



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Eighth Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday 22 August 2023

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 22 August 2023

The Speaker (The Hon. Gregory Michael Piper) took the chair at 12:00.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

The SPEAKER: I advise members that media photographers are approved to cover question time today.

Bills

STATE INSURANCE AND CARE GOVERNANCE AMENDMENT (ICNSW BOARD) BILL 2023

Returned

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

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motions]

The SPEAKER: The member for Kiama will come to order. The member knows that he has breached the standing orders—only a little, but enough to be noticed.

Later,

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

Later,

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order, including the leadership groups on both sides of the House.

Members

MEMBER FOR MIRANDA

MEMBER FOR WAKEHURST

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge some birthdays—this is always a highlight. I forecast previously that the member for Miranda was going to celebrate a birthday. The member does not look a day older than the last time I saw her. I congratulate the member for Miranda. The member for Wakehurst has also celebrated a birthday. He does look a little older than the last time I saw him. I congratulate the member on his birthday celebrations; obviously the member for Wakehurst partied hard.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome my guests, members of Westlake Macquarie National Servicemen's Association, and I thank them for their service. I welcome to the Chamber guests of the member for Terrigal, student leaders from Terrigal Public School accompanied by Mr Clint Lowe, the assistant principal. I also welcome guests of the member for Ryde, student leaders from St Anthony's Primary School in Marsfield, and Eastwood Heights Public School in Eastwood. I acknowledge guests of the member for Tamworth, students from Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, who are participating in the Legal Studies and the Legislature program conducted by the parliamentary education team. Finally, I acknowledge guests of the member for Kiama, Bryan and Margo Fuller, supporters and friends from Jamberoo whom I had the pleasure of meeting earlier today.

Guests will have noticed that things were a little shambolic during the giving of notices of motions before question time. We will address that in subsequent weeks. We have returned to the level of decorum you would expect from a Chamber as august as the bearpit. We will all be very quiet and considered from here on.

*Members***REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS**

Mr RON HOENIG: On behalf of Mr Chris Minns: I inform the House that in the absence of the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads this week the Minister for Transport will answer questions on her behalf.

*Announcements***DEATH OF THE HON. J. RICHARD FACE, A FORMER MINISTER OF THE CROWN AND MEMBER FOR CHARLESTOWN**

The SPEAKER (12:21): It is with regret that I inform the House of the death on 1 August 2023 of the Hon. J. Richard Face, a former Minister of the Crown, who served as the member for Charlestown from 18 November 1972 to 20 March 2003. From my recollection, I believe Richard was the Father of the House for a period and the first Minister for the Hunter, as well as holding many other roles within our community. On behalf of the House, I extend to his family the deep sympathy of the Legislative Assembly for the loss sustained.

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

*Bills***ROAD TRANSPORT AMENDMENT (DEMERIT POINT REDUCTION TRIAL) BILL 2023
ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AMENDMENT (RELIGIOUS VILIFICATION) BILL 2023
STATE INSURANCE AND CARE GOVERNANCE AMENDMENT (ICNSW BOARD) BILL 2023****Assent**

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of messages from the Governor notifying Her Excellency's assent to the bills.

*Question Time***SECRETARY OF TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (12:23): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. According to her ministerial diary disclosure, on 4 April she met with Josh Murray. Did the Minister discuss the transport secretary position or any other government job?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:24): I thank the member for his question. It is a very similar question to one I was asked during the last sitting week. I said then, and I will say again, that I disclosed my meetings with Josh Murray as I am required to do under the Premier's 2015 memorandum on the publication of ministerial diaries. I met with Josh, as I met with many other transport and infrastructure experts, to gather the advice, experience and information that I would need to help me and the Government fix the mess we were left by members opposite. We were left an entire mess. Let us not forget there is not a mode of public transport that does not have their sticky fingerprints all over it. There are bungles, blowouts and maintenance backlogs galore. I will not apologise—

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: The Minister was not asked to reflect on the fantastic transport and infrastructure legacy we left for New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr Mark Speakman: It is direct relevance under Standing Order 129. It is a simple question. Did she discuss with Josh Murray the transport secretary position or any other government job?

The SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. The Minister will be cognisant of the question and answer it directly.

Ms JO HAYLEN: I have answered this question previously and I will answer it again. That meeting that the Leader of the Opposition refers to was publicly disclosed. It was a meeting inside this building. It was in the middle of Parliament House.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Is it the same point of order?

Mr Mark Speakman: It is the same point of order. We all know the meeting was disclosed. Was the transport secretary position discussed?

The SPEAKER: At this stage there is no point of order. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. The Minister will continue her answer.

Ms JO HAYLEN: The meeting that the Leader of the Opposition refers to was held in the middle of Parliament House. I have disclosed it as I was required to do. It is not a secret. It was not a job interview. It was an appropriately declared meeting to gather information that I need, and that the Government needs, to fix the mess that we were left by those opposite. I will not be lectured on how to fix the transport system by those who broke it.

STATE BUDGET

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (12:26): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier outline to the House the reasons for the New South Wales Government's massive debt and what measures are being put in place to rebuild our essential public service?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (12:27): I had a feeling that question was coming. It is a good one. The truth is that New South Wales is heading towards \$180 billion worth of debt, the largest figure ever handed from one government to another in the history of the State.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: About \$7 billion a year, every year, is spent as interest on that debt, not even taking off the principal. Some of the money that was spent is truly shameful, such as \$1 billion on consultants over a three-year period. The former Government added new members of the senior executive service at the rate of one a day, costing \$400 million over the forward estimates.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: There were some shameful examples. Some 96 per cent of bushfire grants went to Coalition electorates, not electorates that had been affected by bushfires, where you would expect the grants to go. That is not even taking into consideration the \$20 million worth of blowouts on major metro and transport projects, all brought to us by what was by common consent a dysfunctional government, or certainly was when it came to the finances of the State. It gave me pause to think, how did we get to this point? Who is responsible for this mess?

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Something in the vicinity of \$27 billion was spent by the previous Treasurer in a nine-month period. That was not during COVID. The \$27 billion was spent in just nine months in the lead-up to the election campaign. That got me thinking, who is responsible for this? It turns out it is the member for Hornsby, Matt Kean.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: By any objective measure, when it comes to data, he is the worst Treasurer that New South Wales has ever produced. I was looking at a 2019 article written by Alexandra Smith in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. This was supposedly a positive article about Matt. There were some quotes about Matt from his current colleagues—all anonymous. But that's fair enough; if you want to speak truth to power, sometimes you have to do it anonymously. One of them said:

Don't pretend for one moment Matt isn't doing everything for political reasons.

Mr Matt Kean: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Premier will resume his seat while I hear from the member for Hornsby on a point of order.

Mr Matt Kean: My point of order is on relevance under Standing Order 129. This is not remotely relevant. What is relevant is what involvement the Premier had in the removal of the General Manager of Georges River Council.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Nothing. You can print that—nothing.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I have given the member for Hornsby a little leeway, but I will not continue to do so throughout question time.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The truth of the matter is that these are some of his colleagues. Another said:

Everything with Matt is about Matt.

Mr Jason Li: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The member for Strathfield is on his feet. All members will come to order. They are letting me down. Earlier I talked them up to visitors in the public gallery, saying how well behaved they would be. We need a reset.

Mr Jason Li: I seek an extension of time.

The SPEAKER: I grant the Premier a further two minutes.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: And a senior Liberal colleague said Matt is:

...very ambitious, at times reckless and not always loyal to people.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I call the member for North Shore to order for the first time.

Mr Alister Henskens: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 73. If the Premier wants to reflect on a member, he should do so by way of substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: There was one positive quote. It read:

He's a superstar. He always was. At uni, we used to call him the Fonze because he was so charming ...

That is from Sam Dastyari.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

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

Mr Mark Speakman: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, direct relevance. This has nothing to do with the question that was asked.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. There is no point of order. I will not stop the clock again to facilitate such behaviour. The Premier will complete his answer.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Presumably, this was meant to be a positive article from Alex Smith, but at the end of the day she can only work with what she has got. In *The Daily Telegraph* yesterday when the member for Hornsby was asked about the previous Government's extraordinary spending Mr Kean defended the money he had spent as Treasurer and said that the then Premier's "ambitious" election commitments were the reasons for it. A hospital pass to Dom! It was not the Treasurer's fault; it was the former Premier's fault that there was a massive spending of money. What a hospital pass! Matt dresses it up as a compliment, but we know what he was really saying. At the end of the day, the problem with his spending and its reckless implications for the New South Wales budget is that there were savage cuts coming to health and education under the previous Government's tenure.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

Mr CHRIS MINNS: We are rebuilding the budget to rebuild essential services in New South Wales. That was five points of order.

The SPEAKER: Has the Premier concluded his answer?

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Sure.

The SPEAKER: The Premier has completed his answer. There is no point of order.

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORT FOR NSW

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (12:33): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. On 5 May the Minister's chief of staff sent a copy of the advertisement for the transport secretary position to Josh Murray. Before the Minister's chief of staff sent the advertisement, did the Minister discuss doing so with him?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:33): Firstly, the answer to the member's question is no. As I have said from the outset, the process for the recruitment of the Secretary of Transport for NSW was run by the Department of Premier and Cabinet in conjunction with my office. That is completely appropriate and reasonable. In fact, the people of New South Wales would expect that when you run a recruitment process there are advertisements placed in newspapers, for example—some of them represented by our friends up in the press gallery—on government websites, on LinkedIn and in fact all across the interweb. It is a public advertisement for a public service position. It is reasonable that my office and people across government would

share those advertisements with people who they believe to be qualified and skilled for the position. That is normally how a recruitment process works. We are talking about people who have relevant experience.

I would say those opposite have been a little obsessed. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the shadow Minister for transport, has very keenly been asking questions about new transport secretary Josh Murray's experience. In fact, she seems a little exercised about his previous employment in this place 15 years ago, when we were using BlackBerrys. In fact, she seems to suggest that somehow working—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. This is completely irrelevant to the question.

The SPEAKER: The Manager of Opposition Business will resume his seat. The Minister is being relevant to the question. She answered the question immediately when she stood up and she is still being relevant to it. There is no point of order.

Ms JO HAYLEN: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition is seeming to suggest that somehow working in the Transport portfolio in government is not relevant experience. I would say let us check whether she applied the same standards when she was appointing ministerial roles. Well, Mr Speaker, you might be shocked to find out that she did not. In fact, her colleague the member for Oatley—

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: The Minister has now gone beyond Josh Murray's—

[*Interruption*]

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will be heard on his point of order.

Ms Yasmin Catley: What is his point of order?

The SPEAKER: I am trying to hear it.

Mr Mark Speakman: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, direct relevance. The Minister is now going beyond the sham appointment process for Mr Murray to other appointment processes. It is irrelevant.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I defer to the Leader of the Opposition. There is no point of order. I will now hear from the Leader of the House.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Under Standing Order 131 (9), a member cannot make repeated, interfering points of order. Opposition members are doing it continuously—five times during the Premier's answer. They are vexatious and you have overruled each one of them. Mr Speaker, I ask that next time Opposition members take vexatious points of order you put them on calls to order. Otherwise, this behaviour will continue throughout question time.

The SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the House for his counsel. The five points of order were not the same points of order; there was some variation. I stand by how I managed the previous answer from the Premier. I will continue to rule as fairly as I can. I thank the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business. In future I will be more rigorous in the way I deal with what I consider to be vexatious points of order.

MATILDAS FOOTBALL TEAM

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (12:37): My question is addressed to the Minister for Sport. Will the Minister please give an update on the Matildas' historic performance at the FIFA Women's World Cup and how we will use this to continue to highlight the sporting achievements of women?

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

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (12:38): How good were the Matildas? I thank the member for Camden, a football zealot and a great advocate for women's sport. There are moments in sport when time stands still, when a nation holds its breath in anticipation and in hope. Think of *Australia II*, the boxing kangaroo flag unfurled, crossing the line in Newport to claim the America's Cup. Think of Cathy Freeman entering the straight in Sydney and powering on to win the 400 metres Olympic gold. Australia's women's national football team, the Matildas, have delivered our latest great sporting moment.

[*An Opposition member interjected.*]

Come on, celebrate the Matildas. Cortnee Vine's penalty kick did more than just secure the Matildas a place in the world cup semifinal. It secured the team's place in history, along with a place in our collective hearts. At the start of the tournament, who would have believed we would need not one but three stadiums to watch the semifinal game? Every Australian—maybe not some of those opposite—is proud of this team, proud of what they

have done for football in this country and proud of what they have done for women's sport. They have created a legacy that will echo through generations to follow, and that legacy must be remembered.

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

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We have committed to a mural on the face of Stadium Australia to remind us of the team that changed the nation. This is the beginning of our female recognition program with Venues NSW. We have already moved swiftly to implement another election commitment—to celebrate our greatest female athletes by naming the eastern stand at Accor Stadium after them. We will have more to announce on that shortly. We are not negative and miserable like those opposite. It has been a privilege to be the Minister for Sport during this special time. [*Extension of time*]

Now that the last game has been played, the work begins to capitalise on the momentum and excitement the Matildas created. That means investing in our grassroots sporting communities and public infrastructure. The starting point is our election commitment to make New South Wales State Sporting Organisations [SSOs] the best funded in Australia. We are increasing funding to SSOs through the Organisation Support Program to \$5 million in 2023-24 and \$10 million in 2024-25. An essential element of the additional direct funding will be agreed outcomes to increase female participation. We will also deliver \$10 million in community infrastructure programs through the NSW Football Legacy Program, providing more opportunities for people of all ages and abilities across the State.

We will have more to announce in the budget in a couple of weeks, but, for now, let us reflect on the greatest FIFA Women's World Cup ever. We have achieved a record attendance of more than 1.9 million people. The FIFA Fan Festival site at Tumbalong Park, just one of the community live sites, hosted 250,000 people. More than 15,000 people at Allianz and CommBank Stadiums watched the semifinal on a screen. Every single match hosted at Stadium Australia was a sellout. This FIFA Women's World Cup reached a global audience of two billion people, the highest on record. Domestically, it has broken record after record in TV viewership. More than 11.1 million people watched the semifinal, making it the most watched TV event ever, by a margin of three million. The Matildas led from the front, in more ways than one. They remind me of something the late, great Australian coach Rale Rasic used to say, "They provided service beyond the contract."

The SPEAKER: I draw the Minister's attention to the clock. I agree that it was a fantastic event. We will discuss it for some time, but his time has expired. I call the member for Newtown.

SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (12:43): My question is directed to the Premier. Yesterday the New South Wales Labor Government announced it will privatise 50 per cent of Waterloo estate south. Currently the Waterloo public housing estate is 100 per cent public housing on public land. Given that planning laws only require affordable housing to remain as such for 15 years, will the Premier commit to working with me and The Greens to ensure that the 20 per cent of affordable housing promised for Waterloo estate south—and affordable housing across the State—is genuinely affordable and remains affordable in perpetuity?

Ms Felicity Wilson: How is the privatisation agenda going?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (12:44): Does the member for North Shore want to answer the question?

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for North Shore that she is on two calls to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: We need to get some important facts on the table when it comes to Waterloo estate south. It will be a mixed-ownership site. It just will be. The time when we would have put 1,500, 2,000 or 3,000 social housing units together, without mixed ownership in the site, is over. It does not work. We need to have affordable housing, social housing, private housing and rental accommodation in the one area. In the Government's recently announced plans, we are lifting the number of social and affordable housing precincts in the vicinity from 750 to 1,500. We are doubling it, compared with the previous Government, which had it at 30 per cent. We are lifting the number to 50 per cent. That will mean that, yes, there is private sector involvement, in relation to the build and sale of some of those sites.

However, I think it is misleading to suggest that a mixed-ownership model, under which we are increasing the amount of social and affordable housing from 30 per cent to 50 per cent, amounts to the selloff of government land for private housing. We are exponentially increasing it, and our announcement does just that. The announcement goes further—15 per cent of the new social and affordable homes will be for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents. We have ensured that any homes operated by local Aboriginal land councils will remain in government ownership. Of course they will—they will be under government title and tenure. The ownership mix will see a substantial increase in the amount of social housing provided to the residents of Waterloo. It has

been opposed by some groups in the community who seemingly do not want the area revitalised, rebuilt or renewed.

Ms Jenny Leong: That is not true.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: In part, it needs to be done. I am not suggesting that the member for Newtown is doing that, but some residents insist that no-one be moved out of their homes and that there be no redevelopment of the site. That cannot happen, because if you speak to the local priest, to welfare services, to the local member or to the Federal member, they will all say that the area needs investment and redevelopment. It needs to be fixed. I believe this proposal will work. In some instances, we are hampered from having even denser development on the site, primarily because it is under the flight path and we cannot go any higher. But we will do everything we need to do, including more dense developments to allow opportunities for people in social housing, and rental opportunities for young people in New South Wales, to grow businesses, join communities and start families in this State. If anyone wants to help in terms of getting Federal money, we could get that bill moving through the Australian Senate to get social housing money to this State.

Ms Jenny Leong: I seek additional information.

The SPEAKER: The Premier has completed his answer.

TEACHER WORKFORCE

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (12:47): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Education and Early learning. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on this Government's commitment to providing greater job security for teachers and outline how that is working to deliver better outcomes for students?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, Minister for Western Sydney, and Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education) (12:48): I thank the member for South Coast for her very important question. When this Government came to office, as the people of New South Wales know, student outcomes were in decline. They were falling. It was no coincidence, because we came to government amidst a chronic teacher shortage crisis. Our Government knew that, if we did not address the chronic teacher shortage in our schools, we could not go anywhere near addressing the declining student outcomes in our classrooms. That is what we are doing. We are ending once and for all the Liberal-Nationals Coalition's obsession with casualisation in our schools. We need our teachers to be focused on teaching, not worried about whether they will have a job next year or the year after.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Or next term.

Ms PRUE CAR: Or even next term, as the Minister says. They need stability and security. The constant forcing of teachers into precarious work that we saw proliferate under those opposite needs to end. The former Liberal-Nationals Government's decision to constantly force teachers into permanent contracts saw a decline in student outcomes. The recent OECD—

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order. There are a number of conversations going on in the Chamber. The member for Dubbo will resume his seat. The member for Dubbo and the member for Coffs Harbour can take their conversation into the Wentworth Room, if they wish, but they will cease their conversation in the House.

Ms PRUE CAR: They do this absolutely every time. I know it is discomfoting for them to hear a woman speaking. I do not know what it is, but they constantly show disrespect for schools, teachers and students by doing this during every single answer. The recent OECD report—

The SPEAKER: The member for Upper Hunter will come to order.

Ms PRUE CAR: This House is becoming embarrassing because of the way Opposition members carry on every question time when the people of New South Wales deserve to hear the answer about what their Government is doing.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: Can the clock be stopped, please?

The SPEAKER: No.

Ms PRUE CAR: This is actually serious business and those opposite continue to make a mockery of themselves by continuing to interject.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: As a government, we are well on our way to surpassing our election commitment to make 16,000 temporary teachers and support staff permanent. That is one of the major ways—

Ms Liza Butler: I request an extension of time for the Minister to provide additional information.

The SPEAKER: An additional two minutes is granted—in view of the interjections, it should really be three minutes. The Minister will be treated with respect and heard in silence.

Ms PRUE CAR: I want to make this very clear for the people of New South Wales to understand that we have already made and have accepted in schools 6,000 support staff made permanent from temporary. They are the vital people that are supporting our teachers in classrooms who were overworked and burdened with administrative work because of members opposite when they were in government.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: If those opposite want to continue to interject about what we are doing for teachers, they can come here every day and lecture us, because what they did was they drove teachers into the ground. We are doing the hard work of actually fixing that. I was recently at the Bush Summit in Tamworth, along with many other members, listening to the Premier and others talk about what we are doing as a government to support particularly regional teachers in rural and regional New South Wales. When the Premier was highlighting just how much we are doing and what our commitment was to supporting teachers in the bush, all of a sudden while he was doing that I heard behind me yelling and moaning from a mob. I looked around and it was the Leader of The Nationals and some bloke called Sam Farraway carrying on like they were on some sort of bucks night. That is how much they care about rural and regional teachers.

This Government, unlike those opposite when they were in government, is committed to doing the hard work to ensure that our teachers and their school administrative and support staff, their school learning support officers, the administration staff—the people in the office who greet the children when they come in the morning and who take care of them in the sick bay—have permanency. We are doing the hard work to ensure that they stay in our schools to improve student outcomes, because the future of our State depends on it.

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORT FOR NSW

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (12:53): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. The NGS Global report dated 29 May states that Josh Murray "has not had the level of operational complexity required for this role" and categorised him as "under review and not recommended to proceed". The media reported that on 30 May the Minister's chief of staff emailed Dianne Leeson stating that "Josh Murray should be interviewed as well". Prior to the email, had the Minister seen the report and did she discuss sending the email with her chief of staff?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:53): Firstly, I reject that assessment of Josh Murray, the Secretary for Transport, and so did the experienced panel of public servants who interviewed him as part of the recruitment process for the Secretary of Transport. That process was run by the Department of Premier and Cabinet. I know it is an inconvenient truth for those opposite, but three highly respected public servants interviewed those candidates. They assessed their credentials for the job. Those three public servants include the Public Service Commissioner, Kathrina Lo, the head of the Premier's Department, Peter Duncan, and the head of the Commonwealth transport and infrastructure department, Jim Betts. So I have got to say that members opposite are going very close to impugning the characters of these highly respected public servants, who rightly assessed the credentials of the new transport secretary.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I assume the Minister has not concluded her answer.

Ms JO HAYLEN: No, I have not.

Mr Alister Henskens: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The suggestion that there was any impugning of anyone's character is completely irrelevant. The question asked: Prior to the email, had the Minister seen the report and did she discuss sending the email with her chief of staff? It has nothing about the independent panel or anyone else.

The SPEAKER: The Manager of Opposition Business will resume his seat.

[*Interruption*]

I call the Manager of Opposition Business to order for the second time. There is no point of order. The Minister had addressed the question to my satisfaction and had every right to make the point she was making. There is no point of order under Standing Order 129.

Ms JO HAYLEN: The Opposition asked about process and it is reasonable to assess what processes those opposite put in place when they were in government. I have to say that there is a member in this place, the member for Oatley, in fact, who said that he was not happy with the processes that were put in place by his predecessor, the now shadow transport Minister, then the seniors Minister.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: Even if, with which we respectfully disagree, the Minister was previously relevant, she is not now. She is going on to a completely different process from the appointment of the transport secretary.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Leader of the Opposition knows that there is room to move after the answer has been given. That is the nature of answers. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. The Minister will continue her answer.

Ms JO HAYLEN: So concerned was the member for Oatley with the former Minister's appointment that he said he was livid. Members do not have to take my word for it: Just read it in *The Australian*. He was so concerned that he undertook a review of the ministerial appointment. *The Australian* details this. I am sure I will have another question and I will allude to it in the House later.

STATE BUDGET

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:56): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, representing the Treasurer. Will the Minister outline this Government's fiscal approach to the upcoming 2023-24 New South Wales budget?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (12:56): I thank the member for Shellharbour for her question. She is not one who is willing to stand by while there is reckless budget management and let that slide, but that is exactly what we inherited when we came into office. Upon being sworn in earlier this year, the Government was presented with some sobering facts about the budget. The Premier touched on some of those facts earlier: a billion dollars in consultants.

Mr Matt Kean: Are you going to keep the triple-A?

Mr PAUL SCULLY: I am coming to you, mate. Don't worry.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: The previous Government not only delivered the biggest budget deficit in the State's history, \$15.3 billion in 2021-22; it also delivered the second biggest budget deficit in the State's history, \$12 billion in 2022-23. Not only that, they ran up debt: \$129 billion when they left office. For members who are doing the maths, that is about \$16,000 for every person in New South Wales by the time they left office. But it was still going up, rising to \$187 billion or, for those doing the maths, about \$22,500 per person by 2025-26. That came with an interest bill of about \$7 billion a year.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: More recently, we discovered that in the nine months leading up to the March election, the previous Treasurer added \$27 billion worth of spending in new policy initiatives. That is costing a whopping \$25 million a day—each and every day, \$25 million. As an incoming Government, we find ourselves facing a budget explosion based on fiscal recklessness coupled with stubbornly high inflation and services under pressure after 12 years of the administration by members opposite. That means we have to go through a process of testing every single line of expenditure.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: We are not taking the approach of the previous Government—saying anything and spending everything just to win an election and pretending it will be okay at the end of the day, only to find out at the end of year two that there is a fiscal cliff, with nurses, cybersecurity and out-of-home care not funded. Unlike members opposite, we are pursuing sustainable spending and trying to take pressure off the economy. We want to make sure that our approach to the budget is not making things worse because the sooner we act, the sooner working men and women stop losing even more of their purchasing power. [*Extension of time*]

I am happy to provide additional information. When the Premier was speaking earlier, I do not think people in the gallery would have seen the faces of some members opposite. Those on the back bench were shocked by what the Government has got up to because they campaigned believing that they were responsible spenders and budget managers, when the \$25 million spent every day proves they are not.

Mr Matt Kean: The ratings agencies suggest otherwise, mate.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: The member for Hornsby is chirping away now, but I understand his colleagues are referring to him as the Shirley Bassey of New South Wales politics—the big spender. In the weakest, most pathetic defence of his own record he said, "It wasn't really me; it was the former Premier's initiatives that we were doing". He tried to blame it on him. "Is Dom, is good" was the budget approach of the previous Government. Whatever the Premier wanted, the member for Hornsby was there to put it in. But he is not alone in putting measures into the budget, because members opposite have not learned anything.

The Leader of the Opposition wanted to keep a forever tax on the family home and adopt the first home buyer stamp duty discount that we initiated, costing \$700 million. The member for Pittwater wants the Beaches Link resurrected. The member for Willoughby has not met a spending proposal that he does not support. But my favourite is the member for Tamworth, who wanted Tamworth to host the Commonwealth Games after Victoria gave it up because it would cost \$7 billion. Tamworth has a great park with a great name, Scully Park, but I do not think that alone will cut it when it comes to the Commonwealth Games. Members opposite have learnt nothing about budgetary management from their time in office—blowout after blowout. That is why the Minns Government is taking the responsible approach to repair the budget so we can rebuild services.

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORT FOR NSW

The SPEAKER: Is the member for Miranda seeking further information about who Shirley Bassey is?

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (13:02): No, I thought I would ask a proper question. My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. Yesterday the media reported that Josh Murray was given a special ranking of "very suitable" that was not used for other candidates. Before that ranking was created, what conversations did the Minister have about its creation?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (13:02): I have answered this question and similar questions before and have made it very clear that the process for the appointment of the Secretary of Transport was run by the Department of Premier and Cabinet in conjunction with my office, as is appropriate. It is pretty predictable that the tactical geniuses opposite went to the front page of *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

Mr Matt Kean: We haven't seen that play this week.

Ms JO HAYLEN: I did see that one coming, Matt, and I have said that that assessment was made by the Department of Premier and Cabinet. In fact, three highly respected public servants interviewed the candidates, and in the article they very clearly stated:

The assessment category descriptors are not prescribed. The evaluation panel used its discretion in its final recommendation of appointable candidates.

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

Ms JO HAYLEN: I know that is an inconvenient truth for the Opposition, but it is a fact. I know we have the right person in the job to lead the Department of Transport.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129—direct relevance. It is a very precise question about what conversations the Minister had about creating a category.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Minister has the call.

Ms JO HAYLEN: I had no conversations about categories because the process was run by the Department of Premier and Cabinet. I have made very clear that those highly respected public servants interviewed the candidates and recommended that Josh Murray was a very suitable and strong candidate for Secretary of Transport, and I agree. I am very pleased that he has started the tough, complicated job of fixing the mess that members opposite left us. That brings me to their approach when in government to finding the right people to fix serious problems for the people of New South Wales. I know that the member for Oatley was very concerned that the right people needed to be appointed to a ministerial board. In fact, he launched a review because, as *The Australian* made clear, the former seniors Minister said, "Appointments ... are always made on merit, with each person chosen for their strong and diverse backgrounds".

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: If it is taken under Standing Order 129, there is no point of order.

Ms JO HAYLEN: It is important to look at what diversity the former Minister was referring to. *The Australian* makes it very clear that those appointments by the now shadow Minister for Transport included not one, not two, but three Liberal Party branch members. We are talking about Liberal Waverley councillor Sally Betts, Liberal deputy mayor of Ku-ring-gai Barbara Ward and a member from Natalie Ward's own Manly branch. That is diversity—one from the North Shore, one from the eastern suburbs and one from the northern beaches.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (13:05): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Regional Health. Will the Minister explain how the Minns Government is providing children with the best possible start in life?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (13:05): I thank the member for Leppington, an electorate in one of the fastest growing communities in south-western Sydney that a growing number of families call home. He is also a hip-hop fan.

Mr Paul Scully: It's not ABBA, mate.

Mr RYAN PARK: It is not ABBA. It is really important that we talk in this place about the first 2,000 days of a child's life, which are absolutely critical. When a child is born, their brain is around quarter the size of an adult brain. By the time they are five years of age, their brain size is 90 per cent of an adult's. The learning, development and behaviour that happen in those first five years are critical. I have made that program a ministerial priority because we have to get it right. The program is focused on those formative years—the first 2,000 days of a child's life. Those 2,000 days set them up for a range of different issues that they may experience. If we get those first 2,000 days wrong, children have a greater chance of incarceration, chronic disease, alcohol and drug misuse behaviour, suicide and teenage pregnancy. For too long all of us have known the stats and have not prioritised the communities they are coming from. Government members will change that over the next four years. I will talk about the program many times in this place and many times in the community—

Mr Paul Scully: Because it's a good program.

Mr RYAN PARK: —because it works and, as the planning Minister said, it is a very good program. We are putting serious investment into the front end of a child's life—over \$111 million going into child health and developmental checks in preschools. That is important because at the moment 50 per cent of four-year-olds do not get health checks and developmental checks. That is where we pick up issues around speech, cognitive development and behaviour. We make the investment at the front end and get rewarded at the back end, and that child benefits for life. We are also sustaining families, with over \$70 million going to our Sustaining NSW Families program. [*Extension of time*]

The program is for families in which a partner or an adult may be experiencing anxiety, depression, mental health issues or domestic violence, or is in an environment where a child's development is at risk. The \$70 million will go to home visits by specialist child health nurses delivering that level of care. It is front-end support and back-end benefit. We are also converting the "Blue Book" from a book into an app-based system. That is important, because what we want to do is obviously try to alert adult family members and parents to when those important developmental checks need to take place.

It is about making it as easy as possible for families to stay together, thrive and continue to benefit. The program is in partnership with Education, Family and Community Services, Justice, the Attorney General's department, and a range of different support services. It is a program that works. The cost of not acting is in the order of \$15 billion. An investment in those first five years returns around \$13 for every \$1 spent to our State and economy. We are investing in families and children from the very beginning to ensure that we give them every chance to live a life that they love and that is full of hope and promise.

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORT FOR NSW

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (13:11): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. A briefing note dated 24 April states that the former Labor Minister Carmel Tebbutt, who was also the former boss of the Minister for Transport's current chief of staff, would be the "independent" member of the assessment panel for the transport secretary position.

The SPEAKER: Members on both sides of the Chamber will come to order. I say to Government members that I am doing my best to facilitate the Minister being able to answer despite the Premier's concerns. The member for Wahroonga will be heard in silence.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I will start again.

The SPEAKER: I am sure you will.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: A briefing note dated 24 April states that the former Labor Minister Carmel Tebbutt—

The SPEAKER: I have no idea who has been interjecting.

Mr Clayton Barr: It was me.

The SPEAKER: The member for Cessnock will come to order. The member for Wahroonga will continue asking his question.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: A briefing note dated 24 April states that the former Labor Minister Carmel Tebbutt, who was also the former boss of the Minister for Transport's current chief of staff, would be the "independent" member of the assessment panel for the transport secretary position. Was Carmel Tebbutt replaced as the "independent" member of the assessment panel and, if so, who replaced her?

The SPEAKER: I assume the Minister does not need to hear the question again.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (13:13): No, I do not need to hear the question again. As I have said from the very outset, the process of the appointment of the secretary for Transport was run by the Department of Premier and Cabinet in conjunction with my office. Yes, my office was asked for feedback on the membership of the assessment panel and, yes, Carmel Tebbutt is the former Deputy Premier of New South Wales and, yes, Carmel Tebbutt is a highly respected and accomplished former member of this place. Asking the advice of highly respected former Ministers, having held roles like I do now and with their experience, is highly relevant to hiring a secretary for a government department. Because making sure that the relationship between a secretary and a Minister is functional and professional is critical to delivering the services the people of New South Wales need. We have seen what happens when that relationship is dysfunctional.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: I know I was interrupted a number of times and maybe the Minister did not hear the question—

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga does not need to give a prologue to his point of order.

Mr Alister Henskens: —but the question was: Was Carmel Tebbutt replaced as the "independent" member of the assessment panel and, if so, who replaced her? The Minister has not yet touched on the question.

The SPEAKER: At this stage I believe the Minister is in order.

Ms JO HAYLEN: As I have said, it is entirely appropriate for a former Minister to provide advice on a matter such as this, because we saw what happened when those opposite had completely dysfunctional relationships between the secretary for Transport and the Minister for Transport. We have seen what happens when the secretary for Transport does not even have the Minister's phone number. In fact, passengers will remember when tens of thousands of them were left stranded on train platforms because the secretary did not have David Elliott's phone number.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Minister, did you finalise your answer?

Ms JO HAYLEN: Yes, I did.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has completed her answer. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time. I will not entertain a point of order.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (13:16): I ask a supplementary question. Was Carmel Tebbutt replaced as the independent member of the assessment panel and, if so, who replaced her?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (13:16): I have answered that question. I have made it very clear that asking highly respected former Ministers of this place for their advice about the recruitment of a secretary of a major department that employs 28,000 people and is responsible for delivering essential services to the people of New South Wales is entirely appropriate.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order.

Ms JO HAYLEN: We have seen what happens when that relationship is dysfunctional. Let us not forget that, when those opposite were in charge of the Transport portfolio, there were five secretaries in 12 years.

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

Ms JO HAYLEN: Let us not forget the scandalous sacking of Rod Staples by those opposite.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Mark Speakman: I take a point of order under Standing Order 129. It is regarding direct relevance. It makes a mockery of this institution if the Minister does not limit her remarks to the leave of the question. She has been asked a simple question: Was Ms Tebbutt replaced and, if so, by whom?

Mr Ron Hoenig: To the point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Swansea will come to order. We all want to listen to the Leader of the House.

Mr Ron Hoenig: The Opposition is not entitled to an answer to the question as the supplementary question was out of order. I ask you to rule it out of order.

The SPEAKER: It is a bit of a moot point at this stage. I acknowledge the point made by the Leader of the House. The Minister has the call.

Ms JO HAYLEN: I remind the House of what those opposite did to the department. They put a wrecking ball through the department each and every time and there were dysfunctional relationships between the transport Minister and the secretaries. They are in no position to go after people who are committed to working for the people of New South Wales as public servants. They want us to believe that, if someone has been in the political sphere, they cannot be in the public sphere. Well, they do not believe that.

Ms Robyn Preston: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Is the member for Hawkesbury taking a point of order under Standing Order 129?

Ms Robyn Preston: Yes.

The SPEAKER: The member for Hawkesbury will resume her seat. I am not entertaining points of order taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister will resume her answer.

Ms JO HAYLEN: It is entirely reasonable to seek the advice of people who have been in positions like this before. In fact, it is exactly what those opposite have done.

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

Ms JO HAYLEN: For example, does the shadow Minister for Health believe that Jillian Skinner, a former health Minister, should be removed from the board of Justice Health? Does the member for North Shore believe that Jillian Skinner should be removed from that board? Does the shadow Minister for the Environment believe that we should remove former National Party leader Niall Blair as the chair of the Biodiversity Conservation Trust? Does the Leader of The Nationals believe that we should remove Duncan Gay, an adviser to me and an adviser to government, as chair of the NSW Freight Transport Advisory Council? I could go on and on but it is only going to embarrass each and every member opposite.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Ms JO HAYLEN: Instead, I remind those opposite that I am not going to be lectured by those who broke the transport system on how to fix it.

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

NEW INTERCITY FLEET

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (13:20): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government has progressed the new intercity fleet coming into service?

The SPEAKER: I remind Opposition members that some of them are on several calls to order.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (13:20): I can update the House. I thank the member for Blue Mountains for her advocacy for improving public transport for her community and her long interest in the new intercity fleet. The new intercity fleet is just one of the many messes left to us by the former Liberal Government. It is a project that those opposite comprehensively mismanaged. Their mismanagement has had far-reaching negative impacts for workers, for New South Wales taxpayers, for our local manufacturing industry and, most of all, for passengers. The cold hard fact is that those opposite abandoned our train manufacturing industry. They said it was too expensive to build them here and that we were not good at doing it. So, instead of backing local manufacturing, they chose to buy them overseas.

Some members will remember former transport Minister Andrew Constance. He was obsessed with the cheaper sticker price from overseas and back in 2016 he said that his Government was "a friend of the taxpayer". How did that go? The originally contracted price for the new intercity fleet was \$2.3 billion. The cost to the

taxpayer now has blown out to \$3.2 billion. That is a 40 per cent increase—so much for being a friend of the taxpayer.

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

Ms JO HAYLEN: But, most of all, it is passengers who have lost out, because seven years down the track—after we had to put up with Andrew Constance boasting about this—the new intercity fleet is yet to carry a single passenger.

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

Ms JO HAYLEN: It was meant to be carrying passengers to Newcastle and the Central Coast in 2019, to the Blue Mountains in 2020 and to the Illawarra in 2021, but because of the former Government's obsession with buying overseas made, its absolute budgetary incompetence and its constant need to pick fights with the transport workforce, the new intercity fleet was stuck in sheds. It has taken a Labor government to get it back on track. I am very pleased to announce that this week, following engagement with train crew and rail unions, the New South Wales transport department has signed a deed to modify and commission the fleet in the shortest possible time. That deed aligns the new intercity fleet operating model with that of the Waratah fleet and, subject to the regulator's approval, we will allow the new trains to enter passenger service months earlier. [*Extension of time*]

The former Government signed taxpayers up to a very expensive and time-consuming process that involved a two-stage approach to modify these trains. In contrast, we have fast tracked that process by working with the train manufacturer and with the transport workforce to make the necessary changes so that these trains are safe and we can get them on the tracks as soon as possible. That is great news for passengers across New South Wales. This has only been possible because the Minns Labor Government has listened to transport workers. We have respected transport workers and we have worked with unions to rebuild trust. Those opposite declared war on their workforce. This new deal is a perfect demonstration of the benefit that comes from working collaboratively and from listening to the workforce and to the public servants who are out there each day delivering essential services. Ultimately, our approach will save taxpayers money and will get these trains on the tracks sooner. These modification processes are being fast tracked. We will also be making changes to track-side infrastructure and that work has begun across the network to determine the scope of what is required.

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

Ms JO HAYLEN: The new Mariyung fleet has undergone testing. Between Central and Springwood, and between Central and Newcastle, the mechanical and electrical systems have been tested, including the modification to the doors. Those tests will make sure that the trains are safe and ready for passenger service because, as always, we are focused on the safety of our passengers, our workforce and the community. We will get on with the job.

RENTAL MARKET

Dr JOE MCGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (13:26): My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading. In August this year the National Cabinet met and agreed to implement a better deal for renters to harmonise and strengthen renters' rights across Australia. What consideration has there been to obtain a fair balance between the rights of landlords, of whom the majority are small-time mum and dad investors, and the rights of renters, and what consultation with industry has the Government undertaken?

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) (13:26): I thank my good friend the member for Wagga Wagga for his question. I am pleased with his interest in this important work to support renters and the rental market. As anyone who has visited Wagga Wagga would know, the good member is a man of great standing in his community because of his great work and strong advocacy for the great Riverina community. I thank also our friends on the crossbench for the way they have engaged with the Government on this important piece of reform to help renters. I was waiting for the Opposition to ask because I am excited about the big reform to policy in this sector. Unfortunately—like the Matildas' shootout against Les Bleues, when we were all silent and waiting—you could hear a pin drop from the other side when it comes to ideas about making our rental system fairer.

The Government has made no secret of what we need to do to rebalance the equation and to deliver a more modern and fairer rental market. We have already moved to ban unsolicited rent bidding and we are also developing a portable bonds scheme, which will make a huge difference to renters in a tough rental market. I thank the member for Wagga Wagga and the member for Sydney for their constructive approach to these reforms. But we are not finished yet. Change is necessary because the world has certainly changed. For many people in this State, renting is now the new normal. For many people in this State, it is really tough going at the moment. Across

the Riverina, more than 17,000 people received rental assistance in 2021. Around 25 per cent of those renters are experiencing some rental stress.

The Government understands that the rental market is complex. It requires a balanced, measured and methodical approach to induce long-term structural changes that will make things easier and better for renters and the rental market. That is why we are consulting widely with the industry on the much-needed changes to modernise our rental reform regime. We welcome the move by the Federal Government to make this a national priority, because it is certainly a priority for us. The Government has a fundamental belief that good property owners need good renters and good renters need good property owners. It is a balanced equation between those two important factors. We do not need to demonise one against the other. A balanced approach can be reached, and I am confident that we can get there with good consultation. They both need a set of rules to engage in good faith and work together. It is a balanced and fair approach to deliver a much better outcome. [*Extension of time*]

Of the more than 150 consultation processes run through the Have Your Say platform, this has been one of the most visited. More than 47,000 owners, agents and members of the public took the time to review the Government's plan for a fairer and more modern rental system. Approximately 16,000 people took the time to complete the survey, and more than 400 took the time to write and upload a submission. That says a lot about how important the policy reform is. More importantly, those submissions represent a diverse group of contributors. Around 9,000 of those were from renters and more than 5,500 were property owners who took the time to give their feedback. That is an incredible response, and it will help the Government to deliver a balanced and fair reform outcome.

The Government is not letting that momentum slip away. The NSW Rental Commissioner and the team at NSW Fair Trading are working through the submissions as we speak. I want to be very clear to members opposite that the State's first ever Rental Commissioner, Ms Trina Jones, will play a critical role in this work. I take extra care to make that point because I noticed the member for Willoughby had some questions about her appointment. Here is a tip: You do not gazette those sorts of senior public service roles at all. Instead of spending their days hunched over the *Government Gazette*, I urge members of the Opposition to get out and listen to the people of New South Wales and industry stakeholders to make sure we get the balance right. I know that my colleagues the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and the Minister for Housing are working hard to drive new supply into the right places to ensure the Government continues to put downward pressure on the market. This is an important piece of reform. The Government is working hard and consulting widely to ensure that it gets a better outcome for renters and the rental market.

CONSULTING SERVICES

Mr RON HOENIG: By leave: Pursuant to Standing Order 131 (7), I table a written response from the Premier to a question asked of him by the member for Kiama during question time on 3 August 2023.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: BILLS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (13:32): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to:

- (1) Have the Variation in Sex Characteristics (Restricted Medical Treatment) Bill 2023 separated from, and no longer considered cognate with, the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023 and the Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2023.
- (2) Amend the routine of business for Thursday 24 August 2023 so that:
 - (a) general business notices of motions for bills may proceed for up to 45 minutes, up from 20 minutes;
 - (b) the only items of business considered during general business notices of motions for bills is the introduction and mover's second reading speech for the cognates Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023 and the Conversion Practices Prohibition Bill 2023; and
 - (c) general business orders of the day for bills may proceed for up to 65 minutes, down from 90 minutes.

I move the suspension of standing and sessional orders at the request of the member for Sydney, who has advised the Government that his second reading speech is likely to far exceed the 20 minutes allocated in the standing orders. He is seeking to complete his second reading speech with respect to those bills. He has involved a number of stakeholders in the preparation of those bills, and he seeks to be able to deliver his second reading speech in one go. I observe that the Opposition has indicated that it is opposed to the suspension of standing orders and wants to add a number of conditions or requests. I make the point that there are occasionally significant private members' bills that are effectively conscience votes—usually moved by the member for Sydney, but sometimes with the carriage of other members—where the House or the Government yields to business or time for the

purposes of those matters to proceed. Members opposite would understand that from when they were in government.

The Government is not seeking that the bill be debated in its entirety; it is simply allocating time at the request of the member for Sydney to deliver his second reading speech in total. In fact, the member is not even seeking further debate on the bill to be given any other priority. He simply seeks the time of the House for this purpose, and the Government has agreed. That is what I propose to do. I sought to do it today so that members could make arrangements well in advance rather than catching anybody on the hop on Thursday morning, which may have been the previous practice.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (13:35): The suspension of standing orders concerns matters of procedure in this Parliament and has nothing to do with the substance of the bills to be brought forward by the member for Sydney that are referred to in the suspension of standing orders. Indeed, the Opposition has not been provided with a copy of two of the three bills that the suspension of standing orders concerns and was only provided with a draft of one late on Friday evening. Under the standing orders, the Government is provided with hours and hours of time to debate government business. We know from the sitting days that have occurred so far this year that this Government has the thinnest of thin legislative agenda. The Government has at least 2½ hours on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons before the public interest debate, and there is unlimited time for government business after the public interest debate.

In contrast with the Government's time for bills, for non-Government bills, such as the matters that Opposition and crossbench private members can deal with—which is a majority of the members in this House given that it is a minority government—there is only 20 minutes on Thursdays to do second reading speeches for private members' non-Government bills and 90 minutes on Thursdays for debate on non-Government bills. That is 48 of the 93 members of this House who have 20 minutes and 90 minutes respectively on Thursdays for private members' bills. This suspension of standing orders seeks to do two things. The first is to separate three cognate bills by the member for Sydney. It is a matter for the member for Sydney how he seeks to deal with the legislation, and the Opposition does not oppose that. The Opposition asks that the question that it agrees with in the motion is determined separately from paragraph (2) in the motion to suspend standing orders and that they are split under Standing Order 153.

Within the 20-minute slot on Thursday, in the order that things are usually dealt with, there are a number of second reading speeches that the motion will effectively jump and get precedence over in a manner that is not allowed under the standing orders. One of those bills is the Constitution Amendment (Water NSW and Local Water Utilities) Bill 2023 introduced by the member for Cootamundra. That bill will protect from privatisation the water assets that were left out of the Government's bill. It will prevent Warragamba Dam and other water assets in regional New South Wales from being privatised. A government that promised to be against privatisation has not protected those assets, and the member for Cootamundra seeks to protect them.

The suspension of standing orders will also take away from debate on the Crimes Amendment (Breaking and Entering) Bill 2023, which will protect victims of domestic violence following the unsatisfactory result in the recent High Court decision of *BA v The King* [2023] HCA 14 and help keep victims of domestic violence safe in their homes. That bill was to be debated on during the 90 minutes for debate on private members' bills this Thursday. Important private members' legislation would be pushed aside by this suspension of standing orders. We ask that instead the bill be pushed into Government business, where there is an abundance of time, rather than use up very limited non-Government time, under the standing orders. We have encouraged the member for Sydney to take it up with the Government and get some of its time rather than to take time from us. Again I hasten to say that we have not seen the bills. This is not a reflection on the bills; this is just a reflection on the limited time the Opposition has to pursue the issues that are important for our constituents and the people that we represent in this House. We do not say that this sort of queue-jumping—

Dr Hugh McDermott: The Opposition had 12 years to do that.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: The High Court decision was made only in May of this year. The member for Prospect should know better than that. We seek to split the two paragraphs. We support the first paragraph but we do not support and we oppose the second paragraph. The member for Sydney can use Government time because the Government's legislative agenda is so thin that there is abundant Government time for him to use.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (13:40): By leave: I put on record my thanks to the Government for facilitating the introduction of the two cognate bills this Thursday. I also thank my crossbench colleagues, particularly the member for Balmain and the member for Ballina, whose legislation otherwise would have been introduced, for their support for that. It is their bills that are being delayed and were next to be dealt with, not the member for Cootamundra's bill. This is a piece of legislation about which there is significant public interest. A number of members have been contacted already about it. The motion facilitates the process of a substantial

piece of legislation, which amends some 22 Acts, to be introduced in a fulsome fashion for community consultation before any debate on the provision, which is likely later in the year.

I understand that this is frustrating for the Opposition. I acknowledge that opposing the suspension does not indicate how they will consult on or consider the legislation that I will seek to introduce. It is good to have a conversation about the use of more time for private members' legislation. That consultation should occur through the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee. During the time of the former Government, I myself struggled at times to get debate time outside of private members' time to introduce and progress legislation in which there was specific public interest. In conclusion, this is a really important bill. It will amend some 22 Acts. This reform is of significant public interest. I have consulted widely with the Government and the crossbench, and I look forward to working with the Opposition on it as well. I commend the suspension to the House.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (13:42): In reply: I make the observation that, firstly, notice was given to the Opposition beforehand. I wanted to move this suspension with notice. It is a crossbench member's bill, which would normally be debated on the Thursday. We simply want to give the member for Sydney time. He is not jumping the queue. In fact, the Opposition will find that its bills will probably be able to have a second reading debate prior to the second reading debate on this bill. It is not intended by the member for Sydney for a second reading debate to proceed. He simply wants to move the second reading of the bill so that it and his second reading speech are on the public record. That is all we seek to do with this. At the end of the day, it is not a serious interference with what the Opposition seeks to achieve on private members' day.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (13:43): Because the Opposition supports the first paragraph and does not support the second paragraph, I move, under Standing Order 153:

That the question be put as separate questions on paragraph (1) and paragraph (2).

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga has moved that the motion be divided into two separate questions. Under Standing Order 153, the question shall be decided without amendment or debate. The question is that the motion of the member for Wahroonga be agreed to.

Motion negatived.

The SPEAKER: The question now is that the motion of the member for Heffron be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes51
Noes31
Majority.....20

AYES

Bali, S	Harris, D	Quinnell, S
Barr, C	Harrison, J	Regan, M
Butler, L	Haylen, J	Saffin, J (teller)
Butler, R	Hoening, R	Saliba, D
Catley, Y	Holland, M	Scully, P
Chanthivong, A	Hornery, S	Shetty, K
Cotsis, S	Kaliyanda, C	Smith, T
Crakanthorp, T	Kamper, S	Stuart, M
Daley, M	Kirby, W	Tesch, L
Dalton, H	Leong, J	Vo, T
Davis, D	Li, J	Voltz, L
Dib, J	McDermott, H	Ward, G
Doyle, T	McGirr, J	Warren, G
Finn, J	McKeown, K	Washington, K
Greenwich, A	Mehan, D	Watson, A
Hagarty, N	O'Neill, M	Whan, S (teller)
Hannan, J	Park, R	Wilkinson, K

NOES

Amon, R	Kemp, M	Sloane, K
Ayyad, T	Lane, J	Speakman, M
Clancy, J	Layzell, D	Taylor, M

NOES

Cooke, S	Perrottet, D	Thompson, T
Coure, M	Petinos, E	Toole, P
Crouch, A (teller)	Preston, R	Tuckerman, W
Davies, T	Provost, G	Williams, L
Griffin, J	Roberts, A	Williams, R
Henskens, A	Saunders, D	Williamson, R
James, T	Singh, G (teller)	Wilson, F
Kean, M		

PAIRS

Aitchison, J	Anderson, K
Cross, M	Car, P
Minns, C	Di Pasqua, S

Motion agreed to.*Documents***REGISTER OF DISCLOSURES**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with clause 21 of the Constitution (Disclosure by Members) Regulation 1983, I table the Register of Disclosures by Members of the Legislative Assembly—Primary Returns and Discretionary Returns, dated 9 May 2023. I order that the document be printed.

PARLIAMENTARY ETHICS ADVISER

The SPEAKER: I table the following advice from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser:

- (1) Copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to Mr Victor Dominello, former Minister, dated 21 May 2023.
- (2) Copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to Mr Victor Dominello, former Minister, dated 21 May 2023.
- (3) Copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to Mr Geoff Lee, former Minister, dated 31 July 2023.
- (4) Copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to Mr Victor Dominello, former Minister, dated 4 August 2023.
- (5) Copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to Mr Victor Dominello, former Minister, dated 15 August 2023.

I order that the documents be printed.

LIQUOR AND GAMING DATA COLLECTION**Return to Order**

The CLERK: In accordance with the resolution of the House of 25 May 2023 and subsequently amended on 21 June 2023, 1 August 2023 and 2 August 2023, I announce receipt of:

- (a) Documents relating to the order as made on 25 May, received on Thursday 22 June 2023 from the Acting Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, together with an indexed list of the documents.
- (b) Documents relating to the order, received on Friday 4 August 2023 from the Deputy Secretary, General Counsel of the Cabinet Office, together with an indexed list of documents and correspondence giving reasons for the delay in the production of the documents.
- (c) Documents relating to paragraph (6) of the order, the inspection of which is restricted to members only, received on Friday 4 August 2023 from the Deputy Secretary, General Counsel of the Cabinet Office, together with an indexed list of documents and correspondence giving reasons for the delay in the production of the documents.
- (d) A further redacted document relating to the order, received on Friday 18 August, along with correspondence from the Deputy Chairperson, Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority to the Director, Legal Branch, Office of General Counsel, the Cabinet Office.

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 35 of the Law Enforcement and National Security (Assumed Identities) Act 2010, I announce receipt of the report pursuant to section 35 of the Law Enforcement and National Security (Assumed Identities) Act 2010 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption for the period 2022-2023, received out of session on 9 August 2023 and authorised to be printed.

AUDITOR-GENERAL**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 38EC of the Government Sector Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Regional, rural and remote education*, dated 10 August 2023, received out of session on 10 August 2023 and authorised to be printed.

INSPECTOR OF THE LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 49 of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007, I announce receipt of the report of the Inspector of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled *Report under Section 49 (1) of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 for the period ending 30 June 2023*, dated August 2023, received out of session on 18 August 2023 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***COMMITTEE ON THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION****Government Response**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the following Government responses received out of session on 14 August 2023 and authorised to be printed:

- (1) Government response to report No. 5/57 of the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Review of the 2020-2021 Annual Reports of the ICAC and the Inspector of the ICAC*
- (2) Government response to report No. 6/57 of the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Review of aspects of the ICAC Act 1988*

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS**Government Response**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the following Government responses received out of session on 14 August 2023 and authorised to be printed:

- (1) Government response to report No. 2/57 of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters entitled *Caps on third-party campaigners' electoral expenditure in s29 (11) and s35 of the Electoral Funding Act 2018*
- (2) Government response to report No. 3/57 of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters entitled *Adequacy of the funding allocation of the NSW Electoral Commission for the 2023 State General Election*

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES**Government Response**

The CLERK: I announce receipt of the Government response to report No. 3/57 of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services entitled *Improving crisis communications to culturally and linguistically diverse communities*, received out of session on 15 August 2023 and authorised to be printed.

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

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ: As Chair: In accordance with Standing Order 299 (1), I inform the House that the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure has received a referral from the Minister for Transport to conduct an inquiry into the Sydney Metro West project, the full details of which are available on the committee's home page.

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

Mr ROY BUTLER: As Chair: In accordance with Standing Order 299 (1), I inform the House that the Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development has resolved to conduct an inquiry into the performance of the Regional Investment Activation Fund and the Regional Job Creation Fund, the full details of which are available on the committee's home page.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**Reports**

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ: As Chair: I table reports of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 1/58* and *Legislation Review Digest No. 2/58*, dated 22 August 2023. I move:

That the reports be printed.

Motion agreed to.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**Chair and Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 31 July 2023 Lynda Jane Voltz was elected chair and Maryanne Norma Stuart was elected deputy chair of the Legislation Review Committee.

MODERN SLAVERY COMMITTEE**Chair and Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 3 August 2023 Joseph Gregory McGirr was elected chair and Jenny Leong was elected deputy chair of the Modern Slavery Committee.

COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION**Chair and Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 3 August 2023 Joseph Gregory McGirr was elected chair and Charishma Kaliyanda was elected deputy chair of the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission.

COMMITTEE ON THE OMBUDSMAN, THE LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION AND THE CRIME COMMISSION**Chair and Deputy Chair**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 3 August 2023 Philip Donato was elected chair and the Hon. Cameron Murphy, MLC, was elected deputy chair of the Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and the Crime Commission.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

The SPEAKER: I announce that the following paper petition signed by more than 10,000 persons has been lodged for presentation:

Houston Mitchell Drive and Pacific Highway Intersection

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to design and construct an overpass at the intersection of Houston Mitchell Drive and Pacific Highway, received from **Mrs Leslie Williams**.

The SPEAKER: I set down debate on the petition as an order of the day for a future day.

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

Warragamba Dam

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Government for a comprehensive parliamentary inquiry to listen to local communities and address Warragamba Dam concerns openly and transparently, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

The CLERK: I announce that the following ePetitions signed by 500 or more persons have been lodged for presentation:

Road Crimes

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly toughen bail laws where an offence has led to death and increase maximum sentences for serious road crimes causing death or injury, received from **Ms Liesl Tesch**.

Public Native Forest Logging

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly take steps to arrest logging in public native forests or arrest such logging while expediting the transfer of koala and other wildlife habitat to national parks, and ensure inclusion of relevant Bulga State Forest areas in the expansion of Biriwal Bulga National Park, received from **Ms Tamara Smith**.

Local Government Elections

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to mandate the use of the NSW Electoral Commission to oversee all local government elections from September 2024 in order to maintain and ensure voter confidence and provide full transparency in the election process, received from **Mr Nathan Hagarty**.

Transgender People and Birth Certificates

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to legislate to remove the current requirement for a transgender person to undergo sex reassignment surgery before updating their birth certificate, received from **Ms Jenny Leong**.

The SPEAKER: I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.30 p.m.

Bills

CRIMES AMENDMENT (CORRUPT BENEFITS FOR TRUSTEES) BILL 2023

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (14:33): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Crimes Amendment (Corrupt Benefits for Trustees) Bill 2023. The bill amends the Crimes Act to expressly require "corrupt" conduct to establish the offence under section 249E of the Crimes Act. Section 249E (2) of the Crimes Act currently provides for an offence where a person entrusted with property receives or solicits a benefit for anyone as an inducement or reward for the appointment of any person to be entrusted with the property, or where any person offers or gives a benefit to a person entrusted with property as an inducement or reward for the appointment of any person to be entrusted with the property without the consent of either all of the beneficiaries of the trust or the Supreme Court. This offence carries a maximum penalty of seven years' imprisonment.

The intended purpose of section 249E is to prevent "a person entrusted with property" from being persuaded by the prospect of personal gain to exercise their power to appoint a substitute trustee. The proposed amendments in the bill respond to concerns expressed by stakeholders following recent decisions of the New South Wales Supreme Court, in particular the decision in *Application of MLC Investments Limited* [2022] NSWSC 1541. In that matter the Supreme Court found that a corrupt purpose is not an element of the offence in section 249E, meaning that a corrupt purpose is not required for this offence to be made out. In *Application of MLC Investments Limited*, Justice Stevenson held that the mental element required to enliven the offence is only a specific intent to offer, give, receive or solicit a benefit without consent as an inducement or reward for any person to be entrusted with property. As a result of the outcomes of recent Supreme Court decisions, I am advised that a large number of routine, good-faith transactions may potentially be captured by the current offence provided for by section 249E of the Crimes Act.

I am advised that it is common practice for outgoing trustees to receive benefits upon the appointment of new trustees. Examples of benefits that are commonly provided, and which may be captured by the offence in section 249E, include contractual indemnities in favour of the outgoing trustee that restate indemnities available at general law, including a right to be indemnified out of trust assets for any expenses or liability properly incurred while acting as trustee, and an arrangement under which a third party will pay the transaction costs of the outgoing trustee to avoid these costs being paid out of trust assets. While these benefits can be provided with the consent of the beneficiaries, meaning that an offence would not be committed under section 249E, it is not always possible to obtain the consent of every beneficiary. For example, where a trust is a large super fund or managed fund with many thousands of members, it will not always be practicable or possible to obtain consent.

Parties also have the option of seeking the consent of the Supreme Court in order to prevent an offence from being committed under section 249E. However, for smaller trusts the cost of an application to the Supreme Court may exceed the value of the trust assets. Even for larger trusts, a Supreme Court application adds significant costs and complexity. In addition, these applications take up court time for what is essentially the approval of routine, good-faith transactions. Further to trustees potentially facing serious criminal penalties for good-faith transactions under the existing provision, commercial advisers are also at risk of committing an offence under section 249F of the Crimes Act if they were involved in decisions made without the consent of the Supreme Court or all beneficiaries. Section 249F provides for an offence where a person aids, abets, counsels, procures, solicits or incites the commission of an offence under part 4A of the Crimes Act. Section 249E is within part 4A of the Act.

The offence of concealing a serious indictable offence in section 316 of the Crimes Act also applies to an offence under section 249E. This means that, in respect of past transactions captured by section 249E, there may be an ongoing obligation for advisers to report offending clients to the NSW Police Force or another appropriate authority. As a result, without the amendment proposed in this bill, trustees and their advisers conducting routine, good-faith business transactions may be exposed to significant criminal penalties.

I now turn to the detail of the bill. Item [1] of schedule 1 to the bill substitutes the existing offence in section 249E with a new section 249E that has three changes. First, the proposed new section 249E specifies that the conduct constituting the offering, giving, receiving or soliciting of the benefit must be done corruptly. Second, the proposed new section excludes the requirement to obtain consent from each person beneficially entitled to the property or from the Supreme Court. Third, the proposed new section excludes the requirement for the Attorney General's consent to commence proceedings for an offence under the section.

Imposing an express requirement that the conduct be done "corruptly" will ensure that the criminal offence only targets dishonest and improper conduct, while allowing parties to engage in good-faith transactions without exposure to potential criminal sanctions. The change will also bring section 249E into line with other similar offences contained in part 4A of the Crimes Act. These are categorised collectively as corruptly receiving commissions and other corrupt practices, which generally contain express requirements for the relevant conduct to be undertaken "corruptly" for those offences to be made out. It is intended that the term "corruptly" in the context of the substituted section 249E offence will encompass dishonesty and acting with a wrongful intention. This will be consistent with other offences in part 4A of the Act.

The requirement for the Supreme Court or beneficiaries to consent to transactions under section 249E has been removed because it becomes redundant in light of the offence applying only to conduct engaged in corruptly. Neither beneficiaries nor the Supreme Court would knowingly approve corrupt conduct. Currently, under subsection 249E (4), the Attorney General must consent to any prosecution under section 249E. Once section 249E is amended to specifically apply to conduct that is engaged in corruptly, the safeguard of the consent of the Attorney General to commence a prosecution under that section is no longer necessary. Other offences relating to corrupt commissions or practices under part 4A of the Act do not require the Attorney General to consent to a prosecution.

Item [2] of schedule 1 to the bill provides that the proposed new section 249E will apply retrospectively, to extend to conduct engaged in before the commencement of this bill. The provision as it currently exists in the Crimes Act will cease to operate in relation to such conduct. It also provides that section 249F and section 316 will apply only to conduct that contravenes the new section 249E. Retrospectivity is appropriate in this case because the proposed amendments appropriately narrow the scope of conduct that is criminalised under section 249E, rather than criminalising previously legal activities.

Retrospectivity is also necessary because, prior to the recent Supreme Court decisions, I am advised that many trustees and advisers were of the view that the current offence required an element of corruption, consistent with other offences in part 4A of the Crimes Act. As a result, good-faith and routine transactions that have already been conducted without any corrupt intention could be captured by the current offence. If the changes do not apply

retrospectively, parties involved in such transactions remain technically at risk of criminal liability, which creates uncertainty and a lack of clarity about the application of the law.

Item [2] of schedule 1 also provides that if a person has engaged in conduct before the commencement of the bill that is permissible under the current offence provision, because it was engaged in with the consent of beneficiaries or the Supreme Court, this conduct remains lawful. This will ensure that conduct that is currently legal is not inadvertently criminalised. These amendments do not change the existing statutory and common-law obligations of trustees or protections for beneficiaries in the context of a change of trustee.

The bill is appropriate and necessary, and responds directly to significant stakeholder concerns about the operation of section 249E. It makes clear that the conduct constituting the offence needs to be engaged in "corruptly". Without that amendment, trustees and their advisers conducting routine, good-faith business transactions may continue to be exposed to serious criminal penalties. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

CIVIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL AMENDMENT BILL 2023

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (14:45): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Civil and Administrative Tribunal Amendment Bill 2023. The bill will implement recommendations arising out of the *Report of the Statutory Review of the Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2013*, which was tabled on 23 December 2021. The review concluded that the policy objectives of the Act remain valid and that the terms of the Act remain appropriate to achieve those objectives, but also recommended some minor and technical changes to improve the operation of the Act, amendments to support the efficient conduct of proceedings, and amendments relating to the Occupational Division and Guardianship Division of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

The report's recommendations aim to clarify aspects of the operation of the Act and to facilitate the just, quick and inexpensive resolution of proceedings before the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. The bill also makes minor and consequential amendments to correct cross-references to other Acts. Importantly, we have worked with those who will be the most affected by this reform to ensure that the proposed amendments achieve their intended aim. The Department of Communities and Justice consulted key stakeholders extensively during the statutory review, including close engagement with the tribunal. Submissions were sought from interested parties and stakeholders. A total of 94 submissions were received.

Targeted consultation also occurred with key stakeholders that represent the interests of tribunal user groups, including legal service providers and stakeholders, including Legal Aid NSW, the Law Society of New South Wales, the New South Wales Bar Association and Marrickville Legal Centre; disability advocacy bodies, including the New South Wales Council for Intellectual Disability, the Mental Health Coordinating Council and Dementia Australia; and tenancy and property advisory bodies, including the Tenants' Union of NSW, Tenants Advice and Advocacy Services, the Real Estate Institute of New South Wales, the Australian College of Strata Lawyers, the Retirement Village Residents Association, the Caravan and Camping Industry Association NSW and the Affiliated Residential Park Residents Association. Further consultation was undertaken on the drafting and final form of the bill.

I now turn to the substance of the bill. Item [3] of schedule 1 to the bill makes clear that the tribunal's duty under section 38 (6) (a) of the Act to ensure that all material relevant to proceedings is disclosed to it in order to enable it to determine the facts in issue is not absolute but applies as far as is practicable. That duty is currently satisfied by the tribunal directing the parties to exchange all relevant information at the commencement of proceedings, but it is not realistic for the tribunal to identify whether or not this has occurred in every case. The insertion of the words "as far as practicable" in section 38 (6) (a), as proposed by the bill, will eliminate scope for technical legal argument on appeal as to whether the tribunal has taken all steps to uncover relevant material.

Item [4] of schedule 1 provides the president of the tribunal with a broader power to reconstitute the tribunal during proceedings in certain circumstances. Section 52 currently allows the president to replace a member after the consideration of a matter by the tribunal has commenced if, before the matter is determined, the member becomes unavailable for any reason, ceases to be a member or ceases to have a qualification required for participation in the proceedings. The proposed amendment to section 52 will also allow the president to replace a

member if the president directs the member not to take part in proceedings. This will ensure that the president can more flexibly allocate resources to efficiently resolve matters and improve time to justice. This is consistent with similar powers in equivalent tribunals in other jurisdictions, such as the power provided by section 19D of the Commonwealth Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1975.

The circumstances in which the president may make a direction under the proposed amendment to section 52 are qualified by item [5] of schedule 1. New section 52 (2A) provides that the president must first, where reasonably practicable, consult the member and be satisfied that a direction not to take part in the proceedings is (1) in the interests of justice, (2) in the interests of achieving the expeditious and efficient conduct of proceedings and (3) otherwise appropriate having regard to the objects of the Act. New section 52 (2B) will allow the president to appoint additional members after the consideration of a matter by the tribunal has commenced, further supporting the flexible allocation of the tribunal's resources. Consistent with other Australian jurisdictions, item [2] also puts beyond doubt the president's power to reconstitute the tribunal before proceedings have commenced. Item [6] makes a consequential amendment to support these changes.

Item [7] provides that the tribunal is not required to give written reasons for certain decisions of the tribunal that are minor procedural decisions or decisions that do not have a final or determinative impact on the rights of a party. Section 62 (2) of the Act currently requires the tribunal to provide a written statement of reasons for a decision upon request by a party to the proceedings. While this requirement promotes transparency and accountability, this should be balanced against the need to ensure the quick, just and cheap resolution of the real issues in dispute. Proposed section 62 (2A) will exclude certain decisions from the requirement to give reasons upon request, including a decision to grant an adjournment, a decision to make an order by consent between the parties and other minor procedural decisions that do not have a final or determinative impact on the rights of a party. This will allow the tribunal to ensure that resources are focused on the efficient resolution of the substantive issues in proceedings.

Item [8] clarifies that the power of the tribunal to correct obvious errors in the text of a notice of a decision or a written statement of reasons for a decision includes the correction of inconsistencies between the stated name of a person in the notice or statement and the name stated on the person's birth certificate or other form of identification. Section 63 (1) of the Act currently provides the tribunal with a general power to correct obvious errors in the text of a notice of a decision or a written statement of reasons, with section 63 (3) providing a non-exhaustive list of examples of such errors, including obvious clerical or typographical errors and defects of form.

The proposed amendment to section 63 (3) will add inconsistencies between the name of a person in the text of a notice or decision and the name stated on the person's birth certificate or other identification to the list of examples, making it clear that such errors can be corrected without the need for a hearing or an order to dispense with a hearing. The reduction in unnecessary delays will better protect the interests of parties and is particularly important for people subject to orders in the tribunal's Guardianship Division, where timely decisions are often essential to supporting a person's health or access to accommodation or necessary services.

Item [9] clarifies that the power of the tribunal under section 64 (1) (b) of the Act to prohibit or restrict the publication or broadcast of a report of proceedings in the tribunal extends to sound recordings and transcripts. The proposed amendment to section 64 (1) (b) will provide clarity and avoid technical legal argument about whether the term "report" only captures written records, such as written reasons and orders, by expressly extending it to include sound recordings and transcripts of proceedings. Item [11] clarifies that, in proceedings before the tribunal where the publication of names or identification of a person is prohibited, parties may not publish a report, including a sound recording or transcript, of the proceedings that has been provided by the tribunal for their personal use.

Section 65 of the Act currently provides that in proceedings in the tribunal's Guardianship Division, or in proceedings for a decision for the purposes of community welfare legislation, the names of witnesses, people to whom the proceedings in the tribunal relate or people who are mentioned or otherwise involved in proceedings are not to be published or broadcast without the consent of the tribunal. Failure to comply is an offence punishable by imprisonment for up to 12 months or a fine of \$5,500, or both, in the case of an individual. Section 65 (3) currently states that this prohibition does not extend to the publication or broadcasting of an official report of the proceedings that includes the name of a person, the publication or broadcasting of which would otherwise be prohibited.

The proposed amendment to section 65 will insert new section 65 (3A), which will clarify that a report, including a sound recording or transcript, of proceedings that the tribunal provides to a party to the proceedings for their use only is not an official report of the proceedings for the purposes of the exception under section 65 (3). This will ensure that the subsequent publication or broadcast of reports provided to parties by the tribunal on a confidential basis will be captured by the offence in section 65 (2). Clarity on this issue will prevent parties from

publishing prohibited information—for example, on social media—and help to ensure that confidential information is protected. Item [10] makes a consequential amendment to support this change.

Item [12] will make it abundantly clear that a failure to comply with a summons issued by the tribunal for the purposes of the Act, without reasonable excuse, is contempt of the tribunal. Section 73 (2) of the Act currently provides that a person is guilty of contempt of the tribunal if the person does or omits to do anything that, if the tribunal were a court of law with the power to commit for contempt, would be contempt of that court. The proposed amendment to section 73 will ensure that a summons issued by the tribunal has the same enforceability as a subpoena issued by a court of law.

Item [13] will allow the president of the tribunal to reallocate a matter from the Administrative and Equal Opportunity Division of the tribunal to another division. Currently, the Administrative and Equal Opportunity Division exercises functions arising under legislation prescribed by clause 3 (1) (a) of schedule 3 to the Act, as well as any function of the tribunal arising from legislation that is not otherwise allocated to a specific division. It is appropriate that functions that are specifically allocated to the Administrative and Equal Opportunity Division continue to be exercised by that division. However, in a small number of cases, where a matter has been allocated to that division on the basis that it arises from legislation that is not specifically allocated to another division of the tribunal, the Administrative and Equal Opportunity Division may not be the most appropriate division to hear the matter.

Item [1] provides for the reallocation of functions between the different divisions of the tribunal through the division schedules that provide for the composition and functions for each of the divisions. The amendment will provide the tribunal with more flexibility to ensure that matters are heard by the most appropriate division and will benefit the parties to proceedings by ensuring that all matters are dealt with by the division with the most relevant skills and experience. Item [14] clarifies that the Occupational Division of the tribunal exercises functions under the Legal Profession Uniform Law (NSW) as applied by the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014, putting beyond doubt that the division exercises functions under both of these instruments. Items [15] and [17] make consequential amendments to support this change.

Item [16] clarifies how the tribunal is to be constituted when conducting a hearing into a complaint for the purposes of the Legal Profession Uniform Law. Clause 18 (1) of schedule 5 to the Act currently requires the tribunal to be constituted by three members when conducting such a hearing, with the composition of members determined by whether the complaint relates to a solicitor or a barrister. Clause 18 (2) provides that, in exercising any of its other functions for the purposes of the Legal Profession Uniform Law, the tribunal is to be constituted by any one or more members with a judicial or professional qualification.

The proposed amendment to clause 18 (1) clarifies that the requirement for the tribunal to be constituted by a three-member panel applies when it is conducting proceedings commenced under section 300 of the Legal Profession Uniform Law which relate to unsatisfactory professional conduct or professional misconduct. As these are original jurisdiction proceedings in which the tribunal will make a finding at first instance, it is appropriate that the panel be constituted by three members, including one judicial member, one member with legal qualifications and one general member, or two members with legal qualifications and one general member, depending on the circumstances.

As will be made clear by the bill, a panel consisting of one or more members with a judicial or professional qualification will be permitted to determine administrative review proceedings brought under the Legal Profession Uniform Law and the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014. These proceedings relate to less serious forms of complaint and are not originating proceedings, as they require the tribunal to review another body's decision rather than to make a finding at first instance. Such matters would include, for example, the review of a finding made by a regulator of unsatisfactory professional conduct against a lawyer where the regulator did not consider the nature of the alleged unsatisfactory conduct to be sufficiently serious to require determination by the tribunal at first instance.

Item [20] proposes to insert new subclauses into clause 4 of schedule 6 to the Act, which will allow the tribunal to be constituted by a one- or two-member panel to determine applications under section 46A of the Guardianship Act 1987 in appropriate circumstances. Section 46A empowers the tribunal to authorise a guardian to override a patient's objection to treatment in particular circumstances. A decision to override a person's objection to medical treatment is a serious matter; however, there may be situations where permitting section 46A matters to be determined by a one- or two-member panel will allow applications relating to urgent medical care for persons under guardianship to be determined more efficiently.

Item [20] also proposes to insert new subclauses into clause 4 of schedule 6 to the Act that will allow the tribunal to be constituted by either a one- or two-member panel, rather than the usual three members, where the application is urgent or made during the exercise of particular substantive division functions that relate to the

person who is the subject of the application, or when determining whether an application is to be withdrawn. This amendment will eliminate the need for an adjournment when an ancillary application for medical treatment is made while a one- or two-member panel of the tribunal is already exercising other prescribed functions arising from the Guardianship Act 1987. It will also ensure that urgent applications can be determined more efficiently, facilitating urgent medical treatment for persons under guardianship in appropriate cases.

Items [21] and [22] clarify that the tribunal has a duty to observe general principles under the Guardianship Act 1987. Clause 5 of schedule 6 to the Act requires the tribunal, when exercising functions arising from the Guardianship Act 1987, to observe the general principles outlined in section 4 of that Act. Those principles include that the welfare and interests of persons with disabilities should be given paramount consideration, and that their views should be taken into consideration when exercising these functions. The Guardianship Division also exercises functions under other Acts. While the Guardianship Division places a focus on the rights and interests of persons who are subject to proceedings when exercising all of its Guardianship Division functions, the proposed amendment to clause 5 of schedule 6 will codify that practice to confirm that the principles contained in section 4 of the Guardianship Act 1987 must always be observed when exercising functions in the Guardianship Division, regardless of the legislation from which those functions arise.

These principles act as important safeguards when the tribunal is making significant decisions, such as determining urgent applications for non-consensual medical treatment. Item [23] will give the tribunal an express power to dispense with the requirement to give notice of a hearing under the Guardianship Act 1987. This power may be exercised where the delay associated with giving notice is likely to cause a real, material and imminent risk of harm to the person who will be the subject of the hearing. This could occur, for example, when the tribunal is asked to make an urgent guardianship order in relation to someone who is at risk of harm. Dispensing with the notice requirement in appropriate circumstances will enable the tribunal to act without delay, potentially by the making of an urgent order that protects the person at risk.

Items [18] and [19] are simple statute law amendments to update outdated cross-references to other Acts. The bill provides that, if passed, the new provisions will commence on assent. Before concluding, I thank those who contributed to the development of this important reform. I extend special thanks to the Hon. Justice Lea Armstrong, president of the tribunal, and Principal Registrar Michelle Brazel, who have been instrumental in this work. The bill is intended to facilitate the just, quick and inexpensive resolution of proceedings in the tribunal for the people of New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

REVENUE, FINES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 1 August 2023.

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (15:06): On behalf of the Opposition, I speak in support of the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. From the outset, I note that for the large part this is a miscellaneous housekeeping bill and, while the Opposition supports the bill, amendments will be moved in the other place to enable the Act to better support the people of New South Wales. The Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 amends 12 Acts related to the revenue function, including amendments to State taxation legislation to enhance revenue integrity, ensure the equity of exemptions and concessions, address anomalies, respond to court decisions, close tax avoidance loopholes, create a new offence of tax evasion, increase penalties and reduce red tape; and to government sector finance legislation to support the recovery of act of grace payments.

It also amends fines legislation to enhance administration and create new offences relating to false nominations and false or misleading information, with the latter offence also being incorporated into State debt legislation. The bill enables information sharing between Revenue NSW and the NSW Police Force, Service NSW and NSW Treasury for various purposes, and amends unclaimed money legislation to aid recovery of incorrectly paid money and improve overall administration. The bill also amends valuation of land legislation to provide for objection rights and to make changes to the handling of sales information data, and shared equity scheme legislation to ensure that payments are validly made into the New South Wales shared equity scheme fund.

The Opposition acknowledges that the bill is intended to strengthen the integrity of the Government's revenue-raising function and to ensure equity in its carrying out. It is common practice that legislation requires regular revision to address anomalies, to clarify provisions, to respond to court decisions and to reduce compliance costs, which is what the bill seeks to do. I take this opportunity to note that the new offence of tax evasion set out in the bill was first proposed by the previous Liberal Government but was unable to progress due to Labor's politicisation of a bill to facilitate payroll tax collection when wage theft is detected.

The bill also addresses the issue of illegal phoenix activity by amending the Payroll Tax Act 2007 to enhance the recovery of tax debts from phoenix operators. The new measures to deal with illegal phoenix activity continue the work begun under the previous Liberal Government to crack down on payroll tax evasion through that method. As many in this place would be aware, illegal phoenix activity is when a company is liquidated, wound up or abandoned to avoid paying its debts. A new company is then started to continue the same business activities but without the debt. It can occur in any industry but is particularly prevalent in property and construction, labour hire and security.

The Australian Taxation Office estimates the economic impact of illegal phoenixing to be between \$2.85 billion and \$5.13 billion annually. That includes costs to business of between \$1.162 billion and \$3.171 billion from unpaid trade creditors and up to \$298 million in unpaid entitlements to employees. As a result of illegal phoenix activity, employees miss out on wages, superannuation and entitlements; other businesses are put at a competitive disadvantage; suppliers and subcontractors are left unpaid; and the community misses out on revenue that could be better used supporting them. The changes to the Payroll Tax Act seek to end that illegal practice in New South Wales.

When in government, the Liberal Party and The Nationals strongly supported the use of work and development orders as an alternative means of resolving fines for vulnerable people. The changes to the Fines Act 1996 will see the additional option of an appropriate mentoring program for people aged 25 years or older where that is seen as the best fit for their particular circumstances. During these trying times, when families across our State are facing ever increasing cost-of-living pressures, the change is a welcome step that will go a long way to helping those who truly need assistance to give back to their community and get the help they deeply need. The organisations and individuals registered as work development order sponsors do incredible work in giving those eligible the skills and support they need to not reoffend.

Most members in this place are well aware of the recent issues faced by PwC, and the approach taken in the bill suggests that Revenue NSW extensively uses such consultants. But that is not the case, with the Attorney General going as far as to say when introducing the bill that penalties for the disclosure of confidential tax information are not really relevant, as "Revenue NSW does not consult commercial bodies or involve them in the design of legislation". In short, it appears that the Government is again virtue signalling without substance by introducing a redundant multimillion-dollar penalty to address an issue that does not exist here in New South Wales. Given the Attorney General's statement on the matter, it is disappointing that the Minister has not devoted more of her attention to other live issues impacting our constituents and communities. For example, the bill could have acted on the ongoing threat to medical practices across New South Wales under the provisions of the Payroll Tax Act 2007, which I will touch on later and regarding which the Opposition intends to move an amendment.

The bill also creates a new offence to "offer or agree to have the person's nomination details used in an approved nomination notice relating to a vehicle or vessel offence". That is a reasonable response to the growth of offers on social media to take demerit points in exchange for cash. It will be done by amending the Fines Act 1996 to make it an offence for drivers who offer to falsely nominate a driver at the time of the offence, with a penalty of 50 penalty units or \$5,500. While Opposition members certainly do not support anyone providing a false nomination, the penalty for which presently sits at 110 penalty units or \$11,000, we have concerns surrounding the criminalisation of such an offer.

There are also concerns surrounding how it will be policed. While in some instances offers are being made on social media, the vast majority of instances would be occurring in homes, with a parent or partner floating the possibility of helping a partner or child who may need their licence for work. In a circumstance like that, simply making such an offer should not be criminalised. The bill also makes two changes to the Land Tax Management Act 1956 to remove a redundant provision relating to unutilised land value and to remove a requirement that land used for a school also be owned by the school to be exempt from land tax. The latter is a commonsense measure that takes into consideration the use of the land and makes the system easier for schools and landowners.

If the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 passes this place, the Opposition intends to move amendments in the other place to provide an immediate exemption from payroll tax for payments to GPs and other health practitioners until 30 June 2025 to ensure that essential medical clinics are not forced to close. In doing so, we are also providing those medical practices with the opportunity to restructure in light of their payroll tax liability. Some GP clinics are facing demands for retrospective payroll tax bills of half a million dollars or more, and many medical clinics are now discovering that operating in a particular way makes them liable for additional payroll tax. The Opposition believes that the best solution to that urgent problem is to provide an amnesty from all such payroll tax for the past five years and an exemption for the next two years whilst a satisfactory solution is found. That is consistent with the approach that has been adopted in Queensland by the Labor Government.

That is in response to concerns raised by medical and allied health groups, including the Australian Medical Association and the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, about the impact of the recent ruling on payroll tax for medical centre businesses with particular administrative structures, which effectively treats payments to contracted registered health practitioners as wages for the purpose of payroll tax. I recently spoke with a general practitioner from a medical centre in my electorate. The general practitioner and their practice are entrenched in our community but, without such an amnesty, the practice may be forced to close. Even if the practitioner could come to some sort of arrangement, they advised that their practice would need to raise fees by at least \$15 to pass the costs on to our community. In closing, I thank the Minister, her staff and her department for their briefing and for answering our questions regarding the bill. I reiterate the Opposition's support for the bill and forewarn that there may be amendments in the other place, as outlined previously. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro) (15:16): I support the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. As was indicated by the Minister and the Opposition, this sort of bill is the routine of government in a lot of ways. It covers a range of areas to continue to fix any holes that appear in our ability to raise revenue for the people of New South Wales and to respond to emerging circumstances that may come up as we go through that constant process. Tax law and revenue in Australia, and in any country, are in a constant process of revision to ensure that the Government is collecting the revenue that it is supposed to collect and closing any loopholes that may arise to enable people to avoid their legitimate taxation responsibilities. That is vitally important for the people of New South Wales because that revenue makes it possible to fund the hospitals, schools and other vital services that the people of New South Wales want.

The major components of our State revenue come from the Federal Government through the GST and grants, but the State Government's own sources of revenue are quite limited—things like stamp duty, payroll taxes, land taxes, taxes on motor vehicle ownership and operation, and gambling and betting taxes. If one were to have a sensible look at our tax system overall, it could be fairly cogently argued that it would be better if a number of the taxes that State governments rely on were not collected at all because of the negative implications of people spending money in those areas. It is always a challenging task for State governments to manage their revenue base and keep up with the increasing demands of the health system, for instance, which is projected over time to become the biggest item of expenditure by a very long way.

Across the nation governments spend more than \$150 billion a year on health. That growth in expenditure requirements means that we have to continually look at how we are raising taxes in New South Wales, how we ensure that people who are meant to pay a particular tax are actually doing so and how we ensure it is as fair and as equitable as possible. A lot of the items in the bill that may seem to be relatively minor are part of that process—and some of them are not so minor. A number of amendments in the bill will ensure that we are keeping up with the people who may not wish to pay as much tax. In particular, the bill enhances recovery of tax debts from phoenix operators for payroll tax. As the Opposition spokesperson said, we know what phoenix companies are and often people use them to separate themselves from a previous liability that they may have had as a taxpayer. In this case we are amending the legislation to ensure that any phoenix-style company is included in a group of companies for payroll tax purposes. It is important to ensure that we do not see that sort of dodging of tax liabilities.

The Opposition spokesperson made a very strange comment regarding the amendments to create a new offence with substantial penalties for a person who uses or discloses confidential tax-related information provided by Revenue NSW or conceals such behaviour. They would be liable for up to more than \$1 million in fines for an individual or up to \$5½ million for a corporation or a partnership—that is quite correctly known as the "PwC amendment" in, I suppose, common terms. I was surprised to hear the Opposition suggest that the Government is virtue signalling by putting that in the bill. I think, if we were not acting to ensure that those sorts of offences were created, we would have inevitably been accused of being blind to the possibility of similar things happening at a State level to those that happened at a Federal level. It is an absolutely sensible amendment.

The PwC issue has certainly shocked a lot of people. It certainly dented confidence in a number of those external advisory firms. While Opposition members might talk about the Government not using organisations like PwC to provide advice on the drafting of bills, we know that they certainly were not too shy to spend a hell of a lot of government funds over their last period in government on getting external advice on different things from consultants. In fact, we heard in question time today about the exorbitant bills that they racked up on consultants. It is entirely relevant that we would be following up on the great work that has been done to reveal this scandal at PwC. I credit Senator Deb O'Neill and other Labor members of the Federal Senate for revealing all of that information. It will make sure that New South Wales is able to avoid that sort of circumstance. Good government does not sit back and say, "All right, we haven't seen that happen now. Gee, the Opposition might accuse us of virtual signalling if we do something about this." Good government says, "Let's avoid that happening to us in the

future." We saw very good initiative from the finance Minister and we have seen follow through in this piece of legislation. That is important.

I have zero demerit points at the moment on my driver licence—I might be bragging; I have had them in the past but not at the moment—so it was only recently that I heard about the practice of people offering to sell their demerit points. In other words, they write the declaration that they were driving the vehicle at the time that the demerit points were accrued and take them. I suppose it is only word of mouth or gossip, but I have heard of prices of up to \$5,000 for three demerit points. That is pretty appalling. I was a bit shocked by that; it never even crossed my mind that people would be doing that. It is absolutely appropriate that the bill creates a new offence of offering to be falsely nominated as the driver at the time of an offence and providing false or misleading information. Because, by definition, that potentially allows a driver who is driving in an unsafe manner to continue to do so.

I know some people view speeding and so on as a bit of a competition: "Oh, terribly unfair they got caught." Well, bad luck, it is not. If someone has a problem with the speed limit, they should ask for the speed limit to be changed. They should not break the law. It is important for us to take a strong stance on that—and we are—because it is totally inappropriate for people to be able to undertake that trading or buying off of their demerit points. I strongly endorse that aspect of the legislation. As we know, a number of initiatives in the bill clarify various duties on changing superannuation funds, again, to make sure that the proper value is actually recorded. It also provides exemptions on certain native title related transfers and modernises some of the processes of reporting and collection. It enables some consistency in some of the grace payments and so on under the Act. It also amends the State Debt Recovery Act 2018 to create a new offence of providing false or misleading information. [*Extension of time*]

As I said at the outset, it is important that we continue to focus on how we collect our revenue in New South Wales and how we maximise it, because it allows us to provide vital government services to the people of New South Wales. One of my concerns about that, as I mentioned, is the narrowness of the revenue sources at State level. It does come down to how we manage budgets. We have certainly seen, over the past few weeks, the history of the previous Government's budget management. Its amazing pre-election spending of money that had not been collected through the revenues available to our State now leaves our State with a \$187 billion debt and a massive prospective deficit in the years ahead. The House can pass sensible bills but it is very hard to properly manage the budget if there is a government like the previous Government, which performed sleight-of-hand tricks on its own expenditure and sought to mislead the people of New South Wales by announcing programs and suggesting that it would continue but not including them in the forward estimates and not even putting them up to the Parliamentary Budget Office for costings before election, thus giving the people of New South Wales a false impression of the prospective deficit.

I am very pleased to be part of a government that has tackled in a very open way some of those challenges of budget management in New South Wales. It is being open with the people of New South Wales about the fact that there are some real challenges to bringing the budget deficit left to us by the previous Government back into a position where we can sustainably deliver the services that the people of New South Wales need. The inconsistency of information from the previous Government and the pork-barrelling and political decision-making that went on with the expenditure of government funds should worry the taxpayers and voters of New South Wales as they head to the next election in 3½ years' time. They should ask themselves whether or not the previous Government can ever again be trusted with the books.

Through this term of government, we will do a number of things that will be about making sure we are responsible budget managers. The budget in the next two-week session of the Parliament will set the scene for us for the next four years. The Government has, unfortunately, been required to make some tough decisions, but it has made them so it can focus on the priorities that the people of New South Wales said were their priorities. We will do things like make sure we retain essential service workers in the positions that we need them in. We will also ensure that we provide services and do not just hand over big cheques at various times around New South Wales. I am confident that we will see that over the next few weeks.

The bill is just a small part of the responsible budget management that we are undertaking. I personally would be happy to have a wider discussion of revenue collection in Australia. Many years ago we saw the Henry tax review, but so often these things get waylaid by negative publicity at the start. That leaves us, as State governments of whatever persuasion, with narrow revenue sources to try to fund the essential services that we all rely on. That is going to be a challenge for this Government and any future government. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (15:30): I am pleased to make a contribution to debate on the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The bill was introduced to the House by the Attorney General, and I support it wholeheartedly. The principle behind the bill is an interesting one. Most in the

community might think that when a bill becomes law it is set in stone, so to speak, until such time that the law is repealed or replaced by other legislation. Of course, in many cases that is correct. But this type of bill—an omnibus bill, if you like—comes before the Parliament regularly to make minor amendments here and there, to update some clauses, to amend a clause because of a ruling by a court or even to make amendments to cope with changes in technology.

An example of changing clauses in legislation because of technology can be found at schedule 1 [2], where one can see words such as "Electronic Conveyancing National Law (NSW)" and mentions of instruments lodged electronically and later "digitally signed". Over the past few decades, there have been many such amendments and clarifications as a result of the computer age catching up with laws drafted many years or even decades ago. I can safely say that the constant review of legislative process will continue to bring forward similar changes as technology alters the way State laws are administered and enforced.

In my role as Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Counter-terrorism, I am particularly interested in the changes at schedule 6 to the Police Act 1990. I was surprised to hear in the Attorney General's second reading speech that under the Fines Act 1996 information can be shared between Revenue NSW and the Police Force to support the enforcement of fines, but there are no provisions for this information sharing if the matter is not related to fines. I am sure that the general public, and particularly the victims of serious crime, would not be pleased if they were to learn that the police had failed to arrest an offender due to a lack of any information that was in the possession of another department, in this case Revenue NSW. The amendment as outlined by the Attorney General is a sensible one, and I believe all members will support it.

I note with interest the Attorney General's words about the changes to payroll tax at schedule 5. I agree with the Attorney General, who has highlighted the issues involved with what is known as phoenix activity, which is the well-known practice of companies, or their operatives, liquidating their business for the purpose of not paying wages or the accounts of people such as small business operators, suppliers and employees. This amendment at least attempts to close any loopholes concerning payroll tax obligations. We all hope that the Federal and State authorities continue to work hard to address this serious problem that has caused financial hardship to many in our State.

I have read through the various clauses and the speech to this House by the Attorney General and cannot find anything that I would object to. The provisions that clear up the liability for land tax relating to the establishment of an education facility, the changes to the provisions that allow reclaiming of wrongly paid unclaimed funds and the penalties for breaches of confidential tax information are welcome, and I fully support the Attorney General in such matters. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (15:35): I welcome the opportunity to make a contribution to debate on the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Whilst the bill may seem to be somewhat of an ordinary process of government, it certainly is an important process of government. I believe it displays the proactiveness of the Attorney General and all Cabinet Ministers, from the Premier down, to make sure that we are making changes through legislation to ensure good governance. There are not too many more important matters of good governance than revenue. As the member for Monaro said, the lines from where the State can source its revenue are quite limited. As we know, much of the revenue flows down to the State from the Federal Government. It also comes from stamp duty, fines and others State sources. But ultimately it is quite limited.

What does that mean for a government? It means we have to spend it well. When we have limitations in capacity to source more revenue, it makes it even more important that we spend the money in the most prudent, sensible, fiscally responsible way to ensure that the people of New South Wales are being well provided for in their needs, dreams and aspirations with their services, facilities and infrastructure. We must make sure that we have a budget that can deliver the Government's agenda, which is to do the best we can for the people of New South Wales in education, health and infrastructure and throughout all facets at the State level.

The Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 makes various amendments to revenue and fines legislation to support its integrity and otherwise ensure that it remains effective and up to date. Revenue legislation requires regular revision to address anomalies, clarify provisions, respond to court decisions and reduce compliance costs. That goes back to my point that, whilst this may not be the shinier part of things that we do in this place, it is probably one of the most important things. We review legislation and make amendments where they are required.

The bill amends the Duties Act 1997 to update concessions for managed investment schemes for greater flexibility when restructuring; clarify concessional duty for a person changing superannuation funds; extend a duty concession in respect of property vested in an apparent purchaser to the purchaser's legal representative; provide an exemption for certain native title related transfers; clarify timing and location of execution of electronic

instruments; ensure all dutiable transactions that are part of a single arrangement are aggregated and brought to duty; update duty recalculation provisions in light of duty indexation changes; and ensure that divisions of corporations are subject to duty provisions.

The bill amends the Fines Act 1996 to broaden Revenue NSW's ability to share information with Service NSW, which I will come back to later in my contribution; to create new offences of offering to be falsely nominated as the driver at the time of offence and providing false or misleading information; to allow an enforcement order posted to a company's registered office to be deemed as served even if it is "returned to sender"; to remove an age limitation for mentoring programs available under Work and Development Orders and clarify the operation of orders outside of New South Wales; and to permit not yet enforced fines to be written off when a fine recipient has other enforced fines that may be written off. The bill amends the First Home Owner Grant and Shared Equity Act 2000 to ensure the proper and ongoing operation of the New South Wales shared equity scheme fund.

The bill also amends the Government Sector Finance Act 2018 to enable the exercise of investigative powers under the Taxation Administration Act 1996 to support Revenue NSW's compliance of act of grace payments administered by Revenue NSW. The bill amends the Land Tax Management Act 1956 to remove a redundant provision relating to the application of underutilised value allowance to rural land. It also removes a requirement that land used for a school must be owned by the school to be exempt from land tax. The bill amends the Payroll Tax Act 2007 to enhance the recovery of tax debts from phoenix operators. It also amends the Police Act 1990 to enable information-sharing arrangements between NSW Police and Revenue NSW in respect of fines information for law enforcement purposes and investigative functions.

The bill amends the Property Tax (First Home Buyers Choice) Act 2022 to correct minor drafting errors. The bill also amends the State Debt Recovery Act 2018 to create a new offence of providing false or misleading information. I note the member for Monaro's reference to being able to sell demerit points and things like that. I had not heard of that and it shocked me. Presumably, that is a system or act where a person volunteers their demerit points to say that they committed an offence as opposed to the person who actually did, which is grossly unjust. I am delighted that the bill moves to amend that. The bill amends the Taxation Administration Act 1996 to limit out-of-time objections to no more than five years after the original assessment and to make other changes to preserve the integrity of the reassessment provisions.

It also allows Revenue NSW to recoup valuation costs from the taxpayer in certain circumstances, enables the application of a taxpayer's tax refund to a fines debt and broadens the ability of Revenue NSW to share taxation information with NSW Treasury and Service NSW. It modernises the methods by which tax may be paid; enhances penalties for offences relating to taxpayer activities that impede a proper assessment of tax liabilities; creates a new offence with substantial penalties for a person who uses or discloses confidential taxation-related information provided by Revenue NSW or other agencies, or conceals such behaviour; and permits the Chief Commissioner of State Revenue to report the person to any relevant professional body and publish details regarding the breach.

The bill amends the Unclaimed Money Act 1995 to aid the recovery of incorrectly paid money and improve overall administration. It amends the Valuation of Land Act 1916 to provide a right of objection to a land value used for the purposes of a property tax assessment issued under the Property Tax (First Home Buyer Choice) Act 2022—and consequential amendments to the Taxation Administration Act 1996—and require that relevant information contained in a notice of sale received by the Registrar General must be given to, and may be received by, the Valuer General. I commend the Minister for his stakeholder engagement. Government portfolio agencies, including the Information and Privacy Commission, support the bill. Revenue NSW's liaison committees, including the Tax Institute, the Law Society of New South Wales and the Property Council of Australia, were consulted on the bill. Some refinements have been made to the bill following that consultation. I again commend the Attorney General. [*Extension of time*]

There are some more specific questions that people should have more detail about. Firstly, how is the Payroll Tax Act 2007 being changed to deal with phoenix taxpayers? As we know, tax law can be complex and confusing, particularly for those who are not familiar with the law. But even those who are familiar with the law can find it complex and challenging to navigate. Phoenix activity is ultimately when a company is liquidated to avoid paying its debts. Before liquidation, the company's assets are transferred to a new entity controlled by the same directors or shareholders to carry on the same or a smaller business without debt. Phoenix activity is a major concern for Commonwealth and State regulators because of not only tax avoidance but also the harm caused generally to individuals, businesses and other creditors to whom the debts are payable.

The Payroll Tax Act 2007 currently allows entities to be grouped for payroll tax purposes where they are owned or controlled by the same people, including directors or shareholders of companies, partnerships and beneficiaries of trusts. However, entities cannot be grouped with ones that have ceased to operate—that have been

"phoenixed". In New South Wales, the payroll tax revenue leakage from phoenix activity has been estimated at over \$85 million. The amendments in the bill will fill that void and are an encouraging and important step forward in eliminating such circumstances and costs. The amendments would extend the existing payroll tax grouping rules to allow Revenue NSW to group companies that are in administration, are being wound up or are deregistered with any successor entity, whether it is a company, partnership or trust. The entities would be linked based on a person exercising sufficient influence over both the defunct company and the successor entity.

Why are the time limits for objections and tax reassessments being changed? A taxpayer generally has 60 days to object to a tax assessment; however, they can lodge an out-of-time objection explaining why they could not object within the 60-day period. Generally, Revenue NSW can only reassess a tax liability within five years of the initial tax assessment. There are limited exceptions to that rule. The time limits are designed to give certainty to both the taxpayer and the State; however, recent court cases have revealed some anomalies in how the time limits operate. Firstly, there is no time limit for lodging out-of-time objections.

If the objection is successful, Revenue NSW may need to issue a reassessment many years after the five-year time limit has expired. That effectively negates the purpose of the time limit on reassessments. To address this, the amendments will require out-of-time objections to be lodged within five years of the initial tax assessment or decision. Secondly, an anomaly has been identified in relation to an exception to the five-year limit on reassessments. The exception permits reassessments beyond five years where facts were not fully disclosed to Revenue NSW, resulting in a tax liability that is less than what Revenue NSW would have assessed had it known those facts.

To summarise and finalise my contribution, I draw back to where I began, which is that the process of good government is to collect revenue and distribute it well. This Government has inherited upwards of \$180 billion of debt. The interest repayments alone are \$7 billion. The budget deficit is around \$12 billion. I have read those fine Sydney editorials that outline where the previous Treasurer and the previous Government went on a spending blitz like a drunken sailor for the purpose of their re-election. That is not good government. I believe that some members on the other side of the House who are new would be shocked and disappointed by that. I do not blame them. I blame those who controlled the former Government and ultimately put politics before what was most important, which is a pragmatic approach for the benefit of the people of New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (15:50): I contribute to debate on the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I do not doubt that the three young men in the gallery have come here for the specific purpose of the debate. It is the nuts and bolts of government. Often people think that that is the hustle and bustle of question time, but this is in fact the core business of governing. The bill makes various amendments to revenue and fines legislation to address anomalies, to clarify provisions, to respond to court decisions and to reduce compliance costs. Another important thing it does is modernise a number of Acts to move with the digital age. We live in a world where we all have smartphones. We conduct a lot of business on our digital devices, and it is important that the legislation keeps pace with that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that you were a keen listener to my inaugural speech, in which I gave some of my professional history. But what I did not go into too much detail about was that, many years ago, I was an IT project manager in the superannuation industry. One thing that kept me up late at night and caused many long meetings and many headaches were regulatory changes from our Federal colleagues and how to respond digitally. We offered a website to our superannuation members. There were regular changes to regulations in the superannuation industry, and we had to respond to those. It is somewhat ironic that I stand in this place today. The shoe is on the other foot in that I am now debating legislation that would impact superannuation and has a bit of a digital flavour to it.

Because of that background and my passion for digital government, I speak on some of the amendments that touch on changes to digital instruments and that kind of thing. Among the 12 Acts that are being updated are the Duties Act 1997, which is being amended to clarify the timing and location of the execution of electronic instruments; the Fines Act 1996, to broaden Revenue NSW's ability to share information with Service NSW; the Police Act 1990, to enable information-sharing arrangements between the NSW Police Force and Revenue NSW in respect of fines information for law enforcement purposes and investigative functions; and the Taxation Administration Act 1996, to share some information between the important agencies of Revenue NSW, NSW Treasury and Service NSW.

Specific amendments for electronic instruments need clarifying. Every year, we do more and more transactions online. In fact, just before I came into the Chamber, I quickly put an electronic signature on some documents someone was waiting for and emailed them. That raises some questions that the legislation has not quite caught up to—namely, when and where those documents were signed. This bill seeks to clarify that kind of thing. For instance, when an electronic instrument is first executed, it is important to work out when the duty is due and whether any interest or penalty tax should apply. Under the Duties Act 1997, an electronic registry

instrument is first executed when it is first digitally signed by a subscriber to the network, such as a legal practitioner. However, there are instances when that is not the case. An example is a transfer or contract of sale a legal practitioner is not involved in. The amendment addresses that by having the time when an electronic instrument is first executed deemed to be when it is executed. That makes sense.

The other issue is where someone is when they affix their e-signature. That is important because it determines whether duty is due for certain purposes. If someone electronically signs a document in Queensland, is duty due in New South Wales? The bill will address that problem by deeming that, when a trust is electronically signed, the place of execution is where the trustee is based. In effect, it can be anywhere in the world, even in space. The amendment will mean that, if someone electronically signs a document for a trust located in New South Wales, it is in fact in New South Wales. Those amendments are consistent with the existing principles under the Electronic Transactions Act 2000 in relation to electronic communications generally. Most importantly, when we deal with things of a digital nature, they will improve customer service by providing certainty, clarity and efficiency, and they will ensure that revenue legislation stays up to date with practices in an ever-increasingly digital world.

The other issue I speak on concerns changes to the Payroll Tax Act 2007. I note that the previous contributions touched on phoenix activity, which I speak on as well. Phoenix activity is when, before a company is liquidated and to avoid paying its debts, the directors or shareholders move the company's assets into another company. We have seen in the press some examples of some rather disreputable operators doing that time and again. It is a major concern for Commonwealth and State regulators. I note that a couple of years ago the Commonwealth Government brought in director identification as a means of cracking down on phoenix activity. Regardless of what the company was or what the new company is, the director ID follows a director and would be able to track that.

Phoenix activity is important because those companies may avoid paying tax and, obviously, cause quite a bit of harm to individuals, businesses and other creditors. I touch on those other creditors because in my electorate thousands of houses are going up every month. Quite a few tradies live and work in the area. Time and again, I hear stories about tradies who are effectively done over by phoenix operators. Tradies work on apartment buildings or houses and, unfortunately, turn out to be subcontracted to a phoenix operator. The company winds up, the directors bail and the tradies go without pay. A lot of tradies in my area are very small business operators with one to five employees. Sometimes it is just that person and their partner. They are very small operations, and not being paid for a job could be the difference between whether or not they put food on the table or whether they are able to pay their mortgage.

I received correspondence from a former constituent of mine who is a building manager. He has had some troubles with phoenix operators in terms of trying to sort out defects and issues with some buildings he looks after. He states in his correspondence, "Perhaps one of the most painful experiences is when individuals find themselves entangled in a situation where they believe they are on the right side, guided by contracts and agreements meant to protect them. Yet, as they navigate through the labyrinth of legal proceedings, they often end up facing heartbreak and disillusionment. This is not the kind of justice system we deserve, nor is it the legacy we want to pass on to future generations." That is heartbreaking stuff. If I were to read the rest of that correspondence, I think members would see the impact of that type of activity on people across our State. It is important that we deal with it. [*Extension of time*]

Companies can group together like-minded companies for the purposes of payroll tax to reduce their payroll tax liability. But, as these phoenix companies do what they do, it is estimated that there is a potential revenue leakage of about \$85 million. We obviously cannot afford to see potential revenue leakage, given the perilous state of the budget. We heard some of those numbers earlier, including the \$7 billion black hole. It is incumbent upon this Government to clean up the mess of the previous one and start plugging some of those leaks so it can provide services and infrastructure to the good people of New South Wales.

I speak on the proposed amendments relating to information sharing. One such amendment relates to Service NSW and Treasury. Currently, the Taxation Administration Act and the Fines Act prohibit Revenue NSW from disclosing information obtained in tax or fines administration except in certain prescribed circumstances. The amendment seeks to change that. It would allow Service NSW to effectively verify that persons applying for grants are able to do so. If someone has faced a fine—if someone is, perhaps, being investigated for fraud—that would make it easier for Service NSW to potentially flag that person or organisation and make sure that they are not able to commit that offence again.

We have seen frankly disgusting examples in the media of people abusing the system after tragic events such as the bushfires and the floods around Lismore. We need to balance looking after taxpayers' money safely with the fact that in situations like those, where people's entire houses have either been burnt down or flooded, they have effectively got the clothes on their back. They do not have identity documents, they do not have their

bank cards and they do not have any cash, so it is important for governments to be able to get that money out the door. But, as we have seen, people have abused that. The bill will go some way to stopping some of that horrible activity.

Finally, I speak on the proposed information-sharing arrangements between the police and Revenue NSW. Currently, the Fines Act does not allow the disclosure of fines and information to the NSW Police Force to support criminal investigations unless the disclosure is to administer or enforce a specific fine. What that means, in effect, is that currently the police do not have the kind of information that would aid an investigation. An example could be where and when a car may have sped through a red-light camera or may have been pinged for speeding or received a parking fine. That information could be very important in solving serious crimes such as homicide, kidnapping, armed robbery or sexual assault. It could also help in determining the location of a missing person. With missing persons, the quicker we find them, the more chance there is of them surviving and not suffering from serious long-term injuries. Sharing that information would obviously be very important.

The other thing to note is that the information could also potentially help to exonerate people. If someone happens to suffer identity theft, or if someone is wrongly suspected of committing a crime and is being investigated by the police, they could be exonerated if they could prove that they were not in the location of the crime. They can say, "I was in fact doing 120 down the Hume Highway when I shouldn't have, and here is my fine," and we can exonerate them. I think that aspect is also important. To wrap up, I note that the Government has consulted the relevant agencies, including the Information and Privacy Commission and some other important agencies and committees. I commend the bill to the House.

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) (16:05): It is unusual that I would speak on a bill such as the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I acknowledge that other speakers have said that such pieces of legislation—or omnibus bills—seek to modernise or close loopholes or fix unintended consequences and are very important in the machinery of government. I commend the public servants who are very diligent in reviewing legislation on a regular basis and ensuring that such important changes are brought to the attention of the House and find their way into those bills. I also commend the gentleman presently sitting in the gallery and listening to the great detail. I assume he is a connoisseur of financial complexity or is doing community service—one or the other. But it is really important. We are probably joined by thousands of people tuning in online.

I had my interest piqued, and that is the reason I am speaking today. I was standing in line at the Central Coast Rugby League grand final on Sunday. The two people behind me were discussing in great detail how they were shifting fines or demerit points from father to son or mother to daughter. It piqued my interest that there was such a thing. Lo and behold, with this legislation the Government is going to close that particular loophole. I think that is really important. I was even more amazed, earlier, to find out that people are actually selling demerit points, paying up to \$5,000 for three points. That is something that I was not aware of. I did not realise that in families or workplaces people nominate themselves to make sure that siblings, spouses or work colleagues keep their licences because they are on the fringe of losing them.

I think the change in legislation will need to be very well advertised to the community because it is one of those things that may have become accepted practice, particularly within families. Parents, knowing that a son or daughter needs their vehicle for work purposes, will nominate themselves as the driver because they have points in the bank. It is even more important given that the Government has made the very sensible decision to reward good drivers and start to give points back again. I think we should be shutting down a virtual market in demerit points. If people do the wrong thing, they should have to take the consequence of that action. We know there are far too many accidents on our roads, particularly due to speeding or careless driving. The demerit point system is set up to keep people on edge when it comes to the possibility of losing their licence. If a person knows that family members, workmates or friends will lend them their points, there is no incentive for a person to make sure they are doing the right thing.

The bill will add two new offences to the Fines Act 1996 and the State Debt Recovery Act 2018. The first offence is to offer to be falsely nominated. For certain driving and traffic offences, the fine and any demerit points are issued to the registered owner of the vehicle. If the owner was not driving at the time, they may nominate the person who was the driver, or the driver may nominate themselves. The fine and any demerit points are then transferred to the nominated person. This occurs on an honour basis. Someone who lets another person drive their vehicle and that person infringes the law has the opportunity to make sure that the fine or loss of demerit points goes to the right person.

Currently, the Act makes it an offence for a person to falsely nominate another person or themselves as being the driver of a vehicle at the time of an offence. A false nomination is often made to not only avoid fine payment but also prevent the real driver from losing demerit points, which may lead to the loss of their driver's

licence, as I described earlier. However, there is no offence for a person who offers or agrees to be falsely nominated. The creation of this new offence will further combat the practice of false nominations, especially where false nominees are effectively being paid to incur demerit points, which is a practice I was unaware of. The fact that two people openly discussed that a father had to cop the demerit points because his son needed to keep his licence indicated to me that this was pretty common practice, or more so than I would have thought.

There need to be repercussions if someone does the wrong thing. These kinds of bills are important to make sure that we close those loopholes. I took the opportunity to speak in this debate after hearing that conversation while sitting in the Chamber and being further educated by members of other practices, including the sale of demerit points. I certainly commend that part of the bill and all of the other sections to the House, and I urge others to be equally supportive.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:12): The important Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 has a number of components. It makes amendments to existing laws that introduce more clarity and information. It puts on notice those who seek to mislead the Government for their own personal gain. I credit my good colleague in the Federal Parliament Senator Deborah O'Neill for the work that she has done. It is tragic that in the New South Wales Parliament we have to introduce a bill to challenge and penalise those who breach confidentiality. This has occurred in response to partners and staff of PwC having leaked confidential Commonwealth taxation policies, including new rules to tackle tax avoidance by multinational companies, to 14 clients. Who would have thought that when a government entrusts organisations with crucial, confidential information, the information would be shared?

It is realistic that governments consult with these organisations. They are experts in revenue and experts in tax, but we have to ensure that confidentiality is kept in place. It is tragic that it is happening, but the bill proposes significant penalties of up to \$1 million for individuals and over \$5½ million for corporates, partnerships or associations that provide confidential government information where that government information should not ever be shared. It makes a very clear statement that the New South Wales Government will not accept any breaches of confidentiality, and the severe penalty sends a strong message about such behaviour.

Another amendment in the bill is to the Fines Act 1996 and the State Debt Recovery Act 2018, which the member for Wyong spoke about. I have spoken in person to the Minister for Industrial Relations about this. I had no idea that people were falsifying their demerit points and giving them to family or selling them on a black market for demerit points. We need to nip that in the bud. The reality is that individuals cannot manipulate justice for their own wellbeing. Currently, the Fines Act 1996 makes it an offence for a person to falsely nominate another person or themselves as being the driver of a vehicle at the time of an offence. However, there is no offence for a person who offers to agree to be falsely nominated. The creation of this new offence will further combat the practice of false nominations, especially where false nominees are effectively being paid to incur demerit points. The new offence carries a maximum of 50 penalty units if the offence relates to a vehicle or vessel registered to an individual, or 100 penalty units for a non-individual.

The bill will also make two changes to the work and development order scheme. The first is about expanding the mentoring program. Currently, the Fines Act restricts the work and development order mentoring program to persons under the age of 25, despite almost 40 per cent of current work and development order participants being aged between 26 and 39. This means mentoring programs for persons 25 years or over cannot be used as a work and development order to help them resolve a fine. The bill removes the age limit and allows persons of any age to undertake a mentoring program as a work and development order.

Secondly, in some circumstances, a New South Wales fine may be issued to a person residing outside New South Wales. For example, people living in cross-border communities may incur a fine in New South Wales while travelling in New South Wales. The Work and Development Order Guidelines 2012 issued under the Fines Act 1996 already support interstate organisations and health practitioners applying to be approved sponsors for an interstate person seeking to resolve their New South Wales fine through a work and development order. The bill further supports this by expressly providing that work and development orders can be applied for by persons outside of New South Wales and be sponsored by interstate organisations and health practitioners.

This is a proactive bill making changes to ensure the Government is improving governance in New South Wales. One of those has to do with phoenix taxpayers. It is currently estimated that the tax revenue leakage from our State is greater than \$85 million, so I am surprised the previous Government did not put this in place. The Payroll Tax Act 2007 currently allows entities to be grouped for payroll tax purposes where they are owned or controlled by the same people, including directors or shareholders of companies, partnerships, and beneficiaries of trusts. However, entities cannot be grouped with ones that have ceased to operate—that is, that have been "phoenixed".

The amendments being proposed will extend the existing payroll tax grouping to allow Revenue NSW to group companies that are in administration, being wound up or deregistered with any successor entity, whether company, partnership or trust. Entities will be linked based on a person exercising sufficient influence over both the defunct company and its successor entity. This would make the successor entity jointly and severally liable for the payroll tax debts of the phoenix company. Revenue NSW should be able to recover the payroll tax debt from the successor.

The bill also includes amendments to the Taxation Administration Act 1996, which would enable its penalty provisions to be applied to promoters of phoenix activity. These provisions include the imposition of civil penalties and injunctions and the making of voluntary undertakings. Madam Deputy Speaker, the audience has gone from the gallery, the bill is so riveting! We are also seeking to make amendments for Revenue NSW to be able to share information with Service NSW and Treasury, and amendments to increase penalties under the Taxation Administration Act.

Greater tax penalties will be put in place. The maximum penalty for people who are doing dodgy things with their tax will be increased from \$11,000 to \$27,000, and penalties for more severe offences will be increased from \$11,000 to \$55,000. Imprisonment will be introduced as a penalty, and a new offence of evading or attempting to evade tax through a deliberate act or omission will be introduced. As I said before, the bill puts on notice all those who attempt to mislead the Government for personal gain. In the current revenue situation, the reality is that we as the incoming Government are faced with a debt that has increased from \$20 billion to \$187 billion. Every single thing we can do to manage revenue and fines, and to improve integrity, is important. I commend the bill to the House and thank the Attorney General for his work.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (16:20): I contribute to debate on the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I commend the Attorney General for bringing this particular bill to the House. Since the change of government, the Attorney General has been frequently at the lectern introducing pieces of legislation to clean up what can only be described as a mess left by the outgoing Government some months ago. Looking at the overview of the bill, we are making many tidy-up changes. They could have been done at any time in the past if only people had applied themselves to the role of being the government of the day. The bill tidies up several pieces of legislation: the Fines Act, the Government Sector Finance Act, the Land Tax Management Act, the Payroll Tax Act, the Police Act, the Property Tax (First Home Buyers Choice) Act, the State Debt Recovery Act, the Taxation Administration Act, the Unclaimed Money Act, the Valuation of Land Act and the First Home Owner Grant and Shared Equity Act.

That is how much work was left to be done. We are about to go into a budget phase in this Parliament, talking about the macro issues of tidying up the State's entire budget. A number of measures in the bill close loopholes in the collection of important sources of revenue. That will assist the New South Wales Government enormously in trying to repair the damage done to the budget and in making sure that moneys that should be collected by the State are, in fact, collected, and in a more fair, equitable and transparent way. It is about making sure that people are not dodging their responsibilities and that money is available to the government of the day going forward, whoever that may be, to invest in important services that are needed in our communities. So I speak with great pleasure about this particular bill.

In his second reading speech the Attorney General referred on a number of occasions to the provisions of the bill closing loopholes and reducing "duty revenue leakage". Duty revenue leakage is, essentially, when duties are required or expected to be paid to the Government but they are not properly followed up, there are loopholes in the system and some of the money never arrives in the coffers of the New South Wales Government. Addressing duty revenue leakage is an important part of the bill before the House. It would be hard to imagine any member in this House or in the Legislative Council being opposed to the State collecting the duties that are required to be paid.

The Attorney General explained that one of the ways companies currently avoid paying duties is to exploit the 12-month time limit. Once the 12-month time limit has expired, the Government cannot put duties or responsibilities together. When companies delay, hide, pause or otherwise make sure that their payments fall outside of the 12-month limit, then currently the Government is not allowed to piece those together and say, "Hang on, there is actually probably a bigger financial responsibility due here because you keep on paying the small payments outside of the 12 months." That is a pretty simple loophole to close, and it is an important one.

It is a little bit like another loophole that will be closed by this particular piece of legislation: separating, splitting or hiding assets for the purpose of phoenixing. Many people in this Chamber and throughout the general community will be aware of phoenixing. A company, for whatever reason, is unable to pay its debts and goes bust. The company might then be dissolved. The next day or the next week, another company suddenly opens up, run by the same people who, the week or the day before, had declared themselves bankrupt. Incredibly, the new

company seems to have a whole host of assets available to it to go about establishing itself as a supposedly brand-new business.

The bill will close that loophole by allowing the Government to consider which people and what assets were a part of the business that apparently went bankrupt. If those same people and assets are used or leveraged against in a new business format, then the Government will be able to say, "Hang on, that business that went bankrupt had some outstanding debts that were owed to the State. We can see that you are now leveraging those assets for the purpose of a new business, and so we are going to come after that new business for those debts that were owed to the State and to the people of New South Wales."

Phoenix activity is not a new thing, and one wonders why it was not dealt with during the past 12 years of the previous Government. One can ponder that maybe it did not realise that it was happening—which is hard to believe. I think that every person in my electorate realises that companies are phoenixing, so one must ponder that maybe it was deliberate and that somehow there was a benefit to people that the former Government might not have wanted to tackle. I do not know what the truth is, but these are obvious, straightforward loopholes that could and should have been closed long before today.

I also note the changes proposed to land valuations and property tax liability for regional land that might have been reclassified or rezoned but which continues to be used, for all intents and purposes, as a farm. Certainly, in an electorate like Cessnock where we have a number of greenfield sites and where the central part of town is gradually spreading and sprawling out in every direction—north, south, east and west—that sometimes means that farming and rural communities find themselves in a new zoning regime which might classify them as medium-density residential or something along those lines. This has a significant impact on the farmer in terms of land valuation and tax liability, including rates payable to council. This is a really tricky and complex part of legislation, to be fair, because while one person wants to maintain their farming conditions—and farms are often in families for generations—the housing needs of the growing population must be met. The bill takes steps in the direction of making things fairer and better for all.

There is a whole host of terrific things in this legislation. I will speak to one example that a number of previous speakers have also referred to—the concept of drivers who have fallen foul of the law allowing their fine to be passed on to another person through some type of black market. Again, this is nothing new. It did not just start in 2023 when the Government changed. This practice has been happening for quite some time. The previous Government was asleep at the wheel on so many things, and this is yet another example. I encourage people across New South Wales to take responsibility if they do the wrong thing on the road; do not let somebody else take responsibility. I applaud the Attorney General for taking action in this space. I commend the bill to the House and support the Attorney General in cleaning up the mess that was left to the New South Wales Labor Government.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:30): I join my colleagues in supporting the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Like my colleague the member for Cessnock, I congratulate the Government on cleaning up a huge number of problems with revenue and fines in an omnibus bill that covers the Duties Act, the Fines Act, the Government Sector Finance Act, the Land Tax Management Act, the Payroll Tax Act, the Police Act, the Property Tax (First Home Buyer Choice) Act, the State Debt Recovery Act, the Taxation Administration Act, the Unclaimed Money Act, the Valuation of Land Act, and the First Home Owner Grant and Shared Equity Act.

I note some important provisions in the legislation. For example, the bill makes sure that duties are not chargeable on the transfer of property to a registered native title body corporate if the transfer is in accordance with the Indigenous land use agreement. In 2023, when we are holding a referendum to give our Aboriginal citizens a voice within government, when it is recognised that they have always owned the land, when they have entered into a voluntary agreement with government under which their native title is recognised and when there is an Indigenous land use agreement, we still ask them to pay duty to the Government on their own land. That is just one indication of why this legislation is so important.

There are two other important reforms within amendments to the various Acts. The first is the changes to the Payroll Tax Act 2007 that seek to support the recovery of payroll tax debts from phoenix operators. Many of my colleagues have referred already to phoenix operators, who essentially strip a company of its assets and transfer them to a new entity. Of course, such activity is designed, among other things, to avoid the payment of debts including tax debts. The reality is that phoenix operators are the most despicable kinds of developers in this country. They rip off workers and send companies under, such as the poor subcontractors who build much-needed houses. On Auburn Road in my electorate the Merhi brothers—I will speak more about them later—rip the heart out of subcontractors and purchasers. They leave buildings in a state of disrepair and flee the country.

The amendments are just one way of retrieving for the State and the people of New South Wales what is owed to them through only one mechanism of payroll tax. It is one small mechanism we have to deal with phoenix

operators and the absolute chaos that they create in communities. Phoenix activity is a major concern for both Commonwealth and State regulators, not only because of tax avoidance but also because of the harm caused generally to individuals, business and other creditors to whom money is owed. For example, employees miss out on wages, suppliers are left unpaid and businesses are at a competitive disadvantage. Currently, entities can be grouped together for payroll tax purposes when they are owned and controlled by the same people. These grouping provisions prevent businesses from avoiding or minimising their payroll tax by splitting the employment of workers across multiple entities to take advantage of the payroll tax-free threshold multiple times.

When entities are grouped together, each member of the group is liable for any unpaid payroll tax of the other members. However, entities cannot be grouped with companies that have been liquidated and cease to exist—that have been phoenixed. Any payroll tax debt of a phoenixed company is therefore irrecoverable. The bill extends the grouping provisions under the Payroll Tax Act 2007 to enable Revenue NSW to group a company that is in administration, winding up or deregistered with its successor entity. The company and successor entity will be linked based on a person such as a director having exercised sufficient influence over both the defunct company and its successor. This will make the successor entity jointly and severally liable for the payroll tax debts of the phoenixed company. Revenue NSW will be able to recover the payroll tax debt of the phoenixed company from the successor entity. To ensure that legitimate businesses are not caught by the provisions, the Chief Commissioner of State Revenue will be empowered to exclude an entity from being grouped if satisfied that there is no phoenix behaviour.

The bill also includes an amendment to the Taxation Administration Act 1996 that will enable its promoter penalty provisions to be applied to promoters of phoenix activity. Those provisions include the imposition of civil penalties and injunctions and the making of voluntary undertakings. The reforms strengthen the integrity of the New South Wales payroll tax system, ensuring that phoenix operators cannot avoid their payroll tax liability and gain an unfair advantage over other payroll tax payers simply by liquidating and deregistering their companies. They also help to discourage the harmful practice of phoenixing. The reality is that often, and not for the first time—as with the Merhi brothers whom I mentioned before—phoenix operators start companies and shift their liabilities from one project to another.

An example is 93 Auburn Road and Hassall Street in Parramatta. The problem is that liabilities end up being phoenixed across all properties. So nobody could access their assets at 93 Auburn Road, where there were huge liabilities, because they were phoenixed to another property in Hassall Street and, because that property was not finished, there was no recourse. Under the amendments, the Government will at least be able to see that properties are owned by the same entity, even though they have different names, and get recourse for the taxpayers of New South Wales.

Unfortunately, the Merhi brothers simply take their names off their companies and flee the country. They have moved all their assets to Saudi Arabia. It is not the first time they have engaged in that kind of behaviour. I refer to a 2014 Coroner's inquiry into a number of fires at Lidcombe, Bellevue Hill and Fairfield East. The Coroner made the following point about the Merhi Bros, which is an example of the despicable nature of phoenixing. The Coroner said:

No property was stolen from any of the premises that were the subject of arson attack and in none of the cases was there any evidence that the fires had been lit to benefit from an insurance policy. As detailed earlier, in each case, the property targeted was owned or occupied by a person or organisation which had been involved in confrontations or disagreements with Khalil Merhi and/or Mark Merhi.

That is what the New South Wales Coroner found. The brothers then fled overseas. Years later, after their issues in the building industry and the coronial inquiry, the Merhi brothers turned up again and caused absolute bedlam across the housing market in Auburn and Parramatta. Yet again, their response was to move their assets offshore to Saudi Arabia. It is not good enough. We need to get to the bottom of the phoenixing problem. The amendments in the bill are just one element of the solution, and they are a good change. But they come too late for a lot of people in our housing market who have been left behind and are picking up the pieces.

The second set of reforms relate to act of grace payments. Under the Government Sector Finance Act 2018 an act of grace payment may be made to a person in special circumstances, even if the payment is not provided for by law or required. A payment may be made subject to terms and conditions which, if contravened, may make the payment required to be repaid. Recently, Revenue NSW has been administering various grant and community support programs through act of grace payments—for example, payments to provide tax relief for individuals and businesses adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and natural disasters. Although these programs are subject to terms and conditions, the act of grace payments are made under the Government Sector Finance Act 2018, which is not a taxation law. As such, Revenue NSW is not able to use its usual powers under the Taxation Administration Act to support compliance activity to ensure that recipients are eligible and that payments

are being applied as intended. The bill addresses this by applying parts of the Taxation Administration Act to act of grace payments. Time has expired, so I will leave my comments there.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:40): I support the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. I thank the Attorney General and the Minister of Finance in the other place, the Hon. Courtney Houssos, MLC, for their work in preparing this bill in collaboration with a range of stakeholders, including the Information and Privacy Commission New South Wales, The Tax Institute, the Law Society of New South Wales, and the Property Council. The Attorney General spoke to me about this bill after he gave a speech for over an hour in which he covered the many key areas of the bill. The bill will change a great deal of legislation and amend quite a few statutes. The Hon. Courtney Houssos also mentioned it to me earlier today.

This is a machinery bill that will have an impact on so many different areas of legislation in New South Wales. The extensive consultation process generated a suite of reforms that will make various amendments to revenue and compliance legislation. It is crucial to regularly revise revenue legislation in New South Wales to address anomalies, clarify provisions, respond to court decisions and reduce compliance costs. These reforms will support the integrity of the legislation and ensure that it remains effective and reflective of contemporary standards in New South Wales—something that our society certainly expects. State revenue is integral to the successful operation of New South Wales vital public services, including hospitals, schools and transport networks.

With revenue legislation caretaking the fundamental services that keep our State running, it is paramount that regular review and amendments are implemented. The bill proposes amendments across a number of Acts that will ultimately offer greater fairness and transparency for the people of New South Wales—for example, a series of amendments has been proposed to State tax legislation. The following Acts will be amended as part of this much-needed reform: Duties Act 1997, Land Tax Management Act 1956, Payroll Tax Act 2007 and Taxation Administration Act 1996.

Schedule 1 to the bill amends the Duties Act 1997 to update concessions for managed investment schemes for greater flexibility when restructuring. A management investment scheme is an arrangement where multiple investors contribute money to obtain interest in such a scheme which is later managed by a responsible entity. Examples of these schemes include cash management trusts and exchange traded funds. The provisions for the duty concessions have become outdated in New South Wales because they do not contemplate non-linear structures and the definition of a "management investment scheme" is currently limited to registered schemes only. The amendments in this bill will modernise duty concessions to address these two significant issues. Therefore, it will avoid these schemes having to use inefficient and complicated structures to achieve their commercial objectives without triggering a duty liability.

Schedule 4 to the bill amends the Land Tax Management Act 1956 and make a number of changes to modernise the Act. Specifically, it will remove a redundant provision relating to an unutilised land value allowance for rural land. Schedule 4 will also provide that the area being used as a site for a school is exempt from land tax, even if the land is not owned by the school. That is extremely important. From speaking to people involved in Catholic education and public education, I know that in parts of Western Sydney the demand is such that 50 new schools are needed right now. Anything that can assist with the provision of 50 new schools going ahead is extremely important. The amendments to the Payroll Tax Act 2007 in schedule 5 to the bill are necessary to enhance the recovery of tax debt from phoenix operators. Phoenix activity occurs when a company is liquidated but its assets are transferred to a new entity with the same directors and shareholders in order to carry on the same business without debt.

Prior to becoming a member of Parliament, I was a senior manager at the Australian Securities and Investment Commission where I was the head of the major fraud division. Time and again we saw phoenix activities by companies that owed massive debts to small operators, contractors, small family businesses and tradies constantly just disappearing and then reappearing later in a phoenix activity. Some criminals—and they are criminals—would do that as part of their business model and they were constantly avoiding their debts. That created all kinds of problems for not only families in Western Sydney or in the electorate of Prospect but also throughout New South Wales. That is something that needs to be dealt with. Phoenix activity is of significant concern to the New South Wales Minns Labor Government, Commonwealth and State regulators. Tax avoidance causes a great deal of harm to the financing of our society and to the individuals, businesses or creditors where the debts are payable. The current cost of phoenix activity is estimated to be over \$85 million. That is completely unacceptable and unfair to the stakeholders and to the industry parties that this action harms.

The Minns Labor Government is introducing this amendment to extend existing payroll tax grouping rules to allow Revenue NSW to group companies that are in administration. The entities would be linked, based on a person exercising sufficient influence over both the defunct company and the successive company. Therefore, Revenue NSW can recover the payroll tax debt from the successive company. Schedule 5 makes important amendments to the Tax Administration Act 1996 that address a range of issues regarding the payment and

administration of tax. Specifically, it will limit out-of-time objections to more than five years after the original tax assessment, which is integral to preserve the integrity of reassessment provisions. It will also allow Revenue NSW to recoup valuation costs from a taxpayer in certain circumstances, enable the application of a tax refund onto the same taxpayer's debt and modernise the methods by which that tax can be paid. The amendments under schedule 5 also make changes to improve the administration of tax, including broadening the ability of Revenue NSW to share taxation information with NSW Treasury and Service NSW.

Schedule 3 to the bill amends the Government Sector Finance Act 2018 to support the recovery of act of grace payments made under government programs. This legislation enables an act of grace payment to be made in special circumstances, even if not provided by law. Revenue NSW has administered grants and community support programs through act of grace payments, such as supporting business and local organisations affected by extreme events such as COVID-19, flooding and bushfires. Act of grace payments are often made subject to terms and conditions and may be repayable in the instance of such conditions being breached. While these payments are subject to terms and conditions, Revenue NSW is unable to carry out compliance activities to ensure payments are given to eligible recipients and used accordingly. It should be noted that the Government Sector Finance Act is not a taxation law, thus Revenue NSW is not so empowered.

The bill will extend the application of the Taxation Administration Act to allow Revenue NSW to recover payment, exercise its investigative powers to determine whether a recipient has contravened a term or condition, and require a third party to provide documents to support the investigation. The amendment will also enable Revenue NSW to apply the offences and penalties for giving false or misleading information that are available in the Taxation Administration Act 1996. Revenue NSW has a major role to play not only in the recovery of tax revenue and making taxation fairer in New South Wales but also in helping the Government deal with the massive debt it has inherited from the previous Government. The projection is \$180.5 billion, with \$9 billion in unfunded commitments on top of that. Legislation like the bill before the House and the actions of Revenue NSW are extremely important in providing the tax revenue to build infrastructure, to build schools, to build our communities and to give our communities the things they need, at the same time as being fiscally responsible so we can pay off that huge debt over the next few years. [*Extension of time*]

I thank the House for its indulgence. Further amendments to the Fines Act 1996 will enhance administration and create new offences relating to false nominations and false or misleading information that carry serious penalties for engaging in that behaviour. The latter offence is being incorporated into the State Debt Recovery Act 2018, and amendments to the Police Act 1990 will enable sharing of fines information between the NSW Police Force and Revenue NSW to ensure that those processes are efficiently administered. It is extremely important that Revenue NSW and the NSW Police Force can work together to deal with financial crimes. I imagine the NSW Crime Commission may also become involved, depending on a referral from the NSW Police Force. It is extremely important that law enforcement agencies and taxation agencies work hand in glove to recover unpaid fines from fraudsters and other people who have given misleading information, to help restore tax revenue to the budget.

Unclaimed moneys are funds owed to people who are unable to be located due to a change of circumstances such as relocation or change of name. Such funds are lodged with Revenue NSW by businesses and public sector superannuation funds. Revenue NSW maintains a public register of unclaimed money and remits it to any owner who comes forward. The bill amends the Unclaimed Money Act 1995 to aid the recovery of incorrectly paid moneys and improve overall administration of the unclaimed money system through six key changes. Firstly, the bill will enable Revenue NSW to use its powers under the Taxation Act 1996 to recover unclaimed money that has been incorrectly paid to a person who is not the owner. Whilst those two Acts already speak to one another, the amendment will further extend the interrelation to enhance the recovery of incorrectly paid unclaimed money. Currently, unclaimed money that is paid incorrectly, owing to a fraud or error, must be recovered through the courts. Litigation can be a long and expensive process, requiring payments to lawyers and barristers, and the bill will help with that. The amendment will enable Revenue NSW to leverage its tax collection powers to better support the recovery of unclaimed funds to the true owner and reduce pressure upon the courts.

To further ensure unclaimed money is returned to the rightful owner, the bill will amend the application process for unclaimed money. It will require an application to be submitted in an approved form and will allow Revenue NSW to require that additional information or documents be provided by a claimant to prove their claim. The bill also considers the rights of review for an unsuccessful claim for money. Currently, a person whose application for unclaimed money is denied has no right to seek a review of that decision, which is unbelievable. The bill will provide objection and review rights similar to those afforded to a taxpayer disputing a tax assessment. Avenues for review will include internal and external review through the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal or the Supreme Court of New South Wales. The bill will also shift away from the futile exercise of obligating Revenue NSW to publish unclaimed money amounts even where the owner's identity is unknown. The amendment will not restrict a person's ability to inquire with Revenue NSW directly if they believe an unclaimed sum is owed.

Another amendment to the Unclaimed Money Act clarifies that disputed money is to be considered untouched, not unclaimed. Money considered untouched involves an ongoing dispute as to who the rightful owner is. For example, deposit money held in a solicitor's trust account for a purchase would be considered untouched if a dispute arose between the vendor and the purchaser as to whether the deposit was refundable. The amendment will prevent such funds being directed to Revenue NSW whilst the dispute is being resolved. That will enable a person's successful claim to be paid towards their tax, grant, fine or State debt, mirroring the existing option for a tax refund to be paid towards other debts with Revenue NSW.

Finally, amendments will be applied to the First Home Owner Grant and Shared Equity Act 2000 to ensure that payments are validly made into the NSW Shared Equity Scheme Fund, and amendments will be made to the Property Tax (First Home Buyer Choice) Act 2022 to correct minor drafting errors in the legislation. The incredibly important, proactive measures introduced by the Minns Labor Government that I have discussed over the past 15 minutes will ensure that our tax and revenue legislation reflect contemporary standards and administrative practices. Ultimately, the changes will benefit the people we serve—our communities and our families across New South Wales, and particularly in Western Sydney, who become disadvantaged because of the actions of those who use legislative loopholes in tax and revenue legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (16:56): I speak in debate on the Revenue, Fines and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Regular revision of our State's taxation laws is integral to ensuring that our State's tax system remains up to date, efficient and fair. That not only strengthens our State's financial health, which is needed to fund our essential public services, but also supports the State's individual and business taxpayers by making it easier to comply. The bill achieves that in various ways, but I focus in particular on key amendments to the Duties Act 1997 and an amendment to the Property Tax (First Home Buyer Choice) Act 2022.

First, the amendments to the Duties Act make changes to reduce revenue leakage while ensuring that existing concessions and exemptions operate fairly. One key amendment to the duty aggregation provisions will reduce revenue leakage. Those provisions enable dutiable transactions that form part of a single arrangement to be aggregated to ensure that duty cannot be minimised through artificially splitting an arrangement into a number of transactions. Currently, the transactions must occur within a 12-month period. But some transactions, such as an option to purchase property exercised more than 12 months after it was granted, may evade aggregation despite clearly being part of the same arrangement. The amendments address that by removing the 12-month requirement. The time frame in which the transactions occur will no longer be a determining factor but can nonetheless remain a relevant factor in the overall test of whether the transactions are part of a single arrangement.

The bill also contains a number of amendments to improve existing duty concessions, but I focus on one: the concessional duty of \$500 for transfers of property that occur when a person changes their superannuation fund. Presently, the person must cease being a member of the old fund within 12 months before the transfer and become a member of the new fund within 12 months after the transfer. That prevents the concession applying where a person continues to be a member of both funds and is essentially not changing funds. However, there may be situations where a person is changing funds but is already a member of the new fund before the transfer. For example, the person may have two funds and is consolidating them. To enable the concession to apply as intended, the bill amends the concession to allow it to apply where the person is already a member of the new fund before the transfer. That is just one example of how the bill ensures that our State revenue legislation remains effective and fair.

Secondly, in relation to the Valuation of Land Act amendments, while the First Home Buyer Choice scheme closed to new applicants on 1 July 2023, those already in the scheme will continue to receive an assessment for property tax every year until they sell their property. Any person receiving one of those assessments should have the right to object to anything in the assessment that they believe is wrong, including the land valuation the property tax liability is based on. People receiving a land tax assessment have the right to object to valuations; under the proposed amendment, people with a property tax assessment will have the same right. The amendment to the Valuation of Land Act will give any person who receives a property tax assessment 60 days to object to the valuation used to calculate the amount of property tax they will need to pay.

Furthermore, in relation to phoenix activity, amendments proposed by the bill would make successor entities to liquidated companies liable for payroll tax debts of phoenix companies. It also ensures that the tax is paid to the government, reduces tax avoidance and discourages the liquidation of companies as a means of tax avoidance. It ensures the owners of businesses pay their fair share of tax, which is especially relevant throughout Western Sydney and parts of my electorate of Liverpool given our industrial make-up and given illegal phoenix activity occurs prevalently in construction, labour hire and security industries. In Australia the economic impact of phoenix activity represents a cost of \$2.85 billion.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): It being 5.00 p.m., debate is interrupted for the public interest debate. I set down resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour.

*Public Interest Debate***MATILDAS FOOTBALL TEAM**

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): Before calling the member for East Hills, I welcome to the gallery members of the NSW Young Labor High School Network. They have come to witness the terrific public interest debate.

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (17:02): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Australian women's national football team on their successful performance in the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.
- (2) Notes that Australia and New Zealand hosted a record-breaking tournament, with the highest attendances of any women's world cup event and unprecedented viewership numbers.
- (3) Notes that New South Wales played a pivotal role in the tournament, with Sydney hosting 603,957 fans at the 11 games played in New South Wales and thousands more watching at the multiple live sites across the State.

The Matildas have captured the heart of the nation in their recent endeavours in the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup and have written themselves into Australia's history books with their incredible achievements for women's sport in our great country. As a lifelong participant and advocate for women's sport, I pay tribute to the Matildas' legacy as well as highlight how we will continue to honour their fighting spirit and the milestones they have reached. Let us talk about the world cup performance. For those who somehow missed the games, the Australian team defeated reigning Olympic champions Canada 4-0, securing their place in the round of 16, where they played and defeated Denmark and then challenged France in the quarterfinals.

They delivered the most riveting and exhilarating nil-all draw against France, resulting in the record-breaking penalty shootout that I am sure many Australians will remember as a great moment in Australian sport—the first of its kind in any world cup. In the final penalty shootout of the game, Cortnee Vine stole the show and booked Australia's place in the semifinal. For the record, no Australian team, women or men, has ever made it past the quarterfinal stage of a world cup tournament. I cannot imagine the immense pressure the team endured during the semifinal, where they unfortunately lost to England. However, every Australian is so incredibly proud of their efforts, the legacy that they have contributed to and the history that they have made.

The Australian women's soccer team was first established in 1978 for the first Women's World Invitational Tournament and grew during the 1980s. In the 1990s, when women's football was introduced at the Olympic Games, a whole new interest in the Australian women's team started to grow and flourish. It is important that we pay respect to the original players and pioneers of the game, players like Moya Dodd, AO; Sarah Walsh; Heather Garriock; and the generations of women who fought for their right to get on the field and who were often denied the opportunity to play on the best fields or who wore second-hand jerseys. Those women paved the way for our current Matildas team.

I also acknowledge the thousands of volunteers who every weekend and on cold winter nights teach and support young players. This win is as much for them as a culmination of women's hard work for equality in sport. The Matildas have been able to show Australians what sportswomen have always known—that our game can be the most exciting contest in the world. Across the tournament physical attendance reached an incredible 1.9 million people. Sydney hosted 11 matches in total, with nine of those reaching maximum capacity. The game against Denmark reached 6.5 million viewers on the television. The game against France reached 7.2 million Australians, and the semifinal against England reached 11 million Australians, achieving a new record for the most watched TV event in Australian history.

Those levels of enthusiasm and support for women's sport have, frankly, never been seen before in Australia and are indicative of the amazing change in our country over the past few decades. Participation in women's football has grown over the past two years. With legends such as the Matildas showing many millions of Australians how exciting women's sport can be, we can expect many more women and young girls to get involved and get active. In fact, Football NSW has reported that the number of players signing up for junior football competitions this summer has spiked by 170 per cent since last year. That is what happens when we support and endorse women's sports, and why we need to keep celebrating the Matildas' achievements.

We know there is no better time to invest in women's sport. We can leverage this momentum and drive change. The New South Wales Government is committed to delivering a \$10 million NSW Football Legacy Program to support opportunities for football in New South Wales. The legacy program, administered by the Office of Sport, includes a \$6 million grant for pathways for female coaches, officials and leaders in sport. We know our sporting legends get their start in their local communities, playing on their local fields. That is why the legacy program will support participation initiatives as well as community infrastructure developments.

I am proud that New South Wales is set to become one of the highest funding jurisdictions in terms of direct support for State sporting organisations, with funding increasing to \$5 million in 2023-24 and \$10 million in 2024-25. It includes \$250,000 to Sport NSW to support the ongoing delivery and expansion of New South Wales female sporting leadership and female coaches programs. The investment sends a clear signal regarding the importance we place on increasing gender equality in sport, both on and off the field. Celebrating Australia's greatest athletes is a vital step to recognising the ongoing connection that women's sport has to our community. We will celebrate our greatest athletes by naming the eastern seating area at Accor Stadium in honour of a female athlete or athletes. It is an important recognition for women in sport in Australia and for girls who are looking to emulate their sporting heroes.

There is no doubt that the FIFA Women's World Cup has showcased the best of the world's footballers in Australia and inspired generations of athletes. With a large contingent of the Matildas team coming from across New South Wales, we celebrate Caitlin Foord from Wollongong, Emily van Egmond from Newcastle, Ellie Carpenter from Cowra, Clare Hunt from Grenfell, Alanna Kennedy from Campbelltown, Courtney Nevin from Hawkesbury, Kyah Simon from Blacktown, and Clare Wheeler from Coffs Harbour. To remind us of the team that changed the nation, the Government has committed to commissioning a great mural at Stadium Australia to celebrate the Matildas' historic success. The permanent mural will capture some of the Matildas' greatest moments during the tournament. The Matildas team delivered both on and off the pitch. They shook every hand, signed jerseys and posed for every photo. They brought compassion and kindness to all who attended and supported them. It is the connection with fans and their on-field performance that have made all of Australia fall in love with them.

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (17:09): I move:

That the motion be amended by inserting after "State":

- (4) Calls on the New South Wales Government to support the development of future Matildas by fully funding Active Kids vouchers as promised by the Premier in the election campaign.
- (5) Congratulates the former New South Wales Coalition Government on securing the hosting rights to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup and on its record investment in sporting infrastructure that enabled the highly successful hosting of the event.

We are incredibly proud of the Matildas and the absolute fanfare all around the country to support them so that the next generation, like those in the gallery, can enjoy everything about football. The Matildas have set an example for not only young women around the country but also young men who love football. This resulted in 11.15 million viewers of the last Matildas game as people around the nation jumped on board to celebrate an historic effort from a Women's World Cup team. In fact, it was so significant that the Boomers, the Australian men's basketball team, moved their game from 7.30 p.m., when it would have coincided with the Matildas, to 5.45 p.m. That is incredible. The idea that men's sport was moved to celebrate the Matildas and get the whole country behind them was absolutely phenomenal in that very important game when the Matildas played England on 16 August.

The Matildas have set Australia on fire, as shown in the many ways that female sport has been celebrated. I am really disappointed that in question time the Minister for Sport could only talk about the mural of the Matildas on the face of Stadium Australia under the female recognition program in conjunction with Venues NSW. If that is the only way that the Government can celebrate women's sport, it is an absolute disgrace. In his response the Minister also spoke about increasing funding to the State sporting organisations through the Office of Sport program, with \$5 million in 2023-24 and \$10 million in 2024-25 with agreed outcomes to increase female participation. There is also \$10 million in community infrastructure programs through the Football Legacy Program. They are all things that were done under the previous Coalition Government.

In this debate members opposite are too embarrassed to talk about the fact that their only legacy for female football will be to reduce the number of young girls—and young boys—who will be able to participate in football due to significant cuts to the Active Kids program. In 2022, 1.3 million vouchers were created. Some 645,000, or 48 per cent of them, were used by females. Over 155,000 vouchers were used for soccer or football by boys and over 53,000 were used for soccer or football by girls as at 25 May 2023. That demonstrates where football was at all around our State—and that was before the increase in female participation in football that we will see across the State. That is why the former Government worked so hard to make sure that as part of the program it brought 10 world cups in 10 years to New South Wales. One of those world cups, as those in the gallery now know, was the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2023, which had an estimated visitor spend in our economy of \$21 million. That event has surely changed the level of football fever all around our State.

It is a really important opportunity for us to celebrate the women who have set this example and who have made our country so incredibly proud. I pay tribute to Mackenzie Arnold, Teagan Micah, Lydia Williams, Ellie Carpenter, Steph Catley, Charlotte Grant, Clare Hunt, Alanna Kennedy, Aivi Luik, Courtney Nevin,

Clare Polkinghorne, Alex Chidiac, Katrina Gorry, Clare Wheeler, Tameka Yallop, Emily van Egmond, Kyra Cooney-Cross, Caitlin Foord, Mary Fowler, Sam Kerr, Hayley Raso, Kyah Simon and, of course, Cortnee Vine, who kicked that very important goal in the tie-breaker penalty shootout in the game with France to set a record for Australia. These women have created an incredible legacy. It is incumbent on those opposite to keep building on that legacy for years to come and making sure there is a path for women in the State moving forward.

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (17:14): I support this public interest debate moved by the member for East Hills. It is safe to say that the CommBank Matildas have literally changed the game of football in this country. Their skill, dedication, determination, compassion and infectious enthusiasm have captured the heart of the nation and at long last have placed women's sport where it rightly belongs—at the forefront of everyone's minds and on top of the agenda for financial support, broadcasting rights and media attention. Never before has an Australian team made the semifinals in a World Cup tournament. From defeating the reigning Olympic champions Canada 4-0, to succeeding in the longest running penalty shootout in history, their accomplishments have been remarkable. This Australian team made history as only the second team to ever host a FIFA Women's World Cup and finish in the top four.

As the member for Parramatta, I am incredibly proud that the Matildas' accomplishments will be immortalised in a grand mural at Stadium Australia at Sydney Olympic Park in the heart of my electorate. Australia and New Zealand have played host to the single largest sporting event anywhere in the world this year. The enthusiasm has been overwhelming, with over 45.61 million total TV viewers, equating to a staggering 6.5 million viewers per game. Sixty-four per cent of the Australian population tuned in to that ripping semifinal against England.

While New Zealand and other Australian cities deserve some credit, the greatest excitement was in New South Wales with over 600,000 fans attending the 11 games around Sydney and 750,000 fans visiting fan sites. While there were live sites spotted around Australia, including at Tumbalong Park, it was the City of Parramatta's amazing live site in Parramatta Square that brought our local community together in a way reminiscent of the 2000 Olympics. The Parramatta live site was one of the only sites in Australia to provide coverage of all 64 matches and, throughout the three weeks of the competition, it attracted over 20,000 visitors. Initially, there was one screen. Then there were two. By the time the Matildas played the semifinal, the council had rolled out a third screen to ensure no-one missed out on a prime position.

I got amongst it at the live site for three of the electric Matildas matches. With mini soccer and Optus virtual reality games, beanbags, "Aussie, Aussie, Aussie" chants, Matildas gift pack giveaways and a crowd ranging in age from nought to octogenarian, the atmosphere was so good I wanted to bottle it. I congratulate and thank the City of Parramatta for creating a 30-day event that was such a wonderful success, cementing Parramatta's reputation as a destination and showing amazing support for the Matildas. In addition to Parramatta Square, the New South Wales Government answered the call for even more live sites and opened up Allianz Stadium, the Sydney Cricket Ground and CommBank Stadium in Parramatta for the Australia versus England clash in the Matildas semifinal and also the third-place play-off. More than 15,000 spectators attended these two matches at our world-class stadia. It was an amazing turning point for women's sport in this country.

Over the past few weeks all of Australia has been swept up with Tilly fever. If members have been for a drive down George Street, Parramatta, they will see that my office has been decked out with a Matildas display. We were fortunate in Parramatta to be one of the epicentres for the incredible FIFA Women's World Cup, with some of the most crucial matches of the competition taking place at Sydney Olympic Park and with the impromptu live sites outside Accor Stadium, at CommBank and, for the entire tournament, at Parramatta Square. The atmosphere was simply electric. The Matildas themselves were on the ground in Parramatta, leading to several exciting encounters for our community, including me, when the one and only Sam Kerr and her partner, Kristie Mewis, called in for coffee at Homage across from our office.

The Matildas have achieved something special and brought our nation together to realise that sport is about the game, not the gender of the players. Sport should be accessible to all, and the interest generated by the Matildas during the Women's World Cup has demonstrated to governments, corporates and sport administrators alike that our society expects to see equality in sport—equal access to facilities, to opportunities and to funding. By virtually every metric, the FIFA Women's World Cup and our amazing Matildas have created sporting history, hopefully turning a massive hairpin corner in the rise of women's sport that will never be reversed. I support the public interest debate.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:19): I am excited to contribute to the public interest debate today. What a time it is to be an Australian. What a time it is to be a New South Welshman. What a time it is to be a football lover both in Australia and across the globe. I start by congratulating Spain on their epic result in winning the FIFA Women's World Cup. It was their first victory at the world cup and, as the host nation, we were

excited to welcome them and celebrate their success on the evening. I think many people were particularly excited to see their success because we were still a bit bitter about losing to England in the semifinal. Many football fans got into Matildas fever, including many hundreds of thousands, potentially millions, of new football fans. It goes to show exactly what the Matildas have done for us as a nation, as Australians and for many new-found football lovers. I got to see a couple of games—

Ms Charishma Kaliyanda: Speak for yourself—"new-found".

Ms FELICITY WILSON: I think you have had your chance to speak. If you want to contribute later on, you can seek leave. As I was saying, there were many new-found football lovers across the country—we literally saw the rise in support for football. I got to see a number of games, not just Matildas ones. I got to take my little two-year-old and four-year-old to see games, including the semifinal against England. I felt fortunate to be part of the momentum of the Matildas' tournament in New South Wales and across Australia and New Zealand. But I also know that the work of the Matildas does not stop "'til it's done", and it is not done.

The real work is yet to come in ensuring that we have equity for women's sport across the field not just for football but across all different codes of sport. We need to see investment in facilities, infrastructure, coaching and training programs across the board for women athletes and sportspeople and see a real change in attitudes to all women athletes and sports players. There is an opportunity to ensure that we do that. The NSW Football Legacy Program is one of the things that I am most proud that the former Government invested in. In 2018 the former Government had a bold vision. Gladys Berejiklian and Stuart Ayres—let us congratulate them—had a vision to bid for 10 world cups over 10 years. People said that nobody would watch the FIFA Women's World Cup and that it is not particularly interesting. The former Government said that it would be the biggest sporting event to hit Australia and New South Wales and that it needed the infrastructure to ensure it would work.

In 2020 we were successful in winning the bid for the FIFA Women's World Cup across Australia and New Zealand, predominantly because of the stadium infrastructure the former Government put up. There is no mistaking the fact that New South Wales hosted the largest number of games in the tournament, was the only location that had two stadiums in operation throughout the tournament and had the largest stadium in operation. Not only did New South Wales host the final, it hosted a semifinal and a number of the most important matches of the tournament. That was because of the foresight and investment of the former New South Wales Liberal Government, particularly the efforts of Gladys Berejiklian and Stuart Ayres. It was a foresight that those opposite—not those in the Chamber because most of them were not in this place at the time—completely shouted down at the time.

The former Opposition shouted at us about investing in stadia and that we should not be investing in our visitor economy, sport or women's sport. It was the lament of NSW Labor for years. Once the stadiums were open, Labor was happy to go to the corporate suites for the hospitality, but nobody on the opposite side of the Chamber would stand up for the FIFA Women's World Cup. Nobody on that side would stand up for the fact that Australia is now also going to host the men's Rugby World Cup in 2027 and the Netball World Cup in 2027. I congratulate the Diamonds on their recent success. Nobody on that side of the Chamber was with us in supporting women's sport and the global events that ensure that we are attracting the best and brightest, and developing women players and sportspeople for the future.

While those opposite want to stand up and be self-congratulatory today, coming in after the fact, it was the Liberals that invested in sport and women's sport in New South Wales. It invested in the NSW Football Legacy Program, which is investing in infrastructure, investing in empowerment programs, ensuring that we promote football and working with clubs across New South Wales to ensure that we have facilities for the women's game to continue to be the beautiful game in Australia. As I said earlier, "'til it's done", and it is not done yet; there is much more work to do. I encourage Government members to look at the amendment moved by the member for Miranda and recognise that the work does not stop after the Matildas have left the field. We need more money, more resources and more investment to go into our youngest players and sporting facilities for women across the entire State. I encourage those opposite to take on the call from the NSW Liberals and Nationals to invest in women's sport into the future.

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (17:24): I support the motion moved by the member for East Hills. On this side of the Chamber, we are going to talk about the Matildas, because that is what the motion is about. I am not going to talk about the pork-barrelling that occurred under the former Government, where electorates like Wallsend got nothing for 12 years. It got nothing for sport because it was all pork-barrelled. All one needs to do is read the article in *The Daily Telegraph* today about Paul Toole and the money that was spent on National Party electorates. But I return to the motion. Labor will not congratulate the previous Government; we will congratulate the Matildas on their success. I go back to my history and my love of soccer for a long time. It started with watching my brother play for West Wallsend Bluebells when I was a little girl. He did not have much of a future. Dad said he was more of a ballet dancer than a soccer player, but I have loved soccer ever since.

The beauty of being an elected member is that I have had the opportunity to meet and watch many local soccer players. In fact, I have spent time watching women and men play soccer nearly every Saturday and Sunday of my 16 years in this game because I like it. I find it is an enjoyable way to spend a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. There is one particular team, North Lambton, that I remember buying socks for when the players were about five years old. They are always interesting games to watch. Those players would now be 17 or 18 years old, so some of them are playing for the Newcastle Jets. They spent a bit more time picking daisies than they did playing soccer at the time, but they have certainly grown up since then.

I particularly pay attention to two of our local soccer players of note who play for the Newcastle Jets—which I have been a member of for many years and follow on a weekly basis. Those players are, of course, our wonderful Emily van Egmond, who is a midfielder who scored that wonderful goal against Nigeria; and Clare Wheeler, who did not get the chance to play but was on the bench. She played for the Adamstown Rosebuds. I remember watching the Rosebuds play in the National Premier Leagues Womens on many Saturdays and Sundays. I cannot remember whether Clare played or not, but they were a terrific team.

The Opposition has not mentioned anything about the fact that it all starts with grassroots support. It is about families, community support, council support and governments, like our Government, that are willing to spread funding throughout all electorates, whether it be Wallsend, Monaro, East Hills, Blue Mountains or Opposition electorates. That is what it is all about. We will not have our best women players playing if we do not have the toilets and facilities for them. That is what this Government is looking towards for the future. Our women need to be able to grow up and play on fields where they have equal access to everything that the blokes have. That is what the Government wants to do. It does not want to pork-barrel money into certain electorates because it is worried about winning them; it wants to share the love.

It was magical to be able to watch the Matildas' matches. I congratulate all of our Matildas. I congratulate all of the volunteers across New South Wales who spend their Saturdays, Sundays, weekends and nights coaching and teaching, because that is where our Matildas started. They all started in grassroots teams, at Coffs Harbour, down on the South Coast, in Newcastle, in the Blue Mountains—from all over the place. They are the ones who deserve the congratulations. There is no way we will bring in the Opposition's self-congratulatory amendment to this motion. That is not what it is all about. Today is about saying that we are grateful for the talent of the Matildas and grateful for all the volunteers and all the support of the Australian community, both women and men, for this wonderful team. Go Matildas! Go Emily. Go Clare. Let us see lots of other young women grow up and play football.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (17:29): I thank the member for East Hills for introducing this public interest debate and the member for Miranda for her amendment. I note that 15,000 Active Kids vouchers were issued to the electorate of Kiama in 2023 and that half of those went to children participating in soccer. On behalf of our community, I congratulate the Matildas on their success in the FIFA Women's World Cup and particularly acknowledge Illawarra talent Caitlin Foord and Mary Fowler, who made a great contribution to the team. Our achievements at the world cup have accomplished something special. No longer should we delineate in our celebration of men's sport or women's sport. Our country was united in a celebration of sport and sporting success. Gender was not a factor. We were unified as Australians in our passion for sport and success.

People watched the Australia-England game in their lounge rooms, in pubs and clubs, and at sporting venues and live sites all over the country. A call went out on social media to set up a live site in Kiama, and I am pleased to have assisted in turning one around in just two days, with a lot of help from passionate locals. Our community turned out. Around 1,500 people came to Hindmarsh Park to cheer on our team. Prior to kick-off, I interviewed the Kiama Quarriers, whose amazing women have made it to the 30s division 1 final against Thirroul. I wish them well in that grand final. Go the Quarriers! I thank them for inspiring players to get involved on the evening. I interviewed Grant Wilson, who is a local Kiama family man, champion of ability and finalist in the Focus On Ability short film awards. He shared his remarkable story of recovery and perseverance with the audience. We played Grant's film in Hindmarsh Park and shared his story and encouraged the crowd to vote for his video in the competition.

I acknowledge the local business community, the sponsors and Kiama Council, who also got behind this event and made the night an evening to remember. The main street stayed open late and supported stall vendors in providing everything from popcorn and coffee to meals. I particularly acknowledge Central Perk Cafe, Saltwater and Mexican restaurant El Corazon for staying open and giving life and spirit to the competition and to our main street. It should be noted that the streaming of these events did not include any gambling advertisements. I commend that, but I go one step further and ask the House to consider the appropriateness of fast-food advertisements to our children at such events and during streamed sports events in general. There is more work to be done in this space. The United Kingdom, Taiwan and Norway, to name just a few, have taken up this challenge. Independent MP Sophie Scamps has introduced a bill into Federal Parliament to restrict junk food advertisements

aired to children. Why should we not lead on this and promote healthy food policy for our children? It is something to think about.

But I return to the main point of the debate. In post-game interviews it was acknowledged that funding was falling short in women's sport and in football in particular. This funding starts at the grassroots level, as many members have said, with clubs like the Kiama Quarriers, the Albion Park White Eagles, the Gerringong Breakers, the Illaroo Mini Roos and the Bomaderry Tigers. I could go on and on. New South Wales should keep pace with the Federal Government's recent commitments, which I commend, to investing in the next generation of girls and boys and boosting active participation, keeping children healthy and active.

So I watch with keen interest and welcome any support and commitments from the Minister for Sport on local programs and supporting local communities, particularly in regional New South Wales. Investment in these programs and projects is an investment in our communities and young people, who may otherwise not have the opportunity to learn a new sport or to take up friendships outside of school. I want more locals to be able to aspire to play for Australia in all sports. Who knows—they may even find themselves on the big screen in their local park, inspiring the next generation one day in the future.

I thank R and R Production Services for putting on the event and for their professional services; Mark Blight and South Coast Flat Packs, who was the major sponsor of our live site; Sally Bursell and the tourism and events team at Kiama Municipal Council; Saltwater and Central Perk on Terralong Street and the many other local businesses that stayed open; and Kiama market stallholders Eat Fuh, Tut's Charcoal BBQ, Kiama Bubble Tea, Haywell's Lemonade and Coffee, and doughnut vendor Moist and Glazed. On behalf of the Kiama community I thank everyone who turned out and supported the event and the Matildas, and say well done to each player, who not just inspired a new generation of female players but also inspired a nation as we were united in our celebration. Our congratulations go to every one of them.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:34): I confess I have not always been a passionate football supporter. One of the main reasons I was so personally invested in the Matildas was that two of the star players were from my electorate. Ellie Carpenter and Clare Hunt both honed their skills on local football pitches—Ellie in Cowra and Clare in Grenfell. Ellie's father, Scott, described the experience of watching his daughter as a rollercoaster of emotions. He said, "For a while, I couldn't watch. But I couldn't not watch. I knew I'd kick myself if I didn't." I know how nerve-racking it was for the rest of us watching on. I can only imagine what it must have been like for the girls' families. I can assure them that their personal journeys from country to the cup is one that has provided so much inspiration for young people, young girls in particular, in our electorate.

I was definitely not the only one caught in the grip of Matilda mania. Local clubs are now expecting an influx of new recruits for next year's season. Fourth place is such an amazing outcome, and I congratulate the entire team on all its hard work and shining a spotlight on this most important issue of female participation in sport. It is not only the Matildas who are blazing a trail for women and girls. The Australian Diamonds are the current Netball World Cup champions; Australia's women's hockey team, the Hockeyroos, recently secured a spot at next year's Paris Olympics, as did the Australian women's water polo side, the Aussie Stingers; Australia's women's cricket team has retained the Ashes; Australia's female swimmers literally leave competitors in their wake; and the female competitions in rugby league, rugby union and Australian rules football are going from strength to strength.

This level of success will continue only if we nurture the talent that is coming through at a grassroots level, which is why we need clarity from the Government about its plans for growing and nurturing sporting opportunities for women and girls in regional New South Wales. How does it plan on accommodating what will surely be a massive increase in demand for sporting programs and resources? The previous Liberal-Nationals Government had big runs on the board when it came to supporting female players in sport in regional New South Wales, particularly through the highly successful Stronger Country Communities Fund [SCCF]—pardon the sporting puns. We kicked some very big goals across the Cootamundra electorate, delivering significant investments in sporting grounds and amenities, aimed at encouraging engagement, improving safety and accessibility and fostering emerging talent for women and girls.

Round four of the SCCF, in particular, was designed to focus on female sport. In that round alone, more than \$9 million was invested in projects across the electorate, from change rooms for female jockeys in Gundagai and Young, better facilities for girls playing rugby league in June, netball court upgrades in Temora, Cowra, Ganmain and Barellan, right through to bathroom renovations for lady bowlers in West Wyalong and programs to empower female sporting participation in Grenfell. The list goes on. But there is more work to be done. For example, the clubhouse and amenities for the junior soccer teams in Young need an urgent overhaul. Given the growth in player numbers in recent years—an increase that will now surely skyrocket—there is also a need for lighting to extend training sessions. That is just one of the many kinds of projects in our region that the Labor Government now needs to focus on if it is serious about nurturing our sportswomen of the future.

It is not enough simply to light up the Opera House in green and gold and paint a mural in Sydney. The Labor Government in this State must demonstrate that it is serious about encouraging female participation in sport and nurturing talent at a grassroots level by investing in projects that make a real difference to the lives of women and girls in our regions.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:39): By leave: I speak on behalf of The Greens to offer support for the motion. We recognise the incredible success of the FIFA Women's World Cup and offer our support to the Matildas. I cannot help but put on the public record that members have moved away from offering congratulations on the most successful women's sporting event ever—the Matildas have become the most talked-about topic in all our communities and in public life and, finally, we are centring on women and women's sport—and blokes on the Opposition benches are supporting an amendment congratulating themselves. The Opposition is actually trying to trump the Matildas and their success by moving an amendment to congratulate the Coalition and the former New South Wales Government.

If we did not think the Liberal Party was out of touch with women and the community before this debate, let us take a moment to recognise how out of touch it really is. We are debating the success of the women's world cup and the Matildas, but the Opposition has moved an amendment to add itself to the motion, saying, "Hello, we are here. We are still here—us blokes from the former Government. We are still here, and we want to make this about us. Can we congratulate us?" The final paragraph in the amendment congratulates the Opposition. I feel like we have gone down a rabbit hole. Members in this place will know that I cannot allow such a thing to pass without calling it out.

We need to recognise that the motion moved by the member for East Hills—it is great to have a Labor member for East Hills in this place—centres on women's sport and the success of the women's world cup and the Matildas. It is not about former sports Ministers who secured a deal. It is not about former Premiers who might have done some stuff to help it along the way.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The member for Terrigal will remain silent.

Ms JENNY LEONG: It is not about Active Kids vouchers. It is about celebrating the incredible public support for one of the most phenomenal shifts in the zeitgeist when it comes to recognising women and sport in our communities and our society, and the celebration of queer relationships on an international stage. It is about recognising powerful, strong women who will be role models for our daughters and our sons—all our children—and the community. It is not about the guys behind me on the Opposition benches trying to somehow insert themselves into the Matildas' success. That is not what their success is about, and it is certainly not the kind of vision they stand for.

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (17:42): In reply: The Government does not support the amendment moved by the member for Miranda. I acknowledge the members who spoke in the public interest debate and thank them for their contributions. I note that there were some great live sites in the electorate of the member for Parramatta. The member for Miranda mentioned that many sports, including men's sports, changed their game times and venues to accommodate the FIFA Women's World Cup. It is great that they did so. The member for North Shore mentioned the tournament winners, Spain. We all take our hats off to the wonderful performance of the Spanish team throughout the tournament.

I acknowledge the member for Newtown, who brought the debate back to recognising the Matildas and the great work they have done in bringing Australia together to support women's sport. We acknowledge how much the Matildas' performance will improve women's sports and facilities for the women's game across Australia. I thank all members for their contributions to the debate. Every single Australian is so incredibly proud of the Matildas' efforts, their legacy and the history that they have made in Australia.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The member for East Hills has moved a motion, to which the member for Miranda has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes32
Noes51
Majority.....19

AYES

Amon, R
Ayyad, T
Cooke, S
Coure, M

Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D
Perrottet, D

Speakman, M
Taylor, M
Thompson, T
Toole, P

AYES

Crouch, A (teller)	Petinos, E	Tuckerman, W
Davies, T	Preston, R	Ward, G
Di Pasqua, S	Provest, G	Williams, L
Griffin, J	Roberts, A	Williams, R
Henskens, A	Saunders, D	Williamson, R
Hodges, M	Singh, G (teller)	Wilson, F
James, T	Sloane, K	

NOES

Atalla, E	Hagarty, N	Piper, G
Bali, S	Hannan, J	Quinnell, S
Barr, C	Harris, D	Regan, M
Butler, L	Harrison, J	Saffin, J (teller)
Butler, R	Haylen, J	Saliba, D
Car, P	Holland, M	Scully, P
Catley, Y	Kaliyanda, C	Shetty, K
Chanthivong, A	Kamper, S	Smith, T
Cotsis, S	Kirby, W	Stuart, M
Crakanthorp, T	Leong, J	Tesch, L
Daley, M	Li, J	Vo, T
Davis, D	McDermott, H	Voltz, L
Dib, J	McGirr, J	Warren, G
Donato, P	McKeown, K	Washington, K
Doyle, T	Mehan, D	Watson, A
Finn, J	O'Neill, M	Whan, S (teller)
Greenwich, A	Park, R	Wilkinson, K

PAIRS

Anderson, K	Aitchison, J
Cross, M	Hoening, R
Kean, M	Minns, C

Amendment negatived.

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

Motion agreed to.*Bills***ICAC AND LECC LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023****First Reading**

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

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for a later time.

*Community Recognition Statements***CARRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL**

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (17:53): Carrington Public School has been providing public education to the primary school children of Newcastle for 150 years. What an achievement! Carrington Public School was established in 1873 and was originally called Onebygamba Public School, meaning "mud crab place". In 2023 the school has almost 150 enrolled students; over 30 per cent of them come from First Nations backgrounds. Biripi and Worimi teacher's aide and artist Ms Kulka Fahey has designed a shirt that will be given to every student, acknowledging Carrington Public School's natural history in the heart of Newcastle Harbour. This school has nurtured some amazing Novocastrians, like former Federal member for Newcastle Sharon Grierson, who was once the principal at Carrington Public School. I congratulate principal Mr James

McGill, and all the present and past teachers. They do such amazing work for these children and our community. Here's to another 150 years and more of quality public education in Newcastle.

THERESA DAVIS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (17:54): I honour and commend Ms Theresa Davis, a beacon of selflessness and love. For over 13 years, Ms Davis has dedicated herself as a foster carer, providing invaluable emergency and short-term care to more than 30 children in desperate need of a safe haven. Her unwavering commitment to those children and their families, even amidst personal tragedy, is a testament to her extraordinary character. In March 2023 the loss of her dear husband did not deter her; she continued her mission, welcoming a young boy who had no place to turn. Now, as Theresa confronts her own health battle, it is crucial that her legacy as a foster carer and her indomitable spirit are recognised. I call upon the community and indeed this House to join me in expressing our deepest gratitude to Ms Theresa Davis for her invaluable service. Her unwavering love, dedication and the sacrifices she has made for the wellbeing of children in need is a testament to the very best of the human spirit.

KELSEY BENNET

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (17:55): I recognise 20-year-old Kelsey Bennet from Mollymook, who earlier this month qualified for the AIG British Open in the world of women's golf. Kelsey has now qualified for the Ladies European Tour and is currently playing in Europe almost every week. Kelsey started playing golf at the age of eight in Mollymook and was taught how to play by her nan, Patricia Allaway. For the past two years, Kelsey has represented New South Wales, and she represented Australia last year in the Women's Amateur Asia Pacific Championship in Abu Dhabi. Kelsey completed her tour in Orlando, Florida, where she was a guest of world hall of fame recipient Karrie Webb. I was thrilled to announce last week that the regional qualifying series will kick off at Kelsey's home course of Mollymook Golf Club in November this year. I cannot wait to see Kelsey in action. I congratulate Kelsey; she has a wonderful golfing career ahead of her.

CASINO TRUCK SHOW

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence) (17:56): I congratulate the organisers of the 2023 Casino Truck Show. It was a record-breaking event, with more than 600 trucks and 14,000 people filling the streets of Casino on Saturday 5 August. In fact, someone calculated the combined value of the rigs alone to be more than \$250 million lined up in the streets of Casino. The real winners of this unreal event were the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service, receiving a donation of some \$5,000; the Jumbunna Community Preschool and Early Intervention Centre, which received \$2,500; and the Casino Community Kitchen, also receiving \$2,500. I spent the morning with the Richmond Valley Council mayor, Mayor Mustow, who estimated that the day brought \$1.7 million in business to the local area. I congratulate the State's trucking industry. Without a reliable and safe trucking industry, our regions and New South Wales would grind to a halt.

ROLAND DE PREE

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (17:58): On 31 July well-respected community advocate Roland de Pree stepped down as president of The Ponds High School P&C after nine years of service. Roland served the P&C through a significant period of growth for The Ponds High School and The Ponds area. Every step of the way, he has sought to improve the wellbeing of students at the high school and to advocate on behalf of parents to the State Government. Whether it be his support of countless community initiatives, his advocacy for the construction of permanent classrooms to cope with the school's immense growth, or his efforts to keep parents informed of the school's progress, he has served with integrity and an unwavering commitment to his community. During his time as P&C president, Roland saw over 600 students graduate, including his son Pascal. Whether it be through his addresses to school assemblies or his work in the school community, Roland has undoubtedly touched the lives of every one of the students at some point. On behalf of the entire Ponds community, I thank Roland for his service.

ROTARY CLUB OF BERRY

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (17:59): Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises the Rotary Club of Berry's annual changeover event, which was held on Friday 7 July 2023 at the Shoalhaven Heads Bowling and Recreation Club. I was extremely pleased to attend this event and meet many of the club's 49 members. I acknowledge the incoming board of directors and office bearers, including president Ian Nicol, immediate past president Haseena Tweddle, secretary Terry Delahunty, treasurer Peter Stinson, marketing and communications director Grahame Sweeney, community service director Greg Herbert, international director Ken Hutt and youth director Dr Shona Gibson. I acknowledge the Rotary Club of Berry's involvement in organising large community events, including the Berry Small Farm Field Day, the Rotary BBQ and Grill and the Berry Celtic Festival. The club's fundraising efforts have raised money to install a new solar power system and

battery at a school in Fiji, provided relief for earthquake victims in Türkiye and Syria, and local flood relief for our region. I also acknowledge the considerable community work which the Rotary Club of Berry has done over a long period of delivering for Berry. It is a terrific organisation with fabulous members.

CANTERBURY-BANKSTOWN COUNCIL BOOMERANG WORKSHOP

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (18:00): In recognition of recent NAIDOC Week celebrations, I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are on, the Gadigal people, and I pay respect to their collective Elders, past, present and emerging. On Wednesday 5 July Canterbury-Bankstown Council hosted a boomerang workshop at the Yagoona Community Centre for our Elders and children. This year's theme, "For our Elders", was introduced by Indigenous Elder, Uncle John, who opened the event with a traditional smoking ceremony. The rich cultural heritage and historical knowledge of the First Nation people was embraced by the participants, who appreciated the unique experience of crafting their own boomerang. I am pleased to acknowledge my parliamentary colleague Kylie Wilkinson, MP, Councillor Chris Cahill and Campsie Police Area Command, who attended the event, and Roselands Service NSW and Bankstown NDIS Early Childhood Approach, who assisted people with accessibility needs. I give a special thank you to Bankstown Fire and Rescue NSW, who needed to come over to help as well. I reiterate my support for the Indigenous Voice to Parliament and encourage everyone to vote yes in the upcoming referendum.

ENDEAVOUR FOUNDATION

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills) (18:01): Recently I visited the amazing people at the Endeavour Foundation, with the Leader of the Opposition, Mark Speakman, for a site tour and to present some awards. The Endeavour Foundation is a terrific organisation that gives local people with a disability the opportunity to participate in meaningful employment that builds their skills, confidence and knowledge. We had a comprehensive tour of the Seven Hills site where locals create and distribute key pharmaceuticals across our State. We also handed out awards to the rising star of the month, the most valuable employee, and long service certificates for participants with more than 40 years' experience working at Endeavour Foundation. I acknowledge the team at Endeavour Foundation, including regional and State manager Carlos Aguado, corporate affairs manager Kirrily Boulton and policy adviser Ben Lienert, who were all present for the visit. The Endeavour Foundation does fantastic work in supporting the most vulnerable people in our community. I wish them every success in the future.

UNCLE MALCOLM MCCOLL

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (18:02): I acknowledge the tremendous contribution of one of Liverpool's First Nation Elders, Uncle Malcolm McColl, who recently shared his incredible life story in the *Voices of Liverpool* anthology book produced by Liverpool City Council. Born in Armidale to an Aboriginal Kamilaroi mother and a Scottish father, Uncle Malcolm moved to Sydney in 1945, when he was four years old. Considered half-castes by the system of the day, due to their mixed heritage, Uncle Malcolm and his sister were taken away and put in a home. They can recall times when Aboriginal people were treated as flora and fauna. Since then, Uncle Malcolm has helped deliver positive changes in our community and has been a source of wisdom and guidance for successive generations of young Aboriginal men. Along with his wife, Nita, he has been heavily involved with the Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council for many years, helping to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in south-west Sydney. While our nation has far more to do to close the gap, the experiences and actions of people like Uncle Malcolm are invaluable in getting us closer to such a point.

TORI MCCOMBE AND MACLAIN COLEMAN-LOCKE

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (18:03): Today I celebrate the achievements of two dedicated apprentices who displayed their mastery on the national stage, showcasing the vocational excellence of those on the mid North Coast. Tori McCombe and Maclain Coleman-Locke flew to Melbourne to compete at the WorldSkills Australia 2023 National Championships, bringing home bronze in the construction steel works and welding categories, respectively. Their accomplishments highlight the invaluable skill set of our vocational students and what can be achieved in the Oxley backyard. The WorldSkills competitions bring youth together and celebrate skill excellence and improvements in training. This is the first time TAFE NSW Kempsey entered the Construction Steel Works category and to walk away with third place is a testament to our diverse and multiskilled talent. I am proud to see Oxley youth strengthen their knowledge and pursue these opportunities while we are amid skill shortages. This is one step towards closing that gap and it is our bright, capable youth taking that charge. I extend my sincerest congratulations to Tori and Maclain, who continue to inspire and to hone their exceptional skills. They should be proud of this monumental achievement. Well done!

RANDWICK GALLOPING GREENS

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (18:04): It has been 13 long years but Randwick District Rugby Union Football Club, our Galloping Greens, are into the Shute Shield big dance this Saturday, facing off against Norths. Hooray! First grade will be joined by the Wicks' third and fourth grades in their respective grand finals. It has been an arduous wait, to say the least, and this season stands as a testament to the team's unwavering dedication, perseverance and the remarkable spirit they bring to "the game they play in heaven". I give a massive shout-out to the coaching staff, including Stephen Hoiles, Rob Horne, Ben Hand and Morgan Turinui. Their tireless efforts in shaping and nurturing the team has played an indispensable role in the team's journey. The Coogee basin is awash in myrtle green as we back our boys all the way. Best of luck to the captain, Ben Houston, and the rest of the boys. Up the Wicks!

THE VOCAL MUSTER

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (18:05): I acknowledge the exceptional talent displayed by the young individuals from Wollondilly and Wingecarribee at the Vocal Muster held in Bowral last month. Witnessing their remarkable skills and performances was truly awe-inspiring. The Vocal Muster plays a crucial role in equipping young people with the necessary training and development to pursue a future in musical performance. Not only do they learn technical aspects and equipment usage, but they also receive guidance on practical matters such as setting up an ABN, managing bank accounts for payments and understanding the value of their time. I have submitted a representation to council in support of the Vocal Muster, marking it as my 100th representation since assuming the role of member for Wollondilly. I am eagerly looking forward to continuing my support for the growth and success of this magnificent program. The Vocal Muster holds immense potential in nurturing and showcasing the talents of our youth. Let us join hands in empowering and encouraging these young individuals as they pursue their passion for music.

RIVER CITY VOICES CHOIR

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (18:06): I was honoured to attend the fundraiser marking five years of the River City Voices choir. Their passion for music and the determination to make "highbrow" music accessible to Parramatta residents as participants and as an audience is nothing short of inspiring. The arts are integral to Parramatta. They are essential to our wellbeing and a vital component to Parramatta's rise to become a significant alternative to CBD Sydney as a destination for the arts and night-life. This choir has opened the door for scores of singers to express themselves and participate in the arts, not to mention the thousands of audience members who are introduced to music they might otherwise not have been exposed to. I give a big shout-out to the executive and creative teams at River City Voices, including Catherine Dolle-Samuel, Schon Condon, Robert Love, Inara Molinari, Bill Soper, Dr Sarah Penicka-Smith, Su Choung, Joanna Brooke, Alex Siegers, and Dr Philip Eames. I look forward to seeing River City Voices continue to thrive and extend Parramatta's musical horizons.

MICHELE BULLOCK

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (18:07): I acknowledge and congratulate Michele Bullock on her recent appointment as Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia. Michele is a local resident in the Drummoyne electorate and is an active member of our community. She has made history to be the first woman appointed Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia in its 63-year history. She is inspiring generations of young women and girls to pursue a professional career in finance and banking. She started her career as a bank intern with the RBA in 1985 and rose to the ranks to become Deputy Governor of the RBA in 2022. Her distinguished career leaves me with no doubt that she will serve the people of Australia exceptionally well. Michele steps into the role during a time when our national economy is facing global economic pressures, and her leadership over the next term will be vital. I am told that on the day Michele was announced as the new Governor she celebrated at Drummoyne Sailing Club with a dozen oysters—such a humble way to celebrate a remarkable achievement. I congratulate Michele and wish her all the very best.

SOLAR DECATHLON COMPETITION

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (18:08): A decade has passed since I worked with a group of students from the University of Wollongong who had an ambitious plan to enter the global Solar Decathlon competition. The team, made up of university and TAFE students, took on a competition that required them to build a net zero energy home, ship it to Datong China, rebuild it and undertake a series of competitions against 19 other entries from around the world, and they won. It was the first time ever. Their home was modelled on a 1960s fibro cottage floorplan, done with the idea of retrofitting a typical Australian home to make it more energy efficient and comfortable to live in. It was the first house in the history of the competition to demonstrate how an existing house could be retrofitted. The competitions ranged from washing

and drying a standard bundle of clothes and hosting a movie night, all to be done using the energy the house could generate itself, through to architecture, communications and market appeal. To win, the house had to be both energy efficient and saleable. I recently caught up with the team and some of the academics from the Sustainable Buildings Research Centre who supported it. Many are forging careers in making buildings and energy generation more sustainable. The influence of their experience remains in their drive to build not only sustainably but also at an affordable price.

2 AIR FM

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (18:09): The much-loved community radio station 2 Air FM is celebrating its first 25 years on the Coffs Coast. I say "much-loved" because the volunteers who run it have the interests of their community at heart. Their Glenreagh Steet studio was the focal point of birthday celebrations on Saturday 19 August, when I had the honour of officially opening the festivities by cutting the cake with Sally-Ann Ikin and president Garry Costa. The entertainment provided by local artists and groups was complemented by the launch of the new 2 Air FM book, which chronicles the station's history from its early days operating at the Big Banana to today. It was compiled from the minutes by Elsie Langford with the help of Richard Moore for the photographs and Sally-Ann Ikin for the cover's original artwork. As many as 80 volunteers are the backbone of 2 Air FM and I thank them for their dedication and passion. I congratulate everyone involved in this iconic radio station's success, particularly its devoted listeners and the 350-strong membership.

TRIBUTE TO TONY MCALARY

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (18:10): I recognise Tony McAlary, a committed community leader born and raised in Warren. After boarding school and a jackaroo adventure, he married his beloved wife, Tish, and they went on to raise their two children, Anna and Anthony, on the family farm. Tony was a great businessman and always looked for ways to improve the agriculture industry, but he did not stop there. When Tony reduced his work life on the farm, he was able to contribute more time to the community. Seeing a gap between skilled agricultural labour and kids in Warren, he approached professionals in the town to help create the Warren Youth Foundation and Warren Youth Support Group. Passionate about inclusiveness and fairness, he had the tenacity to unite the community for a common goal. Tony's early vision—to "employ a few kids for farm work"—has seen him strengthen the future of many upcoming leaders in Warren, knowing the future fell into the hands of the next generation. Tony had a significant impact on the Warren community, and he will be greatly missed. His legacy will be long remembered.

AFRICAN SUB-SAHARA INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (18:11): This year marked the tenth anniversary of the African Sub-Sahara International Development Agency based in Fairfield. The agency is a not-for-profit, international development organisation dedicated to promoting relationships and partnerships with various agencies striving to work with members of the African communities locally, regionally and internationally. They have assisted hundreds of women and children who are victims of conflict, mainly in the form of education initiatives. I thank the director, Theophile Elongo, and his team for their contributions in Fairfield and more broadly across the State. I also extend my thanks to Paul Caesar, Rita Khosheba, Barclay Ilung, Clementine Elongo, Sylvie Ngalula, Theophile II Elongo, Dr Mylene Valdez, Jasmina Bajraktarevic, Bikaya Theodore, Freddy Kashindi and Sipola Tabu.

RICHARD MANCHEE

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (18:12): I congratulate Richard Manchee on being awarded the 2023 Dick Byres Medal. The premier rugby union competition in Australia is Sydney's Shute Shield, of which some of Australia's very best rugby referees are a product. Each year, the coaches of each premiership club vote on their best referee. Receiving such praise—indeed receiving any praise—from a coach is a big deal. This award has been held by high-level referees such as John McCarthy, George Ayoub, Ian Smith, Stuart Dickinson, James Leckie, Matt Kellahan, James Quinn and David Conway. Richard Manchee is a first-time recipient. He joined NSW Rugby Referees in 2011 and, as well as being a dedicated teacher and wonderful human, he has had an illustrious refereeing career with seven grand final appointments since 2011. Making his Shute Shield debut in 2018, Richard has now taken charge of more than 50 Shute Shield derbies. I congratulate Richard on a well-earned award.

CABRAMATTA FIRE AND RESCUE NSW

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (18:13): I recognised the Fire and Rescue NSW Station 049 Cabramatta. I was delighted to join superintendent Andrew Shurety, Cabramatta station officer Ryan Timeus and the rest of the Cabramatta Fire and Rescue team at Cabramatta fire station on Tuesday 24 July 2023. The visit began with a tour of the outstanding station facilities, followed by a comprehensive demonstration of all the gadgets and tools that the fire department uses to save lives. The visit resumed with an explanation about the importance of removing

all dirt and grime after a rescue to prevent inhalation of cancerous substances. Finally, the visit ended with a nice afternoon tea. I was told that the team spent the morning baking the wonderful treats that I was presented with. I thank Cabramatta Fire and Rescue for everything they do for the people of Cabramatta. We are very fortunate to have their team serving our community, and we consider them all to be heroes of our community.

BECKIE PLANT

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (18:14): I recognise Beckie Plant, an author and illustrator hailing from the Orange electorate. Much like distant stars, the dream of penning a children's book once appeared beyond her reach. Yet Beckie's tenacity and courage prevailed, and I was privileged to launch her new book, *Amazing Like You*, last week, tailored for children up to 12 years of age. In the spirit of her own words, Beckie realised that understanding the vastness of the stars required taking steps of her own. Beckie's dedication extends beyond her literary prowess, having studied developmental trauma, art therapy, youth work and counselling. She works in youth mental health to help others reach their own stars. The essence of this book lies in its artful rhymes and illustrations. Beckie encourages our children to embrace their unique qualities and empowers them to see their strengths. Her book does not merely tell our children of their brilliance; she guides them in comprehending the very reasons that make them exceptional. I congratulate Beckie and acknowledge her contributions to our community's literary and emotional landscape. Let us applaud her unwavering commitment to nurturing our youth's potential.

STRATHFIELD PLAZA SHOOTING COMMEMORATION

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (18:15): On 17 August 1991 a man with a gun took the lives of seven people, wounded seven others and traumatised our local community and the whole nation with this senseless act of violence at Strathfield Plaza. Last Thursday I attended a commemorative event organised by Strathfield Council. I acknowledge current president of Cumberland Sub-Branch RSL, Greg Read, who attended and spoke. Greg's brave actions on that day saved the lives of at least eight people. For this Greg was awarded the Star of Courage in October 1992 by the Governor-General. As I laid a wreath at the memorial, I thought of the chaos and tragedy that unfolded on that day many years ago. On behalf of the Strathfield electorate and the wider community, I extend our deepest sympathies to family and friends of those who lost their lives: George Mavis, Rachell Milburn, Joyce Nixon, Carole Dickinson, Patricia Rowe, Robertson Kan Hock Voon and Roberta Armstrong. May they rest in peace.

SOPHIE B PHOTOGRAPHY

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (18:16): I congratulate the incredible team at Sophie B Photography on winning the Outstanding Photography Business category at the 2023 Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards. Founded in 2009, Sophie B Photography has developed a reputation for providing quality photography services, including headshots and wedding photography. During the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, Sophie B Photography set up the Sutherland Shire Open 4 Business Project, which provided \$55,000 worth of photography services to 100 businesses in the Sutherland shire to assist them in promoting their businesses. This has since developed into an online community with over 4,000 followers, highlighting hardworking individuals in our community. I acknowledge the exceptional team at Sophie B Photography who go above and beyond in ensuring that life's special moments are captured. I recognise Sophie Brown, Katia Mure, Georgia Moore, Jacqui Knight and Alie Bond. Small businesses like Sophie B Photography are an important part of our local community as a key provider of goods, services and jobs. I again congratulate the team at Sophie B Photography on their success at the Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards and extend my best wishes for the future.

UNCLE DANNY EASTWOOD

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (18:17): I recognise Aboriginal Elder Uncle Danny Eastwood, who was recently honoured by Blacktown City with the Key to the City Award, in recognition of his 40-year career and dedication to the community. Uncle Danny, who is a resident of my electorate, shares important stories and messages about First Nations culture through his art and cartoons, which have featured in the *Koori Mail* for more than 20 years. His artworks shed light on racism and challenge the damaging stereotypes of First Nations people and culture. Uncle Danny has shown his kind heart and dedication to the community through his teachings over the past 40 years, and I congratulate him on this much-deserved recognition.

CUNNINGHAM "JOCK" CASSELS

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:18): I acknowledge and congratulate Hawkesbury resident and Royal Australian Air Force [RAAF] veteran, Cunningham "Jock" Cassels, who celebrated his 100th birthday on 11 August 2023. Jock was born in Glasgow in 1923. His defence career began in 1941, when he joined the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force [RAF] as a cadet pilot. Following extensive training, Jock joined No. 43 Spitfire Squadron in April 1944 and served as a spitfire pilot in World War II. Jock is the last remaining

spitfire pilot in Australia. In November 1966, Jock was offered a four-year engagement in Australia as a flight lieutenant at RAAF Base Richmond. He then served in New Guinea before joining No. 35 Squadron in Vietnam in 1968. After 25 years in the RAF and 12 years in the RAAF, Jock retired in 1979. I had the honour of celebrating Jock's birthday with family and RAAF personnel at his old stomping ground, RAAF Richmond. I thank Cunningham "Jock" Cassels for his service.

MOSMAN HIGH SCHOOL

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (18:20): As Mosman High School students returned to start term 3, there was such a sense of anticipation and excitement. Why is that so, you ask? Recently Mosman High became the recipient of a long-awaited new building that opened this term to welcome staff and students through its doors. We have modernised a school that is already recognised for its outstanding academic record and creative arts programs. The results are simply amazing. The new build features 16 new classrooms, a new theatre, a new multipurpose hall, a new library and new outdoor spaces, including the incredibly impressive rooftop court and staff and administration facilities. It is wonderful to see that these assets are public education assets. I take this opportunity to thank Principal Susan Wyatt and all the parents and the P&C association who, over the years, worked tirelessly to get this project off the ground. The exterior's design is sympathetic to the vibe of the Mosman village while inside is a modern education precinct. Together we have re-envisioned Mosman High as a modern place of learning for generations to come.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I thank the member for North Shore for organising the "Yes" photo today.

LOGAN MYERS AND HARRY BATES

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:21): I am excited to report to the House that Port Macquarie's very own basketball duo, Logan Myers and Harry Bates, were selected to play for the Central Maine Mustangs in the United States. Exuding talent and potential, young guns Logan and Harry travelled to America on 14 August to join one of the richest professional sports leagues in the world. Proving they have what it takes to train and play amongst the elite, Logan and Harry attribute their success to a dominant performance in the inaugural North Coast Basketball competition held on 19 April. Logan and Harry took with them skills and advice acquired through their participation in the Port Macquarie Basketball Association's Dolphins, showcasing Australia's growing basketball talents born in the regions. They accompanied a 10-player squad led by North Coast Basketball coach Robert Linton. Logan and Harry have the opportunity of a lifetime as they train with the Mustangs, who are renowned for providing a positive learning environment focused on athletic training and education. Port Macquarie is so proud of Logan and Harry's achievements, and I join the community to wish them well in the next chapter of their basketball career.

UMINA BUNNIES

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:22): I give a huge shout-out to the Umina Junior Rugby League Football Club for their initiative in creating an early skills development program for boys and girls aged three to five years. The program is the initiative of one of their treasured volunteers, Dean Young, a local footy player who works with the Central Coast Roosters Development Program to get the younger brothers and sisters of existing players involved in the game, instead of just watching. The program allows the kids to practise teamwork and catching and passing the ball and, most importantly, keeps them running around and improving their general physical and cognitive fitness. Recently I visited the Bunnies to hand over a grant they received from the New South Wales Government's Local Sport Grant Program. I have to say that the Bunnies are about so much more than simply the joy on the faces of the kids on the field. The happiness and pride of the parents and the community watching their young Bunnies train is what sport is all about. There is so much happiness and so much enthusiasm among those kids. Good work, Umina Junior Rugby League Football Club. I wish them all the best for this fantastic initiative.

Private Members' Statements

BLACKTOWN ANIMAL REHOMING CENTRE

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (18:23): I take this opportunity to recognise the official opening of the Blacktown Animal Rehoming Centre, known as BARC, which I had the pleasure of attending on 18 June 2023. BARC is a wonderful new facility that is based on best-practice models of animal care and pet rehoming as followed at the best international facilities. The design standards implemented are crucial to providing an environment for animals to receive excellent care. Based in the suburb of Glendenning, BARC has replaced the 40-year-old council Animal Holding Facility.

The Blacktown Animal Rehoming Centre is the largest council facility of its type in the Southern Hemisphere and its speciality design is based on extensive national and international research. It features 135 dog kennels, 230 cat "condos", and poultry and livestock areas for other animals that need rehoming. The Blacktown Animal Rehoming Centre has a veterinary clinic onsite, which provides education and training for students at both the Western Sydney University and Richmond TAFE. There is even a council library included, so those who adopt a pet can choose to borrow a pet-related book from the display library in the foyer.

The centre is also focused on community education, with schoolchildren and pet owners learning about animal safety and responsible pet ownership. The design aims to improve animal welfare and increase community acceptance around the adoption of impounded animals. By doing so, BARC sets out to reduce animal holding times, increase adoption rates and decrease euthanasia rates. The motto for BARC is a "Home for good". Not only does BARC take in animals from its own population of over 400,000 people, but also it is contracted to take animals from other councils across the Sydney metropolitan area.

When I attended the facility, I witnessed firsthand the dedication and hard work that has gone into making it a reality. I commend Blacktown City Council staff, who, together with the architects and builders, have worked tirelessly to deliver this first-class project. BARC is the result of many years of research, planning and innovation, and no doubt will leave a legacy for many generations to come. As it is the first of its kind, I am sure that other councils will have the opportunity to learn a lot about the success of such a facility in their area. Finally, BARC is not only a place of shelter; it is a place of healing, rehabilitation and hope. It will serve as a bridge between animals in distress and their forever homes. An animal's unwavering loyalty and unconditional love enrich our existence in ways that words cannot express. By providing them with a second chance through this rehoming centre, we are not just changing their lives; we are also enriching our own.

ALBURY PROJECT

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (18:26): One of the most exciting revelations from a social program such as the Albury Project—which has been running in my electorate since 2019—is that predictors of potential homelessness are emerging from the data that are already proving useful to support early intervention while a young person is still at school. The Albury Project supports young people to respond to factors in their life that could increase their chances of one day becoming homeless or leaving school early without a plan for what is next. In participating schools, students complete a survey that requires answers to questions about their experience of school, home life, friendships and relationships, culture and conflict. Developed through research, these surveys can reveal the emergence of elements that are known factors in homelessness. Through this research, experts are learning to read the signs.

The Albury Project then puts in place service and community partners to work with the child, their family and school. It is a form of universal screening for the school community. It is not a program for crisis management or emergency intervention, but a process for intervention and positive interaction at an early stage for that individual student. Darryl Ward, principal of Albury High School; Jennifer Parrett, principal of James Fallon High School; and Norman Meader, principal of Murray High School, have remarked on how this led to improved processes. They said:

Before the Albury Project, if we had an issue with a young person that required an 'outside of the school gate' response, we would make a referral to DCJ or some other agency. This was a slow process. Sometimes we wouldn't hear anything back. Having Albury Project workers based in the school—as part of the school—is crucial ... We now have a workforce that can work both inside and outside the school gate and with families and undertake roles and supports that are outside the purview of school staff.

Pilot funding through the Department of Communities and Justice concludes in December 2023, and Albury schools and support agencies are eagerly awaiting to hear of an extension. Di Glover, CEO of YES Unlimited—a project partner—reports that one of the biggest outcomes of the project is a move towards providing an integrated, systems-based response to early intervention as a collective of schools and service providers, and the project has become an essential mechanism for engaging young people earlier and in a more targeted way.

In the past four years almost 10,000 surveys have been completed, with project partners proactively looking for young people at risk of homelessness, school disengagement or mental health issues. Reviewing the data reveals that between 2019 and 2023 there has been a steady decrease in the number of young people at risk of school disengagement—from 180 young people in 2019 down to 113 people in 2023. Between 2019 and 2023 there has been a reduction to below pre-COVID levels in the number of young people at risk of homelessness, after a spike during COVID. Similarly, between 2019 and 2023 there has been a reduction in the mental health indicator to below pre-COVID levels after a spike in 2021. Earlier evaluation data between 2019 and 2021 shows that for young people identified as being at risk of homelessness in any year, after receiving support through the Albury Project, about half were no longer at risk 12 months later.

Albury Project partners believe additional mental health resourcing should be a fundamental part of community of schools and services models moving forward, using all the great service infrastructure to bring it to young people early. Those outcomes have been achieved by changing the way our systems work, not just providing more and more programs. It has all occurred in the context of bushfires and COVID—a tough time to be piloting a model like that. The data represents early indications of how the program is working and is taken from a population level. It is still too early to have long-term data, so a degree of caution must be exercised, along with acknowledgment that other factors will also have played a role. The Albury Project has already generated improved processes for schools and students. Many people are putting in the hours to explore the new way of working, and New South Wales Government financial support has encouraged it and enabled it to happen. I am making representations to the Minister to continue the support for the Albury Project as our State targets homelessness and mental health wellbeing for our youth.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER VOICE

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (18:31): I begin by acknowledging the traditional owners, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, on whose country we meet. I also acknowledge the traditional owners of my home in Newcastle, the Awabakal and the Worimi people. When I was 18 I had the honour of going to South Africa on a scholarship at a time when the fight against apartheid was at an all-time high. I was taken into the township of Soweto by African National Congress sympathisers. I visited schools and churches, and I was witness to the devastating poverty and extreme inequality that they lived in and fought against.

I was a passionate and hopeful young man who preached equality and dreamed of a fairer world for all so, when someone questioned what I was doing in South Africa and why I was not out fighting for the First Nations people of my own country, I was left stunned and unsure. Why did I, a young Australian, know more about the horrendous conditions that many South Africans were living in than the horrendous conditions Indigenous Australians were living in? Why did I not know that rheumatic heart disease, a condition that has mostly been eradicated in developed countries for over 50 years, was and still is affecting a disproportionate number of First Nations children? Why did I not know that Indigenous Australians were and still are the most incarcerated people in the world? Maybe it was because our First Nations peoples did not have a voice.

I knew then that my mission for equality would not end in South Africa; it had only just begun. Shortly after I returned to Australia, I marched in the first Invasion Day protests in 1988, on the bicentenary of Australia's settlement by white people. When a newly freed Nelson Mandela spoke on the steps of the Sydney Opera House in 1990, I believed that my dream of a fair and equal world was a little closer. When Paul Keating delivered his iconic speech at Redfern Park in 1992, I believed our country was speeding down the road to reconciliation. When I am out in the community, speaking with my constituents about the upcoming referendum, I recall that speech. Paul Keating's words have never been more relevant. He said:

The message should be that there is nothing to fear or to lose in the recognition of historical truth, or the extension of social justice, or the deepening of Australian social democracy to include Indigenous Australians.

There is everything to gain.

The referendum is about recognising the oldest culture in the world in our Constitution. The Constitution is our Federation's birth certificate, but our country has a much longer history that needs to be remembered and respected. It is about giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the opportunity to speak on issues that affect them. A Voice to Parliament will advise the Government on issues such as the poor health conditions and over-incarceration of First Nations peoples to ensure that practical solutions are achieved. It is about recognising and listening to Indigenous knowledge and experiences. There is nothing to lose and everything to gain.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart is an invitation to all Australians to walk alongside one another, to be equal and to be united. To turn down that invitation would be a massive setback on the road to reconciliation. Newcastle has a long and proud history of recognising our First Nations peoples and communities and supporting their fight for equal rights. Over 3,000 of my constituents are from First Nations backgrounds, and that population is only growing. Over my time in Parliament I have established strong relationships with local Awabakal, Worimi and other First Nations communities in my electorate. I know how much getting a Voice to Parliament means to them.

As the representative for Newcastle, fighting for First Nations rights, I stand on the shoulders of giants. Bryce Gaudry, a trusted mentor and friend to me, once represented Newcastle here at State Parliament. As the Parliamentary Secretary for Aboriginal Affairs at that time, he consistently advocated and fought for the rights of First Nations people, not just in Newcastle but across New South Wales and Australia. Under the leadership of Newcastle's first female lord mayor, Joy Cummings, the City of Newcastle was the first council in Australia to fly the Aboriginal flag above the city hall. Its advocacy and legacy lives on in my electorate, where the fight for

equality is never ending. I am confident there will be resounding support for constitutional recognition and a Voice to Parliament in the upcoming referendum.

MODULAR HOUSING

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (18:36): I address a critical issue that plagues our regional areas—a double-shortage blow that threatens the very essence of our thriving towns and cities. I refer to the interlocking challenges of workforce scarcity and housing inadequacy that are stifling our growth and our prosperity. As we navigate the intricate tapestry of our regional landscapes, we are confronted with a catch-22 that has very profound implications for our future. On one hand we find ourselves in dire need of an expanded workforce—a fresh infusion of skilled individuals who can breathe new life into our industries, foster innovation and drive the engines of progress. On the other hand we are grappling with an acute housing shortage that undermines our ability to attract and retain those essential workers, particularly those who reside within the medium- to low-income brackets.

The problem cannot be disentangled because addressing one issue inherently relies on resolving the other, so I bring into focus a solution that can serve as the catalyst for change. That solution is modular housing, a game changer that promises to alleviate our regional housing shortage and revive our rural communities. As Leader of The Nationals in New South Wales, I am deeply committed to championing that cause. The beauty of modular housing lies in its versatility—its potential to serve as a short-, medium- and long-term fix.

Let us look at the short term first. It offers a rapid response to our urgent need for accommodation, put very simply, particularly in areas going through rapid change and development like renewable energy zones. Its efficient and streamlined construction process means that homes can be ready to move into in a fraction of the time it takes for traditional construction. Looking ahead to the medium term, those modular structures can be harnessed to create new suburbs or expand existing ones, infusing life into the very heart of our regional landscapes. As we plan for the long term, modular housing offers a promising solution for addressing the enduring challenges of social and affordable housing—something we often talk about.

So why modular housing? Simply put, it brings efficiency, speed and versatility to the table. Homes can be erected almost anywhere without being constrained by location. Whether it is private land, council-owned property or, in fact, Crown land, the modular approach offers unprecedented flexibility. We have already seen successful partnerships around the development of Crown land in places like Cooma, and modular housing could easily make a tangible difference to more of those types of partnerships into the future. Modular homes can be tailored to meet the unique needs of each community. From one-bedroom units to spacious three-bedroom residences and even studios, the homes can be designed to suit the diverse needs of our workforce. Individual and modern—that is modular.

Let us not overlook the potential job creation within our regions. The construction and transportation of modular homes will generate local employment opportunities, further revitalising our economies. Crucially, modular housing is not hindered by weather-related delays as the homes can be manufactured within controlled factory environments. That means progress can march forward without the setbacks that have often plagued traditional construction projects. Companies specialising in modular homes are ready and eager to contribute to our collective efforts. Their innovative ideas and commitment to change line up very well with our mission to bolster regional housing. I have already engaged with some of those businesses and it is imperative that we now forge meaningful partnerships to bring their ideas to fruition. In this endeavour, collaboration will absolutely be our guiding light.

The State Government can play a pivotal role by working with local government around providing the necessary infrastructure—things like power, water and sewer—that will lay the foundation for modular housing developments. We also need to work in harmony with local councils to address roadways and other infrastructure needs. I really want to see a meaningful legacy for the towns and cities across regional New South Wales, which will otherwise continue to struggle to attract workers and house them. Rather than seeing work camps set up outside towns as projects are occurring, surely we can take the opportunity to make a difference now and for future generations, and it can be a modular solution. I call on the Government to join us in smoothing the pathways of planning and making it easier for those developments to unfold seamlessly. The time has definitely come for us to embrace the potential of modern modular housing. State and local governments need to start looking at this in a different way and unlock the boundless possibilities that lie within our regional towns and cities. I cannot wait.

NETBALL

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (18:42): I acknowledge that on 6 August 2023 the Australian Diamonds won the Netball World Cup in South Africa, beating England 61 goals to 45. It was a historic match as it was the first time England had ever made it to the grand final. The momentous victory by the Diamonds also

marks the first time that they have held the world cup trophy in eight years, and it is the twelfth time in the history of the world championships that Australia has won the title. Indeed, on 14 August 2023 Australia celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of when we won the first ever world championship, defeating New Zealand in England. The 2023 Australian Diamonds World Cup squad consisted of captain Liz Watson, vice-captain Steph Wood and teammates Sunday Aryang, Kiera Austin, Ash Brazill, Courtney Bruce, Sophie Garbin, Paige Hadley, Sarah Klau, Cara Koenen, Jamie-Lee Price and Jo Weston, with coach Stacey Marinkovich. The reserves were Ruby Bakewell-Doran, Kate Moloney and Donnell Wallam.

Just like the Matildas, those women have inspired a nation, and that is particularly evident in the South Coast electorate. Last weekend I was thrilled to attend the opening of the new netball courts at Park Road, Nowra, with teams from all over the Shoalhaven in attendance to help celebrate. The cutting of the ribbon was undertaken by Mayor Amanda Findley and included the hardworking executive committee of Shoalhaven Netball Association: president Kathy Rembisz, secretary Wilma Klein and committee members Maree McMillan, Helen McGuire, Sara Reynolds, Amy Ryan, Kerri-ann Norman, Libby Walsh, Nat Atkin and Rachel Hagedoorn.

It was also great to have Netball NSW represented by Vincent De Luca, OAM, and Sallianne Faulkner, with Jennie Webster, OAM, the current New South Wales Premier League winning coach and strong supporter of Shoalhaven Netball Association, also in attendance. Shoalhaven City Council contributed \$4.8 million to the new courts, but there is still so much that Shoalhaven Netball Association would like to achieve, including the building of an indoor facility at the Park Road Netball Courts to service its members and grow the sport, especially as the association proudly has a metropolitan representative league team.

Jervis Bay Netball Club is the biggest club in the district. Its four courts at Wool Road, Sanctuary Point, in the bay and basin are unsafe and not playable. Despite this, the club still trains on them. The club has been promised two new courts near the leisure centre at Vincentia, but more are needed for their 24 teams. This project has been sitting still for several years now, so netballers on the South Coast are eagerly awaiting progress and I will continue to advocate for them. The New South Wales netball community has over 115,000 members who play, coach, umpire, officiate, administer and just love this fantastic sport. Women and men of all ages are playing netball. I too have enjoyed playing netball for most of my life, playing in mixed indoor teams, ladies indoor competitions and outdoor night comps—all providing me with hours of fun, camaraderie and fitness. Recently I was honoured to play in the New South Wales parliamentary women's team against New Zealand parliamentarians, and I look forward to playing in the social masters at Woy Woy later in the year so that we can all continue to promote the wonderful sport of netball. I congratulate the Diamonds. They are truly dazzling.

BARWON ELECTORATE TOURISM

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (18:46): It has been a boom time for tourism recently in Barwon. Over the past few months, the electorate has hosted a multitude of big events such as races, agricultural shows, concerts and rodeos, and several big tourist developments have either started, are nearing completion or have been unveiled. This year's Mundi Mundi Bash was a huge success, with over 12,000 people coming into Silverton. I was on the Barrier Highway last week and saw hundreds of caravans heading west to join in the fun. Primarily a music concert, it featured some well-known Australian performers and bands. But there were also other eccentric elements, like over 6,000 people paying tribute to Tina Turner by breaking the record for the number of people dancing the nutbush together, and hundreds of people in underwear doing the Mundi Undi Run, both to raise money for charities like the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Louth Races finally ran again after being stopped twice due to COVID and once due to flood. It was nice to make it back to such a famous country race with a long history going back to 1890, along with thousands of others who turned out for the event—over 5,000 people into a town that normally has about 30.

I was also at Milparinka last week to unveil Sturt's Steps, a tourist trail that goes through some of the land explored by Charles Sturt. The next day I was at the first sod turning for the building of the Baaka Cultural Centre at Wilcannia, which will preserve aspects of Aboriginal culture and be a community hub where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people will come together. There are also dozens of other events coming up, like the Broken Heel Festival, a celebration inspired by the film *The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, the Let's Dance Festival at Carinda—that is a David Bowie Festival—and the Enngonia and Come-by-Chance Picnic Races, two iconic country race meetings. I encourage everyone in this House to get out there. A more recent addition to the tourism trails out west is the visitor centre at Condobolin, which will be opening soon near the Utes in the Paddock—an outdoor art gallery with utes turned into artworks.

I am constantly being invited to openings, unveilings, festivals and shows; you name it. But with over 44 per cent of the State to cover, it is not always possible to accept. But this plethora of attractions means that tourists can head out almost anywhere in the electorate and be assured of something to see or do. Tourism in western New South Wales has enjoyed a boom time over the past few years. It was given a huge boost from July to October 2020, when people in the cities were given their first chance in months to get out and about. They

could not go overseas and they could not go interstate, so they hitched up caravans and went out west into the countryside. Owners of cafes, restaurants, museums and other tourist haunts often tell me that was their best year. That five months was their best year in a decade. That burst of tourism inspired many people to return—some for good—and it spread the word about what a great place regional New South Wales really is, not just to visit but also to live in.

A recent survey showed that one in five people are thinking of moving to a regional area in the next two years and over 30 per cent in the next five years. Some of the impetus came from that period when people were out of lockdown around New South Wales. They liked what they saw. Many of them bought real estate, sending property values in regional New South Wales soaring. That burst of tourism also helped revive many towns that were still recovering from the drought. Such a large injection of tourism money was more than welcome. Some towns in Barwon are reliant on either mining or agriculture, which can make them susceptible to what happens with resource prices or drought conditions. Some are lucky enough to have a bit of both, but towns that can also draw money from tourism can really benefit from the revitalisation of town infrastructure, more jobs and increased opportunities to have their communities recognised.

That is why it is so vitally important to keep government funding flowing to regional festivals, events, sporting fixtures, tourist developments and other things that will draw tourists to every corner of New South Wales. There have been some good programs that are showing positive results, such as the Reconnecting Regional NSW – Community Events program that offers funding for markets, fairs, festivals, field days, theatre, racing carnivals and community celebrations. It has provided funding for Cobar's Running on Empty Festival—that is based on the petrol-head movie from the '80s, Mr Temporary Speaker.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I'm too young to remember.

Mr ROY BUTLER: Nyngan's Big Bogan Festival is also a good one, so get out there and see that. The Mundi Mundi Bash was funded by the Regional Events Acceleration Fund. Tourism funding also needs to build up some of the local infrastructure like roads, street signs, accommodation, water supplies, sewerage, lighting, campsites, dump points and boat ramps—all things that will make the visitor experience better and allow a town's population to expand when some big event is on or when tourist season gears up. While these events and tourist drawcards bring more money into the electorate, they also show people what a liveable place regional New South Wales is. They allow locals to show visitors the sort of hospitality that might make them want to get out of the city and go to the bush for good. There a lot of people doing that.

CAMDEN HERITAGE AND HISTORY

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (18:51): Today I speak about the history of Camden itself. It is important to note that Camden's history did not start in 1788 with the arrival of the First Fleet. Camden sits at the intersection of three tribal boundaries, serving as a meeting place for the local Indigenous peoples. Early settlers noted seeing corroborees and gatherings of local Indigenous peoples from all surrounding regions. Heritage in Camden started all those thousands of years ago and it has been built on since then by Indigenous peoples and settlers alike, forming the distinct cultural heritage that the town possesses today. The Macarthur family, pioneers in agriculture and wool production, left a permanent mark on Camden and its surroundings. The family helped formed Camden's early colonial history, setting the region up for success.

Local history groups currently in Camden cherish the history of the town and seek to protect, preserve and showcase it to all those who wish to come and see it. Camden is full of beautiful buildings that have significant heritage value. The Camden Courthouse, Camden Park House and the Camden Police Station are a few of the heritage buildings, built decades ago, with historic architecture and design from another time. It was a time when Camden was considered a rural township, so different to the suburban nature it possesses today. Local historical societies have contributed to the local area and economy, seeking to preserve the historic nature of Camden in keeping with its character in the face of significant changes. I particularly mention two of these groups: the Camden Area Family History Society and the Camden Historical Society. These heritage and history groups make such a vital contribution to the local Camden area.

Last week I had the pleasure of visiting the Camden Museum, which is run by the Camden Historical Society. A museum is a place of living history, where the stories of our forebears come alive through carefully curated exhibits and displays. Every item, every photograph and every narrative shows the journey that Camden has been on in reaching the present day. Through the efforts of the museum we can peer into the lives of those who lived in a different era, providing valuable insight into the past. It was such a joy to chat with members of the historical society and see people who are so passionate about displaying and sustaining local history.

It was great to see that the Camden Museum is committed to accessibility and community engagement. It serves as a bridge between generations, ensuring that the knowledge of the past is shared with the younger

members of our community. The museum exhibits showcase the best of Camden, from items to famous people who have called it home. I thoroughly look forward to attending the next exhibition hosted by the museum on the life of Graeme Clark, a man instrumental in the development of the cochlear implant that has changed the lives of so many people around the world. He was another local, raised in Camden.

The commitment of Camden Museum to showcase some of Camden's vibrant history serves as a reminder to us that heritage and history cannot be taken for granted. Heritage needs to be looked after to preserve some of the character that has developed with towns, villages and suburbs. Camden Museum does an excellent job of doing this by acknowledging Camden's historical significance and the continued character that its history exhibits to locals and tourists alike. I thank the Minister for Heritage for her commitment to protecting important heritage that is central to local areas and their economies. I particularly thank her for meeting with me a few weeks ago together with the Camden Residents' Action Group to talk about Camden's local heritage and the town generally.

Heritage is vital to towns and communities like Camden, showcasing its vibrant history and serving as a reminder of past times for future generations to see. Groups such as the Camden Historical Society make a brilliant contribution to the local area. Heritage is an issue that does not get a huge amount of airtime or media coverage but the look, feel and character of an area can make a difference to people feeling like they are welcome and are at home. Heritage is something we can all look to improve on. Local history should be cherished and serve as a beacon into the past, just as the Camden Historical Society has done brilliantly with the local museum, which I encourage everyone to one day visit as it is truly a blast from the past and a delight to see.

WORLDSKILLS AUSTRALIA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:55): I recognise the extremely talented and gifted students at Newman Senior Technical College and TAFE NSW Port Macquarie Campus on their successes at the recent 2023 WorldSkills Australia National Championships held on 17 to 19 August in Melbourne. Some 21 of Port Macquarie's best and brightest VET students travelled to the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre to challenge and test their knowledge at the biggest trades and skills competition in the country. A showcase of 100 education providers and employers was presented at the WorldSkills National Championships, with more than 60 skills on display over the three-day period. The event also included over 50 competitions for students to test their skills against other peers in their region, celebrating career pathways for those interested in vocational education and training.

Newman Senior Technical College Port Macquarie selected 19 students from 12 vocational areas to travel interstate to experience Australia's premier trade and education event. Those attending included Jayden Farrington and Knaihe O'Hara, information technology; Abbey Styles-Slater, automotive; Emma Marchant, food and beverage; Molly Partington and Kingsley Threlfo, bricklaying and blocklaying; Ella Mannion, Heidi Simmons and Lillie Jepp, health services assistance; Flynn Hall and Laacey Costigan, business services; Cooper Williams, carpentry; Elka Monckton, commercial cookery; Harry Dodd, plumbing; Elijah Coles, metal and engineering; Jasmyn Debreceny, Molly Ahearne and Jasmine Van Den Nieuwenhof, tourism; and Braydan Laing, wall and floor tiling.

I acknowledge the triumphant winners: Lillie Jepp claimed gold for health assistance; Abbey Slater won gold for automotive; Cooper Williams took out gold for construction; Flynn Hall received gold for business services; Elka Monckton won silver for commercial cookery; Emma Marchant claimed bronze for food and beverage; Kingsley Threlfo won bronze for bricklaying; Jasmyn Debreceny took out bronze for tourism; and Jayden Farrington also won bronze for information technology. Representing TAFE NSW Port Macquarie campus were Kyle Polidano and Carlos Bovey Mendez. Kyle is an electrotechnology student with experience in electrical installation planning and design, fault finding, testing and maintenance, and repairs. Carlos is currently studying graphic design and was pumped to compete at WorldSkills amongst other likeminded peers, describing the training as "really valuable" to improve his tertiary skills.

Launched in 1981, WorldSkills Australia has supported more than 100,000 students to participate in national and international vocational education and training in schools competitions. The team at WorldSkills is "passionate because skills grow careers, foster life-long partnership and build successful communities." As a member of the former Liberal-Nationals Government, I am proud of our record in vocational education and training. Overall, we invested a record \$3.1 billion in skills and training, including delivering 120,000 fee-free places to grow a pipeline of apprentices and other skilled workers. Relating specifically to year 11 and 12 students, prior to the election we announced landmark reforms to revolutionise the delivery of VET in schools across the public, Catholic and Independent school sectors. These reforms addressed challenges often found in rural, regional and lower socio-economic areas by opening doors for all students to study VET courses regardless of where they go to school.

The new model would see all schools receive a subsidy for externally delivered VET, with students having 60 per cent to 100 per cent of their tuition fees covered, depending on their school's level of socio-economic disadvantage as determined by the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage. The Liberals and Nationals remain committed to delivering VET in regional and rural communities. We only hope that Labor will pursue the adoption of these significant reforms in VET so that all students in New South Wales have equal access to opportunities to study their chosen career. Again, I congratulate all of the students who participated at the 2023 WorldSkills Australia National Championships. A qualified trade certificate can literally open the doors to employment and business opportunities. I thank TAFE NSW Port Macquarie and Newman Senior Technical College for offering an opportunity for their students to attend WorldSkills and equipping them with the necessary skills to obtain employment and advance their careers.

VAPING

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (19:00): Recently I met with Cancer Council NSW to discuss the wonderful, important work that it is doing. In spite of the great advances in medicine and health care over the past few decades, there is still no cure for cancer, and cancer still causes so much devastation and heartbreak in our society and healthcare system. Cancer Council NSW has recently been awarded a grant from Multicultural NSW to deliver in-language cancer screening workshops, including in Mandarin Chinese. That is important because research has shown that the rates of cancer screening in people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities are significantly lower than the general population. It is critical to catch a lot of cancers early. The funding will deliver in-language workshops, and the Government looks forward to cooperating with Cancer Council NSW and other partners to roll out the workshops around my electorate of Strathfield later this year.

As we were talking, the conversation with Cancer Council NSW turned to the issue of vaping, particularly amongst young people. Cancer Council is currently undertaking the Generation Vape research project with the Daffodil Centre at the University of Sydney, thanks to funding from the Federal and New South Wales health departments since 2021. That funding is due to end in 2024. The aim of the research project is to look at awareness, perceptions, attitudes, knowledge and behaviours of vapes and e-cigarettes amongst young people aged 14 to 17 years old, 18 to 24 years old, their parents, carers and high school staff. A recent online survey showed that, from a sample of some 700 young people aged 14 to 17, 32 per cent reported being an ever-vaper—in other words, somebody who has had at least one puff of a vape. Fifty-four per cent of ever-vapers had never smoked cigarettes prior to starting vaping. Ever-smokers—in other words, somebody who has had a puff of a cigarette—were seven times more likely to be an ever-vaper than those who had never smoked, and ever-vapers were 18 times more likely to be ever-smokers than those who had never vaped.

There were concerning findings about how young people access vapes in New South Wales, including that 80 per cent of young people find it easy to access vapes, 80 per cent of those who did not buy vapes themselves got them from a friend, 49 per cent of those who did buy a vape bought it from a friend or a dealer and 31 per cent who bought their vapes bought them from a retail store such as a tobacconist, petrol station or a vape or convenience store. There were also findings about the types of vape products that young people are using, including that 50 per cent used disposable vapes, 53 per cent used a vape that they knew contained nicotine and that the most important factor in their purchasing decisions for vaping was flavour and taste.

The research snapshot from 2022 also highlighted the following findings: For young people, access to vapes is getting easier. The sources are their friends, dealers at school or outside of school and retail outlets. For this age group, over half of ever-vapers reported using a vape they knew also contained nicotine. For young adults, the most important factors for vaping included flavour, taste, relaxation, stress management and the nicotine hit. It is also seen as socially acceptable within this age group. Obviously parents and teachers are massively concerned about vaping. Over half the teachers surveyed were aware of the sale of vaping products in schools. A 16- to 17-year-old male student said to the researchers, "I think it's a major issue. These kids are, like, three or four times younger than us and they have access to it—just straight access."

As a parent, I too am greatly concerned about the prevalence of vaping in schools. Vapes are colourful, brandable and small, and they deliver lots of nicotine hits. The risk of vapes is that they threaten to undo the decades of progress that we have made in tobacco control and nicotine control through the anti-smoking campaigns. They threaten to undermine and undo this really important work unless governments—Federal and State, in a whole-of-community approach—tackle this growing problem.

MUSWELLBROOK HOSPITAL

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (19:05): I provide the House with an update on the Muswellbrook Hospital redevelopment project. To some extent there is a sense of déjà vu in having to revisit the issue in this place. A discussion began tonight with the Minister for Health and the Minister for Regional Health

that I hope can continue over the coming weeks with the Treasurer before the New South Wales budget is delivered on Tuesday 19 September.

I begin with a request to Minister Park and Treasurer Mookhey. It is a somewhat familiar request, if they read the *Hansard* on Muswellbrook Hospital. I say to them: Please do not forget the lifters of the New South Wales economy. The Hunter Coalfield makes up much of my electorate of Upper Hunter, which centres on the Singleton and Muswellbrook local government areas [LGAs]. New South Wales Treasury previously advised in answers to questions on notice that the two LGAs have accounted for about 55 per cent of total coal royalties paid in this State. Revenue contributions during the life span of the redevelopment have gone from approximately \$1 billion in the 2015-16 financial year to \$3.5 billion in the 2021-22 financial year. Based on published NSW Resources Regulator data for that seven-year period, there was almost \$12.5 billion in coal royalty revenues. Using just 50 per cent of that figure, Muswellbrook and Singleton have contributed \$6.25 billion.

To briefly give the Ministers a history of the Muswellbrook Hospital redevelopment project, it began with and remains a community request for action. The Muswellbrook Aged Care and Hospital in a New Environment [MACHINE] organisation, chaired by Granville Taylor, was formed in May 2013 to lobby for improvement in the hospital and aged-care facilities in Muswellbrook. On 14 November, just six months later, then member for Upper Hunter, the Hon. George Souris, presented a petition of over 10,000 signatures on behalf of MACHINE to the Legislative Assembly. The petition debate was subsequently held in this place on 6 March 2014, with the members of the MACHINE committee in the public gallery. Let us revisit their grievance. The petition stated:

The Petition ... brings to the attention of the House the Site Development Plan prepared by Hunter New England Health (HNEH) in March 2012, which proposes a 15-year staged refurbishment plan for Muswellbrook District Hospital at a cost of \$55.4 million. The work is required because of serious issues with asbestos contamination, ward areas which are identified as having grossly insufficient space to operate under existing conditions and generally archaic infrastructure. HNEH concluded that insufficient capital funding will be available at one time to address multiple issues.

MACHINE's prayer or clear request was to "appoint a taskforce to fund and construct a new hospital for Muswellbrook as described by HNEH's 'Total New Building Option' at a cost of \$79 million for completion before 2018. This will help meet the Health guidelines." During that petition debate, Mr Souris advised the House:

The master plan considers a number of different options for redevelopment. One is a staged approach that would allow Hunter New England Health to take full advantage of any progressive funding opportunities that may arise. The committee suggests that with limited funding available this may be the best option for the region.

Mr Souris continued:

A \$6.5 million emergency department redevelopment is underway and is the first phase of the overall redevelopment of Muswellbrook Health Service. The New South Wales Government has already allocated \$4 million to the project from the ... Resources for Regions funding program. BHP Billiton is partnering with Hunter New England Health to deliver this project ... [as part of] BHP Billiton Sustainable Communities ... program.

History now records that stage one was completed in 2015. Stage two was completed in 2019 through the Resources for Regions program. But we have now arrived at stage three, which is meant to build on and complement stages one and two. Health Infrastructure appointed a design team in October 2021. A community information session, which I went to, was held at Muswellbrook and District Workers Club on 24 June. Fast-forward over 12 months, and I have now been informed that Health Infrastructure has undertaken a review of the hospital and, due to cost-of-living increases, reduced the scope of stage three. At this stage I put a request through to the Minister for Health and the Treasurer: Do not cut the services of stage three from the Muswellbrook Hospital project.

LISMORE LIFELINE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (19:10): Recently I attended the formal opening of Lismore's Lifeline office, which has been operating since February 2023 after being decimated by the 28 February 2022 floods. It is in Conway Street in Lismore, next to the Service NSW centre, which was also smashed in the floods and is now operating out of the Lismore golf club. Our community is eagerly awaiting its rebuild and waiting to hear about the plans from the emergency services Minister and Service NSW Minister, who is in the Chamber beside me. The formal opening also marked Lifeline's sixtieth anniversary. Lifeline shone a light on suicide prevention, as it does each and every day, as its people do their quiet work to change and save lives. The event was presided over by Michael Were, the New South Wales general manager of Lifeline Direct Limited. All were met by Cathy Bird, the community engagement manager for northern New South Wales, upon arrival.

In local style the opening had enough formality to honour the wonderful work of Lifeline and its whole family of staff and volunteers and enough informality to be in step with local culture. Uncle Gilbert Laurie performed the smoking ceremony and spoke in his Bundjalung language. He is a language teacher and storyteller in our local schools. Michael and his team, which includes many wonderful volunteers, have been a tower of

strength to our community in general and in particular during our disasters—floods, bushfires, drought and more floods—including the humanitarian disaster that smashed our communities on 28 February and 30 March 2022.

Michael has been with our community for only a few years, but he is now well and truly a local. I can remember meeting him upon his arrival. John Brogden—a friend, Lifeline luminary and suicide prevention advocate who was then Lifeline Australia CEO and is now patron and head of Lifeline International—let me know that Michael had been appointed and wanted us to meet up straightaway. We too became friends. I have watched as, under his stewardship, Lifeline has gone from strength to strength. During the emergency response and the recovery time, Lifeline operated out of the Lismore showground, whose team opened their gate to many in need. Lifeline kept people—I was one—clothed and fed, gave them hope and kept some alive, giving expression to its vision of an Australia free of suicide.

In attendance at the opening event was Colin Seery, the CEO of Lifeline Australia. I also had the pleasure of having Minister Jodie Harrison in town for a few other events and welcome announcements. Minister Harrison got to attend Lifeline, have a tour of the offices, was briefed on their work and gave a sweet speech. She thanked them for their grand work and thanked them with great emotion for helping a family member. The local Lifeline crisis supporters had worked out of mobile sheds out the back for some 10 months and were pleased to be back on deck in their headquarters, as were the locals who volunteer to take calls and the suicide prevention staff. Lifeline lost its shops in Casino Street, South Lismore, and Magellan Street in the CBD and was able to reopen the CBD shop but not the Casino Street one. It is good to see the CBD shop up and running. All proceeds go to the running of the local 13 11 14 service and other suicide prevention programs. It is important to support the shop by donating quality clothes and goods and buying them as well.

Michael said, "Calls to Lifeline doubled after the floods and at the 12-month mark were 50 per cent higher than the months before the floods." I also have some startling statistics that cover some areas in the Lismore district, mainly in the east and north parts, which I will speak about another time. The Lifeline team always needs more volunteers. They lost some who had been personally impacted by the floods or who were directly helping family or friends or both. Michael said that Lifeline crisis supporters come from all walks of life and ages and the key characteristic was empathy coupled with good listening skills and time to give four hours per fortnight. They provide ongoing training and support. For volunteering opportunities, they say to ring their 1300 number or the 24-hour crisis support on 13 11 14. They offer free video counselling sessions as well. I thank Lifeline for changing and saving lives.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (19:15): That was quite fortuitous. I think the member for Lismore timed her contribution perfectly.

Ms Janelle Saffin: I did.

Mr JIHAD DIB: I update the House and my friend the member for Lismore. The Minister for Planning and I visited Lismore about six weeks ago where we met with the member for Lismore, the member for Clarence, the member for Ballina and the member for Tweed. One of the issues raised was about the Service NSW centre operating temporarily out of the golf club. I assure the member for Lismore and other members that we are looking at it very closely and will hopefully have some good news very soon. I also congratulate Lifeline and the incredibly resilient Lismore community, which continues to inspire us. Every time I go up to Lismore, I am inspired more and more. We will not leave them, as I promised we would not. We will get a resolution to that and I will keep the member for Lismore in the loop.

Ms Janelle Saffin: You visited Clarence too.

Mr JIHAD DIB: And Clarence as well, sorry.

DIGITAL GAMING MACHINES

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (19:16): I speak in support of my private member's bill, the Gaming Machines Amendment (Cashless Player Cards) Bill 2023. Poker machines were legalised in New South Wales in 1956, but the mechanical machines introduced then were a lot less harmful than the machines decimating our communities today. Back then they were often called the one-armed bandits because they were mechanical and had a handle on the side to make the machines operate. Sure, those old machines did harm, but nothing like today's machines. What has changed? To put it simply, the old mechanical machines went digital. Suddenly the machines could perform tasks they were never able to perform when they were legalised in 1956. Suddenly deliberately addictive features could be programmed into the machines, and the industry does that. Nothing I am saying is controversial. It is well-known that Australia is a world leader when it comes to creating addictive machines. Governments around the world already agree with machine experts and engineers who say that today's machines are deliberately programmed with addictive features.

I will look at one such feature: losses disguised as wins. That is when the computer inside the poker machine makes the digital reels look like the user has almost won even though they were never going to win. I will explain that. A machine user will put their hard-earned money, or their stolen money, into a machine and hit the bet button. They will watch the reels spin and the lights flash and hear the music play. Then the reels start to stop, slowly, one by one. They see apple, apple, apple, apple and pear, and they think, "I nearly won." But the truth is, they did not nearly win. That is because the outcome of the spin is decided the exact moment the bet button is pressed. That is not speculation; it is fact. Right now, every single machine in New South Wales is programmed to con you into thinking you have almost won—apple, apple, apple, apple, pear. It is a digital con job.

Make no mistake, it is not just the machine users who are being conned. No, every single person in this Parliament and every Parliament since the mechanical machines went digital has been conned. It is as if the Parliament of New South Wales legalised a popgun and the industry secretly turned it into a nuclear weapon. Today's poker machines are sneaky. They are addictive, and all too often they are deadly. How many suicides, how many broken homes and how many hungry kids can we live with? When will New South Wales politicians accept that we have all been conned? In fact, the people of New South Wales do not even have to use a modern-day poker machine to be harmed by it. That is because poker machines are the second leading cause of crime in the community after the illegal drug trade, according to a famous but often ignored study by the University of South Australia. We have all been conned, but we can do something about it. We must rein in that industry, starting with the immediate introduction of a cashless gaming card.

Right now, the Premier says he is running a trial of the cashless card. I have a real problem with that, which is why I am presenting my bill. A trial is a cop-out. It is weak. It says, "I might do this, but I might not. I don't really know. Let's wait and see." That is not good enough. The people of New South Wales are tired of waiting as they watch the suicides and the broken homes and the hungry kids and the increased crime that everyone in this place could help to prevent, if we wanted to. Let us stop calling it a "trial" and start calling it "testing". In other words, we need to tell the industry that we are introducing a cashless card—end of story. We acknowledge that we may need a short period to test the cards and to make sure the system works, but it cannot be a trial. It cannot be optional. It must happen. If my bill is supported, that is the message the industry will hear. It will not like it, but it will absolutely hear it, which is why I encourage everyone in this place to support my bill.

ILLAWARRA RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONES

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (19:21): A little over a week ago, the Federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy fired the starting gun on something that could transform the Illawarra while creating jobs, cutting emissions and improving energy security. Minister Bowen announced the commencement of consultation on an offshore wind area off the coast of the Illawarra. That is the sort of energy project that I had in mind when I successfully lobbied the previous Government to add the Illawarra to its renewable energy zones, which finally happened in February after the zone was declared and more than \$43 billion in investment interest was expressed.

The consultation area is 1,461 square kilometres. It could generate up to 4.2 gigawatts of electricity—enough to power around 3.4 million homes. It could support up to 2,500 jobs in construction and a further 1,250 ongoing jobs. At its closest, it will be 10 kilometres from shore; at its farthest, it will be 30 kilometres. This presents an exciting opportunity for the region. As Business Illawarra noted, "Large scale renewable energy projects are critical for the Illawarra's energy evolution." As executive director Adam Zarth went on to say, "The opportunities around manufacturing, securing labour supply and the logistics required to bring a project of this scale to reality will be enormous." But the Illawarra has skilled labour, a research-led university, a deepwater port and industrial capacity, and all are ready to play a role in building our future.

Of late, the region has been growing its contribution to addressing our future energy generation, transmission and storage needs. Hydrogen projects are expanding, particularly as key users of hydrogen such as the Tallawarra B power station commence operations, and potentially a Squadron Energy peak power generator after that. Add to that the work underway at BOC Gas, which is developing a hydrogen hub in the region aimed at mobility and energy applications. Coregas recently opened Australia's first commercial hydrogen refuelling station in the Illawarra aimed at heavy vehicles like trucks and buses. Remondis garbage trucks are going to be powered by it as a trial.

Building hydrogen supply will be supported by local organisations like Hysata, which is improving the efficiency of hydrogen electrolyzers out of technology developed in the Illawarra, which could reduce the cost of production, progressively building supply as new steel production technologies are developed and commercialised to provide a seamless pass to low carbon steel production—particularly now that BlueScope has approved plans to reline the No. 6 blast furnace to continue steelmaking in the region. The hydrogen sector is expected to grow

to generate an additional \$50 billion of GDP by 2050 and create an additional 16,000 jobs nationally. Hydrogen production needs considerable energy, and offshore wind—or variable baseload power—can provide that power.

That is another reason it is important to have secure energy supplies ready for industry in the Illawarra. Building our capacity in energy storage will be supported by local companies such as Sicona, whose magic fairy dust is making batteries last longer, perform better and recharge more quickly, and Green Gravity, whose innovative approaches give new life to old mine shafts as energy storage facilities. The University of Wollongong was built on its excellence in material science, providing the skilled research platform to help improve materials for energy storage into the future. Materials are one part; the IT challenge is just as much about energy transformation. The University of Wollongong graduates the highest number of IT graduates in the country, a skilled base to build the bridges between generation, storage and use in a way that drives each electron further while protecting infrastructure from disruption.

The Illawarra has skilled workers, and we are creating more of them. It has innovations, and we are commercialising them. It has the industry willingness, and we are building on it. For the past few years a group comprising unions, businesses, educators, researchers and me have been working to bring people together with a common goal of making sure that the industrial heartland that helped build the Illawarra and the country is at the centre of a clean industrial future. That is why the region is ready to play an oversized role in our energy transition and future, and in extracting resources out of renewable energy assets at the end of their lives. I continue to work with the Department of Planning and Environment to improve planning and assessment processes around renewable energy projects.

Part of the Minns Government's effort to modernise the planning system is about making sure that we deliver on our ambitious energy goal as much as it is about tackling the housing and jobs challenges. However, if we are going to achieve our shared goal, it is increasingly important for the planning system and all parts of government to act in cooperation as efficiently as possible so that the rollout of infrastructure is not delayed. Communities are increasingly asking, "What's in it for us?" Just as the technologies that deliver renewable energy will mature, so too must our regulatory structures, assessments and oversight. Benefit-sharing must be part of that, and I am determined to improve the system so that we can pursue our shared goals with shared intent while sharing in the benefits beyond our collective benefit from a cleaner environment. That all starts with a collective willingness from government, industry, researchers and the union movement, and that is what we have in the Illawarra.

VAPING

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (19:26): Each week my office receives calls and emails from worried parents, teachers and community members about the rise of vaping amongst children. It is well known that vaping is becoming more common among kids. That is deeply concerning. Vaping threatens not only kids' health but also their education. Research indicates that between 20 per cent and 60 per cent of high school students have vaped, including children as young as 11 years old. Many of those children are already addicted to vaping, with teachers reporting that some students are unable to wait until the end of the day, or even lunchtime, instead vaping inside the classroom. Vaping affects students' attention span and hurts their neurodevelopment and immune systems. Vaping can also leave a young person at increased risk of depression and anxiety due to the chemicals and toxins commonly found inside vapes.

Earlier this year the Federal health Minister, Mark Butler, stated that vaping has become "the number one behavioural issue in high schools". Teachers and parents are unsure how to address the rise of vaping in children, with constant disciplinary action such as suspensions seeming to result in students developing more severe addictions and falling behind in their education. There is a perception that kids vaping is less harmful than cigarettes. That is untrue. Some vapes contain the same amount of nicotine as 50 cigarettes. Even kids, who should not be vaping at all, should have some capacity to make informed decisions about the consumption of vapes. That is extremely difficult due to the lack of awareness surrounding their contents.

Vaping products are often not labelled or their labels claim misleadingly that they are nicotine free. That is extremely dangerous, causing kids to develop nicotine addictions unknowingly. Each time a parent contacts me, they are very clear. They feel that their children do not understand the consequences of vaping in the same way as they understand the consequences of smoking. They also believe that children should not have access to vapes at all. The fact is that it is illegal for a child to be supplied with or to use a vape. Whilst families and parents have the primary role in educating kids around vaping, government has a role to provide a structure and support so that families are able to undertake this important task.

Parents and teachers are concerned that the packaging of vapes is highly appealing to kids, helping contribute to the perception of vapes as trendy rather than deadly. Kids see vapes as fun, spending time and money to try out every flavour from mango to vanilla to mint. For many, nicotine-free vapes have been a tool to help quit

smoking. With the rise of illegal nicotine vapes, the data is showing that the opposite is true for children in our State. The research indicates that young people who vape are three times more likely to take up smoking. We now have kids who are vaping who would never have smoked. Rather than improving health outcomes, vapes are laying a foundation for devastating health outcomes for kids as they grow up.

Let me be clear, these remarks are not about adults who vape. That is a separate matter. This is about keeping our kids safe. It is clear that the Government must do more to address the epidemic of vaping amongst children. I am concerned that violations of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008 are becoming more common. Any form of vaping is illegal for kids in Australia and New South Wales, yet research indicates that nearly 80 per cent of children believe it is easy to obtain a vape at a shop or online. Vapes containing nicotine are meant to be illegal in New South Wales, but a lack of transparency regarding the contents of vapes means children are unknowingly damaging their health and developing addiction. Under section 16 of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, advertisement of vapes is illegal. However, many shopfronts display the word "vape", unchallenged by the Government. This must be stopped. Vaping is a serious issue, which requires laser-focused action. I implore the Government to take immediate action to prevent children from vaping.

To support concerned parents and teachers, and ensure our laws are enforced, the Government should implement the following measures urgently: an undercover blitz on stores and individuals selling vapes to children; increasing fines by 10-fold on those who sell vapes to children, which would increase the fine on individuals from \$11,000 to \$110,000 and the fine on a corporation from \$55,000 to \$550,000, a strong message which would help change behaviour; an immediate media campaign regarding increased enforcement action, and an education campaign targeted at kids; and the immediate rollout of vape detectors in all New South Wales schools. Those measures can be implemented now. However, a long-term strategy is needed. I call on the Government to prepare a full suite of measures to tackle underage vaping to help keep our children safe.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER LAURIE BEATH

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (19:31): It is often remarked that, when it comes to regional towns and villages, everyone knows everyone. While this is a generalisation, where Father Laurie Beath was concerned, you could be certain that he was as close as anyone could be to knowing everyone. How else can one explain the crowd of more than 1,000 people who gathered recently to pay their respects at his funeral in Cowra? The hugely popular identity, who lost his battle with cancer in July, clearly left an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of the many who knew him. Aged just 68 when he passed away, Father Laurie worked tirelessly for his community, serving as parish priest at Cowra, Eugowra and Canowindra, a post he held for 12 years. He was considered by all who knew him as hardworking, compassionate and inclusive.

Having grown up in the Cowra area, Father Laurie had an abiding connection to the district, with many both within the Catholic community and beyond considering him a part of their own family. This was a point of pride for Father Laurie; it was remarked during his eulogy that he loved being part of his own large family—he was one of nine children—but he also loved being part of other people's families. Described as a "social person", Father Laurie always preferred the company of others over time spent alone, and it was said that sometimes after a hard day at work he would phone various friends and see what they were having for dinner before deciding who he should visit that evening. He dedicated his life to serving his communities.

Despite his terminal illness, Father Laurie continued to show his determination in fulfilling his ministry right up until his death. In fact, just weeks prior to his passing, Father Laurie was instrumental in organising celebrations marking the 150th anniversary of Catholic education in Cowra. This included the reopening of the Brigidine Chapel, which, under the guidance of Father Laurie, recently underwent a major refurbishment, and now stands as an enduring symbol of Father Laurie's life's work, and an eternal reminder of his legacy created during his 35 years of service of the Catholic Church. While his work ethic never wavered, there was certainly a lighter side to Father Laurie. After celebrating mass he was often known to playfully rate the choir with a score out of 10. His love of music extended beyond singing hymns to the church. ABBA and The Seekers were high on his playlist, even to the extent that he would dress up with amateur impersonators and perform tracks by The Seekers for fundraising events.

Those who attended Father Laurie's funeral heard stories about his fondness for harness racing and his years spent playing football. Friends say he often boasted about a lighthearted match he played many years ago alongside the now Melbourne Storm coach Craig Bellamy, whom he knew through his professional football playing brother, former second-row forward for the St. George Dragons, Barry Beath. But there was a softer side to Father Laurie, who was renowned for his love of gardening. Known for his creativity, the grounds of his presbytery were always immaculate. Once he had mowed his own lawns, he would then help others design and create their gardens.

Before becoming a priest, Father Laurie was a teacher, which was just as much a calling for him as the priesthood was. As parish priest, he naturally enjoyed participating in school life and interacting with the students and their families. Prior to his posting in Cowra, he served in the communities around Dubbo, Bathurst, Coonabarabran and Baradine and maintained strong connections to the people in those areas, often travelling great distances—even when he was unwell—to visit those who needed him. He was once asked by a journalist what it was that he could bring to a community. Father Laurie replied, "My style, my energy and my enthusiasm", all of which added up to a larger-than-life personality, who will be greatly missed and certainly never forgotten by the ever so many people who knew him.

BUSHFIRE READINESS

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (19:36): On Tuesday 8 August a perfect storm of dry ground, windy conditions and heat enabled terrible fires to destroy thousands of homes in Maui, Hawaii. The situation on the ground that the people dealt with is heartbreaking, and the individual stories of loss that are now being broadcast are similar to those that are shared by many people who know members in this place and by many from my community who remember the major fires over the past few decades. The fires on 8 August jumped containment lines through the day and spread through the town of Lahaina, a township of 13,000—not too different from the population projections, based on current growth and approvals, for Wilton and Appin, which are also surrounded by bushland with only one way in and out.

The ocean that contained the people of Maui is similar to the ridges that contain the population of Wollondilly, the place where we now have an approved 40,000 projected homes, thanks to the former Liberal-Nationals Government. This risk is one that is not unknown to many in this place. Following the Green Wattle fire, Wollondilly Shire Council was given a grant and sought to create a hazards analysis and emergency management study, which would present evidence-based advice to mitigate risk associated with natural and human-made hazards across the shire, including exit times for villages that will grow to over eight hours.

The areas of risk have increased as the populations in certain areas have grown. This includes the northern part of my electorate in Warragamba, Silverdale and towards The Oaks, as well as the areas in the central part of Wollondilly, with Picton, Tahmoor and Thirlmere relying on the aging Victoria Bridge and the single lane each way railway underpass to exit. We need to plan for disaster here in two ways. I recognise the Reconstruction Authority's brief in developing and implementing methodologies for disaster resilience, adaptation and mitigation activities. I look forward to the outcomes from the newly created authority for statewide preparedness. I also look forward to reading the full, unredacted hazards analysis and emergency management study when council finally releases the document for the locals to read. The blockages and the increased times should also inform our decisions and infrastructure provision. Perhaps a developer should not receive 13,000 homes, and larger blocks with a smaller population would be more in keeping and manageable.

We also need to look for solutions for infrastructure clogs, and this means we need the Picton bypass desperately. I do not want the communities of any of the villages in Wollondilly to be the next Maui village. The villages of Picton, Tahmoor and Thirlmere are surrounded by bushland. We have been through a dry winter and the risk of fire this season is high. The projection for years to come is higher as the El Niño dry period is beginning. The townships are at risk and access to the freeway or alternative accessways through the north are key. What are those accessways? Ultimately, the completion of the M9, and Maldon, Dombarton and a number of other freeway interchanges will be needed. However, I am a realist. That small list of projects will cost hundreds of billions and we need to prepare with what we have.

The Picton bypass project is partially completed—a journey of close to 35 years—and needs to be done. It will unlock easier access to the freeway for the community. The single-lane, weight-limited bridge will fail in an emergency, as will the single lane each way underpass. I know this because they failed last time. Fortunately, while everyone was queuing that afternoon in 2019, the wind changed—otherwise the story would have been much different. Balmoral was lost and Buxton and Thirlmere were next to go, with so much fuel and beautiful bushland turned deadly thanks to years of drought.

The difference is ours to make and I seek an answer from the Government for Wollondilly now, starting with the preferred option for the Picton bypass to be completed. These needs must be addressed now. If they are not and if the unthinkable occurs tomorrow—the fires return to Wollondilly and the wind does not change—then it will be too late. There will be people caught in their cars, trying to get out of the area. My plea to the Government is to look seriously at completing the Picton bypass, where more houses are being built and where people will have less time to evacuate when these events occur—and they are going to come.

HAWKESBURY FLOOD RECOVERY

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (19:41): I recognise a recent visit to the Hawkesbury by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and the Minister for Emergency Services, who I note is in the Chamber, on Wednesday 16 August 2023, at which I was present with Hawkesbury City Council's mayor and general manager. With a new government in charge, it was important that Hawkesbury's flood issues are discussed openly. The Hawkesbury community is still recovering following the horrendous flood disasters that have impacted us since 2020. Our recovery was not enhanced when Premier Minns confirmed after the election that he would not proceed with raising the Warragamba Dam wall. So my question to the visiting Ministers was: What, then, is the New South Wales Labor Government's solution to providing relief and protecting everyone below Warragamba Dam?

This Government has said that levees are a solution, but I am yet to see any business case or modelling that justifies this. I welcome the opportunity to consider the case. Both Ministers said that work was being done in this area as part of a suite of measures to prevent a recurrence of the flooding of the past. I eagerly await further intelligence from those Ministers. Flood mitigation was also raised. It is an issue that creates great angst amongst primary producers, businesses and families, who constantly watch water levels during wet weather periods and do not understand why water cannot be released earlier than it has been in the past. Better regulation of water levels must be factored in as part of the solution.

Moving to discussions about the Pitt Town area, I raised the importance of honouring the previous Liberal-Nationals Government's \$100 million commitment to building the Pitt Town bypass. This project has been sought for more than 70 years. I could not get a definitive answer from either of the Ministers, even though they surely appreciated the importance of this project to the local community. I take this opportunity to thank the Pitt Town Progress Association for advocating to the Ministers when they toured Pitt Town recently. Residents are subject to more than 800 truck movements a day on Pitt Town Road and the local streets.

I speak also about the action taken by Transport for NSW to reduce the speed limit along Pitt Town Road, starting yesterday. A reduction to 50 kilometres per hour has been applauded on Pitt Town Road, Bathurst Street, Chatham Street and Eldon Street, but there is an error that has come about because local knowledge has not been applied. Cattai Road's 60-kilometre speed limit has been lifted to 80 kilometres per hour right where the Milestones Early Learning centre is located. That 300-metre stretch of road once had a 60 kilometre per hour speed limit. I urge Transport for NSW to correct that and to continue with the 50 kilometre per hour speed limit so that families with preschoolers can enter and depart the centre in safety. Imagine a loaded truck-and-dog vehicle travelling on Cattai Road suddenly braking at 80 kilometres an hour to avoid a parent who is trying to enter or leave the childcare centre. I implore Transport for NSW to review this and to continue with the 50 kilometre per hour speed limit for that small stretch of Cattai Road.

I return to the post-flood needs that I raised with Minister Scully and Minister Dib. The Pitt Town evacuation route is 50 years old and is in serious need of an upgrade. I was grateful that those Ministers walked the route with me. If raising the dam wall is to be ignored, the evacuation route must be upgraded at a cost of around \$11 million. It will provide residents with a safe passage for when they next need to evacuate. Another item I raised with them was the need for a better way to design and rebuild houses in Hawkesbury so that residents can recover faster from the impacts of floods. Can we work towards building elevated homes, homes that are not on a slab and homes that have custom-made fixtures that can be removed easily? Can we enable homes to be more resilient, so they can be hosed down and dried out faster?

I asked whether the New South Wales Government would consider underwriting insurance policies for residents, but I was only invited to make a submission to a Federal inquiry that is about to inquire into flood-affected communities, which I will do. The financial toll of six floods in three years has been catastrophic for many businesses, primary producers and families in Hawkesbury. The riverbank restoration was also discussed. We want to provide a quicker path and less red tape for people who want to restore the riverbanks. They do not want the Government to pay for it, but they would like to be able to do it themselves without being fined. I want the Ministers to look also at the Cornwallis collapse. Both Ministers appreciate the work that must be done. I hope we can work together on those solutions. I really appreciate them coming out on the day. Hopefully by taking a bipartisan approach we can get a good response to those matters.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (19:46): It is my lucky day: I have responded to two private members' statements. I thank the member for Hawkesbury for her contribution. I echo that Minister Scully and I visited Hawkesbury, as co-owners of the regulation around the NSW Reconstruction Authority, and I thank the mayor and general manager of Hawkesbury. The member touched on a few things that I would agree with, and we will continue to work on some of the others. Minister Scully and I have been doing a lot of touring around the State, primarily because we want to see what is going on so that we can come up with even better ideas.

We acknowledge that work must be done. We acknowledge also that the previous Government was in power for 12 years and could have done a lot more. We are picking up some of the pieces and trying to fix them. In relation to some of the programs that the member raised, we visited Pitt Town for the second time to look at evacuation routes, levies and roads. We are proposing to continue to work with the local community, local government and local members. That is how we will get the best outcomes, with the Reconstruction Authority driving the best plan forward.

OYSTER BAY ART AND CRAFT FESTIVAL

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (19:47): I acknowledge the Oyster Bay Art and Craft Festival, which recently celebrated 50 years in our community. The annual festival attracts hundreds of attendees, artists and stallholders, who all have one common goal: to raise money for the wonderful Oyster Bay Public School and its students. Since its inauguration in 1970, the Oyster Bay Art and Craft Festival has grown to become a family favourite, with parents and children eagerly anticipating the final weekend in May each year. The event, which has grown into a longstanding Oyster Bay Public School tradition, is the biggest of its kind in southern Sydney and is known to be a weekend of fun for all.

Since 1970 the Oyster Bay Art and Craft Festival has been the major fundraising event supporting Oyster Bay Public School, providing it with thousands of dollars' worth of educational resources that go directly to classrooms and school programs. The generous support of parents and the broader community has meant that this event has grown over the years and continues to thrive. The dedication of teachers, parents and volunteers is extraordinary, both over the course of the festival weekend and during the many months of preparation. The festival is renowned for its fantastic planning, the high calibre of exhibits that are available for purchase and the child-friendly activities. This year there was something for everyone, including handmade jewellery, photographic art, homemade delicacies, books, CDs, DVDs, toys, apparel and show bags.

Every year the festival kicks off on Friday night and includes an auction, entertainment and the display of art work which is available for purchase. This included art by Robert Adams, Suanne Allen, Jennifer Bollinger, Anne Cahill, Catherina Campion, Noel Carigg, Rosalind Conroy, Liz Donley, Sandra Dennan, Rosalie Duligal, Anna Farmillo, Barbara Fitzpatrick, Catherine Garbutt, Beth Gibbeson, Noel Grannall, Annabel Green, Richard Green, Chris Griffiths, Julianne Heatherly, Brett Hayes, Vicki Hazzard, Gillian Hughes, Gaye Jennings, Faye Joseph, Maureen Lembke, Chrysovalantou Mavroudis, Janet McCauley, Elizabeth Morrissey-Tarrant, Louise Murray, Robert Ogilvie, Sue Olby, Andrea Rees, Michael Rogers, Leah Ryan, Narelle Scott, Michelle Sexty, Nicole Southworth, Kat Stanciu, Sandra Stebbings, Michal Sturgess, Dorothy-Rae Sullivan, Kristen Tall, Maija Tillers, Georgina Walls, Julie Watkins, Margaret Whii and Margaret Whitehurst.

Oyster Bay Public School's dance group, choir and band performed over the weekend, as well as community bands and dance groups. Additionally, there were enough doughnuts and other delicious treats to please everyone. It truly was a fun day out for all. Of course, none of this would be possible without the Oyster Bay Art and Craft Festival Committee. I acknowledge the hard work of Alex Grossett, Andrea Ford, Belinda Bartels, Ben Prest, Bonnie Bearcroft, Brendan Ford, Brianne Gorman, Bruce Balfour, Callena Brooks, Charley Jones, Christopher Burton, Liz Rudder, Emma Phelps, Fiona Morrison, Hayley Kohler, Helen Maddern, Hollie March, Joel Plavecky, Karina Cox-Ruddell, Karla Malin, Kita Kemp, Kylie Prestoe, Kylie Shadlow, Larna Cooper, Laura Stafford, Laura Petch, Lisa Coyle, Mat Egan, Matt Smith, Melanie Ashton, Melody Stack, Michelle Herrett, Miranda Moir, Monica Villacorta, Rebecca Rathbone, Sheree Morrison, Sian Monkley, Sophie Brooke and Vickie Hinton.

The history of Oyster Bay Public School is unique. Starting as a one-teacher school in 1944, the Oyster Bay Public School that we know today has grown substantially over the years. The school now has two sites, caters for 430 students and is a beacon of our community. Indeed, the values of respect, resilience and accountability characterise Oyster Bay Public School. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the school's leadership in overseeing this event. I extend my thanks to principal Wanita Bowles, assistant principals Christine Harrison, Brendan Sexty, Samantha Jenkins, Jacky Merrin and the rest of the staff who work at the school for their fantastic contribution to not only the school but our broader community.

It would be remiss of me not to also recognise former assistant principal Elizabeth Rudder for her efforts at the school and wish her well in her new journey as the Principal of Bonnet Bay Public School. As a result of this highly successful fundraising event over the years, the school has been able to purchase state-of-the-art classroom furniture and learning resources and has even created a naturescape playground, amongst many other things. The Oyster Bay Art and Craft Festival is an incredibly popular event in our local community. I congratulate all involved in the fiftieth-year anniversary event. I look forward to celebrating this wonderful event in our community again next year.

RIVERSTONE ELECTORATE LIVEABILITY

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (19:52): The history of Riverstone clearly illustrates the significant impact of local employment on a community. Initially established in 1803 as a small settlement, Riverstone's transformation began in 1878 with the opening of the Riverstone Meatworks. Over time, the meatworks became the heart and soul of Riverstone and the surrounding district, employing over 2,000 people by 1978 and becoming the largest employer in the region. A community survey conducted way back in 1980 highlighted the pivotal role the meatworks had in delivering the town's economic activities. The income generated by the meatworks facilitated the payment of workers, circulating money to various businesses, schools, medical services, banks and other essential amenities in the town. Other economic forces were present, but the meatworks' significance overshadowed their impact.

During the meatworks era, more than half of Riverstone's population found local employment, with most enjoying a daily commute of less than 30 minutes. This abundance of local jobs resulted in minimal unemployment and low crime rates, and allowed people to spend more time socialising with family and friends, participating in sport, recreational activities and volunteering, and engaging with neighbours and the broader community. This way of life, supported by local employment, is now known as liveability, a term that encompasses the quality of life and overall wellbeing of a community. A livable community is safe, attractive, affordable and sustainable, offering appropriate housing near employment, education, health care, social services, healthy food and quality open spaces.

In the broader context of the North West Growth Area, most of which falls under the Blacktown local government area, the population is projected to reach approximately 250,000 upon completion. As the North West Growth Area expands, the challenge lies in absorbing the population growth while still creating liveable communities. In recent years the concept of liveability around Riverstone has been replaced with the term "total yield"—thousands and thousands of new residents without the infrastructure to support liveability.

The key to achieving this lies in redeveloping the Riverstone town centre, with the meatworks site, now known as Riverstone West precinct, strategically located at the heart of the North West Growth Area. The opportunity presents itself to unite the east of Riverstone with the west of Riverstone on either side of the railway line, creating an employment hub that can cater to the entire region. With local employment for up to 40,000 people, access to over 100 hectares of open spaces and a revitalised town centre to accommodate the growing community, the vision for a liveable community suddenly becomes attainable.

The lack of road and transport infrastructure is a crucial challenge facing the North West Growth Area, where Richmond Road, Garfield Road and Windsor Road are all congested with heavy traffic. Particularly, Richmond Road and Windsor Road are the preferred routes for people travelling to work because despite the thousands of "new yield" residents, there are no local jobs. Garfield Road remains the only major road in the Sydney metropolitan area that has a level crossing.

One simple and effective solution to this issue is local employment, which reduces the necessity for travel and alleviates the strain on our already overburdened roads. Emphasising local employment within the community will create a domino effect in the local economy. Workers spending their earnings locally will stimulate business activities within the community, fostering economic growth. In turn, local businesses are more likely to support community organisations and contribute to charitable groups, further strengthening the community fabric. In addition to the economic benefits, working locally profoundly impacts the lives of individuals.

Employees who work locally experience increased productivity, happiness and overall wellbeing. With reduced commuting times and expenses, individuals have more time and resources to engage with their families and actively participate in volunteer activities. Achieving this vision of a liveable community requires collaborative planning between the State, Blacktown City Council and other community stakeholders. The potential for positive change is too significant to be ignored. By seizing these opportunities, Riverstone and the North West Growth Area can pave the way for sustainable growth, ensuring a vibrant and thriving community for generations.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:57 until
Wednesday 23 August 2023 at 10:00.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

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

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL - WORLD WALK EXPEDITION

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—On 12 February, then 27 years old Alexander Campbell of Yowie Bay embarked on 4 year solo journey to circumnavigate the world on foot. The journey will spread over 40,000 km, 4 continents and 30 countries. Alexander is raising money for the Fred Hollows Foundation, to support its work towards ending avoidable blindness. The Foundation operates in more than 25 countries, through some of which he will pass. In some countries it costs as little as \$25 to restore sight and is one of the most cost-effective ways of alleviating poverty. The Foundation has restored sight to more than 3 million people. Alexander has raised over \$12,000 so far. The journey began and will end in Sydney; he recently passed Darwin. This is not Alexander's first walk; he hiked the Colorado trail (800km) and across the entire length of Nepal (1,600km). Alexander studied Anthropology and Archaeology at the University of Sydney. He graduated with First Class Honours in Anthropology, his thesis examining the experiences of long-distance hikers reintegrating into life after their hike. Alexander's journey can be followed on his website <https://www.worldwalkexpedition.com>, Instagram, and Facebook.

WADE GRAHAM

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—Cronulla Sharks captain Wade Graham recently became the third player in the club's history to pass the milestone of playing 250 games for the club. Since his debut for Cronulla in 2011, Wade has been one of the club's best and most consistent performers. He was an integral part of the 2016 NRL premiership-winning team, of which he is the last remaining member still playing. He took over as Sharks skipper with Paul Gallen's retirement at the end of the 2019 season. Before joining the Sharks, Wade played 42 games for the Penrith Panthers. He has also played eight matches for Australia and made six State of Origin appearances for NSW. He is also a Rugby League Players Association [RLPA] Board member. Wade has announced he is hanging up his boots at the end of the season. I congratulate Wade on his extraordinary career. Wade is a genuine, decent fellow and I wish him all the best for the next chapter of his life after he retires from playing NRL football.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE BUSINESS AWARDS 2023

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Acorn Building Solutions of GyMEA Bay for winning the Outstanding Service and Trade award in the 2023 Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards this month. Founded by Colin and Clare Laycock in 2010 after 15 years' experience in building and construction, Acorn Building Solutions specialises in residential and commercial building and construction projects. In residential projects, work includes extensions, internal renovations, unit refurbishments, kitchen, laundry and bathroom renovations and construction of freestanding garages, outdoor rooms, pergolas etc. I congratulate Chopt Studio and Productions in Caringbah for winning the Outstanding New Business award in the 2023 Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards. As a design and construction company, it specialises in event and brand activation solutions. It offers a vast range of joinery and fit out options along with visual merchandising, retail displays, TV and stage sets, and now also offers finesse metal fabrication. I congratulate Commercial Freight and Logistics in Caringbah for winning the Most Inclusive Employer award in the 2023 Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards. CFL is a leading independent international logistics and customs brokerage specialist, running for over 40 years. It has partners in 780 cities in 191 countries.

SWISS NATIONAL CELEBRATION DAY

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—The Swiss National Day Picnic was held on 6 August 2023 at the Castle Hill Showground. The day was organised by the Swiss Yodlers of Sydney and The Swiss Folk Dance Company Alpegruess. The day celebrated the 175th anniversary of the Swiss Federal Constitution. The National Picnic Day was attended by Swiss compatriots, friends and families and it was a great day. There were stalls offering Swiss delicacies, barbecues, Swiss Chocolates, Raffles and Silent Auctions, games for the children. Those present were honoured by the attendance of Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis, Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, National Councillors Yvonne Feri and Thomas Aeschi as well as Swiss Ambassador Caroline Bichet-Anthamatten. Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis said: "Australia is still one of Switzerland's favourite non-European destinations, and this afternoon, with you and your warm welcome, I can easily see why." "Switzerland and Australia are united in the values they share and democracies like ours, can gain much from each other, despite global challenges and crises." On behalf the Castle Hill community I congratulate the President of the Swiss Yodlers of Sydney Alios Krez and the event organisers. I look forward to next year's Picnic Day.

KENTHURST PRE-SCHOOL FETE

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—The Kenthurst Pre-School Fete was held again this year. The fete was held on 6 August 2023 at the John Benyon Rotary Park. The Kenthurst community were treated to music as

well as a magnificent variety of stalls including a white elephant stall, kid crafts, face painting, cake decorating, gift baskets, homemade cakes, and much more. There were pony rides, pirate ship rides and train rides. The Fete raises funds to provide much needed maintenance for the Kenthurst Pre-School. This year's fete raised an amazing amount expected to be on final counting near \$30,000.00. Funds will be used for important projects such as expanding the outdoor pergola and updating the classroom. The Preschool commenced operation in Kenthurst on Monday, 3rd April 1967 and has been serving the needs of the Kenthurst community for over fifty-five years. The committee are to be commended for the work undertaken to organise what was a truly wonderful fete. The committee involved including the President Christine O'Brien and committee members Kathryn Carlino, Carlie Bryom, Lyle Reuben, Candice Rapp, Tanya Corrigan, Eliza Calabria, Rebecca Sedger, Andrew Power and Kate Martin are to be congratulated for their efforts. It was a wonderful community day.

HILLS WINTER SLEEPOUT, 05 AUGUST 2023

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—On 5 August 2023, the tenth annual Hills Winter Sleep Out was held at Bella Vista Farm. The Sleep Out is a unique event aimed to raise awareness of homelessness arising from factors including domestic violence, financial hardship, and mental illness. The Sleep Out raises funds to support people in The Hills who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Total funds raised this year exceeded \$60,000.00. With many dedicated community members, I spent the night at the Farm. Some stayed outdoor under the clouds, in tents, in the shed or in cars. The weather report records at 4.00am it was 13 degrees although I am sure those who were outside would say it was much colder. We heard stories from community members, and we were treated to the barbeque organised by Norwest Sunrise Rotary. On behalf of the Castle Hill community, I recognise and congratulate those involved including Dr. Michelle Byrne, Mici Beer, and Jim Taggart OAM. I also recognise the support given by Norwest Sunrise Rotary, Rouse Hill Town Centre and Hills Community Aid. I thank everyone for supporting the Hills Winter Sleepout and I look forward to next year's Sleepout.

BARNIER PUBLIC SCHOOL SRC

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—I would like to recognise the incredible work of Barnier Public School's student representative council. During the recent National Day Against Violence and Bullying, Barnier's SRC made informative presentations for their fellow classmates. They raised awareness of the seriousness and the need to act against bullying and violence. It is great to see student run initiatives to address social issues which impact people at all ages and levels in society. Tackling bullying head on from such a grass roots level, instilling these values in our children, takes our whole community forward. The student representatives also encouraged their peers to talk people they trust, whether it be a friend, parent or teacher. I thank Barnier Public School's SRC for carrying out these important presentations and I hope you continue to play an important role within the young people of our community. I commend Barnier Public School's SRC for taking an active role in standing up against violence and bullying.

BLACKTOWN CITY LIONS

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—Mr Speaker, the need for emergency relief in the Riverstone electorate is not new. With a three hundred per cent increase in calls for assistance in the last few years, the people of North West Blacktown are eternally grateful to community members like the members of Blacktown City Lions. Led by Rachel and Rebel Hanlon, the crew from Blacktown City Lions spend their precious personal time in the service of others engaging in multiple community initiatives. Just over a year ago, I spoke with Rebel and Rach about my concern for social support in Riverstone. Without hesitation, the Lions sprang to action establishing a monthly food collection at Woolworths Greenway for the Emergency Relief Pantry at North West Community Services. Over the last twelve months, the Lions have collected over 60 trolleys full of groceries for the people of Riverstone donated by the generous shoppers of Greenway. Thank you to the whole Lions Crew, in particular Rachel, Rebel, Cecil and Amrit. Your passion for serving the community is very much appreciated.

NITHYAKALASHESTRA DANCE SCHOOL

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—Attending the 2nd Annual Dance Concert of the Nithyakalashetra Dance School in my Electorate was an honour. Congratulations to all the fantastic performers from four to over forty who graced the stage, showcasing their incredible talent and embodying the spirit of their esteemed Guru, Jeeva Elyathamby. Through her unwavering commitment and passion, Jeeva has honed the skills of her students and instilled in them the values of discipline, perseverance, and respect for their art. In Riverstone, we take pride in our multicultural community, where diversity is not only embraced but celebrated. The concert illustrated the power of arts and culture to unite us all by allowing performers to express themselves and connect with others, regardless of language, race, or background. The performances displayed extraordinary talent and celebrated the immense diversity thriving within our community. The growth of the South Asian population in Riverstone is a testament to the contributions enriching our community in countless ways. I eagerly look forward to witnessing

more extraordinary performances from the Nithyakalashetra Dance School and celebrating the diverse talents that make up our community's rich tapestry.

ALEXIS BELL

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Alexis Bell, from Warilla High School, who competed at the 2023 NSW All Schools Cross Country Championships at Eastern Creek on Friday 21 July 2023. The 2023 NSW All Schools Cross Country Championships event was livestreamed this year, with multiple cameras set up to catch as much action as possible for families and friends who were unable to attend. Alexis won the event making her the CHS State Cross Country champion in the 17 years girl category. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our congratulations to Alexis and wish her well in her future sporting endeavours.

TREVOR BATES

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Trevor Bates, from Dapto, for generously donating blood which has proved vitally important for helping save the lives of newborn babies and others in need. Trevor made his first trip to the blood bank more than two decades ago when he was diagnosed with hemochromatosis, a disorder where the body builds up too much iron, which can eventually lead to tissue and organ damage. He had to give blood to get his iron levels down and then after his iron was down to a manageable level, he started donating on a regular basis.

The grandfather went from donating full blood to donating plasma and then platelets, which is when he discovered just how special his blood was. Trevor has a rare gene that is helpful for newborn babies' immune systems. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our congratulations to Trevor for all his blood donations that are helping save lives in our community.

THE GROUNDZ PRECINCT

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Katrina Novak, CEO of the Groundz Precinct, for transforming the Dapto Showground's old farm sheds into wonderful new spaces for families and functions. The site has just opened a new hospitality venue in The Poultry Shed with the Groundz Precinct planning to host even more events to make the most of the venue. The Dapto Agricultural and Horticultural Society was first established in 1857, with the showground one of the last remaining privately operating sites in the State. The not-for-profit group has used the site for the famous Dapto Show, markets and family fairs, with the racetrack a dominant feature. Through community consultation they established a future vision for the venue, with potential short-stay accommodation, a children's playground and more opportunities for hospitality businesses. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour electorate, I would like to express our congratulations to Katrina and the Groundz Precinct organisation for their vision and wish them well in this business venture that will benefit the community.

LINDA CLARKE-ANDERSON

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I wish to acknowledge and recognise lifelong volunteer, Ms Linda Clarke-Anderson for her commitment and dedication to St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School. Ms Anderson is a volunteer at St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School and has been willingly giving up her time and energy to help the school community for a number of years. Linda has shown unwavering support for the school. She regularly volunteers at the school's uniform shop, welcomes new parents on open day and assists students with their studies. In addition to this, Linda always helps out with other school events, fundraises and always puts her hand up to help in whatever way she can. The school would not be able to run so successfully without the invaluable contribution of volunteers like Ms Anderson. I would like to thank Ms Anderson and express my deepest appreciation for the wonderful work she does to spread joy and happiness throughout our local community.

RITU HINDUJA

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I wish to acknowledge and recognise Kogarah resident, Ms Ritu Hinduja, for her amazing contributions to our local community. Ms Hinduja started volunteering at the South Asian Australian Association in 2016. Since then, she has worked as an executive member of the association and has led the organisation in staff management, finance, operations, and events. For almost 7 years now, Ritu has been teaching different levels of language classes and looking after the administration at the Hindi School. As President of the Association, Ritu, was able to successfully complete the information and assessment session with the Department of Education which meant the South Asian Australian Association is now an approved early education and care provider. This also allows Ritu and her organisation to launch its first mobile preschool in Kogarah. I want to sincerely thank Ms Hinduja for playing a crucial role in shaping the direction and future course

of the Association. I express my deepest appreciation for her dedication, commitment, and ongoing support to our local community for which we are all extremely grateful.

ROSE SAID

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I wish to acknowledge and recognise lifelong volunteer, Ms Rose Said for her commitment and dedication to Carlton South Public School. Ms Said is a volunteer at Carlton South Public School and has been willingly giving up her time and energy to help the school community for over 38 years. Rose primarily teaches scripture, helping students appreciate the understandings of religious texts while developing their reading and interpretation skills. Rose is a quiet, empathetic, kind and loving person which is reflected in her teaching style. It is no wonder why, the students are so excited to see her come in week after week. In addition to this, Ms Said is always helping out with other school events and always puts her hand up to help in whatever way she can. The school would not be able to run so successfully without the invaluable contribution of volunteers such as Ms Said. I would like to thank Ms Said and express my deepest appreciation for the wonderful work she does to spread joy and happiness throughout her our local community.

NEWCASTLE AND HUNTER REGION VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL SERVICE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—The service for our country by Private (William) John Ashton, Service Number 1730888, was commemorated on Saturday 12 August at the Newcastle & Hunter Region Vietnam Veterans Memorial Service in Newcastle's Civic Park. I attended to pay my respects to those men who lost their lives from around Australia, and to those who came home forever changed by their experiences in Vietnam. The Vietnam War Memorial, where the service was held, was constructed by the Vietnam legion with funds donated by the citizens of the region. Those of us in attendance heard the story of Private John Ashton, who was affectionately known by his comrades as "Asho the Natio". Conscripted in the first Vietnam War ballot, he sadly lost his life on 3 April 1967 when he stepped on a landmine at the age of 22. He was one of nineteen men from the Hunter Region lost their lives during the Vietnam War. Their average age was just 24. My thanks to Newcastle & Hunter Region Vietnam Veterans, and to honorary historian W. James Mackay OAM for bringing the story of John Ashton to us. Lest we forget.

KOTARA SOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—When we support junior sport, we keep our community healthy and connected - and maybe we'll see our young players don their country's colours one day. The morning after the Matildas spectacular win, paving their way into the World Cup semi-finals, Kotara South Football Club celebrated the opening of the Lugar Park amenities upgrade, and I was thrilled to be part of it. The \$1.2m project replaces the old amenities with a new inclusive facility including accessible amenities, female friendly change rooms, canteen, referee room and storage. The project included investment from the club itself, the NSW Office of Sport under Greater Cities Sport Facility Fund and the City of Newcastle. It's a big step up from the days of just one changeroom, limited shelter for spectators and a tiny canteen. A big thank you to the club's executive, including president Bryn Hoskins, secretary Rikki Lee Pointon and treasurer Andrew Luks, as well as to Lyndell Jennison, who serves not only as the Girls/Women's Coordinator and Registrar but also as the Canteen Coordinator, and to Grounds and Facilities Coordinator Sue Aebi. It was great to celebrate the opening with the under-13 girls side. Go Tigers!

JOHN LE MESSURIER

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—On Tuesday 1 August, as part of World Scout Day, Charlestown Electorate local and community stalwart John Le Messurier was announced as the recipient of the third highest award in Scouting - the Distinguished Service Award. This is just the latest achievement for John, who was named the 2018 Gardener of the Year by Gardening Australia, and who worked so hard to transform what was a barren 6.2 hectare former coal mine site at Glenrock Scout Camp into a glorious native garden. I have known John for many years, and at a National Tree Day event recently I joined him and Antarctic explorer Dr Gareth Andrews, an Ambassador of the Scouting movement, to plant an Antarctic Beech tree at Glenrock Scout Camp. The tree symbolises the adventurous spirit and natural stewardship of the Scouting movement, which is so well-represented by John. Congratulations, John, on a well-deserved accolade! And thank you to Dr Andrews for sharing your adventures with the Charlestown community and inspiring many to dream.

YEAR 10 STUDENTS AT PENTRITH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, Minister for Western Sydney, and Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education)—I would like to

recognise Jaida, Tahlia, and Faith, who are Year 10 students at Penrith Christian School within my electorate. These students have dedicated themselves to STEM, taking their passions all the way to Singapore to represent Australia at the World Final of F1 in Schools STEM Challenge. At this competition, Jaida, Tahlia, and Faith will compete against 68 teams from around the world, to create the fastest miniature F1 car on the planet. What a great achievement, and experience for these young women, who I hope to find their adventure to Singapore both motivating and inspiring. Their dedication and passion for STEM is admirable and encourages other young women to pursue an interest and possible career in STEM, which is a growing industry that is vital as we move into the future. I look forward to hearing about their endeavours in Singapore, best of luck Jaida, Tahlia, and Faith!

ST MARYS RSL SUB-BRANCH VIETNAM VETERANS DAY SERVICE

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, Minister for Western Sydney, and Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education)—Last Friday 18 August, the St Marys RSL Sub-Branch held a commemorative service to mark Vietnam Veterans Day. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. I would like to recognise the service of the 60,000 Australian personnel that served in Vietnam and thank these veterans for their service and sacrifice, as well as the sacrifice of the families who had to witness their loved ones go to war. It is important that we recognise and honour their service for our nation, and the role they played in building our modern world. Our veterans made our nation proud and continue to make us proud to be Australian, every day. Furthermore, I would also like to recognise the work of the St Marys RSL Sub-Branch, who run various initiatives to support and maintain the wellbeing of our veterans. The support and friendship you provide to these community members is profound. Thank you for your work and dedication to our veterans. Lest we forget.

2023 TELSTRA ALBURY WODONGA BUSINESS AWARDS WINNERS

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to extend my congratulations to the following 2023 Telstra Albury Wodonga Business Awards Winners: Outstanding Business Leader (35-plus): Shane Walters-PCYC Albury; Outstanding Business in Professional, Financial and Business Services: Linchpin Digital-Albury; Outstanding Business in Education and Training: Squad-Albury; Outstanding Business in Healthcare and Social Assistance & Most Outstanding Business: Formulae-Albury; Outstanding Business in Construction and Trade: BP Air Services-Albury; Outstanding Business in retail and Personal Services: The Real Florist-Albury. These awards are in recognition of your incredible commitment, vision and determination as excellent business leaders in your respective fields. May your continued success serve as an inspiration to your business community.

RETIRING POSTMAN TREVOR PATTEN - 50 YEARS' SERVICE

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge Mr Trevor Patten, who has served the community of North Albury as a postman for the last 50 years and who has decided to retire. Mr Patten's colleagues from Australia Post organised a heart-warming tribute on Wednesday 11 July by riding in a convoy to Mr Patten's home, and surprising him with a gold postie helmet. The helmet displaying his name and a badge commemorated his remarkable 50 years from 1973 to 2023. Mr Patten will be showcasing this special gift in his games room alongside other tokens of appreciation he has received from his colleagues since retiring. Mr Patten has shown extraordinary dedication to his postal route and has witnessed the evolving changes and needs within the postal industry over his long journey. Thank you Trevor for your wonderful commitment and service to our community, as you embark on a well-deserved retirement.

BEANIE GETS NOD OF APPROVAL

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to extend my congratulations to Pat Meehan from Thurgoona, who has been recognised for creating an award-winning beanie - winning the Australian Road Trip category award at this year's Alice Springs Festival. Pat triumphed over hundreds of other talented participants from both interstate and international locations. The inspiration for her beanie stemmed from her extensive travels throughout Australia, showcasing the beauty of country as well as delving into research of our flora and fauna. The judges were captivated by her craftsmanship, where she meticulously captured our iconic flora and fauna. From the magnificent Uluru grazing the top of the beanie, to the clever use of roads and shrubbery to divide sections, whilst kangaroos and emus bound alongside a boab tree, with the Sydney Harbour Bridge, scattered with beloved koalas and Ulysses butterflies. Thank you, Pat, for incorporating the beauty of regional living into your art, bringing joy to our community and to all who travel.

AUBREY POLDEN – DEPUTY UNIT COMMANDER

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I rise today to acknowledge the newly appointed Deputy Unit Commander for Marine Rescue Crowdy Harrington, Aubrey "Aub" Polden. If you live in regional New South Wales and you live on the coast you will undoubtedly agree that one of our most valued team of first

responders is Marine Rescue. Operating 24/7, Marine Rescue are the heroes of our waterways and oceans where they provide immediate lifesaving assistance for boaters both recreational and commercial who find themselves in challenging and often dangerous circumstances. Now the second in command, Aub Polden will help lead a team of trained volunteers who are proficient in emergency response involving incidents offshore and on enclosed waterways, rivers and lakes. It is unsurprising that Aub was chosen for the Deputy Unit Commander's position considering that since joining the Unit he has qualified as a Radio Operator, Workplace Health and Safety Officer, Watch Officer and Buildings Officer. From a decorated employment history as an aircraft pilot and aircraft engineer in Papua New Guinea, I have no doubt Aub will shine in his new position and strengthen the capabilities of the Marine Rescue Crowdy Harrington unit into the future. Congratulations Aub!

AARON HALL - THE BAKER'S DELIGHT BAKER SUPPORTING 'BREAD TAGS FOR WHEELCHAIRS'

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I rise to recognise the benevolent efforts of local baker Aaron Hall who for the past three years has been supporting 'Bread Tags for Wheelchairs.' Aaron's Baker's Delight store seemed like the perfect business to be a collection point for the bread tags, with locals responding to the call and bringing in the small plastic tags that would normally be thrown in the bin. Locals are jumping onboard to support the cause with Aaron already donating approximately 100kg of bread tags to the charity. Bulk deposits are also coming in from schools and local clubs who have asked their students and members to bring in their bread tags for recycling. A collection of 250kgs of bread tags are needed to fund an entry level wheelchair which are then donated to children in South Africa who normally would not be able to afford the expense associated with purchasing a wheelchair. Aaron says that this simple act which can give a child some independence and freedom of movement is a satisfying feeling. I applaud Aaron's compassionate venture and hope the community continue to support him to support 'Bread Tags' for Wheelchairs.

HAYDEN COPPING – WORLD CHAMPION PADDLEBOARDER

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I join with the Port Macquarie community to congratulate World Champion Paddleboarder Hayden Copping on his sensational victory at the 2023 Molokai to Oahu World (M20) Championships in Hawaii. Locals have another reason to celebrate our regions sporting achievements after Hayden secured his first world championship in the stock category of the Solo Prone Paddleboard Race. Described as the 'worlds' most challenging paddleboard course' Hayden fought his way through the toughest of seas to achieve a finishing time of 5:41:16. Hayden has literally conquered the elements and recorded his name in the history books as Port Macquarie's newest, if not first, paddleboard champion. His achievements also highlights that regional Australia can deliver sporting excellence. The 24th Molokai to Oahu World Championships is a 52 kilometre, 2,300 foot channel race. Thirty countries were represented at the 30th July event competing in a number of paddleboarding disciplines for a prestigious world title. Hardly a novice to world competition, Hayden achieved a commendable second placing in the 2022 Blue Water Hawaiian Classic Pro Paddleboard Race, making him even more hungry for a world title. Congratulations Hayden - our community is so proud of your World Championship win!

INVERELL DRAMAMATICS GROUP

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I would like to recognise the Inverell based Dramatics group, a New England theatre group for adults with disabilities, for supporting the people of Lismore following the devastating floods in 2022. The group took part in the 29th annual Lismore Lantern Parade, which symbolically aims to bring light to the heart of the Lismore CBD. Parade members carried lanterns and presented one of their new works, Local Aboriginal Elder Uncle Alex Munro's March of the Murrigeegar, as well as signing the lyrics, sang in Gamilaraay by Mr Munro. I congratulate the 20 participants of the Dramatics group for taking part in the Lantern Parade, the group's Director Stephanie Marshall, for offering this new opportunity and Uncle Alex for sharing his culture with all. Thanks also to the Inverell Best Shed, in particular Ken Middleton, for making the trip to Lismore possible. I commend the Dramatics for lending their support to those at Lismore who have been doing it tough, for sharing your talents with other regions, for giving back to your community and for spreading goodwill.

RECOGNITION OF ADELE CHAPMAN-BURGESS AND RAQUEL CLARKE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I would like to recognise Adele Chapman-Burgess of Glen Innes and Raquel Clarke from Moree for curating artworks, objects and artefacts at the 'For our Elders, it's in our hands' exhibition held at Coonamble recently. I congratulate Adele and Raquel for being part of the First Nations led Curatorial Intensive Program, which explores the stories, cultural practices and wisdom from Elders, which guided the narratives and themes of the exhibition. I commend Ms Chapman-Burgess and Ms Clarke on this achievement, along with eight other First Nations Curators and Artists from the north west and far west

regions. Thanks also to the Outback Arts North West division for providing this valuable opportunity for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

VALE – DR EDGAR FREED

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the many achievements of the late Dr Edgar Freed, who received an OAM for his service to Medicine as a Psychiatrist at the King's Official Birthday celebrations recently. Dr Freed lived in Walcha, following many years of practice in Sydney. Dr Freed had an accomplished and exemplary career in Psychiatry and noted for his devotion and passion for the practice of Psychiatry for those mentally ill, in both the public and private sectors. In recognition of this, Dr Freed was awarded the Margery Johnston Award for Service to the Mentally Ill and their Families in 1995 and the Meritorious Service Award in 2017. I commend the late Dr Freed on his significant and enduring career and his contribution to mental health. Such a highly regarded leader in his field, his passing will be a considerable loss to the Health Sector, the Walcha community and to his family. Through loss there is an abundant legacy left by Dr Freed.

MAGIC OF WIRADJURI COUNTRY PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Dr JOE MCGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I would like to congratulate the winners of the Riverina Local Land Services [RLLS] Magic of Wiradjuri Country photography competition. I was delighted to present the awards alongside RLLS General Manager Ray Wallis and chair Barney Hyams at the Wagga Wagga City Library on the 7th July 2023. The theme was 'The Magic of Wiradjuri Country' and it was wonderful to have Wiradjuri Elder and Magic of Wiradjuri Ambassador Aunty Isabel Reid there. This competition encourages local primary and secondary students to reflect on and capture the beauty of Wiradjuri Country through photography. The competition and these pictures, which combine modern technology with tradition and culture, show the gifts of our talented young people which we can celebrate as a community. I congratulate the winners who were: Connor Simpson, Griffith North Public School – Junior Runner-Up; Kiana Sant, Young High – Senior Highly Commended; Jemima Nugent, Wagga Wagga Christian College – Senior Runner-Up; Corey Pye, Mt Austin High – Best Cultural Photo; Charlotte Foster, Wagga Wagga Public – Best Landscape; Skye Burnes, Brungle Public – Junior Highly Commended. And well done to Riverina Local Land Services for their sponsorship and support.

RIVERINA REGION VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2023

Dr JOE MCGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Volunteers are the backbone of our society, and I would like to congratulate and acknowledge all Wagga Wagga winners of the 2023 Riverina Region Volunteer of the Year Awards, announced last week on the 17th of August at the Wagga Wagga RSL Club. The volunteer team of the year was won by the Wagga Wagga Branch of the Country Women's Association of New South Wales, and was accepted by Dr Saba Nabi. The senior volunteer of the year was Brian Roy from Wagga Wagga, who volunteers with the Rotary Club of South Wagga. His award was accepted by Ray Pankhurst. And the winner of the Young Volunteer of the Year was Quade Smith from Lake Albert who raised more than \$20,000 for CanAssist. I would also like to thank all the volunteers in my electorate for the important work they do across a variety of different areas in the community including but not limited to health services, the environment, homelessness and poverty support, landcare, veteran support, multicultural services and accident and natural disaster relief and support.

LOCAL LEGEND DALE ALLISON

Dr JOE MCGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I would like to recognise the 50th career anniversary of local guitarist, Allison Music business owner, former accountant, and Daily Advertiser Role of Honour recipient Mr Dale Allison. Dale said to the Daily Advertiser "If I did one more tax return I would have gone nuts" and remarked that he changed careers after being inspired by the love a truck driver he met had for driving trucks. On the 21st and 22nd of July Dale and his band the Groove Factory held a concert celebrating his 50 years in local music but also dedicated to the musical legacy of the recently deceased Burt Bacharach and Hal David at the Civic Theatre Wagga Wagga. Dale has played for many years at the now 60 year old Civic Theatre but also the Wagga Wagga Food and Wine Festival, the Commercial Club and has been a regular and welcome fixture at venues across Wagga Wagga. Dale has also contributed his talents to charitable causes including Wagga Takes 2 and has helped many young musicians begin their journey to discover the joys of a lifetime of music performance and enjoyment.

KRISTEN TAYLOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT WORKER

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt)—I wish to recognise Kristen Taylor for her work as a youth employment support worker at Whitelion Youth. I recently had the pleasure of meeting Ms Taylor on 26th June 2023, at a Youth Training Café Showcase hosted at the Mt Druitt Hub, where free training courses and workshops are available for local youth to gain hospitality skills and life skills to support them on their journey to future

employment. I take this opportunity to thank Ms Taylor for her commitment to the youth of Mount DrUITT and for all her work to give disadvantaged youth a bright future.

GERTRUDE AND ALICE BOOKSTORE

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)—Recently I joined the Leader of the Opposition, the Member for Cronulla on a visit to small businesses in Bondi, in my electorate of Vaucluse. I want to acknowledge Gertrude & Alice Café Bookstore and owner Jane Turner. Gertrude & Alice Bookstore and Café has an incredibly rich literary history and has become an institution of Bondi in its own right. Jane told us about the difficulties of operating through the Covid-19 pandemic, and I thank her for her dedication to small business. All of us know how incredibly hard our small business owners work, Jane is no different. I have no doubt that Gertrude & Alice will continue to be an institution in Bondi, and I am looking forward to popping in again soon to find my next book to read.

BONDI LIQUOR CO

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)—Recently I joined the Leader of the Opposition, the Member for Cronulla on a visit to small businesses in Bondi, in my electorate of Vaucluse. I want to acknowledge Bondi Liquor Co, an amazing small business in the heart of Bondi. Bondi Liquor Co is the first operating distillery in Bondi, and they produce gin and vodka. I particularly want to note founder Adrian Henshall who showed us how his team make liquor products that are distinctly local. I thank Adrian for his dedication to small business. While I may not have had the opportunity to have a tittle during work hours, I am looking forward to returning to Bondi Liquor Co soon and sampling their amazing local products.

S'WICH BONDI

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)—Recently I had the opportunity to visit an amazing local business in my community, S'WICH Bondi. S'WICH sandwich shop, which has recently celebrated its first year in Bondi, was started by university friends, Jay Fink and Jordan Abram. S'WICH was originally a pop-up business in Bellevue Hill and has now moved to a bigger and better store in the heart of Bondi. S'WICH prides itself on providing a unique experience whether at lunch or dinner, and they have amassed a dedicated following. Truly an amazing and innovative small business success story. It was incredible to hear about Jay and Jordan's plans to expand their business, and I am very much looking forward to seeing their further success in the years ahead.

ADAMSTOWN ROSEBUDS

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Audrey-Rose Budden, Mackenzie Duraj, Chloe Clark, Michaela Bird, Olivia Rayfield, and Heloise Dunbar, the young football superstars from Adamstown Rosebud Football Club, who were flag bearers at the FIFA Women's World Cup. These girls held the FIFA flag at Stadium Australia during the England v Colombia Quarter Final game. Adamstown Rosebud FC are an excellent club, with Matilda, Clare Wheeler, amongst their alumni. These girls stood on the field alongside some of the world's greatest football players and in front of over 75,000 fans. They were great representatives of their club and of Newcastle. Well done and I hope you each get the opportunity to take the World Cup stage again.

BOB SHERIDAN

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to local cyclist, teacher, and mental health advocate Bob Sheridan on completing his 12,000km bike odyssey from Townsville to Newcastle via Perth. Mr Sheridan has been pedalling away for 6 months, raising money for mental health research and support and sharing his own story across Australia. Mr Sheridan has fought a lifelong battle with depression, anxiety, and PTSD and cycling is an outlet and a joy for him. He kept his suffering to himself for decades but is on a mission to help others fight their own mental health battles and destigmatise mental illness. Mr Sheridan has now raised over \$25,000 for the Black Dog Institute. It is such a huge achievement, and I am so glad to welcome Bob back home to Newcastle. Well done!

SAM MILTON & MICHAEL WHEATLEY

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Newcastle's own Special Olympians, Sam Milton and Michael Wheatley, who represented Australia at the 2023 World Games in Berlin. Mr Milton is a member of the men's 5v5 basketball team, who came home with a shiny bronze medal. Mr Wheatley is a player in the 10-pin bowling team and did an awesome job bringing home a gold medal in the men's pairs and a bronze medal in the mixed fours. The Special Olympics allows athletes with intellectual disabilities to perform on the world stage. It is such an encouraging community and an honour to have Newcastle represented by these two great athletes. Well done to you both and to all the other athletes that competed!

ST CLAIR AND DISTRICT MEN'S SHED

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—It brings me immense pride to commemorate the 30-year milestone of Men's Sheds, an institution that has done good work for men's well-being across our nation. Men's Sheds provide a sanctuary where camaraderie, purpose, and meaningful engagement intertwine. This remarkable initiative has transformed lives by fostering a space for connection, skill-sharing, and mutual support. A shining example in our very own community is the St Clair and District Men's Shed. Celebrating a decade of service, this incredible group has consistently offered warmth, acceptance and a sense of belonging. I recently had the honour of acknowledging their 10-year journey and as a proud patron, I'm continually astounded by their commitment to community-building. My heartfelt congratulations to the St Clair and District Men's Shed for a decade of significant impact and to Men's Sheds across Australia for 30 years of enhancing lives. Here's to many more years of friendship and empowerment!

DEBBIE O'CONNOR

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I stand in admiration of Glenmore Park's own Debbie O'Connor, CEO of the Creative Fringe, who yet again has demonstrated her unwavering commitment to our community. Celebrating the 7th successful year of the TOTS Blanket Challenge, under Debbie's compassionate leadership, an impressive 547 knitted and crocheted blankets were meticulously crafted and presented to local charity partners. These blankets, much more than mere fabric, represent warmth, care and the binding threads of our community. I want to extend heartfelt congratulations to Debbie for spearheading this initiative and to our community members for their outstanding generosity and heartfelt compassion. Their collective effort ensures that during the chilly Winter months, those most vulnerable among us feel the embrace of a caring community. Well done, Debbie and bravo to all involved!

EBONY DOMANSKI

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—It is with great admiration that I recognise Ebony Domanski, a dedicated 20-year-old constituent from Oran Park. Ebony recently showcased her remarkable skill and determination during the Mass Casualty simulation conducted by Western Sydney University for its final year paramedicine students. Participating in such a complex and demanding event, especially in a setting that mimics the intense realities of an underground train crash, is no small feat. The university's state-of-the-art 360-degree lab provided a platform for Ebony to demonstrate her proficiency and readiness for real-life challenges. This simulation is vital in preparing our future paramedics to respond with expertise and calmness in the most challenging situations. Ebony, your commitment to honing your skills and serving the community in times of dire need is commendable. Our community is safer and better prepared with aspiring paramedics like you. Congratulations on your outstanding effort!

LYLE ORREAL

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Bathurst resident Lyle Orreal is one of the last living local veterans who was fighting in Vietnam when the war was officially declared over, and troops were withdrawn. Mr Orreal served as a platoon medic in the 9th Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment, and was involved in Operation Goodwood, a major allied operation that formed part of the Battle of Hat Dich in late 1968 and early 1969. Whilst the war ended 50 years over, the fight continued back home. Mr Orreal said he couldn't return to his hometown of Brisbane due to prejudice against Vietnam veterans, but Bathurst was a much more welcoming and friendly place. Upon his return to Australia, Mr Orreal's battalion marched through Adelaide and while treated reasonably well, there were people throwing red paint on leaders of the parade as a sign of protest. It was a real war, and any soldier who fought in Vietnam should be recognised the same as any other member of the armed forces. Thank you for your service Lyle.

FUDEKO REEKIE

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—The strong cultural ties between Bathurst and the Japanese township of Ohkuma are a proud legacy that Fudeko Reekie will forever be remembered for. Mrs Reekie was recently honoured by the local community at an official Bathurst Regional Council event marking the milestone of 35 years of her involvement with the promoting our Sister City relationship with Ohkuma. A tree planting was held to honour Mrs Reekie at the Ohkuma Garden in Bathurst which is thriving after initially being established in 1997. I congratulate Mrs Reekie on this honour as she has generously served Council and the community over many decades. Her duties over this time has included showing Japanese visitors around Bathurst; connecting the Bathurst Visitor Information Centre to various organisations in Japan; interpreting and translating duties; established and maintained the Sister City relationship with Ohkuma; being a member of the sister city committee; establishing student and teacher exchange programs; arranging host families; escorting delegations to Ohkuma;

and writing books in English and Japanese. Well done Mrs Reekie, the addition of the new tree in the Ohkuma Garden is testimony to your tireless and generous contributions to the cities of Ohkuma and Bathurst.

KARLA MCDIARMID

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—A well-known Bathurst business owner and involved community member Karla McDiarmid has held a successful event raising money for cancer. Karla McDiarmid, owner and director of Macquarie Medi Spa held a 'Barbie' themed movie night to raise awareness of breast cancer and fundraise for local cancer service Daffodil Cottage. The sold-out event saw a wave of pink outfits through Bathurst and raised over \$5,000. Karla is known for her generosity in volunteer roles across the area including Wires, Lions Club, Bathurst tourism committee and she is also on the Bathurst Thoroughbreds Racing board dedicating her time to the betterment of our town. This is not Karla's first time participating in fundraising for charity having participated in many CEO challenges, sleepouts and annual donations including Ronald McDonald House 'Walk in my shoes' challenge. And she still has time to run a successful, award-winning business as well!

FIONA CAMPBELL

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney electorate, I congratulate Fiona Campbell on receiving the Committee for Sydney's 2023 Unsung Hero Award. Fiona has been the City of Sydney's Cycling Strategy Manager for 15 years, leading work to enable and support bike riding in Sydney. Fiona's careful and strategic approach has ensured that there is sound research for both the technical foundation and the community support for riding bikes in a city that is often describe as bike-unfriendly. As a result, the City provides cycling courses, advice on safer routes to get to work, maps and education sessions combined with bike maintenance checks to engage with bike riders and encourage safer riding. Fiona has been one of the driving forces behind getting dedicated cycleways separated from fast-moving traffic and safer on-road routes to encourage cycling. This has been vital to our community getting the health, social and environmental benefits of active transport. I thank Fiona for her patient and tireless work over many years that has already made Sydney a more liveable city and will continue to make it easier and safer to get around on a bike.

MOSMAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I acknowledge the incredible work the Mosman Chamber of Commerce undertakes to support and connect local businesses and industry. The Chamber's work was never more critical than during the pandemic, and Tamara Keniry, the Chamber President, always ensured that local businesses in my community had the opportunity to voice any concerns or issues they were having. Tamara truly goes above and beyond in her work with the Mosman Chamber of Commerce, and I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge all her efforts. They also recently held a fantastic event at Mosman Art Gallery on the economic and business outlook for the new financial year, with special guests David Robertson, the Chief Economist and Head of Economic & Market Research at Bendigo Bank, as well Lucas Hazelton from Service NSW to explain the support that they can provide to make it easier for businesses by connecting them to what they need to start, run, and grow their businesses. It was a full house, and I congratulate Tamara, in particular, for her organisation of the event. It was a fantastic night. Thank you, Tamara, for all your hard work.

MUDGEES WINE FESTIVAL RETURNS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—After a 3-year hiatus Balmoral was once again awash with fine food and wine from the beautiful country region of Mudgee. The Mudgee Wine Festival took place on Sunday 13th August after significant delays caused by COVID. As always, this event is a great opportunity for regional wine producers and sellers to gain exposure, but also for locals and Sydney siders to sample the very best that regional New South Wales has to offer. Mudgee has a strong viticultural history and has a reputation for producing high-quality and well-respected wines. The festival was also a great social event for locals, with wine-tasting provided upon entry with free tumblers, along with special activities such as face-painting and an art space for kids to get involved. Balmoral always provides a magnificent backdrop for events such as the Mudgee Wine Festival, and I know that many locals and Sydneysiders alike enjoyed the gorgeous vistas that Balmoral is renowned for. A special thank you to the Mudgee Wine Association and Mosman Council for ensuring that this event was such a success, I am sure that everyone is looking forward to seeing it return to Balmoral again next year.

NORTH SYDNEY YOUNG WRITERS' AWARD 2023

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I acknowledge the talented young writers' from my electorate of North Shore who were recently recognised for their exceptional writing skills at the annual North Sydney Young Writers' Award, officially the Nan Manefield Writers' Award. This year marked thirty-four years of Stanton Library and North Sydney Council celebrating the writing talent of young people in our community. Young people aged 11 to 18 years old are invited to submit either one poem or one short story not exceeding

750 words. I congratulate the winners of this year's competition Ethan Li, Andy Elias, Catherine Grice, Anthony Li, and Angus Koch. I also congratulate those who were recognised as highly commended, Amadea Luong, Cameron Masters, Oliver Macalister, Angelina Mei, Jimin Jeon, Adrita Saha, Amelie Elias, Thehashi Upsara Gunawardene, Chloe Lu, and Elaine Chen. Congratulations to you all. I acknowledge the judges of this year's competition who had the arduous task of judging over five hundred entries across five age categories. Thank you to Erin Gough, Ursula Dubosarsky, Tim Sinclair, Will Kostakis, and Sue Whiting. Congratulations to all involved on another successful North Sydney Young Writers' Award.

LITTLE PEOPLE NUTRITION

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)—Community member Mandy dos Santos from the Sustainable Wetlands Agricultural Makers Project has made her dream come true by bringing the community Little People Nutrition at the Central Coast Wetlands. Mandy is a mother to 3 children and a qualified nutritionist and food scientist. Working with food for over 20 years including food manufacturing, nutrition consultation, menu development, childcare menu development, quality assurance and control, product development, food education, community education and food writing. Mandy believes food nourishes our bodies and connects us with our family, friends, culture, and community as well as our environment where the food comes from and how it is raised. It is important to nurture the love of food in children by helping them gain a greater respect and develop a healthy relationship with food. Little People Nutrition run workshops, online cooking classes, books, videos, and recipes, also cooking and food education incursions in preschools, childcares, early primary school, and even small gatherings like birthday parties. This is an exciting group for little people and their carers to learn how to grow, shop and cook food while choosing healthy options. I wish Mandy all the best in her new journey.

KEVIN BOOTH

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)—I rise to pay tribute to Kevin Booth OAM, an icon of the Central Coast who passed away last week at the age of 92. He was born and raised in Gosford, attending Gosford Public and Gosford High schools before joining his parents, Fred and Evelyn, in the business they had started in 1939. He was well known on the Coast, not just for the success of his business Booth's Motor Group but also for his long association with Gosford Musical Society [GMS] and multitude of other charity and volunteer work. He was one of GMS' first members, and was involved in numerous productions, both on-stage and backstage for many years. He was a Life Member and President of the group many times. I last saw Kevin at GMS Production earlier this year, he loved GMS. David worked hard and was dedicated to anything he took an interest in. He served on the Anglican Parish Council for more than sixty years, was a past President of Gosford Rotary and Patron for Gosford Rugby Club. He even raced speed boats on Gosford Broadwater. He will be missed. My condolences to Kevin's family and friends. Rest in peace.

VOCAL EVENTS

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)—I would like acknowledge owner Jamie and Stephanie Cartner from Vocal Events at Woongarah for being nominated as a finalist for the 2023 Wedding Industry Awards. Jamie has been entertaining the Central Coast, Sydney, and Newcastle region for over 20 years and recently became a Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrant to complement their MC and DJ services. The couple take the pressure away from the bride and groom, organising a smooth day along with Jamie's great comedy and relaxed nature. Vocal events also entertain family events, functions, and local annual events with the choice of hiring a Trivia Host, Jammus the Mad Magician, Children's entertainment, Science Shows, Magic Showbag, Balloon Twister and Face Painting. I wish you both the best in the 2023 Wedding Industry Awards.

SOFIA FANTE

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote)—Firstly, it would be remiss of me not to congratulate the Matildas on what was simply an outstanding performance in the recent World Cup. They have captured the hearts of a nation with their spirit and the way they conducted themselves both on and off the field. It's also heartening to know that the next generation of players will help build on the Matilda's successful campaign. One of those talented young players who will be eyeing of a Matilda's jersey in coming years will be Wombarra's Sofia Fante. The teenage goalkeeper was part of the Australian side that qualified for the second round of the 2024 AFC U-17 Women's Asian Cup earlier this year. Sofia's passion for football started at the mighty Coledale Waves and included spells with Football South Coast – now South Coast Flame – and the Illawarra Stingrays. Sofia's achievements to date are a great example of determination and passion. I have no doubt that Sofia, like the current

Matilda's squad, will serve as inspiration for younger generations. On behalf of the Heathcote electorate, well done Sofia. We are all extremely proud of you.

AUSTRALASIAN ENABLEMENT AWARD WINNERS

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote)—I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations to TJ's Swim School of Kirrawee for their prestigious Australasian Enablement award. This accolade celebrates their excellence, innovation, and exceptional accomplishments in disability care. TJ's Swim School has shown unwavering commitment to an inclusive environment, accommodating 50 children with disabilities weekly. The employees at TJ's Swim School need to be congratulated for their dedicated efforts in catering to diverse needs. Their professionalism and commitment set a remarkable standard. I also appreciate the collaborative support from the community and media outlets like, The Sutherland Shire and St George Leader, which provides positive stories like these, who reach the community and beyond. TJ's Swim School's achievement is a great example of inclusivity and compassion. This recognition inspires broader excellence and inclusiveness in our communities. The Heathcote community is extremely grateful for all your efforts. We are proud to have such a dedicated and caring organisation in our midst. Your hard work and dedication have not gone unnoticed, and we are honoured to have you as a part of our community.

RYDE SPORTS FOUNDATION WINNERS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Mr Speaker, I recently spoke in this place about the Ryde Sports foundation awards, and I am happy to announce the winners for 2023. Jess Johnston is our Ryde Sports person of the year - a versatile athlete competing at high levels in both netball and athletics. She has set the standard, especially in her specialty throw events where she is constantly pushing new boundaries. I am confident many young women and girls will look to Jess for inspiration as they chart their own sporting journeys - I congratulate her on this wonderful achievement. The Rising Star recipient was Nicholas Platonov - an emerging judo star, who has demonstrated great enthusiasm and discipline as a member of the Budokan Judo Club. Judo is less well known than many other sports, and so to see it recognised at this level is a testament to Nicholas's achievement. The Foundation also recognised Jack Dwyer and Jarrod Emeny with encouragement awards for their strong performance in water polo and wheelchair basketball respectively. No doubt we will hear more about these athletes in the future. To all our winners, and the many coaches, friends and family who support them, congratulations!

EASTWOOD AND DISTRICT ORCHID CIRCLE

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Mr Speaker, Amidst the vibrant heart of Sydney's Eastwood, the Eastwood and District Orchid Circle, a cherished institution with a legacy spanning 79 years, has once again graced the community with its enchanting winter show at the Eastwood Shopping Centre. President Rupa Dharmasiri deemed the event a "resounding success" as the community revealed the beauty of orchids. The Eastwood Shopping Centre's commendable role in fostering this event cannot be overlooked. Their supportive management opened the doors to this floral spectacle, allowing the Orchid Circle to bloom in the heart of the community. As petals of gratitude are strewn, the synergies between local businesses and dedicated community groups was on full display. Sales reached soaring heights, a testament to the allure of these delicate blooms and the cause they represent. Each sale echoed a contribution toward a noble cause - aiding sick children in their journey towards healing. As the Eastwood and District Orchid Circle continues to hold these shows, their commitment to both the beauty of nature and the betterment of their local community remains unwavering.

RYDE HOCKEY FAMILY DAY

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Mr Speaker, The Ryde Panthers Hockey Family Day was a vibrant celebration that brought together players, families, and supporters in a spirit of camaraderie and sportsmanship. Spearheaded by President Glen Castersson and Administrative Director Meg Smith, the event reflected the heart and soul of our close-knit community. I acknowledge the committee's tireless work in making the day and the club overall a great success, specifically Dean Merchant, Men's President; Kara Retford, Women's President; Richie Webster, Juniors' President, Mark Richards, Men's Masters; and Pippa Quilty Women's Masters, for their continued love of the sport. The Family Day also shone a light on the off-field culture, which is supported by Coaching Director Larry McIntosh, Social Director Teaj Sian, Facilities Director Neyif Hanna, and Club Administrator Felicity Wyker. It is for their contributions that more and more families are signing up to play hockey in Ryde. Together, this dedicated committee embodied the true essence of the Ryde Panthers Hockey Family Day, fostering a sense of belonging and teamwork that reverberated throughout the event. I thank members of Ryde Hockey for having me, and encourage families living in Ryde to sign up to play when registration next opens!

CENTRAL COAST LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—Mister Speaker, today I speak on the Central Coast Local Business Awards and wish to congratulate all the finalists in the awards. The Local Business Awards are done every year to recognise our Central Coast local businesses for their excellence. The awards are not only a recognition of excellence of a business, but also help promote the business to the local community, provide motivation to business owners, business staff and customers, and allow for the celebration of success of these businesses for their efforts. Customers have the opportunity to nominate their preferred businesses for this recognition in which there have been several nominated within my Electorate. I want to recognise just some of the many outstanding businesses who have been selected as finalists in the 2023 Local Business Awards, including The Little Teapot, Macs Beach Café and Beeline Coffee & Co in the Café category, BubbaDesk, Adrenaline Optometry and Green View Café in the new business category just to name a few. I want to wish all businesses who have been nominated as finalists in the Local Business Awards best of luck and thank you for all that you do.

MATCHAM HOLGATE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—Mister Speaker, I rise to speak on one of my local Rural Fire Brigades, the Matcham Holgate Rural Fire Brigade. I recently had the great pleasure of attending the 65th Anniversary celebration of the Brigade in which I witnessed the strong commitment and connection to the brigade from the volunteers and their families. Formed in the 1950s by a collective of citrus and vegetable farmers, Matcham Holgate RFB have since grown into a well-established and active fire brigade. They have been active in engaging in responding to not local incidents, which can number 70-80 a year, but also to larger regional fires such as during the 2019/20 Fire Season as well as flood responses on the North Coast and Western Slopes of New South Wales. Today, the Brigade has a base of 30 active members who proactively engage with the community in managing fire risks and educating on fire mitigation methods. Thank you to the Matcham Holgate RFB for hosting me on your 65th anniversary, and I look forward to attending many more.

BANKSTOWN LEG OF THE LEGACY CENTENARY TORCH RELAY 2023

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—On Thursday 21st July 2023, our community marked the start of the Bankstown leg of the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay 2023 at Paul Keating Park, Bankstown. For a century, Legacy has provided vital services and support to the families of veterans across the world. Legacy is proud of the tremendous achievements and positive impact they have made on thousands of lives, including the Bankstown community. Their programs include relieving financial hardship, social connection services, and providing developmental opportunities to veterans and their families, especially those who are widowed. The ceremony included speeches from many dignitaries. The highlight of the event was when June Young, a relative of an Australian veteran, read a poem that depicted the horrifying experiences of war but also illustrated the pride of their nation and the longing soldiers had to come back home to their families. I am pleased to acknowledge my parliamentary colleague Kylie Wilkinson MP, Mayor Bilal El-Hayek, Councillor Rachelle Harika, and Councillor Chris Cahill who attended the event. I want to thank Mayor Bilal El-Hayek, Canterbury Bankstown Council, and Legacy Australia for organising this historic event in our community.

ST NICHOLAS SENIOR CARE CENTRE GRAND OPENING

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—On Thursday, 27th July 2023, I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the St Nicholas Senior Care Centre alongside my colleagues, the Hon Chris Minns MP Premier of NSW, Hon Stephen Kamper MP, Minister for Multiculturalism and Hon Sophie Cotsis MP, Minister for Industrial Relations. St Nicholas Senior Care Centre is the first aged-care centre in NSW to be designed and completed in accordance with the recommendations of the Aged Care Royal Commission. It features many impressive amenities that cater to all the residents' diverse needs and interests. Mr Robert Furolo, Director of Strategic Housing Solutions led the ribbon cutting, followed by the Archbishop's formal blessing, speeches and a tour of the new 80-bed facility. St Nicholas Senior Care Centre has created an environment that is loving, supportive and comfortable for all residents, allowing them to discover a place where they belong. I want to acknowledge His Eminence Metropolitan Basilios, Archbishop of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia, and New Zealand for this remarkable achievement of bringing this facility to life and providing a vibrant and loving environment for the Antiochian Orthodox faith community in our local area.

YOUTH OFF THE STREETS

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—On Thursday 20 July 2023, I joined Youth Off the Streets at their Bankstown Outreach program where I had the opportunity to learn more about their sporting

activities in support of young people. Every Thursday Youth Off the Streets provide a dinner and sports activities for young people across our community at Paul Keating Park. Father Chris Riley is the leader and founder of Youth Off the Streets. It all began in early 1990 when he initially supported St Vinnies for Youth crisis refuge in Marrickville. This encouraged Father Riley to expand his work and in 1994 he established a youth residential program called Better Homes Farm under the management of Youth Off the Streets. Today Youth Off the Streets provide many support programs including homelessness and housing, education, alcohol and drugs, street walk and food van, mental health, and cultural support. These invaluable initiatives ensure that young people have access to assistance if they are ever in need. I want to thank Youth Off the Streets for the invaluable work they do across NSW and especially in our community to keep young people on the right path in life.

LIONS CLUB OF FRENCHS FOREST CHANGEOVER 2023

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—I recognise the Lions Club of Frenchs Forest who held their annual changeover dinner in June 2023. The club has been of service to the community for over 62 years since its inaugural meeting on 20 June 1961. Their work is exemplified in the Lion's motto – "We Serve." Frenchs Forest Lions undertake several projects including supporting Stewart House, Lions Youth of The Year Quest, the Forest Community Men's Shed Project, a community book stall at Forestville Shopping Centre on the first Saturday of every month, and a food drop for those in need at the end of every month. During Christmas festivities, the Club organises a Carols by Candlelight event Lionel Watts Oval, which I attended in 2022, and operates a Santa Sleigh around the streets of Belrose and Frenchs Forest and collect donations for worthy causes. I congratulate President Neville Hudson, and the Board Tony Philps, Stuart Pengilley, Rachael Jackson, Wayne Brown, Martin Orchard, David Stephens, Keith Wilson and Robin Reynolds. Thank you for your ongoing service.

LIONS CLUB OF ST IVES CHANGEOVER 2023

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—The Lions Club of St Ives held their changeover for 2023. The club was founded in 1972 and has overseen various projects across the local community. These projects include Lions Youth of the Year Quest, Lions Youth Exchange, Lions Peace Poster Contest, the collection of used spectacles for recycling to the developing world, supporting a child with a walking device and assisting the Salvation Army with the annual 'Red Shield Appeal'. This is on top of their sausage sizzles, garage sales, sale of the famous Lions Christmas Cakes and the St Ives ANZAC Day service. I thank outgoing Secretary Johan Reyneke for his public service. I also congratulate President Geoffrey Gibbons, Treasurer Michael Chan, newly elected Secretary Michael Ferns, and the rest of the St Ives Lions Board who I'm sure will continue the proud legacy of St Ives Lions. Well done to all involved.

TAFE NORTHERN BEACHES – PITTWATER TRAINING RESTAURANT

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Thursday 15 June 2023, I was pleased to attend TAFE Northern Beaches Pittwater Training Restaurant in Brookvale. Among the several guests was Rory Amon MP, Member for Pittwater, and Cr Sue Hines, Mayor of Northern Beaches Council. To say that I was blown away by the experience is an understatement. This event showcased the commercial cookery course students undertake as a part of their vocational education, where they provide and manage real-life dining situations in a professional restaurant. We all enjoyed a wonderful modern Australian cuisine lunch, and received a kitchen tour, where I saw firsthand the students having access to the top-quality kitchen technologies. The Pittwater Training Restaurant won the Restaurant and Catering Association best training restaurant award in 2013 and was a finalist in 2012 and 2014. It was also the winner of the Tourism, Hospitality and Catering Institute of Australia, President Training Award in 2018. I acknowledge Lilian Hong, the Services Coordinator at TAFE Northern Beaches and the students for hosting the visit. I place on the record my strong support for TAFE and encourage everyone to look at the opportunities available to them, that only TAFE can provide.

ANN EVANS

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—Mr Speaker, I rise to recognise an exceptional individual in my community. Ann Evans, a recipient of the Surf Lifesaving Lower North Coast President's Award. The President's Award recognises the extraordinary contribution of a member where their conduct, commitment, and dedication to promoting Surf Lifesaving has reached out and influenced so many people. Their behaviour has been exemplary and their willingness to engage and be involved across multiple fields of endeavour, is never in question. Anne is a dedicated member of Forster Surf Life Saving Club, she has been heavily involved in all aspects of Lifesaving, reporting on its people, functions, building development at Forster and sporting events up and down the coast. Anne approaches her role as Media Officer with enthusiasm, diplomacy, and compassion. Her dedication to her role has brought her to many Surf Lifesaving Clubs and special events to listen, learn, understand, distil the underlying message and report factually with empathy. Anne exhibits all the qualities of a person worthy of being recognised to receive the President's Award, congratulations Anne on your well-deserved recognition.

BIBIANNAH PEATTIE

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I rise to congratulate Bibiannah Peattie from Cundletown, who has been named one of 73 scholars to receive a RAS Foundation Rural Scholarship. The RAS Foundation Rural Scholarship program provides financial assistance to rural and regional students who are passionate about the future success of regional NSW and intend to work within a rural or regional community at the completion of their studies. Bibiannah is studying a Bachelor of Veterinary Technology at Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, following her passion in animal husbandry. Bibiannah grew up in Cundletown and is looking forward to returning, armed with her degree and being able to turn veterinary technology into a career within the primary industry taking care of livestock both large and small. Congratulations on your well-deserved scholarship Bibiannah, I wish you all the best with your degree and look forward to having you back in the Myall Lakes.

CAREERQUIP

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I rise recognise Donna Ballard, the CEO of Taree Universities Campus for the organisation of another successful Mid Coast CareerQuip. CareerQuip 2023 saw around 2000 students from across the Mid Coast region attend the Taree foreshore for a day of information and advice focused on shaping future careers. It was so wonderful to see so many young people in one place, enthusiastic and curious. The career expo was attended by students from as far away as Wauchope and Gloucester, with attendees benefiting from information provided by more than 60 industry exhibitors. The range of exhibitors included tertiary education providers, government departments, local apprenticeship and traineeship facilitators, student support services, armed forces, law enforcement and more. Thank you to all the organisers, volunteers and sponsors who made this event a success. This is such a fantastic community event for the Myall Lakes, allowing locals to explore career options without having to leave the area.

PASSING OF THE LATE – ALBERT CINCOTTA

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I am deeply saddened to learn about the passing of the late Albert Cincotta, founder of the Discount Cincotta Chemist located almost opposite my office at 185 Merrylands Rd, Merrylands. I was fortunate enough to benefit from Albert's legacy, an affordable discount pharmacy with extended operating hours, one of the first of its kind. During the 1960's Albert first recognised the strong need for customers to obtain pharmaceuticals after normal business hours. Albert fought hard to win the right to offer after hours trading, which was uncommon in the 1960's, but he was determined to fulfil the need of the community. Last year was the 70th anniversary of the Discount Cincotta Chemist in Merrylands. Albert attended this celebration with many members in the community who were grateful for Albert's efforts of opening and maintaining this store. Albert's legacy will continue to live through this store via the discounted services it provides and time it stays open til. I offer my sincerest condolences to Albert's family and the entire Merrylands community who will be forever grateful for this essential service and blessing that Albert has left behind. Gone but not forgotten, Albert will be missed.

SHORTEES TERREY HILLS

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I recently had the opportunity to visit Shortees Golf in Terrey Hills within my electorate of Pittwater. It was wonderful to meet with General Manager and part owner, Scott Williams, and hear about the business's success. Since opening, the team at Shortees have given the club house and golf course a facelift, transforming the site into a vibrant and welcoming community hub. The Par 3 'pitch and put' course is a great way for beginners to try their hand at golf and it has become a popular location for local schools to bring students for excursions and offer as an option for weekly sport. Scott and the team are extremely passionate about making golf accessible and helping people of all walks of life enjoy the activity they love. The team at Shortees prove that mixing business and friends can be very successful. Scott advises me that they owe their success to their friends, family, and word of mouth advertising. I'm pleased that acknowledgement of the friendly team at Shortees will now be preserved in the records of the oldest Parliament of our country. I can't wait to see what the team do next.

BILGOLA SOCIAL

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—It is with great pleasure that I recognise a phenomenal local café in Pittwater, Bilgola Social. A few years ago, owner Vincent stumbled upon an empty shop front and saw an opportunity to make his dream of opening a community café a reality. Vincent spent 10 months during the pandemic working on designing and creating a warm and welcoming place that locals would enjoy. But the ambience of Bilgola Social is not their only asset, and this is reflected in their rave reviews. Bilgola Social has been credited with having the most passionate staff, who are masters at crafting coffee and have fantastic attention to detail. This month, Bilgola Social is celebrating two years of business. I congratulate Vincent and the whole team and thank them for their work creating a space for the wonderful Bilgola community to come together and

unwind. Local Linda said it best on Instagram, 'so happy you noticed that empty store Vincent'. I'm pleased that acknowledgement of such an amazing cafe will now be preserved in the records of the oldest Parliament of our country. Well done, Vincent!

DACHSHUND RESCUE AUSTRALIA

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I recently had the opportunity to attend a fundraiser for Dachshund Rescue Australia [DRA] at the beautiful Bilarong Reserve in the electorate of Pittwater. It was a wonderful day filled with sausage sandwiches, sausage dogs and learning about the important work done by DRA. Through engagement with shelters, other rescue groups, registered breeders and members of the dachshund community, DRA work to help ensure all rescued dachshunds are placed in safe and suitable forever homes. Dachshunds are dogs with many quirks and DRA are committed to ensuring current and potential owners are well informed and equipped to handle the challenges of the breed by providing a range of educational resources. Thank you to Sharman Moore, the founder of DRA, for your continued advocacy and passion for assisting dachshunds. Thank you to the wonderful volunteers I met, Lisa Gordeno, Tash and Peter Scarf, Kenny and all of DRA's volunteers, whose work is essential to the success of DRA. I'm pleased that acknowledgement of this wonderful charity will now be preserved in the records of the oldest Parliament of our country. Well done all!

UNDER 14S ILLAWARRA HAWKS GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)—As the Nation is currently captivated by the growing dominance of women's sport, I take great privilege in recognising the outstanding achievement of the Under 14s Girls Illawarra Hawks basketball team, who will be going on to compete in the National Championships later this year. The Illawarra Hawks Under 14s Girls team is a representative side, made up of the best athletes in our region. After a standout season, the team can write their name in the history books of Basketball Illawarra, as the first junior female state championship team in over eleven years. They have gone undefeated in the Junior Premier League season and have dominated the NSW state championships. The team will now travel to Melbourne later this year in hopes of continuing their winning streak and claiming the National title. I commend all the athletes, coaches and staff for their hard work and dedication during this season and beyond. As we rally behind our beloved Matildas, it is important we show the same amount of support for all our local female sporting teams. Go the Hawks!

EDUCATION WEEK 2023

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Education Week, which was held from the 31st of July to the 4th of August. This year, Education Week celebrated 175 years of public education in New South Wales, an incredibly significant milestone. Education Week was celebrated by students across the St George area, giving both pupils and teachers the opportunity to slow down and reflect on what learning means to them, whilst also embracing the future of education in New South Wales. With the Board of National Education being formed in 1848, our education system has seen significant change over the last 175 years. However, the core objective has always remained the same – preparing our younger generation to think critically and grow as individuals. My wife, Adla is a teacher at De La Salle at Cronulla, and I am so grateful for the work she does. I know how incredibly hard she works for the good of her students, often with little to no recognition. I would like to specifically acknowledge the hard work of all teachers across New South Wales. Your passion and dedication to the lives of today's learners should be celebrated and commended.

HURSTVILLE GROVE INFANTS SCHOOL – PLAYGROUND OPENING

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to attend the official opening of a brand-new playground and yarning circle at Hurstville Grove Infants School. It was wonderful to see all the student's faces as they eagerly awaited their turn to check out the new outdoor space. This project has certainly been many years in the making! Uncle Dean conducted a traditional Indigenous smoking ceremony to officially open the space, with the Student Leadership team running the ceremony on the day. I would like to commend them on the fantastic job they did. I would also like to thank Kym Ferrario, relieving Principal of Hurstville Grove Infants School, as well as Kylie McKinnon, for all the effort they have put into getting the new outdoor space up and running. The work of Principals like Kym, as well as all of our hardworking teachers, ensures that New South Wales is at the forefront of education, not only in Australia but across the globe. Your commitment to the school is phenomenal, and you should all be very proud of yourselves.

IRT PEAKHURST RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION – SHARE THE DIGNITY

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I would like to recognise the IRT Peakhurst Retirement Village Residents and Friends Association, who recently donated \$100 worth of products in support of the 'Share the Dignity' campaign. Share the Dignity is a fantastic initiative which supports vulnerable women across New South Wales and Australia. They collect and distribute bags filled with essential feminine hygiene products to women

experiencing homelessness, domestic violence, or poverty. I am particularly proud of the work they do in my community. The IRT Residents and Friends Association has made several contributions to the Oatley Community over the last few years. Not only do they support the residents at the Retirement Village itself, but also countless community organisations across the Oatley Electorate. I would like to thank Lyndon Mitchell, President of the Residents and Friends Association, for his hard work, as well as Donna Thomson, the Retirement Village Manager, for delivering the products to my office. I look forward to continuing to work closely with the IRT Peakhurst Residents and Friends Association into the future.

STATE TITLE FOR NARRANDERA NETBALL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to congratulate the four teams from Narrandera Netball Association [NNA] who have competed in several carnivals across NSW this year. This year's teams comprised of Opens, Under 17s, 15s and 13s and included the players of; April Walsh, Chloe Clark, Carneh Yongai, Hannah Buchtmann, Claire Colvin, Hantah Brooker, Mackenzie Brooker, Imogen Bloomfield, Mikayla Bloomfield, Philomena Grigg, Jessica Wright, Millar McGown, Charlie Brooker, Charlotte McCall, Matilda Sidebottom, Savannah Hillsley, Charlotte Chandler, Zahli Ivanoff, Sophie Buchtmann, Isabella Masters, Mikayla Towers, Maggie Hawke, Isabel Fiumara, Riah Morris, Lauren Wickes, Katie Fawns, Evie Speirs Dill, Ava Robertson, Bonnie Speirs Dill, Amber McGown, Erica Bomm, Taylor Griffiths, Zoe Winnell, Zara Berrigan and Isla Donaldson. Along with their coaches Brendon Colvin, Melissa Brooker, Simone Te Maru Leatham and Fiona Morris. All four teams had an outstanding year with the Under 17s team winning the 2023 HART Senior State Age Titles Division 4. All players and their coaches should be incredibly proud of their accomplishments this year. Your dedication and commitment to the Narrandera Netball Association is evident in the results you have received. Congratulations once again to all four teams on a fantastic year.

SMILES FROM A SHOEBOX

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to thank the communities which make up the Weddin Shire for their support towards 'Operation Christmas Child'. The community of Grenfell have been supporting 'Operation Christmas Child' since 2005, with over 5,000 shoebox gifts delivered all around the world to such countries as Ukraine, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Philippines and Cambodia. The shoeboxes are filled with various items such as handmade gifts, school supplies and hygiene items, and put together with love and care. Last year almost 470 gift-filled shoeboxes were distributed from the communities of the Weddin Shire, I am sure this wonderful cause will be just as successful this year. I would like to make special mention of Joyce Baker of Grenfell who has been coordinating these care packages for the past 15 years. Congratulations to everyone who volunteers their time, donates items and is doing their part to put a smile on a child's face.

2023 GANMAIN ARTS FESTIVAL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to extend a huge congratulations to the organiser of this year's very successful Ganmain Arts Festival, Myfanwy Collette. The streets of Ganmain came to life over the weekend of Friday 23 to Sunday 25 June 2023 for the second ever Ganmain Arts Festival. Crowds and participants came from across the state including Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Sydney and of course Ganmain, to enjoy all the festival had to offer. Many different art forms such as sculpting, painting, photography and even an ecofabric creator were on display at this year's festival. The whole of Ganmain got behind this fantastic event with local businesses coming onboard and happily displaying artworks in their windows. Ganmain and Matong Schools also participated in the event by creating multicoloured lollipops which were on display in the park. Fisher and Farmer gift store and Ganmain Pub's Social Club catered for this year's festival supplying visitors with warm coffee and soup. Visitors enjoyed music by Wagga Wagga Rugby Men's Choir and historic display of art was on display in the Ganmain Hall. Congratulations once again to Myfanwy for all your hard work.

CENTRAL PERK

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Central Perk café in Kiama who are a finalist in the Precedent Local Business Awards 2023. Central Perk was selected out of well over 100 café nominations to become one of the 17 finalists for 'Outstanding Café' in the Precedent Local Business Awards 2023. Central Perk was one of only three selected from Kiama. The awards are held on 13th September 2023 at The Fraternity Club in Fairy Meadow. Cameron Thomas, proprietor of Central Perk café, has a love and passion for food. Chef by trade Cameron has been in hospitality most of his life and was 26 when he opened his first café in Mulgoa. For 10 years he successfully operated the café, and a 'before and after school' care centre, plus a wedding venue. Always drawn towards working in a stimulating workplace, and at age 39, Cameron decided on a career change. I can personally attest that Cameron has selected the right team with the right attitude toward hospitality and gave them the best training. Cameron should be extremely proud of his Central Perk café team in Kiama and what they have achieved together.

SHOALHAVEN HEADS RSL SUB-BRANCH

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises the Shoalhaven Heads RSL Sub Branch. On Friday 18th August 2023, the Shoalhaven Heads RSL Sub Branch hosted a Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony at the Memorial Park in Shoalhaven Heads. I was extremely honoured to attend this Commemorative Service and to lay a wreath. This year marks a very special 50-year anniversary milestone since the Vietnam conflict ended, which tragically killed some 525 Australians and wounded over 3,000 other Australians. Some 60,000 Australians served in the Vietnam War. I would also like to acknowledge the Shoalhaven Heads RSL Sub Branch Executive Committee Members which includes the President Mr Ray Silverstone, the Secretary Christine Skinner-Gough and the Treasurer Mr Brian Curran. I also thank HMAS Albatross Commanding Officer Scott Palmer for his address. I also acknowledge and thank the RSL Australia President Mr Greg Melick and the RSL Australia National CEO, Brigadier Philip Winter, AM, CSC, ADC. It is our ongoing duty and responsibility to acknowledge and remember the courage and sacrifice of all Australians who served in the Vietnam War. Lest we forget.

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY IN BOMADERRY

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises the Bomaderry RSL Sub Branch. On Friday 18th August 2023, the Bomaderry RSL Sub Branch hosted a Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony at Walsh Park on Meroo Street in Bomaderry. I was extremely honoured to be invited and to attend this Commemorative Service and to lay a wreath. This year marks a very special 50-year anniversary milestone since the Vietnam conflict ended, which tragically killed some 525 Australians and wounded over 3,000 other Australians. Some 60,000 Australians served in the Vietnam War. I would also like to acknowledge the Bomaderry RSL Sub Branch Executive Committee Members which includes Mr Clyde Poulton and Mr Carl Robinson. I would also like to thank Mr Poulton for his excellent address at this service. I also acknowledge and thank the RSL Australia President Mr Greg Melick and the RSL Australia National CEO, Brigadier Philip Winter, AM, CSC, ADC. It is our ongoing duty and responsibility to acknowledge and remember the courage and sacrifice of all Australians who served in the Vietnam War. Lest we forget.

EVANS HEAD MARINE RESCUE

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to recognise the dedication and exceptional service of volunteer members of Evans Head Marine Rescue, Deputy Unit Commander Jim Roberts, Kira Hartland and Ken and Kerrie Exley who were recently awarded a National Emergency Medal for their efforts during the 2019/2020 bushfires. This group of extremely professional and highly skilled volunteer members of Marine Rescue worked closely with the Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service and provided invaluable logistics and radio support during the bushfire emergency. A number of other volunteer members also stood up to be available for doorknocking and food deliveries. Our emergency service volunteers are a special breed of people. They are selfless, brave and above all generous with their time. On behalf of the Northern Rivers community, I thank them for their service in not only keeping boaters safe, but for going above and beyond to help others in times of emergency.

ASHCROFT HIGH SCHOOL DRIVE

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—I recognise the recent Toy Drive undertaken by Ashcroft High School for children at Liverpool Hospital. Last month, student leaders at Ashcroft High School set out on a mission to spread happiness to sick children and express their gratitude to the nurses and staff at Liverpool Hospital. Thanks to the generosity of students, staff and the school community, student leaders were able to present many toys to the children, bringing smiles to many faces. In what are difficult times for these children, the energy and compassion of the Ashcroft High School community no doubt goes a long way to making their lives a little bit better. I would like to recognise the efforts of Ashcroft High School's Student Leadership Council in coordinating the toy drive, as well as acknowledge the broader efforts of student leaders in addressing social justice issues in our community. I expect that their civic mindedness and servant leadership will set them on a successful path, and will make our community in Liverpool a better place.

ERIN POGMORE

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—I celebrate the achievements of Erin Pogmore, leading firefighter at Liverpool Fire station and long-time SES volunteer. Erin was recently awarded overall officer of the year in a paid capacity at the Rotary NSW Emergency Services Community Awards. She is also the first and only Australian to receive a Higgins and Langley Special Commendation for the development of training and safety, in addition to previously winning the Rotary Rural Inspirational Women's Award. Last year, while Erin was on duty fighting another fire, unfortunately her own home was lost. Despite this, Erin still turned up to work the following day to support her team. With 19 years in the SES and the last 11 with Fire and Rescue NSW, it is

difficult to understate the significance of Erin's civic contribution. I join a grateful community in thanking Erin for her tireless service, and I wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

HOXTON PARK TIGERS - END OF SEASON AWARDS NIGHT

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—Recently, I was delighted to take part in the Hoxton Park Tigers End of Season Awards Night. Having only formed in 2018, the club has already grown to accommodate 15 junior teams after starting with two! In three seasons they have already claimed coveted premiership wins in the under 9's, 10's, 12's, 13's and 15's club competitions. The night featured a stellar cast of up-and-coming cricket stars, and it was great to acknowledge the record run-scoring and wicket-taking figures for this season, with junior players collectively scoring 8 centuries and 54 half centuries. I also met the incredibly impressive Trisha Shinde, who took this seasons only hattrick by clean bowling 3 consecutive wickets against Prestons Maroons. Cricket is a pillar of our nation's sporting tradition, I am excited by the uptake of the sport by our young people, and in particular young girls. I would like to thank President Peter Moore, Secretary Sharjeel Siddiqui and the entire Fairfield Liverpool Cricket Association for their fantastic work.

KERSTIN SCHWETH

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise Kerstin Schweth. Kerstin migrated from Germany to Australia to live in Sydney before settling near the picturesque village of Robertson. Kersten's strong desire to rescue and care for injured and orphaned wildlife, became a premise for her and husband Woody to convert their property into a sanctuary, suitable to accommodate the needs for the recovery and rehabilitation for a range of animals, founding Native Wildlife Rescue in 2007. Kersten has predominately funded the expenses incurred to maintain and keep the sanctuary operational. Since the passing of her husband, she has been supported by volunteers to assist in the care of the animals. It is with great pleasure to recognise that Kersten has been announced winner of the 'Highlands Hero' award. The Southern Highlands Community Foundation award recognises the work of volunteers within the community, and they are rewarded with a \$5,000.00 grant for their organisation. Kersten hopes to utilise the grant money to convert a shed into an area where injured and orphaned wildlife can be assessed, treated, and quarantined if necessary. I praise Kersten for her tireless work, and her driving passion to assist wildlife.

KERRY FRIEND

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—Today I recognise Kerry Friend. Kerry was born in Goulburn and has continued to live within the region. Kerry describes the attributes which characterise the region, the defined four seasonal weather patterns, and amazing flora displays which she adores. The lilac trees provide a stunning display in Spring. Kerry has demonstrated a keen willingness to undertake several volunteer roles and is a recognised Elder within Parkesbourne Uniting Church and a member of the Goulburn Vintage Car Club and the Yarra / Parkesbourne Rural Fire Brigade. Kerry's variety of roles has seen her spend many hours organising fundraising activities, providing a broad scope of administrative functions and whilst volunteering at the Uniting Church drop-in centre, cook nourishing breakfasts for the homeless every second Friday. Not only has Kerry been a truly exemplary role model within the community, but she has also spent many hours volunteering at her children's school canteen, reading and assisting with excursions. Kerry's contributions have been recently recognised by the Portraits on Main exhibition. Kerry's generous and compassionate demeanour, is foundation to her belief that living within rural areas requires a collaborative effort to develop, maintain and continue to build on benefits for the community.

ALAN MILNE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—Today I recognise Alan Milne. Alan describes himself as having lived "A Fortunate Life" attributing this statement to the autobiography written by A. B. Facey. Alan believes that in his role as teacher and Principal at Goulburn East School he was the recipient of many learnings from his students, which have contributed greatly to his life, over the twenty-year period at the school. Alan also reflects warmly upon the pride he took over students and teachers. Joining the Lions Club of Goulburn City, Alan was involved in the very popular Christmas Car Raffle, the Goulburn Clubs Scholarship Fund for Secondary Students, and construction of the retaining wall at Rocky Hill Museum. Alan also assisted the Southern District Show Society setup their display at the Royal Easter Show, highlighting and promoting the district. Alan's interest in trains saw him join the Argyle Model Railway Society, taking the role of Treasurer for many years. Alan's significant contribution has been recognised by the Portraits on Main Exhibition. I also thank Alan for his contributions to the community over the forty years that he has been in Goulburn, whilst retaining a humble disposition and gratitude for what he has received in return.

DALMENY PUBLIC PARENTS AND CITIZENS

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—Speaker, on Friday the 16th of June, I had the opportunity to attend a morning tea organised by the P&C committee at Dalmeny Public School in Prestons. It was terrific to be able to meet and talk to the parents, teachers and school staff that make up this school community. Dalmeny Public School P&C organises fantastic events for their school community to enjoy: including school discos, mothers and Father's Day stalls, raffles, canteens, morning teas, and - as many of us in this house would agree is any P&Cs most important event - the election day sausage sizzle! I should personally thank those in the Dalmeny P&C for providing my democracy sausage on polling day back in March! Dalmeny P&C has also made sure to give back to their school, through holding second-hand uniform sales and fundraising for the purchase of a new school sign. Thank you to the members of the Dalmeny Public School P&C Committee for hosting the morning tea and inviting me along to take part. I look forward to continuing to partner with P&Cs in the Leppington electorate to support our students' education.

LIP

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—On June 8, I joined the Treasurer Daniel Mookhey, some of my fellow parliamentarians, and leaders from across the South West to launch the Liverpool Innovation Precinct's Investment Prospectus. The prospectus seeks to advance Liverpool as an ideal place to live, work, and play. I joined a panel of my fellow parliamentarians, the Member for Liverpool Charishma Kaliyanda, and the Member for Holsworthy, Tina Ayyad, to discuss what we can do in our capacity to advance our area. Whilst the Liverpool Innovation Precinct is centred on the Liverpool CBD, Leppington is also a big winner. Western Sydney Airport will deliver jobs and opportunity to the people of Leppington. To unlock this potential, Leppington needs good transport links on day one, and it was fantastic to see the prospectus highlight the necessity of an upgrade of Fifteenth Avenue, which this government is committed to delivering. Thank you to David Borger and Lance Chia for your continuing dedication to the Liverpool Innovation Precinct. I look forward to partnering with this community to unlock the potential of our region.

CAMPBELLTOWN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—On June 7th, I paid a visit to the President of the Campbelltown Chamber of Commerce, Carlene Cardona. The Campbelltown Chamber of Commerce is a business network, with a goal to further the interests of businesses in the Macarthur region. The chamber boasts a membership of over 150 businesses - both small and big - across the region. It was heartening to hear from Ms Cardona that despite the difficult period of the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses in Campbelltown have not only been able to survive, but thrive. Campbelltown was designated as an LGA of concern during the pandemic and thus, like most of Western Sydney, had to deal with stricter restrictions. The Campbelltown Chamber of Commerce was able to work with other stakeholders during this tumultuous period to ensure the continued survival of businesses during the pandemic. I thank Ms Cardona for her time and look forward to partnering with business organisations throughout my electorate of Leppington into the future.

HOLSWORTHY HIGH CHRISTMAS IN JULY DINNER

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—On July 27th I had the pleasure of attending the Holsworthy High School Christmas in July Dinner held at the school. Organised by the school's parents and carers (P&C) association president Sue Bolger, it was a wonderful opportunity to meet the school administration team, students, and local families. The food was prepared and served by food technology students, which was a fantastic way to showcase the practical skills peers have learnt during the time in secondary education. I would also like to acknowledge the entire P&C team who made the night a great success, as well as Principal Mark Watkins, and school captains Benjamin Walke and Jade Peckett for great conversations over dinner – it was a throwback to my time at high school! The school's motto of "Strive to Succeed and Be the Best You Can Be" was on full display on the night, and I look forward to next year's Christmas in July celebration and food!

SANDY POINT PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—On Monday, July 10th the Sandy Point Progress Association [SPRA] held its Annual General Meeting at the Sandy Point Community to guide Centre. At the meeting, a new executive was elected for the next year, ably headed by re-elected President Andrew Joyce. I would also like to extend my best wishes and congratulations to Vice President Stuart Vowles, Secretary Jasmin Guthrie, Treasurer Tracey Cross, Public Officer Greg Cavell, and News Editor Kelly Brown. My thanks also go out to outgoing members of the previous executive former Vice President Geoff Booth and former Treasurer Julie Maddock for their service to making Sandy Point an even better place to live. Whilst Sandy Point is the smallest suburb in my electorate of Holsworthy, they have one of the strongest advocacy groups in the SPRA executive. I look forward to working with the team and attending their monthly meetings into the future.

TLC LIVERPOOL SKILLS CENTRE OPENING

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—On Friday 30th June I had the honour to attend Tender Loving Care [TLC] Disability Services Liverpool Skills Centre grand opening. As a leading NDIS provider, TLC focuses on nurturing talent, developing key life skills, and fostering an inclusive community where everyone has the chance to shine. It was an absolute honour to cut the ribbon outside the front door, with so many happy and cheery faces to join in the celebration. Empowerment is so important, and this was on full display during the launch event with clients independently hosting a panel session, as well as a dance performance to the song "fruit salad"! The panel session was especially touching, with clients reflecting on how both TLC and the NDIS have changed their outlook on life. In building basic life skills with TLC, they now have the chance to live life to the fullest – and be anything they want to be. I would like to particularly congratulate global CEO of TLC Yasser Zaki, Australian CEO Laura Cowell, and the entire Liverpool Skills Centre team, including Mohammad Dannawi for their work. Once again congratulations to everyone involved and I wish them all the best in the work they do.

IRENE RAINEY JP

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—The Tweed Electorate is home to many remarkable, generous and giving people and today I would like to single out Irene Rainey JP for a special mention. Irene is a NSW Justice of the Peace and Secretary of the Tweed Valley Justices Association, a wonderful group of local volunteers who dedicate their time to providing the Tweed with Justice of the Peace services. In addition to working at the community desks certifying documents, signing statutory declarations and other appropriate forms, Irene always makes herself available to answer any questions people might have about where and when to find a JP and what documents they can witness. Irene is a wealth of knowledge and a very experienced JP and on top of that she's lovely to deal with. Thank you Irene for your dedication to the people of the Tweed and for the enormous contribution you make to our community. Your commitment to your role as a Justice of the Peace is second-to-none and very much appreciated by all.

FELIX PEREZ MACDONALD

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)—I am honoured to acknowledge the leadership of students within the Illawarra and the exceptional service of Woonona East Public Schools Vice Captain, Felix Perez MacDonald. To be elected as a leader by your fellow peers is a huge compliment and a true testament to your hard work and determination. A leader leads by example and prioritises attributes of being kind, thoughtful and empathetic, which are all qualities that Felix's teacher and peers use to describe him. As a former schoolteacher, I feel strongly about showcasing the accomplishments of students in all areas. From kicking goals in the classroom to our greatest sportsmen on the field, it is vital that our students feel supported and recognised. As a student who has shown a maturity beyond his years, his interest in mathematics, geography, and his community proves he is not only a noteworthy leader but a great friend and classmate. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Felix and all school leaders across the Illawarra who have been and will continue to carry out their leadership roles with great pride and wish them all the best for the rest of the school year.

LYDIA AND SARITA SIDDONS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Congratulations to Lydia and Sarita Siddons on their recent fundraising efforts for the Mark Hughes Foundation. Following the tragic death of their husband and father, Leigh Siddons last year from brain cancer just 10 months after his diagnosis, Lydia and Sarita wanted to give back to the organisation which had supported them through their brain cancer care coordinator program. Lydia and Sarita took part in the Big 3 Trek. The trekking group of 40 walked 150km over three days, starting on Friday, June 30th from McDonald Jones Stadium in Newcastle and finishing at 4 Pines Park for Round 18, NRL Beanies for Brain Cancer Round game between Manly and the Roosters. While their stated aim was to raise \$10,000 for the Mark Hughes Foundation, with sales, fund raisers and the GoFundMe page the result was over \$25,000. The trekking group was a special mix of Brain Cancer Warriors, family and friends of those that have fought or still fighting brain cancer! Congratulations to both Lydia and Sarita for dealing with their grief in such a positive way and for the part they played in the \$280,000 fundraiser.

MAITLAND UNITING CHURCH MUNCH PROGRAM

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Congratulations to The Maitland Uniting Church for the delivery of their MUNCH meal program supporting so many in our community for the last 30 years. The MUNCH program is free and includes a two course dinner service, catering for up to 80 people from Maitland and surrounding areas twice a week. Even during COVID, they adapted to take out meals and continued to provide food for those in need. MUNCH truly is people coming together to serve the community, with 30 active volunteers from all walks of life and backgrounds, making up the volunteer team.

MUNCH aims to boost self-confidence and is a safe space where guests do not feel judged and are accepted. The success of MUNCH can be seen as over the years guests have returned as volunteers, to give back, knowing the difference it can make. Thank you MUNCH for welcome those that need support with open arms and offering care beyond food.

DUST (POST PUNK BAND)

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—I would like to congratulate the members of the young rock band DUST who returned from a 21-day European tour earlier this year. DUST is headed by Maitland pair Justin Teale and Adam Ridgeway and is supported by friends Kye Cherry, Gabriel Stove and Liam Smith and are gaining increasing recognition for their unique and energetic sound. This group of 23 year olds are taking the world by storm. They have toured Europe with Australian band 'Hockey Dad' and recently supported English band 'Slowdive' at the Enmore theatre. Their EP 'et cetera' was released 6 months ago and was recorded at Edwardsville near Wollombi using a mobile recording studio they built themselves. The band are already back in the studio working on a new release. The band will continue to tour Australia, ending in Sydney's Southwest in late October. Their drive, hard work and passion is undeniable and on display every time they hit the stage. I want to wish the band members every success as they continue to perform across the globe and continue to represent Maitland on the stage.

BERNADETTE SPEDDING – DISTINGUISHED LONG SERVICE AWARD

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I wish to congratulate Ms Bernadette Spedding on being awarded a prestigious Distinguished Long Service Award at the 2023 Sports Foyer NSW Community Sports Awards. Bernie as she is known, was among 23 individuals recognised for her longstanding achievements and contributions to community gymnastics in the Clarence region spanning over 25 years. Bernie has received and enjoyed previous sporting accolades spanning four decades of commitment to gymnastics, including being honoured as Heathcote's Woman of the Year in 2017. Her most recent accomplishment is in the development of TeamGym, an exceedingly-popular group gymnastics program currently active at PCYC Grafton. I am proud to have the opportunity to acknowledge the incredible sporting spirit that exists here in the Clarence Valley. It is on the backs of compassionate and selfless volunteers such as Bernie that our community has access to the best coaches and programs allowing us to be recognised beyond our region. Active participants and other community members involved in our region's gymnastics community are fortunate to have someone like Bernie in their lives.

COMMEMORATION OF AUSTRALIAN VETERANS FROM THE VIETNAM WAR

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—On the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, I would like to express my deep appreciation and the fearless Australians who served in Vietnam. To those Australian's who served, were injured and most significantly, those who laid down their lives for us and the people of Vietnam, I, on behalf of all the constituents of Lane Cove send out our most heartfelt thank you. Your legacy continues to inspire me, the people of Lane Cove and every Australian. Your service and sacrifice shall never be forgotten. LEST WE FORGET.

THE LANE COVE FESTIVAL

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—The upcoming Lane Cove Festival, run by the Lane Cove Council is an amazing month-long event designed to unite the community of Lane Cove. Running from the 25th of August, starting with the Lane Cove Festival Launch Event, and finishing on the 7th of October, with the Lane Cove Rotary Fair, the festival is a fantastic initiative with a plethora of exciting events. From activities the Lane Cove Children's Festival, the Neighbourhood Night Trivia, the Lane Cove Fun Run & many more, September is looking to be a month of excitement for all constituents of Lane Cove and I express my gratitude to the Lane Cove Council staff for making this event possible.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF FOCAS - FUNDRAISING FOR LANE COVE COMMUNITY AID SERVICE

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—I would like to acknowledge the incredible work done by FOCAS for the people of Lane Cove. The group creates calico dolls for children's hospitals, baby and children's wear as well as knitted rugs. This work does not go unnoticed by the people of Lane Cove. We are incredibly grateful for your ongoing selfless service, in which you embody the Australian spirit of helping those in need while asking for nothing in return. You continue to inspire me and the people of Lane Cove every day.

100 YEARS OF ROYAL NORTH SHORE HOSPITAL SCHOOL

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I congratulate the Royal North Shore Hospital School on its centenary year. The RNSH School was one of four hospital schools established by the Department of Education in 1923 for seriously ill children. It first operated from March 1923 till April 1926. It reopened in May 1939 operating until

July 1949. It again began operating in November 1962 until the present day. The school is currently situated in the new Clinical Services Building within the grounds of the Royal North Shore Hospital. It caters for pupils who spend extended time in the children's hospital wards. Schools such as Royal North Shore Hospital School play such an important role in making education accessible to children experiencing medium to long-term illnesses. I commend the dedicated staff of the school for the special care they give to their students from years K-12 and I again congratulate it on reaching this historic milestone and providing a century of service giving kids in need continuity in their education.

OPENING OF CHATSWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL MAJOR UPGRADE

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—The Chatswood community came together on the morning of August 1 to celebrate the completion of the Chatswood Public School major upgrade. A state-of-the-art new school campus with innovative learning spaces, playgrounds, a new school hall and even a ninja warrior course. The School Principal, Alex Montgomery, hailed it 'as a shining beacon of innovation, knowledge, and opportunity for public education'. I commend all involved in this project, including the school executive, parents and citizens association, the builders and contractors, staff, students and wider community for the vision and determination to see this upgrade realised. The school community rightly took great pride in its new upgrade and the atmosphere was festive with impressive performances by a variety of students and a delicious BBQ to celebrate the opening. This investment in Chatswood Public School is a huge boost to public education in our local community and I pay tribute to the community of Chatswood Public for making this dream a reality.

NORTHBRIDGE KNOCKOUTS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—The sporting life of Willoughby is rich and diverse, catering to a variety of interests including the skipping rope. I would like to acknowledge the Northbridge Knockouts, a local club dedicated to nurturing the sport of skipping, a simple and inexpensive form of exercise offering great health and cardiovascular benefits. The Northbridge Knockouts started more than 15 years ago when head coach Takashi Ogawa organised a Jump Rope for Heart team at Northbridge Public School. Since that time, the club has made great headway, competing at State and National Competitions, and regularly sending skippers to the World Rope Skipping Championships. In 2013, Takashi was deservedly recognised with a Services to Young People Award for his substantial contribution and active commitment to nurturing the sport of skipping in Australia. Thank you to the club's leadership, coaches, parents and participants - we're proud of you. I look forward to following and supporting the club's progress in the years ahead.

KEITH ROFFEY OAM

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate Keith Roffey of Kirrawee on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his international Rotary project and other work. Mr Roffey was recognised for his service to our community through a range of organisations particularly Rotary which he joined 23 years ago. On learning that an estimated billion dollars of unused medical equipment and consumables go into in landfills across Australia, Mr Roffey helped establish MediShare through the Rotary Australia World Community Service of which he is Donations in Kind National Chairman. MediShare works with a range of partners, government & not-for-profit organisations to add value to the infrastructure of health care in disadvantaged communities who face difficulties obtaining the affordable goods they need, through the provision and shipping of recovered usable medical consumables and equipment. Working alongside a team of trained volunteers of whom he is extremely proud of, MediShare was recently able to distribute \$15 million in medical consumables to Ukraine, in conjunction with the Australian Ukrainian community. I commend Mr Roffey for his highly deserving receipt of the Medal of the Order of Australia and extend my best wishes for the future.

SYLVANIA HEIGHTS COMMUNITY AND YOUTH CLUB

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge Sylvania Heights Community and Youth Club who are the successful recipients of \$2,900 from the NSW Government's 2023 Local Sport Grant Program. Sylvania Heights Community and Youth Club has brought our community together through a mutual love of sport for 67 years. The club offers a range of activities including dance, netball, soccer, cricket, physie and calisthenics to community members of all ages. Through this funding, the club will offer high-quality performance events, showcasing calisthenics and promoting their community presence. Additionally, the funds will enable the club to improve the expertise of their coaching staff and allow an additional five coaches to be qualified by the end of 2023. Of course, none of this is possible without the hard work and dedication of the Sylvania Heights Community and Youth Club volunteers. I acknowledge Executive Committee Members Trent Jordan, Tony Robins, Jenny Buchanan as well as calisthenics volunteers Jodie Morton, Lisa Wells and Lauren Cotton for their efforts. I thank the members of the Sylvania Heights Community and 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.

PETRA THEMSEN

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge Petra Themsen, a woman not only passionate about supporting her students, but also our delicate environment. Petra was nominated for Environmental Citizen of the Year at Sutherland Shire Council's 2023 Australia Day Awards. Small steps lead to big results. This is especially true for Petra, who is a learning support officer at Taren Point Public School. Since joining the team, Petra has displayed her passion for the environment by contributing to the introduction of recycling opportunities through Return and Earn and a variety of other options with the aim to reduce the school's land fill to zero. In leading the school's gardening club, Petra has also inspired students to develop a love of gardening. Through utilising composting and worm farms, Petra can grow delicious, fresh produce for the school canteen. This also helps feed the school's chickens, Phoenix Snowball, Pom Pom, Henny, Penny and Bolt providing the school with a supply of free-range eggs. I congratulate Petra on receiving this nomination and admire her passion to instil a love of our environment to our next generation.

ASSYRIAN CULTURAL AND SOCIAL YOUTH ASSOCIATION – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—It was fantastic to attend the Assyrian Cultural and Social Youth Association [ACSYA] 2023 Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 8th July 2023 with members of ACSYA and our wider Assyrian community in Western Sydney. ACSYA is a not-for-profit community organisation based in Western Sydney whose primary objective is to preserve and protect Indigenous Assyrian culture. The organisation engages in crucial work to conduct research about the social, political, and cultural affairs of our Assyrian community, and then share this information with the wider community. ACSYA also aims to increase dialogue, develop partnerships with social and political stakeholders, exchange knowledge, and promote volunteerism. Since the beginning of 2023, the volunteers have contributed over 1,200 hours to directly benefit the Assyrian community – congratulations on this monumental achievement. As an organisation, ACSYA especially prioritises the promotion of these initiatives with Assyrian youth, ensuring that there is a welcoming space for members to gather and maintain their rich Assyrian culture and heritage. Thank you to ACSYA President Stephanie Basdekis, outgoing President Stella Kina, the Board of Directors, and volunteers, for your dedication to strengthening Assyrian culture, particularly amongst our youth in Western Sydney.

FRESENIUS MEDICAL CARE ONSITE SOLAR SYSTEM LAUNCH

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—It was a pleasure to attend the new on-site solar system launch at Fresenius Medical Care in Smithfield on Friday, 7th July 2023. Fresenius Medical Care is a leading provider of products and services to support people experiencing chronic kidney failure. Aware of the significant impact of chronic kidney disease to people's lives, Fresenius Medical Care offers considered outpatient services to patients from the comfort of their own homes, and in familiar surroundings. Located within the Electorate of Prospect, in the heart of Western Sydney, Fresenius Medical Care is also leading the world to research, create and produce innovative products and technologies to offer patients the best-possible quality of life. Fresenius Medical Care has continued their technological leadership by partnering with Sungrow and Solar Galaxy to launch a new on-site solar system to power productions. Thank you to General Manager, John Amiradaki, and the dedicated teams at Fresenius Medical Care, Sungrow and Solar Galaxy for inviting me to this celebration. Congratulations to these organisations for pioneering sustainable, innovative solutions within the medical industry.

BOOK LAUNCH

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—It was a privilege to join our Western Sydney Tamil community to celebrate the Australian book launch of Prisoner #1056, by Canadian Tamil author Roy Ratnavel. Prisoner #1056 is an immigrant success story with searing recounts of surviving injustice and trauma. Mr Ratnavel's novel narrates his journey, beginning with his seizure by government soldiers and internment in a prison camp, to his rise as a senior executive in one of Canada's largest companies. The novel offers a voice to a generation of Tamil immigrants and tells a collective story of survival, and the experience of balancing the dichotomy of loss and grief with peace and prosperity. Prisoner #1056 is a shining example of the spirit and resilience of our Tamil community, as against all odds they established their sense of identity and community in Western Sydney. I was also pleased to see Prisoner #1056 listed as the number 1 bestseller in 'The Globe and Mail Bestsellers Award' on 5th May 2023. Congratulations to Mr Ratnavel on the official launch of his book and for all he has achieved for his family and our Tamil community. I also thank the organising committee for hosting a fantastic launch.

MANISH GUPTA

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—I rise today to recognise the service of Mr Manish Gupta who is moving on from his post as Consul General of India in Sydney. Mr Gupta's years of dedicated service have ensured the continued growth of our close bonds between NSW and India. Nowhere is this more evident than in Parramatta where the Consul General's work has supported new migrants, international students, economic growth, cultural

understanding and partnerships between our two countries. Mr Gupta has worked for over 20 years in India's diplomatic service advocating for international cooperation and supporting Indian diasporas across the world. This has included postings in Nepal, Dakar, Brussels, Turkey and with the United Nations. Mr Gupta has been instrumental in the establishment of the Centre for Australia-India Relations, Prime Minister Modi's recent visit to Sydney Olympic Park and the official acknowledgement by Prime Ministers Albanese and Modi of "Little India" in Harris Park. The people of Parramatta and NSW are very grateful to Mr Gupta for his service. On behalf of my community, I would like to thank Manish and his wife, Nameesh, and wish them well in his new appointment as High Commissioner to the Republic of Ghana.

HAPPY 90TH BIRTHDAY ALAN HYAM OAM

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—Happy 90th Birthday Alan Hyam OAM! Alan was born in Nowra in 1933 and moved to Parramatta as a child. He married Judith Hyam in 1958 at St Johns Parramatta and had 2 children. Sadly, Judith passed away in 1991 and Alan remarried to Siram in 1996. Alan served 27 years as an Alderman. He was Mayor from 1975 -1978, 1986 – 1987 and the first Lord Mayor of Parramatta Council in 1988. Alan held various public service positions prior to practicing property law and being called to the NSW bar in 1981. Alan's wide-ranging contributions during his tenure have left an indelible mark on our community that can be seen today, from securing the funding for Riverside theatres, to the building of several major multi-storey car parks in the CBD, the implementation of the inner and outer ring road system and the redevelopment of Civic Place. For his contributions to our state, he was recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours and was awarded the Order of Australia. I wish Alan a belated 90th birthday for the 26th of July and thank him for his longstanding dedication to the City of Parramatta.

FIRE AND RESCUE NSW MEDAL PRESENTATION - WALLSEND

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Fire and Rescue NSW is one of the world's largest urban fire and rescue services and is the busiest in Australia. Its main function is to enhance community safety, quality of life, and confidence by minimising the impact of hazards and emergency incidents on the people, property, environment and economy of NSW. Their motto is: "We are FRNSW and we are PREPARED FOR ANYTHING". These brave and dedicated individuals not only fight fires on the frontline, but they respond to Triple Zero calls in communication centres to help save lives. Their selfless contributions to the community, courage, professionalism and leadership were celebrated at the Metro North 1 Medal Presentation Evening on 20 July 2023 at Wallsend Diggers. The recipients of the National Emergency Medal out of Wallsend are Captain Robert Walker, Deputy Captain Graham Thorpe, Firefighters Mark Dempsey, Callen Newby, Daniel Ogle and Alan Witenden. Deputy Captain Graham Thorpe and Firefighter Alan Witenden were also awarded the National Medal 1st Clasp, and Firefighter Mark Dempsey was also awarded the Long Service Good Conduct Medal. Congratulations and thanks go to the firefighters and business support staff who have been celebrated.

FIRE AND RESCUE NSW MEDAL PRESENTATION - LAMBTON

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Fire and Rescue NSW is one of the world's largest urban fire and rescue services and the busiest in Australia. Its main function is to enhance community safety, quality of life, and confidence by minimising the impact of hazards and emergency incidents on the people, property, environment and economy of NSW. These brave and dedicated individuals not only fight fires on the frontline, but they respond to Triple Zero calls in communication centres to help save lives. Their selfless contributions to the community, courage, professionalism and leadership were celebrated at the Metro North 1 Medal Presentation Evening. The recipients of the National Emergency Medal out of Lambton are Leading Station Officers James Downey and Glen Whitehead, Station Officer Chad Parker, Captain Ryan Agland, Deputy Captain Matthew O'Malley, Firefighters Kenneth Brinkley, Sandy Brown, Cameron Ailwood, Simon King, Luke Russell, Craig Sunderland, Steven Wallace, Robert Wyatt, and Posthumous Award to Firefighter Mark Aglio. Deputy Captain Matthew O'Malley was also awarded the National Medal, Firefighters Sandy Brown and Luke Russell were also awarded the Long Service Good Conduct Medal 1st CLASP. Congratulations and thanks to the firefighters who have been celebrated.

CASSIDEE SHARP – NEWCASTLE CAMEL JOCKEY WINS PRESTIGIOUS BOULIA CUP

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—In 2018, the Oakfield team from Newcastle won the Boulia Camel Races in outback Queensland. In July 2023 Cassidee Sharp, a Novocastrian camel jockey, was victorious. She was riding "Firebelly Em", trained by Peter Hodge of Shepparton, winning both the P&G Harris Contractors ¼ Mile Flyer and, by a nose, the Boulia "Better Beer" Cup, the most prestigious camel race in Australia, run over 1500 metres. All camel jockeys like Cassidee have day jobs and are not always from horseriding backgrounds. There are no reins to hold on a camel and jockeys sit on small saddle pads behind the hump. They start from barriers with no front gates, and the camels steer themselves down the track. Camels usually graze for most of the year – or are used for tourist rides - until the trainers prepare them for the race meeting. These races are regulated

by Racing Queensland and a vet is onsite. The winning camels in the two main races, with a prize pool of \$45,000, are swabbed and bloods are taken to safeguard an even playing field. Congratulations Cassidee on a unique effort.

DUBBO FAMILY AND DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to congratulate the Dubbo Family and District History Society, which will proudly commemorate its 40th anniversary on August 26 2023. This day not only honours the society's legacy, but also acknowledges the transformative impact it has had on the way we explore our familial pasts and connect with the roots that ground us. From its modest beginnings to its present status as a beacon for history enthusiasts, the society's journey is a testament to the tireless commitment of its members, and the dynamic evolution of genealogical research. Central to the society's accomplishments is its unyielding dedication to indexing and preserving historical records. Countless hours of volunteer effort have been poured into indexing and digitising documents like rate books, enabling researchers to uncover vital information about their ancestors with ease. The Dubbo Family and District History Society's outreach also extends beyond the walls of its physical location, reaching remote members who benefit from online research services. Congratulations again on the celebration. May the next 40 years continue to be a journey of exploration, discovery, and connection that binds us to our past and propels us toward a brighter future.

ASTLEY CUP

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—The Astley Cup is a prestigious and long-standing school sports competition held in regional NSW, which sees Dubbo College, and Orange and Bathurst High Schools compete against each other. This year marked the 100th anniversary of the Astley Cup – a remarkable milestone! Throughout its history, the Astley Cup has earned a reputation for nurturing and producing some of Australia's finest sportsmen and women. From Australian cricketers Brian Booth and Trent Copeland, to Olympic boxer Brian Tink, Socceroo Archie Thompson, golfer Peter O'Malley and Australian netballer Sharon Pratt, many have kicked off their careers at the Astley Cup. Tennis, soccer, netball, basketball, athletics and rugby league became the pillars of the competition, captivating players and spectators alike. Congratulations to Orange High on their win, and Bathurst on their well-deserved second place. And lastly, but certainly not least, well done to Dubbo College. You may not have won, but your perseverance, commitment to sportsmanship, and relentless pursuit of excellence have not gone unnoticed. May the legacy of the Astley Cup inspire generations to come, reminding them that through dedication and unity they can achieve remarkable feats. Here's to a century of excellence!

LESLEY SULLIVAN

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to Lesley Sullivan, who has reached an incredible milestone of 50 years as a medical receptionist for Dubbo Family Doctors. Beginning her role in 1973 with the practice that was then known as Dr Adams, Dickens & Beith, Lesley has been with the practice as it transitioned to the Family Medical Clinic and then again to Dubbo Family Doctors as it is known today. Lesley's presence at the desk has seen patients whom she first met as bouncing 4 year old's running throughout the waiting room grow and flourish into accomplished adults with families of their own bringing the next generation through the practice doors. Forever learning and growing throughout the years as technology evolved and changing conditions such as Covid-19 meant new procedures to learn, Lesley has adapted and embraced change, all the while keeping her main priority the wellbeing and care of patients. Throughout these five decades, Lesley has been the warm smile that has welcomed countless faces through the door and the steady presence that has kept things running smoothly. Congratulations again Lesley, you truly are an inspiring woman.

BECKIE PLANT

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Speaker, I wish to recognise Beckie Plant. An author and illustrator hailing from the Orange Electorate. Much like distant stars, the dream of penning a children's book once appeared beyond her reach. Yet, Beckie's tenacity and courage prevailed, and I was privileged to launch her new book "Amazing Like You", tailored for children up to 12 years old and serves as a beacon of identity and self-esteem growth. In the spirit of her own words, Beckie realised that understanding the vastness of the stars required taking steps of her own. Beckie's dedication extends beyond her literary prowess, having studied Developmental Trauma, Art Therapy, Youth Work, and Counselling, she works in Youth Mental Health to help others reach their own stars. The essence of this book lies in its artful rhymes and illustrations. Beckie encourages our children to embrace their unique qualities and empowering them see their strengths. Her book does not merely tell our children of their brilliance, she guides them in comprehending the very reasons that make them exceptional. I congratulate Beckie and acknowledge her contributions to our community's literary and emotional landscape. Let us applaud her unwavering commitment to nurturing our youth's potential.

SIMONE CRAFT

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I would like to recognise the wonderful contribution of Forbes-based volunteer Simone Craft. Ms Craft has dedicated 30 years to the Forbes Learning Ladder which provides a vital service for children to learn and grow from ages 6 weeks to 12 years with a variety of options for parents and carers. Despite her disability, Ms Craft has supported children over many years by reading to them, listening to their stories and participating with them in play and learning activities. In the past, Ms Crane has volunteered up to five days a week, making her a valuable member of the Forbes community. Management and staff of the Learning Ladder hold Ms Craft in high esteem, due to her ability respond to the needs of children in a flexible and appropriate way, during her volunteer shifts. She has endeared herself to staff, parents and children at the centre over three decades and was recently honoured with a special presentation at the centre to acknowledge her amazing contribution. Rural communities value volunteers of the calibre of Simone Craft, who has enriched the lives of so many.

MARLON ZIELINSKI

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to congratulate Marlon Zielinski from Orange club Central West Gymsports for a great effort in the relatively new sport of Parkour. For the uninitiated, Parkour was developed in Paris in the late 1990s and is the practice of getting from point A to point B in the fastest way, without using equipment but instead using agility, athleticism and acrobatics to cover the distance. It teaches participants to challenge themselves, overcome fear and think on their feet. The sport is especially exciting because it appeals to young men looking for an alternative to traditional gymnastics. Marlon led the way for the five-member Central West Gymnastics team, which was invited to compete in New Zealand's Gymnastics for All, or GFA, in the Bay, at Tauranga. The youngest member of the Orange team, Marlon placed first in the 7-10 years speed run and backed that up with a first place in the elite free style. His win in the elite free style was especially impressive considering this is a category based on skill, not age. This was Marlon's first overseas competition and I look forward to seeing him advance in the parkour ranks.

KOSTA "CON" ANAGNOSTOU - "CONS HANDMADE SHOES"

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—Kosta Anagnostou of "Cons Handmade Shoes" was a much-loved, longstanding member of the Hurlstone Park community, known as "Con" by family and friends. "Cons Handmade Shoes" was a symbol of the many skilled Greek migrants who established businesses in our area. Con was a master craftsman who made and repaired shoes meant to last – a skill that is slowly dying out in our modern world. Con provided his unique service for over 45 years, making shoes for a wide range of community members and groups, including the NSW Police, children at Westmead Hospital and the Sydney Opera House wardrobe department. Nestled in his workshop amongst his materials and tools Con was always welcoming with a smile and ready for a chat. Con's granddaughter, Irene, described Con as "able to chat with anyone" and said that many members of the community have reached out with lovely stories of Con since his passing. Con will be sorely missed, and I send my deepest condolences to his beloved family and all the inner west community who mourn his loss. Vale Con.
