



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Eighth Parliament
First Session**

Tuesday 19 September 2023

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 19 September 2023

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: As we begin this historic sitting of the Legislative Assembly, I extend a warm welcome to guests of the member for Charlestown, staff and interns from SSI, formerly known as Settlement Services International. I also welcome to the Chamber guests of the member for Maitland, year 10 commerce students and teachers from All Saints' College Maitland, St Peter's campus. I also welcome my guests from the Toronto Macquarie Ladies Probus group. Finally, I welcome guests of the member for Orange, Pamela Harrison and Christie Roses.

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

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

Bills

APPROPRIATION BILL 2023

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2023

TREASURY AND REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023

First Reading

Bills introduced on motion by Mr Paul Scully, on behalf of Mr Chris Minns, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (12:03): On behalf of Mr Chris Minns: I move:

That these bills be now read a second time.

Debate adjourned.

Budget Speech

[The Hon. Daniel Mookhey was conducted by the Serjeant-at-Arms onto the floor of the Chamber.]

The SPEAKER: Order! In accordance with the resolution of the House of 12 September 2023, I admit the Treasurer, the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, MLC, to the Legislative Assembly for the purpose of giving a speech in relation to the New South Wales budget 2023-24. I note that the last time a Treasurer from the other place gave a speech in our House was in 2010, an event that only seven of our current membership—me included—would have witnessed in person. In accordance with the practice of the House on such occasions, the usual courtesies are to be afforded to the Treasurer, particularly that his speech should be heard without interruption.

I welcome to the gallery for this historic occasion members of the Treasurer's family: his mother, Neelam Mookhey; Sheena Mookhey; and Tarun Mookhey.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (Treasurer) (12:05): I am presenting this year's budget on the land of the Gadigal.

So let me begin by offering my respect to their Elders—past, present and to the First Nations leaders of tomorrow.

And allow me to pledge my allyship to all First Nations people presently campaigning for Australia to take the next step forward in perfecting this democracy.

By enshrining a voice for First Nations people in the national constitution; so we all can partake in this nation's future equally; and we do indeed advance Australia fair.

A Fresh Start For New South Wales

I have come here—to the people's House—to deliver this new Government's first budget.

This Labor budget signals the beginning of a new age of public investment that benefits the many, bringing an end to the era of privatisation that handed profits to the few.

This budget treats our schools and hospitals, our railways and roads, as assets to revitalise; not liabilities to neglect.

This budget builds more homes amidst a housing crisis. It funds more essential workers for our essential services. It rescues the energy transition with additional investment. It aids disaster-hit cities and regions with help to repair.

And this budget cuts waste; ends pork-barrelling, funds what works; and lowers debt for our children and our grandchildren.

Above all—

This Labor budget delivers the people of New South Wales the fresh start they voted for.

Busting the wages cap, beginning toll reform, backing first home buyers, building new and better public schools and hospitals; restoring TAFE, fixing social housing, repairing rural and regional roads, helping small businesses, and wrangling debt back under control.

Today I intend to set forth how the Minns Government will use the people's resources to improve our people's lives.

Economic Outlook

Rising rents; skyrocketing mortgages; ever-increasing electricity bills and even more expensive groceries are making it harder to live, work and retire in this State.

Like I said in June: inflation remains New South Wales's preeminent economic challenge.

It is why interest rates have increased; living standards have fallen; real wages have declined and unemployment is likely to climb.

The Treasury expects elevated inflation this financial year.

The forecast is for it to top 4¾ per cent. It is then expected to return to the Reserve Bank's target range from the June quarter in 2025 onwards.

Economic growth is moderating. Twelve interest rate rises in 16 months has hit households hard. They are spending less.

The Treasury predicts the New South Wales economy will still expand, rising by 1¼ per cent in real terms this financial year.

Growth is then anticipated to climb to 2¼ per cent by 2026-2027.

Unemployment is likely to hew closely to the national projections.

Importantly, wage growth is finally set to accelerate.

The Treasury expects real wages to rise from next year: outpacing price growth by 0.75 per cent by the 2026-27 financial year.

Signalling the reversal of a decade of real-wage stagnation. Beginning the recovery of a decade's worth of lost buying power.

HELPING FAMILIES WITH THE COST OF LIVING

The prospect of real wages rising will help families live through this once-in-a-generation cost-of-living crisis.

But any truthful reckoning of the current difficulties will reveal this simple truth:

Too many of our citizens will still live in dread of the next interest rate rise.

Or their next utility bill.

Or their next visit to the supermarket.

Or their next notice from their landlord.

Or their next toll notice.

In New South Wales the cost-of-living crisis is worse because of a decade of privatisation. The sale of tens of billions worth of public assets turned families into the prey of private monopolies.

It is why New South Wales is home to the most tolled city in the world. It is why New South Wales families are paying more for their power.

And it is why New South Wales families have less control of their energy future than families living in States like Queensland—which still owns their electricity assets.

Privatisation is draining family budgets. They need help now. So the Minns Government will act.

Our strategy is to provide immediate relief to help alleviate the pain of high housing costs, electricity bills, and tolls; but pair these measures with long-term change.

Private-sector reform. Matched with public sector innovation. Targeting the factors responsible for inflicting those pains in the first place.

Let me explain—beginning with housing.

Housing

New South Wales is in the midst of a fierce housing crisis. Rents are rising. Interest rates are climbing. Home ownership rates are falling. Demand for social housing is increasing. Homelessness is worsening. And the next generation fears permanent eviction from safe and secure housing.

Had we built more homes during the last decade—more homes could be bought or rented in this decade. But years of governments plodding means the State now needs deep systemic solutions to correct the flaws in the housing market.

New South Wales needs to think laterally about how to add to the State's housing stock.

That means re-imagining the role of the government agencies we entrust to lead our housing interventions.

Modernising them so their capabilities match the moment we live in.

A New Future For Landcom

One of those agencies is Landcom. It is a publicly owned corporation. It has featured heavily in our housing past. It needs to feature prominently in our housing future too.

Under the Minns Government: it will.

That is why I am announcing a \$300 million funding injection for Landcom. It will go towards building 4,697 new homes.

1,409 of them will be affordable homes.

The extra money is in addition to the \$60 million Landcom will get to pilot publicly owned build-to-rent projects in the Northern Rivers and the Illawarra-Shoalhaven regions.

And it makes possible this reality: a publicly owned company can build new housing on the public's land for a public that needs them desperately.

Building Neighbourhoods Before The Housing Arrives

I am also announcing the creation of a new \$400 million Housing Infrastructure Fund. Financed from the monies leftover after more than 700 Restart NSW projects finished.

Many of those dollars have been idling in the government's bank accounts for years. They were forgotten until our comprehensive expenditure review found them.

Now, that money will go towards building sewers, footpaths, lights, parks and schools.

\$100 million is reserved exclusively for Regional NSW.

It bolsters the \$1.5 billion available through the new Housing and Productivity Contribution so the practical infrastructure people expect is ready before they get the keys to their new homes.

The Government is also providing the State's social housing agencies and homelessness services a one-off \$224 million emergency funding boost.

Neither of them can wait long for more resources.

They are both facing acute pressures.

So they are getting what they require right now. And we will return with further reform to equip them with what they need thereafter.

Alone these measures will not transform the New South Wales housing market. I do not make that claim.

But I do say that—along with removing and reducing stamp duty for 84 per cent of first home buyers, the creation of Homes NSW; the adoption of the faster planning protocols; and the modernisation of our rental laws—the Government is establishing the foundations of a new housing compact in New South Wales.

Tolls

There is yet another reason why New South Wales families are suffering acute cost-of-living pressures. They involve choices the previous Government made.

From their very first term and until their last term, the Liberal and Nationals parties showed they are the parties of privatisation.

That is when Sydney became the most tolled city in the world. With a private company owning all or part of the M2, the M4, the M5 East, the M5 South West, the M7, the M8, the M4-M8 link, NorthConnex, the Lane Cove Tunnel, the Cross City Tunnel and the Eastern Distributor.

By the time the last of these privatised roads returns to public ownership a child born today will be celebrating their thirty-seventh birthday.

If New South Wales is to have a simpler, fairer and more efficient tolling system, then work needs to begin immediately.

Toll reform cannot wait 37 years.

So here is what we will do:

First, the Government is getting ready to introduce a two year \$60 per week toll cap from January onwards.

\$551 million back to more than 700,000 motorists. Complemented by \$64 million for a one-third cut to the toll multiplier for trips taken by trucks on the M5 East and M8 for two years.

Two election promises: delivered in full.

Second, Australia's toughest customer—Allan Fels—is spearheading the work necessary to streamline motorway pricing across Sydney.

Third, public ownership.

Under Labor the public will always own the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Sydney Harbour Tunnel, the Western Harbour Tunnel, and the M6 Stage 1.

The era of toll-road privatisation is over.

With public ownership, we can begin to inject competition into the toll market. And that is what this Government intends to do.

Energy Relief

Privatisation also drains family budgets every time an electricity bill arrives.

And those with the least are suffering the most from the sky-high power prices charged by the privately owned power companies.

So this Government is responding.

This budget raises:

- the Family and Seniors Energy Rebates to \$250;
- the Low-Income Household and Medical Energy Rebate to \$350; and
- the Life Support Rebate to \$1,639 for each equipment type from 1 July next year.

These additional three measures are part of a package worth a combined \$100 million. They will help up to 1.6 million families.

They complement the \$500 energy rebate currently rolling out to those 1.6 million households.

And they form part of the \$1.1 billion the Minns Government is spending this budget year to alleviate the pain families feel from the privatised electricity utilities.

Energy Reform

This investment is coupled with reform. Reform that builds an energy market that is stable enough, cheap enough and predictable enough for businesses to make long-term investments; and clean enough to help stave off the horrors of global heating.

To begin this work: this budget creates the NSW Energy Security Corporation. It seeds it with \$1 billion.

The corporation's mission: to partner with the private sector.

To unlock the investments in the long-duration storage we need to curb our dependence on coal-fired power.

The budget also injects an additional \$804 million into the Transmission Acceleration Facility. Money to connect the State's Renewable Energy Zones [REZ] to the grid sooner. Money to save the energy transition from faltering altogether.

The Government is also revamping the NSW Electric Vehicle strategy.

Rather than spending \$263 million of the public's money on private subsidies for electric-vehicle buyers, this budget will use those funds to build more electric-vehicle infrastructure.

Especially charging infrastructure. Especially in regional New South Wales.

REBUILDING ESSENTIAL SERVICES

A New Deal For New South Wales Essential Services And Workers

Energy bills, tolls, rent and mortgage increases have all felt more severe because for more than a decade, conservative politicians—Federal and State—have held down the wages of working people.

Mr Speaker,

Paying people enough to provide for their family is right morally; it is correct economically; and it is vital if we want to rebuild essential services to the world-class standards New South Wales demands.

If we want a world-class health system: we have to train, recruit and retain enough health workers to staff our hospitals.

If we want young people to have more opportunities than we do: we need to stop denying there is a teacher shortage—and instead act to solve it.

If we want to keep our communities safe and prosperous: we have to fill the vacancies in our police force, our child protection system and across the New South Wales public service.

So, to begin rebuilding our essential services, the Government will act on the labour shortages that are diminishing them.

We have removed the wages cap the conservatives introduced—which only served to stoke confrontation—and are replacing it with a new bargaining system that fosters cooperation.

We are creating a \$3.6 billion Essential Services Fund to share the fruits of reform with those who deliver them.

And the New South Wales public sector has already gotten the biggest public sector pay rise in more than a decade.

Turning around a decade of wage suppression will take more than six months. The best way to restore real-wage growth for all workers remains bringing inflation back under control.

Another decade spent holding down people's wages will result in more inequality, a weaker economy and worse public services.

Health

Recruiting more essential workers is the first step of rebuilding public services after more than a decade of decline.

The need is especially urgent in the New South Wales health system.

We need more hospital cleaners and security guards; more allied health professionals and paramedics; more nurses as well as doctors.

That is why this budget:

- Hires 500 new paramedics for rural and regional New South Wales as part of a \$438.6 million program.
- Begins to reform salary packaging benefits for some of our lowest paid health workers so more of them stay working in our hospitals and don't leave for other industries.
- Funds scholarships for 12,000 healthcare students. New students will receive \$4,000 per year and existing students will receive one-off payments of \$8,000 if they join and stay working for NSW health.

This budget also commences the historic introduction of Safe-Staffing levels for NSW Nurses: \$419 million to hire the 1,200 nurses the health system has to have.

And

The budget saves the jobs of 1,112 nurses. Nurses that otherwise would have been fired next June because the previous Government left their positions unfunded without telling anyone.

The investment we are making in the people working in the health system is complemented with the investments we are making in health infrastructure.

The \$13.8 billion we are spending to build and upgrade health facilities include:

- \$120 million to expand Blacktown and Mount Druitt Hospital;
- \$350 million for Canterbury Hospital, \$550 million for Fairfield Hospital; and
- \$1.3 billion to rebuild Bankstown hospital on a new site.

And, after being promised for three elections in a row, this Labor Government is delivering \$700 million to finally build the Rouse Hill Hospital.

Last year a parliamentary inquiry told us: "Residents in rural, regional and remote New South Wales have inferior access to health and hospital services".

This budget begins to end this divide by making:

- A \$260 million investment in Eurobodalla Hospital.
- \$200 million for Bathurst Hospital to serve the Central West.
- \$538 million for Albury Wodonga Regional Hospital.
- And we will help make parking free across our rural and regional hospitals at a cost of \$19 million.

Education

Mr Speaker,

The long-term driver of our prosperity is our people. Their skills and ingenuity.

Let there be no doubt: Our State makes its living by selling the intelligence of our citizens to the world.

Education has always been our secret superpower.

It's how we acquire the world-beating skills that we then use to unlock the magic circle of productivity growth, that leads to investment growth, that lifts real wages as our national income climbs.

Yet this truth is increasingly self-evident:

The power of our education system is fading. Here are some facts that alarm this Government, and should alarm this House too.

The most recent NAPLAN results showed one out of every 10 children in year 9 are not able to read or write to the minimum standard.

Between 2006 and 2018, New South Wales students dropped from 6th to 22nd in the OECD in reading, from 9th to 30th in maths, and we dropped from 3rd to 23rd in science.

So I'm clear:

Falling education standards today is a recipe for economic decline tomorrow.

And no long-term economic plan is worth its salt unless it truthfully reckons with the decade of declining education standards New South Wales has just endured.

So this Government is acting.

- After just six months—New South Wales teachers are now the best paid in the nation. And more than 3,000 of them are heading back to the classrooms—after the historic agreement we reached with their union.
- Six months ago 16,000 teachers and admin staff were on temporary contracts despite an epic teacher shortage. Six months later—those people have permanent jobs and the job security they have earned.

We make further progress in this budget—with \$9.8 billion for school infrastructure, TAFE and preschools, including:

- \$3.5 billion to build 24 new and upgrade 51 schools in Western Sydney.
- \$1.4 billion to build 19 new and upgrade 35 schools in regional New South Wales.
- And \$769 million to fast track 100 new public preschools.

Labor has always been the party of education. Labor will always be the party of education.

Infrastructure and Transport

Let me now turn to our infrastructure and transport networks.

This Government prefers to build real projects—not waste billions on fantasy projects, vanity projects, or projects that are just plain bad.

So the pipedream of a park on top of the Cahill Expressway, a tunnel under the Blue Mountains, or dams that don't stack up, will make way for our emergency regional road repair program; the urban congestion busting fund; and the new and upgraded schools and hospital packages that communities really need.

Furthermore:

- The Sydney Metro City and Southwest needs an extra \$1 billion to get back on track after years of delays and cost blowouts. This budget provides it.
- We have reserved \$303 million for a Western Sydney Rapid Bus Network to the future Western Sydney International Airport.
- The Parramatta Light Rail Stage 2 will be expedited by reserving \$200 million to get construction started.
- We will put Australian-made ferries back on our harbour with seven new Parramatta River Class ferries for \$43 million, and \$71 million to return Freshwater Class ferries to the Circular Quay-Manly route.
- We will spend \$300 million upgrading train station car parks and installing new lifts, ramps and footbridges.

And, as promised during the election, we will give people more options to walk or ride to their destination by doubling the statewide investment in Active Transport Infrastructure with an additional \$60 million.

Statewide roads

In Western Sydney a booming population needs roads and we have set aside \$2.4 billion for this purpose.

This budget includes a commitment of \$770 million to establish an Urban Roads Fund to bust congestion in metro areas.

Furthermore, we will spend:

- \$106.2 million on the M7-M12 Interchange
- \$95.7 million to improve the Western Distributor
- And the Bells Line of Road will be upgraded for \$100 million.

Roads right across our vast State require significant improvement and repair.

A new \$390 million Regional Emergency Road Repair Fund will help councils rebuild local roads destroyed in natural disasters.

A further \$334.0 million Regional Roads Fund will build and maintain new and existing roads across the State.

Promises made. Promises kept.

Disaster Relief

Mr Speaker,

Few people have done it tougher than those who have lost their homes or seen their community devastated by floods and fires.

This budget includes \$4 billion for natural disaster support and recovery programs to pay the bills left behind from the March 2021 floods; the November 2021 floods; the February and July 2022 floods, and the floods in August and September 2022.

These floods affected people in Lismore, Ballina, Woodburn, Windsor, Chipping Norton, Molong, Eugowra, Cowra, Forbes, Young, Yass, Bega, Gunnedah and Scone to name just a few.

Those communities have waited too long.

So those communities are getting help now.

As weather events become more extreme, new investment in preparation and mitigation is as needed as funding for recovery and rebuilding.

More than \$700 million will go to rebuild roads. And the NSW Reconstruction Authority will also get \$121.0 million to ensure communities are better prepared for, and can recover faster from, the heartache of natural disasters.

And that's just the start.

Mr Speaker, the programme of reform funded in this budget is extensive:

We are putting an end to the politicisation and pork-barrelling of regional development funding. A new \$350 million Regional Development Trust Fund will have rules to ensure allocations are transparent. Because need should matter more than political allegiance.

- \$80 million is being set aside to establish the new Great Koala National Park on the mid North Coast.
- \$34.3 million is going to 20 Women's Health Centres—their first funding increase in decades.
- We are partnering with the McGrath Foundation to hire 29 new breast cancer nurses.
- And we are spending \$52.7 million to fund 48 new Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners.

Common-sense programmes. Life-changing outcomes.

FIXING THE STATE'S FINANCES

The Budget Result

Undoing the damage privatisation did to family budgets; fixing our essential services; paying our essential workers decently; rebuilding disaster-stricken cities and regions: these decisions begin the work of building a better New South Wales.

The investments we make in this budget are possible because the Government has made better choices.

Better choices about the use of the public's resources.

Choices necessary for the State to have the finances it needs to deliver the changes New South Wales must make.

Choices essential given the fiscal position this Government inherited.

Choices that have yielded a substantial improvement to the budget result.

The forward estimates are \$4 billion better off under Labor. No privatisation needed. No smoke-and-mirror tactics used.

The Treasury is forecasting the budget deficit to reach \$7.8 billion this financial year.

They then expect the State to post an \$844 million surplus in 2024-25;

A \$1.6 billion surplus in 25-26;

And a surplus of \$1.5 billion in 26-27.

Reducing Liberal Party Debt Without Privatisation

Labor has also begun the hard work of reducing New South Wales's level of debt.

The last budget planned for New South Wales to add \$60 billion of additional debt in the next three years.

Under that plan we would have owed a total of \$188.2 billion by June 2026.

This was the largest debt any incoming State Government has ever inherited from its predecessor.

In three years' time, the State would have been handing our lenders \$7 billion in annual interest payments.

This is billions more than we spend to fund the entire NSW Police Force.

So there is no doubt:

This Government favours paying our essential workers more and our bondholders less.

Under Labor: we can.

I can report to the House:

Because of this budget, gross debt will be \$14.8 billion lower by June 2026 compared to our predecessors. Net debt is \$10.5 billion lower.

This is New South Wales's largest ever reduction in gross debt—actual or forecast—and it has been achieved without privatisation.

As a result, the State will be saving \$2.3 billion in interest payments.

Money freed for our schools, hospitals, police stations and other vital public services. Money no longer destined for our creditors.

The Comprehensive Expenditure Review

Mr Speaker,

The Finance Minister and I pored over every dollar the New South Wales Government spends.

We have been determined to make sure the public's money is being spent on the public's priorities. We found \$13 billion over four years that we have redirected to the State's top priorities.

By freezing the pay of politicians and top public servants for two years, and by reducing the record 4,000 top executives employed by the former Government, the public is more than \$700 million better off.

Instead of forking out a king's ransom to hire an army of consultants and labour-hire companies, we will act on solving the staff shortages in the public service. Curing the cause to avoid the symptoms. Cutting expenses by \$530 million.

We prefer our State planners to work together—not be dispersed across a passel of planning agencies. So the Greater Cities Commission and the Western Parkland City Authority will be merged into the planning department. Yielding \$111 million in efficiencies.

COVID has ended. But a clutch of COVID programmes have not. Like the \$100 million still set aside for emergency PPE. We are ending them.

Getting New South Wales its Fair Share from Our Resources and the Commonwealth

The people of New South Wales will also be getting more of the wealth their resources create for others.

Coal royalties are increasing by 2.6 percentage points from 1 July 2024. The change will start after the Coal Market Price Emergency directions, introduced by the previous government in December 2022, come to an end.

The old system is out of date. The market has moved on. So the Government will modernise the State's coal royalties system so it suits current market conditions.

We will close a number of tax loopholes to existing taxes and duties. These measures will improve the fairness and integrity of our tax system.

And New South Wales is being clear with Canberra: the GST no-worse off guarantee must stay.

CONCLUSION

Mr Speaker,

In a few moments I shall return to the other place—Daniel is leaving the lion's den—indebted to this House for the courtesies you have extended to me: a stranger in your midst.

So let me leave you with these closing remarks.

I grew up in Merrylands, in the Granville electorate. Most of my neighbours worked in the factories, estuaries, quarries and refineries of wider Western Sydney.

Today, people in my old neighbourhood have very different jobs. But, their ambitions and aspirations have stayed the same.

They expect honest businesses to make good profits.

They expect their hard work to be rewarded with greater wealth.

And they extend the hand of friendship to those experiencing adversity.

The budget I deliver is a budget driven by those values—made for a State who voted for an energetic government, led by a united team, with a vision for what our State can become.

For that reason, I commend these bills to the House.

APPROPRIATION BILL 2023

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2023

TREASURY AND REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023

Second Reading Speech

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (12:36): On behalf of Mr Chris Minns: I commend the Budget Speech by the Treasurer and commend the bills to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Documents

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2023-2024

Tabling

Mr PAUL SCULLY: On behalf of Mr Chris Minns: I table copies of the following papers:

- (1) Budget Statement 2023-24 (*Budget Paper No. 01*).
- (2) Agency Financial Statements 2023-24 (*Budget Paper No. 02*).
- (3) Infrastructure Statement 2023-24 (*Budget Paper No. 03*).
- (4) Appropriation Bills 2023-24 (*Budget Paper No. 04*).

I move:

That the papers be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:38): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the resolution of the House of 12 September 2023 regarding the budget week routine of business to be amended by:

- (1) In paragraph (1) omitting all words after (1) (a) (v) and inserting instead:
 - (vi) Giving of general business notices of motions for up to 15 minutes, then Speaker to leave the chair.
 - (vii) Speaker to resume the chair at 2.30 p.m. followed by question time and the associated routine of business, Government business, the public interest debate at 5.00 p.m., resumption of Government business if

required, community recognition statements and then private members' statements with the House to then adjourn without motion moved.

(2) In paragraph (2) inserting the following:

- (g) The House to consider at any time any messages from the Legislative Council regarding the appropriation bills, and to continue to sit after the conclusion of private members' statements, including the option of the Speaker leaving and then resuming the chair on the ringing of a long bell, to receive any such messages.

I note that I conveyed to the Opposition yesterday my intention to move this motion to suspend standing and sessional orders and change the routine of business, and it is opposed to the appropriate change. As members of the House are aware, generally I proceed on the basis of being a traditionalist and try to follow the normal practices and conventions of the House.

Mr Gareth Ward: When it suits you.

Mr RON HOENIG: Somebody interjected "when it suits me". I do not think anybody in the Chamber would suggest that I have ever proceeded contrary to the conventions of the House or the Westminster system—and only the member for Kiama would suggest that. I took the opportunity to see what the conventions of the House were. I noticed that over the past four years on 6 June 2019, 20 November 2020, 10 June 2021 and 9 June 2022, the Leader of the House moved that standing and sessional orders be suspended to ensure that at the conclusion of the Budget Speech and the appropriation and cognate bills, the House stand adjourned, or that the Speaker leave the chair. On those occasions it was until 2.15 p.m. I am proposing until 2.30 p.m. to give members the opportunity to utilise 15 minutes of time for general business notices of motions. That has been the practice and I assume that is to enable the Opposition to have time to absorb the budget and the Budget Speech prior to question time. That is the convention that I propose today. That is a matter for the Opposition. I flag to the House that the Opposition wishes to proceed directly to question time. I am proposing the suspension of standing orders in accordance with the normal convention of the House on budget day.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (12:42): Regrettably, courtesy in this place has reached a new low, because, although the Leader of the House indicated that he wished to have question time later today, he did not supply me with any copy of a motion for the suspension of standing orders, and he also has never discussed the issue of general business notices of motions being on immediately. Yesterday he said to me that the proposal was that general business notices of motions be after question time, which he wanted to be later in the day. What members see is not only discourtesy but a great metaphor for the Minns Labor Government and the budget that has just been delivered.

A week ago the Leader of the House on behalf of the Government made a promise to the House as to how the day today would proceed. What have we seen? That promise did not last a week. Like too many of the commitments of this Government, the promise has not lasted a week. What the leadership of this Minns Labor Government does not seem to understand is that when a government makes a commitment, people inside and outside of the House plan their affairs accordingly, whether it is promises about Active Kids, Creative Kids or First Lap vouchers or regional seniors travel cards. People actually take governments at face value until they are repeatedly found out to be economical with the truth.

If simple promises, like what will happen on a day in this House, cannot be relied upon from this Government, then how can anything said about the budget be relied upon either? I feel sorry for the Leader of the House, because the plans that he put to the elected representatives of this place just a week ago have now been vetoed by the faceless people in the Premier's office. That is the only conclusion that one can draw, given that the Premier was in Parliament last week when the Leader of the House moved the motion for the suspension of standing orders. This is a triumph of the spin doctors over elected representatives of the Parliament and a good indication of what the people of New South Wales can anticipate over the next four years of this Government.

Prior to the election, we said that Labor is all about politics, not policy. This motion is an ample demonstration of that fact. The Opposition is ready to immediately ask questions of this Government after the Budget Speech. Why is the Government not ready to answer those questions? This is another example of the Ministers over there not being on top of their portfolios and not being ready. This is a budget that I assume has gone through Cabinet. Why are they not ready to answer questions on the budget? Therefore, I move:

That the motion be amended by:

- (1) Omitting those parts of paragraph (1) of the motion that deal with changing question time from what was resolved by the House on 12 September 2023 so that it will continue to occur today immediately after the delivery of the Budget Speech.
- (2) Appending the following words to the motion: That the resolution of the House of 12 September 2023 admitting the Treasurer to the House to deliver the Budget Speech be conditional upon him remaining in the Chamber for question time to respond to any questions that members of the House may wish to ask him about the budget.

Paragraph (1) of my amendment seeks that items 2 to 10 of the question time and associated routine of business continue for sitting Tuesdays, after which the Speaker will leave the chair and the House will resume at 3.00 p.m. These amendments to the motion now before the House will continue what was proposed last week and upon which people have planned the day and add an element of economic accountability. If strangers from the other place are allowed to come into this House, they should be prepared to be accountable for the speeches they deliver. The Treasurer should not deliver a speech and then sneak out of the Chamber without being held accountable for the speech that he has delivered. I encourage all members to support my amendments to uphold the standards of this House, to give a vote against the sneaky conduct of bringing forward this motion for the suspension of standing orders and to return accountability to this Chamber.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:47): The Government will not take integrity lessons from the member for Wahroonga—it would be like taking human rights lessons from Joseph Stalin.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will resume his seat. Members will come to order.

Mr Mark Speakman: That is a breach of Standing Order 73. It is a personal reflection on the member, and it should be withdrawn.

The SPEAKER: Will the Leader of the House withdraw the statement?

Mr RON HOENIG: No, I will not withdraw it. I did not direct it towards him personally; I gave an analogy. As I said last week, if that is your effort to become leader of the Liberal Party, to stab the member for Cronulla in the back, it is the most porous effort I have ever seen. You are suggesting a lack of courtesy, when I told you yesterday about the proposed changes. I told you yesterday, and your response was that you were going to check with the Leader of the Opposition. You came back to me and you checked with the Leader of the Opposition and you said that you had organised your entire day.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Point of order: I am incredibly disappointed by the member's contribution today. Mr Speaker, could you please ask him to address his comments through the Chair instead of screaming at members on this side of the House?

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for North Shore. I uphold the point of order. The Leader of the House will address the House through the Chair.

Mr RON HOENIG: I am clearly addressing my remarks via the Speaker because I am looking at him as I am speaking to him.

Mrs Leslie Williams: No, you weren't.

Mr RON HOENIG: I can look at the member for Port Macquarie when she interjects. It is not like her to interject; she is usually well behaved and respected. I indicate to the House and to the Manager of Opposition Business that I happened to look and see how many times that former Premier the Hon. Barry O'Farrell sought a change in the standing orders during his first year in government. I noticed that he changed the procedures of the House 66 times in 2011 between March and December. To suggest that somehow there is something untoward about a government changing the routine of business is bizarre, but I remind members of the Opposition that when they were in government—and I am referring not to the member for Wahroonga but to his predecessor when he was Premier—they did not even consult the Opposition before they made those changes and rammed legislation through this House. The Opposition is making a stunt for no purpose whatsoever. All that the Government is offering the Opposition, as governments have done for every single opposition before it, is to give its members time to examine the budget.

To move an amendment to suggest that a member of the other place be in this Chamber to answer questions is not only inconsistent with the comity between the two Houses but is also a bizarre suggestion. I tell the Manager of Opposition Business that if he wishes to ask questions about the budget, the Treasurer is amply represented by talented and capable Ministers and I am sure that he will be amply represented. But in any event, the questions will not be too hard to answer because at the end of the day the Opposition does not even require any time to prepare for the questions it proposes to ask, which is somewhat bizarre. Oppositions often pull stunts; that is not unusual. But usually, particularly on a day like budget day, they are informed, refer to precedent or refer to some traditions of the House. I tell the member for Wahroonga that this stunt is the worst I have ever seen in the history of the New South Wales Parliament. Old son, you will never be the Leader of the Liberal Party.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

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

The House divided.

Ayes35
Noes52
Majority.....17

AYES

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

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

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

NOES

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

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

Minns, C
O'Neill, M
Quinnell, S
Regan, M
Saffin, J (teller)
Saliba, D
Scully, P
Shetty, K
Stuart, M
Tesch, L
Vo, T
Voltz, L
Warren, G
Washington, K
Watson, A
Whan, S (teller)
Wilkinson, K

PAIRS

Cooke, S
Toole, P

Dib, J
Park, R

Amendment negatived.

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

The House divided.

Ayes52
Noes35
Majority.....17

AYES

Aitchison, J
Atalla, E
Bali, S

Hagarty, N
Hannan, J
Harris, D

Minns, C
O'Neill, M
Quinnell, S

AYES

Barr, C
Butler, L
Butler, R
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Holland, M
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Kaliyanda, C
Kamper, S
Kirby, W
Leong, J
Li, J
McDermott, H
McGirr, J
McKeown, K
Mehan, D

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

NOES

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

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

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

PAIRS

Dib, J
Park, R

Cooke, S
Toole, P

Motion agreed to.

[Notices of motions given.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.30. p.m.

*Question Time***STATE BUDGET AND PUBLIC SECTOR WAGES**

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (14:33): My question is directed to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Table 5.2 in *Budget Paper No. 01* shows an increase of 3.3 per cent in employee expenses in 2023-24 compared with 2022-23. How can the Government keep the increase in employee expenses to that percentage when it is increasing salaries for teachers by between 8 per cent and 10 per cent?

The SPEAKER: Government members will come to order. The Minister will be heard in silence.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (14:34): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question and his interest in Labor's first budget in over a decade. I congratulate the Premier, the Treasurer and the finance Minister on an exceptional job. The budget is about re-investing in our public services, and we are investing. With respect to *Budget Paper No. 01*, I see what the Leader of the Opposition is trying to say, but let me give him an explanation. We are investing in future essential services by investing in people, our human capital. *Budget Paper No. 01* shows employee expenses growth, not wages growth. It includes more essential workers. It is not just about wages. It includes all essential workers.

In health care alone, the Minns Government will save 1,112 nurse positions that the former Government left unfunded. We are hiring 1,200 nurses across our suburbs and our local health districts and in our regions. We are hiring 500 more paramedics. Of course, more essential workers means employee expense growth. We went to the election with a mandate to scrap the wages cap and to re-invest in our public services. The premise of the Opposition's question demonstrates two things: Either the Opposition does not know how to read the budget papers or it is deliberately misleading the public. The budget is about a fresh start.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: My point of order is direct relevance under Standing Order 129. I will give the Minister the benefit of the doubt; she may have misunderstood the question. The question was this: Given that teachers' wages are increasing by between 8 per cent and 10 per cent, how can the Government's employee expenses be growing by only 3.3 per cent? How does she reconcile the two?

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being directly relevant to the question. There is no point of order.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: I am answering the question. It is an important question. This is the signature platform that we took to the election. We made a promise to the people of New South Wales that we would re-invest in public services. Why is that important? That is because we inherited a crisis. I will quote some numbers. Last year 7,678 nurses left the health system. [*Time expired.*]

STATE BUDGET AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES FUND

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (14:37): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier outline how the Essential Services Fund will help rebuild essential services in New South Wales?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (14:37): That is a great question that goes to the heart of the budget that has just been handed down. The \$3.6 billion Essential Services Fund goes to the problem of essential service provision in New South Wales. There are alarming statistics in key areas of service delivery in the State. I report to the House that in the April to June quarter 43 per cent of patients spent more than four hours in an emergency department, longer than any quarter on record, according to the most recent data. In education, 30 per cent of students rank in the lower two bands for reading and numeracy—that is, "needs additional support" or "developing". One in 10 students in year 9 is unable to read or write not to adequacy or to the median but to the minimum standard. We are talking about 15-year-olds.

Circumstances are deteriorating for police as well. We know the previous Government promised 1,500 new officers. It provided the funds for them but because of attrition, resignations and a lack of recruitment we ended up with an actual decrease of 427 officers. So despite the most laudable efforts to recruit officers, we now have 1,365 fewer police officers. What does all that mean? It means that we cannot rebuild essential services in New South Wales without investing in the people we rely on to provide those essential services. So, yes, we have got rid of the wages cap and, yes, we have made a multibillion-dollar Essential Services Fund to pay wage increases into the future, because I can see no other way to provide essential services to the taxpayers of New South Wales. If the Opposition had any other ideas, it should have presented them in the election campaign, but it did not.

We cannot run an education system when one in five teachers are resigning in their first five years. We cannot run a health system when 7,500 nurses resign every single year. Contrast that with the plans of the previous Government: racking up \$27 billion worth of spending in a 12-month period as a result of the election campaign—that was the simple fact—and racking up an interest bill of \$7 billion every year as a result of that spending. We have been able to invest in essential public servants and services while reducing debt in New South Wales by \$15 billion. [*Extension of time*]

So \$27 billion went out the door in a 12-month period. The interest bill on that was \$7 billion a year. We have been able to reduce that debt by \$15 billion. What does that mean for the budget over the next five years? It means New South Wales taxpayers will pay \$2.3 billion less in interest to bondholders as a result of those decisions. It means there will be \$2.3 billion to invest in public servants and to roll into the NSW Police Force, our health system and our education system. That is responsible budgeting for the future.

The corollary of that argument was presented by the Opposition and was effectively that we spend \$27 billion in 12 months and we rack up \$180 billion worth of debt—yes, that is the largest debt ever recorded—and as a result of our reckless spending no public servant should ever get a pay rise at all, under any circumstances. That is the basis of the Opposition's argument. The only argument that was absent from those opposite was the argument made by the shadow Treasurer, who had the gumption and honesty to reveal to taxpayers that if the Opposition won it would bring back the wages cap—only he said that. We heard nothing from the Leader of the Opposition. I leave the House and the people of New South Wales with this question: How can we turn around essential services if we do not invest in the nurses, police and teachers that we need to provide those services? The answer is that we cannot.

POLICE WAGES

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (14:42): Talking of essential services, my question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. When teachers have been given a pay increase of 8 per cent to 10 per cent, has the Minister told the Police Association that its members will get far less?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (14:42): I am so pleased to receive a question about the budget for the NSW Police Force. The 2023-24 budget provides the NSW Police Force with a recurrent expenses budget of \$5.057 billion, and a further \$364 million for capital investment comprising \$317 million for capital expenditure and \$47 million for lease acquisitions.

Ms Robyn Preston: What about the wages?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I note the interjection. What does the member think the \$5 billion is for? I will come back to that question. The New South Wales Government continues to invest in our Police Force to ensure that this State is safe and secure. Headline figures for the NSW Police Force—get ready, everyone—include \$12 million over four years to enhance the State's Forensic and Analytical Science Service to allow for timely DNA collection and investment in criminal cases. It also includes \$6.9 million—

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order—

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Opposition members do not want to hear it. They just want to keep interrupting me. This bloke constantly interrupts when he does not get the answer he wants.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume her seat.

Mr Dugald Saunders: I take a point of order because the Minister is clearly not answering the question. The question was around wages. The Minister was talking about high-level figures.

The SPEAKER: The member for Dubbo will not argue across the table. I assume the point of order is related to Standing Order 129, direct relevance. I rule that the Minister is being directly relevant.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: That is an excellent ruling, as usual, Mr Speaker. Some \$6.9 million over four years will pay for 15 new police officers to achieve 24/7 policing and community safety in the fastest growing area of Murwillumbah, which the member for Lismore has advocated for since she became the local member—and that is why she keeps getting re-elected. Some \$2.1 million over two years will go to a pilot program for sexual violence liaison officers to work with survivors of sexual violence. These are exactly the sorts of things we should be spending our money on in the budget, and only a Labor budget would deliver them. Some \$4.2 million will go to support the first tranche of additional police for south-west and north-west Sydney to prevent, disrupt and respond to crime to protect our community, because that is what the NSW Police Force does. Some \$317 million will go to capital expenditure, which includes new and continuing capital investments right across this State.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: I asked about the pay increase.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I am giving the list of budget items.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Can I have some extra time? I have about six pages. [*Time expired.*]

STATE BUDGET AND EDUCATION FUNDING

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (14:45): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Education and Early Learning. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the Minns Labor Government's first budget is making a record investment in education and addressing the chronic teacher shortage?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, Minister for Western Sydney, and Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education) (14:46): I thank the member for Prospect. I certainly can answer that question. After 12 years of neglect, the first Minns Labor Government is spending record amounts, investing in education in New South Wales. I say to those opposite that they can ask us about wages every day because we are proud of what we are doing for the essential workers of New South Wales. We are investing a record \$26.1 billion in the education of our young people in New South Wales. We are building the schools that communities have been crying out for and we are valuing the teachers we need in those classrooms.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: Of course, at the heart of this budget—

Mr Paul Scully: There is a heart.

Ms PRUE CAR: There is a heart, as the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces says. As we heard the Treasurer say in his speech this morning, at the heart of this budget is our commitment as a government to addressing the teacher shortage crisis, because we know the biggest resource in our schools and classrooms is our wonderful teachers. There is so much evidence that the biggest thing we can do to improve a child's quality of learning is improving the quality of the teacher and putting more teachers in front of children in our classrooms. Teachers are critical to every student outcome, every academic success and every wellbeing outcome in every single school across the State.

That is why in this budget we are proud to be giving teachers the most significant uplift in salaries that they have ever received from a government. We will finally break the back of the teacher shortage by acknowledging how to get more teachers in classrooms. It starts by giving beginning teachers a 12 per cent pay rise; it starts by giving a pay rise to top-of-the-scale teachers so that we can begin to slow the trend of resignations outstripping retirements. While the Government is committing to schools and teachers like no other government has before, the Liberal-Nationals Opposition—of course, old habits die hard—is still hell-bent on attacking teachers.

Its line of questioning is very hard to follow. Opposition members are still saying that teachers should be working harder for the increase we are giving them in the budget and which they will receive in their pay packets on 9 October. The Deputy Leader of The Nationals in the other place said that teachers must work harder and be more productive. I dare her to say that to any teacher in any Opposition electorates. The member for Vacluse is out there like some sort of *A Current Affair* reporter chasing down a dodgy business. She recorded a video this morning saying it is a bad choice to give teachers a pay raise. [*Extension of time*]

While members of the Opposition may say that getting rid of the wages cap is a bad choice, we say it is the right choice. As the Premier so eloquently just said, how can we improve the services delivered to children and parents without improving the working conditions of the people who work in our schools and hospitals? We simply cannot do it. That is what the first Labor budget in over a decade is all about. The first budget of the Minns Labor Government is delivering for teachers and, therefore, delivering for children in our classrooms. We do this because we want to improve education outcomes. The single biggest thing we can do is put more teachers in front of children, and the budget will do that.

We will address the teacher shortage and we will build schools. We are making a record investment in new and upgraded schools where they are needed. Go to Gregory Hills, go to Jordan Springs, go to Tallawong—all areas where we desperately need schools and teachers in them. That is what the Government is all about. The Government believes at its heart that education is the start of everything. Teaching is the profession that starts all others and achieves all outcomes for our children. The Government will deliver schools through this budget. The Government will deliver a long overdue increase to salaries for educators in this budget.

Opposition members can come in here every day and attack the fact that we are delivering for essential workers, but it is what the people of New South Wales voted for when they kicked the former Coalition Government out and voted us in. They wanted the Government to deliver the pay rise that essential workers have deserved all along, which will improve educational outcomes for our kids in all of our electorates, including the electorates represented by Opposition members.

STATE BUDGET AND DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDING

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (14:51): My question is directed to the Premier. Whilst I am grateful on behalf of the communities I represent in the Northern Rivers for the further \$100 million of support for the Resilient Homes Program and flood recovery, will the Premier explain why we are being short-changed \$700 million?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (14:51): With the leave of everybody present, I need to report to the House that Eden Public School and Eden Marine High School on the South Coast have recently been evacuated as a result of fire threats. It is a reminder of the urgent pressure that natural disasters put on communities across our State, and we think of those communities this afternoon. It is important to put disaster recovery funding in perspective because we need to understand what the outlays have been over the past two years and what is expected over the next four.

Firstly, phase one of the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Program included \$350 million from the New South Wales Government and a matching fund from the Commonwealth, so a total of \$700 million. The previous Government funded that. I report to the House that there have been 1,000 buyback offers and home

owners have either approved or accepted those grants. There is around \$350 million remaining in that tranche one fund. So tranche one contained \$700 million, and there is still \$350 million in that fund. I acknowledge, and the member for Lismore has repeatedly told me, that that is not going to be enough, but it is important. It is the first plank.

Secondly, having won office in March, the Government discovered that the Disaster Relief Account was underfunded by \$1.6 billion. It is a demand-driven grants program that spikes when communities have been hit by natural disasters—for example, on the South Coast, as a result of the huge fire coming through during the Black Summer fires, the program spiked to provide funds for emergency road repairs, critical infrastructure and community hubs. Money was said to have been allocated over the next four years, directly as a result of disasters in New South Wales, but there was no money allocated.

We have allocated the full amount today. Primary industries and communities on the South Coast, in the Northern Rivers, and in the Central West, represented by the member for Orange, will know that if a grant has been applied for by the council or the local community, it will be paid under that program. The third thing is the Reconstruction Authority. Having won office, our accounts indicated that it had been underfunded to the tune of \$121 million. A government cannot run the Reconstruction Authority in New South Wales, particularly with the expected increase in the number of natural disasters, by short-changing the agency by over \$100 million. *[Extension of time]*

Let us put those funds together. We have \$1.6 billion for the Disaster Relief Account, we have \$121 million for the Reconstruction Authority and we have \$350 million for tranche one of the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Program. We have allocated, on top of all of those funds, an additional \$150 million for tranche two. We want money from the Commonwealth Government as well. That is reasonable, and I am sure the former Premier would tell the House that in those circumstances it was a Commonwealth-State arrangement to fund tranche two. We will be going to the Commonwealth for additional funds for the Northern Rivers. If they do not provide it, we will go it alone, and \$150 million will not be enough. But we are not going to bid against ourselves. We have every right as a sub-national government to say to the Commonwealth Government, "This is important for the Northern Rivers. We have contributed significantly to disaster recovery across the State, and we expect the Commonwealth with its deeper pockets to come to the table as well."

STATE BUDGET AND HEALTH FUNDING

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (14:56): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health. Will the Minister update the House on how the Minns Labor Government's first budget is rebuilding essential health services in New South Wales?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (14:56): I thank the member for Heathcote for her fine advocacy, particularly on behalf of the people of the northern Illawarra, a community that I belong to and love so much.

Mr Paul Scully: They have a better member now.

Mr RYAN PARK: Maybe they do. I thank the planning Minister for his advocacy. What a budget, hey? Wayne Swan was called the world's best Treasurer, but not after today. We have the world's best Treasurer and a fantastic finance Minister, led by a great Premier and a great team. Today we have delivered—importantly for me—a really strong Labor health budget. As the Premier outlined earlier, we have some serious headwinds facing our health and hospital system right now. I will outline those headwinds and take members through some of the things we are working on.

We are losing staff in the thousands, and that is a huge challenge across the health system. We have to turn that around. We are facing increased presentations in our emergency departments, particularly category two presentations, which are life-threatening presentations. We are facing record 000 calls and record demand for ambulance call-outs across the board. In the face of that, we have to make some serious changes to the way in which we fund our health and hospital system, and we have to redirect funds to the front line.

The budget outlined a number of ways we are going to do that. Let us talk firstly about essential workers who deliver health care across New South Wales. What is going to happen? We are providing 500 new paramedics for the bush, which is more than anything the National Party ever did. They will make a significant difference to the lives of communities along the length and breadth of this State and make a significant difference to the lives of regional, rural and remote communities. We have funded 1,200 additional nurses over four years, plus 1,112 positions that were going to be cut under the previous Government, which will deliver safe staffing levels across our hospitals, starting in our emergency departments. We are also going to ensure that we have subsidies for healthcare workers so that we have a pipeline of workers to deliver the healthcare services that we will need in the future. At the same time, we are providing the money back through the salary sacrifice reform to some of

the poorest healthcare workers in the State—the first time that has happened in over 20 years. We are delivering real reform for our essential workers. [*Extension of time*]

On top of that, we are delivering infrastructure across New South Wales. Billions of dollars are being invested across the board—whether it is across our metropolitan areas in places like Western Sydney or in places like Wollongong, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven and Albury. We are delivering health care where it is needed most. We understand the priority is our essential workforce, but we also need to make sure we keep up with the infrastructure demands of those growing communities.

Pleasingly for me, we are also providing health care to some of the most vulnerable in our community. For the first time, 20 women's healthcare centres across New South Wales will receive a record increase in funding the likes of which they have not seen since the eighties. Those centres deliver primary care and first-class health care to the most vulnerable women in New South Wales. But we can and will do more. We are reforming pharmacies to make sure they can provide the services people need, when they need them most. We will continue to focus on our essential healthcare workers, building infrastructure needs and making sure we are providing health care to the most vulnerable members of our community.

This is not just our first budget; it is a Labor budget in every way possible. It was delivered by a Treasurer who cares deeply about essential workers, and we are led by a Premier who cares deeply about essential workers and services. That is what members on this side of the House will focus on for the next four years. We look forward to delivering better health care for everybody right across New South Wales.

SCHOOL SWITCHBOARDS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (15:01): My question is directed to the Minister for Work Health and Safety. Contractors were told by NSW Public Works to stop work upgrading school electrical switchboards to current standards because there is no money in the budget. Does the Minister think that putting the safety of our children and teachers at risk is an appropriate saving to pay for union wage grabs?

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (15:01): I thank the member for her question. We are all concerned about safety. SafeWork NSW takes electrical safety extremely seriously and work continues. I am aware of the recent media report to which the member refers. I am advised that SafeWork NSW has not been made aware of any specific incidents relating to contractors working on upgrading school switchboards to current safety standards. I am advised that as a matter of good practice, SafeWork NSW meets quarterly with the Department of Education and provides an overview of matters received by SafeWork NSW and any work health and safety trends identified.

STATE BUDGET AND HOUSING

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (15:02): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Will the Minister please update the House on how the Minns Labor Government's first budget begins the long-term reform to address the housing affordability and supply crisis?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (15:03): I thank the member for Parramatta for her question and congratulate her on her advocacy, which has resulted in \$200 million extra to fast-forward Parramatta Light Rail stage two. That sort of transport link allows for the development of more housing and supports communities. It is essential to delivering the housing needed by the great, dynamic community of Western Sydney, particularly Parramatta.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: This budget is the essence of a Labor budget at the highest level: We uncap wages and cap tolls.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: We are also getting on with the job of improving the budget bottom line. During the Budget Speech I saw some of the faces of members opposite. Their jaws were dropping. They finally realised it was possible to repair the budget while delivering more infrastructure than they ever did, without delivering the debt that they did. They realised you can deliver homes, too.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Housing affordability and availability is one of the biggest pressures facing the people of New South Wales. Over the past decade members opposite talked a big game on housing yet each year we slipped further and further behind. In fact, over the past five years less than half of Sydney local government

areas managed to meet their housing targets. It was not a complex problem; those opposite just needed to build more homes, but they didn't.

In today's budget—the first budget of the Minns Labor Government—there is a massive \$2.2 billion budget boost to pay for housing and the critical infrastructure to support it. Our housing and infrastructure plan includes \$1.5 billion to build the infrastructure, such as roads, hospitals and schools, that is needed to support new homes across Sydney, the Illawarra, the Central Coast and the Hunter. We have reserved \$400 million from Restart NSW funding for the new housing infrastructure fund—with \$100 million of that committed to regional New South Wales—to deliver the infrastructure that will help to build houses. If you do not have the basic infrastructure—the water, the sewerage, the drainage and the roads—you cannot have a home. Anyone who builds a home knows that, which is why those opposite do not know it.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: In addition, we are committing \$5.6 million to introduce artificial intelligence into the planning system. The bit of our plan that I really like is the \$300 million we have committed to Landcom to accelerate the construction of thousands of new homes. [*Extension of time*]

I am a big fan of Landcom and I intend to build on the foundations established when it was set up by the Wran Labor Government in the seventies. That lot opposite wanted to privatise it; they had it up for sale. Instead, we will take the \$300 million that was sitting in the Landcom bank account. What will we do? Build houses. Some 30 per cent of those will be affordable houses. That is the sort of countercyclical stimulus we are doing. The Government's own property developer, Landcom, is going to get housing moving. It is the exact opposite of what the previous Government did.

Those sites will be infill sites on government lands. They will also be targeting lands with potential for build-to-rent projects, adding to the \$60 million that we committed and provisioned in this budget for build-to-rent trials on the South Coast and in the Northern Rivers. Under our housing and infrastructure plan, this amount from the special dividend that was saved up and sitting in a bank account will help to deliver nearly 5,000 additional homes above that amount that was going to be delivered by Landcom. Why? That is because we understand that housing availability and housing affordability rely on increasing supply. Do you want to get rents down? Build more houses. Do you want to get house prices down? Build more houses. Do you want to get young people into homes?

Government members: Build more houses!

Mr PAUL SCULLY: While the previous Government was trying to set up Landcom for sale by setting it up for failure, the Minns Government wants it to do what it does best: deliver more homes. That is part of our \$2.2 billion housing and infrastructure fund to help confront the housing crisis, which the former Government left us with because it did not want to build more houses.

ERARING POWER STATION

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:08): My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, representing the Minister for Energy. Earlier today the Treasurer spoke about the energy transition. Does the budget make any provision for expenditure to extend the operation of Eraring Power Station? If so, what is the dollar amount?

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (15:09): I thank the member for Manly for his question, to which I respond on behalf of the Minister for Energy. What is interesting here is that the Opposition has forgotten what it did when it was in government for 12 years. Those opposite talk about Eraring but they forget to tell us about the sales that they made when it comes to the energy assets.

The SPEAKER: I place the member for North Shore on two calls to order.

Mr JIHAD DIB: They seem to have forgotten their own history. It is clear that the problem families, households and businesses have right now with the energy sector is of the former Government's making. It was so obsessed with privatisation that it sold off everything it could and we now find ourselves in this situation. The Minns Government has been clear to say that the priority for us is to ensure that we keep the lights on. The priority is to make sure that households have access to energy.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order relates to direct relevance. The question asked, "Does the budget make provision for expenditure to extend Eraring Power Station, and if so what is the dollar amount?" It is a financial question. The Minister has not come close to anything about costs.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Wahroonga. I uphold the point of order. The Minister will be directly relevant.

Mr JIHAD DIB: It is interesting, those opposite sold it and we have talked about having to enter into some sort of agreement and negotiation. Why would we put that figure into a budget? Why would we write that figure down and say that is what we are doing? That is because of the policies of the former Government what we have been very clear about is our commitment to make sure that we keep the lights on. We are not going to use this budget to negotiate with Origin. We have made it clear that what we want to do is—

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

Mr JIHAD DIB: I did not hear him. There was whining about something. Again, it is the reminder, the decision to sell Eraring—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: It has nothing to do with selling Eraring.

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga will resume his seat. I call the member for Wahroonga to order for the first time. The Minister is not flouting my ruling. He is being directly relevant.

Mr JIHAD DIB: That from a member who wants to make a speech in reply on the budget. He forgot that he is not the Leader of the Opposition—maybe that is what the member is aiming for. The decision by this Government to sell Eraring and other energy assets was made because the former Government put us in that position. I have made it clear; the Government has made it clear; the energy Minister has made it clear; that our intention is to make sure that we keep the lights on. We are not going to give a dollar figure—

Mr James Griffin: Point of order: The question was, "Does the budget make provision for expenditure to extend Eraring Power Station?" Is the answer no?

The SPEAKER: The member for Manly knows that is not how questions are answered. He might not agree, but I have ruled that the Minister is being directly relevant. The member for Manly will resume his seat.

Mr JIHAD DIB: I appreciate the Speaker's ruling. The problem is that those opposite ask a question and then do not like the answer. Directly relevant, straight to the point—

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

Mr JIHAD DIB: We have to undo the damage done by the former Government's ideology of privatisation. That is what we are dealing with. We are now doing something for the people of New South Wales.

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

Mr JIHAD DIB: We are not selling them short as those opposite did.

STATE BUDGET AND DEBT

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (15:13): My question is addressed to the Attorney General in his capacity representing the Minister for Finance. Will the Attorney General update the House on how the first budget of the Minns Labor Government will begin the task of lowering the State's debt and advise the House on the levels of gross and net debt inherited by the Government?

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (15:13): I begin by congratulating the Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Finance and all the Ministers, particularly those who have spent weekend after weekend, day and night for months formulating the budget delivered today of which we can all be proud. I was in this place 13 years ago when the last budget was handed down by a Labor government. Today will herald a new beginning for New South Wales. This will be the first of many not only Labor Government budgets but also Minns Labor Government budgets. I congratulate the Premier. Leadership trickles down; it is certainly imprinted on every page of the budget. After the Budget Speech I went into the office of the Minister for Finance to congratulate her.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. The Attorney General will be heard in silence.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Naturally enough she was smiling from ear to ear. We got into a discussion about one of the things that she likes the most about the budget, which is the reduction in debt, and well she might. Today's budget was formulated with a few factors in mind: honesty, Labor values and responsibility—about balancing resources and directing them to where they are needed; about being honest and restoring public confidence; and for making necessary choices to get the Government back on track and to spend money where it is most needed. Today's budget stands in clear contrast between what the Government will do and what the former

Government did. What the former Government did, amongst a litany of sins, was not only to rack up record debt but also to try to hide its problems.

We have been responsible and honest in our approach to debt. We are paying down the massive record debt that was left to us without privatisation and without fudging the figures. We are doing it without budget trickery like TAHE. The reduction in debt is one of the huge achievements of this budget, amongst many. It will reduce the growth of gross debt by \$14.8 billion by 2025-26, while delivering the largest ever investment in new schools and hospitals in New South Wales. By reducing that massive debt the New South Wales Government will save \$2.3 billion in interest payments. To put that into perspective, that is enough to fund 1,200 additional nurses—I know the Minister for Health is happy about that. It is enough to make more than 1,000 nurses and midwives permanent. *[Extension of time]*

Not only that, but it is also enough to provide study subsidies for 12,000 healthcare students; 500 new rural and regional paramedics; pay for the Bathurst hospital redevelopment; and expand the Fairfield Hospital redevelopment to provide more beds and increase the capacity of its emergency and critical care services. They are no small achievements and they would not have been done if we had not rescued the budget in the nick of time. Those opposite pose the question, "So what?" This is what it means in the budgetary context: When interest rates are low, so is the debt burden and we can afford to borrow a bit more.

However, those opposite did not have an eye to the fact that financial and economic circumstances move in cycles. They can move quickly. They can be influenced by health pandemics. They can be influenced by things like international interventions such as we saw in 2008 and 2009. Governments need to be prudent; they need to keep an eye on the future and not become reckless and irresponsible. That is what those on the other side did. In 2011, when the former Government came to office, debt was \$22.5 billion, or \$3,100 per person. In 12 years it lost control of the budget and delivered the two biggest deficits in our State's history—\$15.3 billion in 2021-22 and \$10 billion in 2022-23.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Then it left office without a care in the world. We are here now and we care for the people of New South Wales. We care about budget honesty. We care about crucial government services. That is what will be seen from us over the next 365 days until we hand down the next Minns Labor Government budget.

SCHOOL SWITCHBOARDS

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (15:18): My question is directed to the Minister for Work Health and Safety. I refer to the Minister's previous answer where she acknowledged a problem with school electrical switchboard safety. What will the Minister do to guarantee that all of the planned upgrades to school electrical switchboards will be completed?

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (15:19): For 12 years the Coalition Government did not have a Minister dedicated to work health and safety. I acknowledge the Premier for appointing me as the Minister for Work Health and Safety.

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

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: This question should really go to the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Education and Early Learning. I am happy to talk about work health and safety and I am happy to talk about this particular issue. With respect to the question asked by the member for Vaucluse, on 1 July 2023 the management of school maintenance contracts transferred from NSW Public Works to School Infrastructure NSW. During the transition period, an email was sent to contractors requesting work to cease so it could be transferred to School Infrastructure NSW. The Minister for Education and Early Learning agrees that this never should have happened. I understand the department has confirmed that all contracts for ongoing works onsite will be continuing. We know the former Government left a \$1.2 billion unpaid maintenance bill across New South Wales public schools, and this Government takes that challenge seriously.

Ms Kellie Sloane: Point of order: It is on relevance. It is a very circular argument that is going back historically. I am asking specifically, given the cuts to contractors, will the Minister guarantee upgrades to school electrical switchboards?

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order. The Minister has the call.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: The Minns Government is committed to delivering essential services. Today we have seen the greatest budget, a great Labor budget, and we are investing in essential services. The only thing members of the Opposition have is to come up and ask a question about electrical switchboards.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: It is about a guarantee.

The SPEAKER: I heard the point of order. It is about Standing Order 129, direct relevance. Has the Minister completed her answer?

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: I have completed it.

The SPEAKER: In that case, there is no point of order. Members will come to order.

STATE BUDGET AND ENERGY BILL RELIEF

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (15:22): My question is addressed to the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Youth Justice, in his capacity representing the Minister for Energy. Will the Minister please update the House on how the Minns Labor Government's first budget delivers energy bill relief for eligible families?

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (15:23): I acknowledge the outstanding member for South Coast and thank her for her question. To add to what the Premier said earlier, there are about 60-plus bushfires and grassfires burning at the moment in local communities. I am more than happy to work with anybody who needs further information. I will stay in touch with members when it is affecting their community. There are some things on the South Coast. There is a total fire ban today and we will be going to a total fire ban tomorrow. I encourage members to share as much information from the RFS as they can. I thank the member for South Coast.

The Minns Government has shown today very clearly that it understands the cost-of-living pressures that households are facing. It is not just about having an understanding but also what is done with it. The Government has inherited a problem, and rather than just sit there and say, "It's a problem", we have some different solutions. A budget is a statement of priorities. We heard the Treasurer give the priorities of a Labor government, which are to make sure that everybody who needs support is supported and that people are not left behind. As part of today's budget, the biggest ever energy rebate support in Australian history was announced. That is \$1.3 billion in partnership with the Federal Government in terms of energy support and rebates for communities and families. That means 1.6 million households are eligible for support in New South Wales alone. Over 300,000 small businesses are also eligible for support. We know their challenges and we are not going to leave them behind. That was an election promise and the budget is about fulfilling the election promise. We do not forget the promises we make. We do not forget the commitments that we make. Our word is our bond.

Eligible low-income households, pensioners, self-funded retirees, veterans, families and carers will receive \$500 towards their electricity bills. Some families have already started receiving \$125 as part of their quarterly instalments. Customers who already receive support do not have to apply; it is going to be applied automatically. We want everyone who is eligible for support to get that support. When members of the Opposition were in government, they made a program and they hoped that people would not apply for it. There was a lot about wanting people to go on a website to apply. We are not setting up a program in the hope that people do not apply. We will make sure the money goes directly into their accounts. That is what good governments do. It is not about smoke and mirrors but about addressing the challenges that households and communities are facing. *[Extension of time]*

I thank the member for South Coast. For those who are not eligible at the moment but will be eligible under the new thing, the Service NSW website is there for them as well as the great team at the Service NSW centres. Services Australia will also be making contact with people who are newly eligible. We have also increased the EAPA vouchers, the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance. As local members, we know that people come to us on a regular basis asking if they can have assistance. The payments have now gone up to \$500 and they are available twice a year. Like all good things, there is more. The Minns Government is injecting an additional \$100 million, on top of all of that, into supports for families and households from 1 July 2024. The Low Income Household Rebate for the Medical Energy Rebate will increase from \$285 to \$350. That is the biggest increase in more than a decade. The Family Energy Rebate will increase from \$180 to \$250, an increase of 39 per cent. The Seniors Energy Rebate will increase by 25 per cent. The Life Support Rebate will increase for each piece of equipment by 22 per cent.

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

Mr JIHAD DIB: That support will provide energy bill relief for eligible concession card holders, including low-income households, pensioners, self-funded retirees, veterans, families and people with certain medical conditions.

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

Mr JIHAD DIB: The \$100 million is on top of the \$326 million that is already allocated in 2024-25. We understand that people are doing it tough. A lot of that is on the former Government, but this Government is committed to keeping downward pressure on power prices at the same time as making some reforms. We have a big difference. The difference between this Labor Government and the former Government is we have a plan for the future; the former Government only had a plan for the next media cycle.

RENTAL CAPS

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (15:28): My question is directed to the Premier. In today's budget \$615 million is allocated to cap tolls. In the middle of a housing crisis and a climate crisis, why is the Premier committing to give a private, polluting toll road company like Transurban massive corporate handouts but refusing to address the biggest cost in people's weekly budget by implementing a cap on rents, which would cost the Government absolutely nothing?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (15:29): I thank the member for her question. How has it been having question time later in the day? Despite all the fears of the member for Wahroonga, it has not been all that bad. It gave Opposition members time to sleep in.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier has woken the sleeping beast.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: They are sound asleep. The later time has allowed the member for Northern Tablelands to come to his first question time, so that is fantastic. I welcome him to his first question time this year; it is fantastic to see him. We have to cap tolls. It is too important for Western Sydney families who do not have access to public transport. They have to use toll roads in New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. The Premier will be heard in silence.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: We have to provide some subsidy for them because they do not have access to public transport and they should not have to pay exorbitant tolls to get to and from work. We would not have designed the system that way. But the cap is essential, particularly for Western Sydney families. The second part of the question related to a rent cap. We are not going to pursue that. We have said repeatedly that if we instituted a rent cap on Saturday, then the first thing landlords would do is jack up rents—if they had not done so already in the past 12 months.

Ms Jenny Leong: That's why you backdate the bill to 1 July.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: There have been four interest rates rises since then. Do we say to those homeowners, "We're backdating rents to be frozen to 24 months ago", not taking into consideration the four interest rate rises over that two-year period?

Ms Jenny Leong: Maybe they will go back on the market.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Well, I do not know if you've done the homework on this to justify the New South Wales Government imposing those tax changes on two million people.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: What we are saying in relation to housing—and this is important—is it is about supply. We have to get supply going in New South Wales. It has been crucial. The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has been focusing on this like a laser beam—almost to the distraction of some councils, who are appalled. There is a fellow named Roy Bendall on Mosman Council. He accused Mosman of being the whipping boy of the planning Minister. He said, "I wouldn't take that from school bullies and my community's not going to take that either." I have to inform the House that the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that for the month of July, Liverpool recorded 223 dwellings; Canterbury Bankstown, 138; and the district of Mosman, two.

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

STATE BUDGET AND REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro) (15:32): My question is addressed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism in her capacity representing the Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Western New South Wales. Will the Minister update the House on measures included in the budget to provide for regional communities?

The SPEAKER: The member for Maitland will come to order. She has been doing really well.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (15:33): I thank the member for his question. Members opposite have been running a scare campaign like no other about the budget. They told anybody who would listen to them that this budget will not provide for regional communities. I inform the House that there could be nothing further from the truth. In this budget we are delivering real benefits for regional communities by focusing first and foremost on the things that really matter to the people of the regions. We are rebuilding essential services, paying people a wage that recognises their contribution and investing in infrastructure to support regional communities to thrive once again.

The SPEAKER: The member for Terrigal will stop inciting members to interject.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Are members ready? We are investing \$1.4 billion in new and upgraded regional schools.

Mr Paul Scully: How much?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: We are investing \$1.4 billion there. Members opposite should just say thank you. We are investing \$3.8 billion in regional health facilities.

The SPEAKER: The member for Myall Lakes will come to order.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I have no doubt that people will come and see the Minister and probably buy him some lamingtons—or maybe some cupcakes or whatever his fancy is. We have already heard from the Minister for Health today that we are hiring 500 new rural and regional paramedics. People in regional New South Wales can once again have confidence that they are going to get the health care they need in the regions. Unfortunately, we cannot turn around a decade of neglect of our essential services in our first budget, but we know that these benefits will make a genuine, positive difference to the lives of people in regional New South Wales.

The Liberals and The Nationals used public money for their own purposes, politicising grant funding—it is now proven—so that it was no longer about need. It was never about need but about winning the next election, and they even failed at that.

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

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: In contrast, we are committing \$1.8 billion of new funding for regional communities. Now wait for it. This is important because it can no longer be pork-barrelled. Our funding includes \$350 million for the Regional Development Trust Fund—

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

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: —and a \$250 million Working Regions Fund designed to deliver projects to regional New South Wales to support regional people in their work.

Mr Steve Whan: I seek further information on the benefits for regional New South Wales.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: There is a lot to tell the member for Monaro.

The SPEAKER: The member for Monaro is seeking additional information. The Minister seems keen to provide it. I grant an additional two minutes.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: We are delivering on our promise to fix regional roads, and I thank the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. We have a \$390 million regional Emergency Road Repair Fund. I have no doubt they will all be coming to say thank you to the Minister. But wait, there's more. There will be a \$334 million Regional Roads Fund to make sure that regional communities are once again connected properly. Members can just say thank you. The member for Dubbo will be interested to know that we are supporting our agricultural industry. He gave no promises in the run-up to the election, so we filled that space too. There will be \$298.5 million just in biosecurity measures. Mr Speaker, we know that as a beekeeper you will be particularly interested in that. We will be bringing back the bees. We will also protect agriculture in New South Wales. It is important that we do that because that industry employs more than 66,000 people. The Minns Labor Government is supporting the agricultural community across New South Wales.

We know that people right across this State are struggling with the cost of housing. As we have heard today so proudly in this House from our Treasurer, there will be \$100 million for the new Housing and Infrastructure Fund. The planning Minister has said that we will deliver the infrastructure to support new housing in New South Wales, and that is what we are going to do. That will address our concerns around housing in New South Wales. So while members opposite ran their scare campaign and tried to protect their dodgy grant schemes, what are we doing? We are delivering for the people of New South Wales in spades.

*Documents***PARLIAMENTARY ETHICS ADVISER****Reports**

The SPEAKER: I table the report of the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser for the year ended 30 June 2023. I order that the report be printed.

NSW CRIME COMMISSION**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with section 242A of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002, I announce receipt of the report by the Commissioner of the NSW Crime Commission for the year ended 30 June 2023, received on 14 September 2023.

*Committees***LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE****Reports**

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ: As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 4/58*, dated 18 September 2023. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Morriset West Gateway Precinct

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to extend the period of public consultation for the Morisset West Gateway Precinct by two months and not construct a transport hub on the current proposed site for the precinct, received from **Mr Greg Piper**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

The CLERK: I announce that the following Ministers have lodged responses to paper petitions signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Paul Scully—Northern Beaches Bushland Conservation—lodged 1 August 2023 (Mr Matt Cross)

The Hon. Ron Hoenig—Local Government Elections—lodged 22 August 2023 (Mr Nathan Hagarty)

*Bills***HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2023****Second Reading Debate**

Debate resumed from 12 September 2023.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (15:40): I contribute to debate on the Health Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2023. The bill makes several amendments that were proposed by the Coalition Government to make minor administrative changes that were requested by stakeholders and the department. Those proposed reforms affect no less than eight pieces of legislation. I turn to the detail of the bill. The changes to the Health Administration Act 1982 in schedule 1 to the bill will allow the health secretary to require a health service organisation to conduct a serious adverse event review where they deem that an incident has occurred that warrants investigation. Those reviews are crucial to ensuring that hospitals can understand what went wrong and how to mitigate that risk in the future.

Under the current system, that type of review is requested by the chief executive of the organisation—often the local health district. Giving that power to the Health secretary strengthens and centralises oversight, governance and control functions in the public health system. With the amendment to the Act, if either the chief

executive or the Health secretary deems an incident serious enough to warrant a review, the bill requires that review to take place. The bill also allows for alternate or additional assessors to become involved if necessary. Schedule 2 to the bill reintroduces the reference to the professional standards committee, which was inadvertently removed from the definition of "disciplinary body" during a 2022 amendment. That minor change is in keeping with the intent of the bill.

The amendments in schedule 3 relate to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law. The amendment includes a new offence relating to directing or inciting a registered health practitioner to engage in unsatisfactory professional conduct. The current law does not work as intended in New South Wales because the term "unprofessional conduct" is not a term used in New South Wales. The New South Wales equivalent term is "unsatisfactory professional conduct". The amendment introduces new section 136A into the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) to ensure that it functions as intended. New section 221A in schedule 3 [2] of the bill clarifies the definition of "prohibition order". That change will include prohibitions from other jurisdictions.

The changes to section 37 of the Human Tissue Act 1983 clarify that the family of an organ or tissue donor can consent to the release of the donor when the donor has passed away. The changes to the Mental Health Act 2007 ensure that persons detained in a mental health facility are aware of their rights in greater detail. The Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 will be modernised by allowing the destruction of scheduled medicines and poisons to be ordered by the NSW Health Secretary rather than getting a magistrate's order.

Schedule 7 to the bill makes minor amendments to the Public Health Act 2010 to remove the procedural requirements for making a code of conduct for non-registered health practitioners and health service providers. In order to protect the public from the risk of harm of illegal tobacco, schedule 8 makes changes to the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008 to ensure that e-cigarettes must be hidden from public view and stored behind closed cabinet doors. Clarification will be added that allows inspectors to search the areas in which those tobacco products are stored. The changes to the Act are minor but necessary to ensure the timely and effective oversight of the public health system.

I acknowledge the work of the health Minister's office and the department in bringing forward the changes. They are minor changes to the various Acts, which, in some cases, will bring them in line with national laws and, in other cases, respond to previous committee reviews or clarify a number of standing positions taken by Health. Various stakeholders have been consulted in relation to these minor changes. I have spoken with a number of members of the crossbench. The Opposition is happy to support the proposals in the bill.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (15:45): I contribute to debate on the Health Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2023. I acknowledge the contribution to debate by the member for Hornsby. I also acknowledge the Minister for Health, and Minister for Regional Health for introducing the bill, which proposes a range of amendments to various health-related Acts, including the Health Administration Act 1982, the Health Care Complaints Act 1993, the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, the Human Tissue Act 1983, the Mental Health Act 2007, the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1996, the Public Health Act 2010 and the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008.

I expand on why the changes are required, starting with the Health Administration Act 1982. The bill recognises that, on occasion and due to the complexity of health care, there are many differing opinions about whether a particular incident should be subject to a serious adverse event review. If either the chief executive or the health secretary considers that such a review is appropriate, then it should occur. The bill is not intended to impact on existing processes but rather formalise existing processes. As part of usual processes, such incidents and clinical incidents due to potential serious systemic issues are reported to the Health secretary, with the Ministry of Health and the Clinical Excellence Commission providing advice to the relevant health services organisation on whether a serious adverse event review should be conducted.

The bill recognises the importance of senior clinicians and patient safety experts conducting a rigorous and comprehensive review following a serious clinical incident for continuous improvement, learning and sharing of findings with families and clinical teams, and to ensure transparency, accountability and the confidence of the public in the health system. The amendment to the Health Care Complaints Act is a minor amendment, introducing the professional standards committee due to an error made to the definition of a "disciplinary body".

The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law sets out the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme [NRAS] for registered health practitioners in New South Wales. It is an applied law model. All the States and Territories generally apply the schedule to the Queensland Health Practitioner Regulation National Law. New South Wales is a co-regulatory jurisdiction and never adopted the complaints process under part 8 of the Queensland national law. Instead, we retain our own complaints processes for registered health practitioners involving the Health Care Complaints Commission and the Health Professional Councils Authority. Under the

NRAS, there is a national board for each profession, such as the medical board that registers practitioners. In jurisdictions other than New South Wales, the board also handles complaints. However, as New South Wales is a co-regulatory jurisdiction, complaints are dealt with by the independent Health Care Complaints Commission and the Health Professional Council Authority.

National boards, such as the Medical Board of Australia, are required to keep a register of registered health practitioners and deregistered practitioners. The register includes whether a practitioner or a former practitioner is subject to a prohibition order, which is an order that can prevent the practitioner from providing any health services. New South Wales already has a definition of a prohibition order in section 138. However, it is a New South Wales specific provision that relates to complaints processes in part A. There also needs to be a definition of a prohibition order for the purposes of public register provisions that includes prohibition orders made in all other jurisdictions. The bill fixes that by including a new definition of a prohibition order for the purposes of the public register provisions.

Moving on to the Human Tissue Act 1983, section 37 of the Act currently creates an offence for medical practitioners or hospital staff who publicly release information about an organ donor or recipient except in limited circumstances, including if the disclosure was made with the consent of the donor or recipient. There has been some concern that section 37 may limit the ability of families to talk publicly about a deceased organ donor. While the Act does not prohibit family members from speaking about their loved ones, in experience, the aim of the bill is to clarify that family members are not prevented from sharing information about a deceased donor. The bill ensures that a deceased donor's next of kin, which will include the family member and spouse of that person, can consent to the public disclosure of details about that donor. The bill aligns with the Commonwealth Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority Amendment (Disclosure of Information) Bill 2023, which received royal assent on 21 August 2023.

Moving on to amendments to the Mental Health Act 2007, under the health Act, when a person is detained in a mental health facility they must be given a written statement of their rights, which is set out in schedule 3 to the Act. The statement sets out the rights of a person detained in the facility, including the person's rights regarding treatment and when a mental health inquiry must be held by the Mental Health Review Tribunal with regard to the person. The statement also sets out the facility's obligations with respect to the detained person. Under the Act and the Mental Health Regulation, a facility must provide a person with appropriate street clothes and grooming items, such as shaving equipment and make-up, before they appear before the tribunal. The statement of rights currently set out in the Act does not include details about this obligation of the facility to provide grooming items and street clothes. The bill will ensure that this right is included in the statement of rights so that a person is aware of the facility's obligations to help them present themselves in the best way before they appear before the tribunal.

The bill makes amendments to the Public Health Act 2010 to remove the procedural requirements for making a code of conduct for non-registered health practitioners and health service providers. The Public Health Act allows regulations to be made before setting out a code of conduct for non-registered health practitioners and health service providers. A breach of the code can result in the Health Care Complaints Commission making a prohibition order if the person poses a risk to the public. While the code is made by regulation, the Act includes specific procedural requirements that are over and above what is normally required to make a regulation. The current procedural requirements for making a code of conduct, which include placing the code and an impact assessment on public exhibition and considering any submissions received, are in addition to the requirements for making a subordinate legislation under the Subordinate Legislation Act.

The procedural requirements for making the code of conduct have been in place since 2006 when New South Wales became the first jurisdiction to introduce the concept of a code of conduct and prohibition orders. While the additional requirements for making a code of conduct would have been appropriate when the code provisions were first developed, the code provisions are now well established and having additional procedural requirements for prescribing a code of conduct is no longer considered necessary. The bill also makes a minor change to the definition of "immunisation certificate", as the definition currently refers to the outdated Australian Childhood Immunisation Register, which has been replaced with the Australian Immunisation Register. *[Extension of time]*

I thank the House. The proposed amendments to the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 streamline the ability to order the forfeiture and disposal of medicines and poisons seized under the Act. It is considered necessary to streamline the process for forfeiture and destruction of illegal medicines and poisons, which include e-cigarettes containing nicotine, seized under the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act. In the past 18 months, NSW Health conducted over 4,800 retail inspections and seized over 369,000 e-cigarettes and e-liquids containing nicotine, with an estimated street value of \$11.8 million. Despite increased targeted enforcement efforts, the illegal sale of nicotine e-cigarettes continues to increase. In the first quarter of this year, NSW Health seized 94,000 products, up from 51,000 at the same time last year. Due to the rising sales and seizures of e-cigarettes

containing nicotine, it is not practical to seek a magistrate's order to destroy the goods, nor is it practical to seek the consent of the person from whom the goods were seized.

Finally, I turn to the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008. The bill clarifies and updates the power of tobacco inspectors under the Public Health (Tobacco) Act. We know that tobacco smoking is a leading cause of death and premature death in New South Wales and is associated with an increased risk of respiratory, cardiovascular disease and cancer. It can also harm others either through exposure to second-hand smoke or the harmful effects on unborn babies of smoking during pregnancy. NSW Health is receiving an increasing number of complaints about the advertising and sale of e-cigarettes including nicotine and illicit tobacco products and sales to minors across New South Wales, including in rural and regional areas. NSW Health received 909 complaints in 2020, 2,407 in 2022 and 1,654 in the first six months of 2023 alone.

E-cigarettes are of growing concern in the New South Wales community due to their availability and increasing use, particularly among adolescents and young people, with associated health risks including nicotine addiction, nicotine poisoning and exposure to toxins. The majority of e-cigarettes are labelled incorrectly and may contain high levels of nicotine even when they claim not to. There is strong evidence that non-smokers who use e-cigarettes are three times more likely to also smoke traditional tobacco cigarettes than people who have never vaped. Health harms include addiction, poisoning, cough, dizziness, headaches and nausea. For young people, nicotine can cause changes to brain development, impaired learning and memory, and may worsen stress, depression and anxiety. Nicotine poisoning can occur if too much nicotine is inhaled, ingested or absorbed through the skin and can be fatal.

If inspectors do not have the power to search premises, it would significantly impact on the ability of NSW Health to undertake compliance and enforcement activities and likely result in illegal tobacco and illegal e-cigarettes containing nicotine being more freely available in the community. These are uncomplicated but very necessary amendments for the improvement of health in New South Wales. I once again congratulate the Minister for Health on introducing the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (15:57): I am pleased to speak in debate on the Health Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2023. The purpose of the bill is to make a number of amendments to Acts related to the Health portfolio. The amendments to the Health Administration Act 1982 aim to ensure that the health secretary can require a health services organisation to conduct a serious adverse event review when the secretary considers that an incident is reportable or may be the result of a serious systematic problem in the health system. It will also allow the secretary to appoint an alternate assessor to a serious adverse event review where the assessor who was originally appointed to the review is unable to continue in the role for reasons such as illness or unavailability. Those changes to the Health Administration Act 1982 will ensure that there is more transparency and, importantly, will improve accountability.

Another important component of the Health Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2023 is the changes to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). Under the proposed changes to that law, it will be an offence for a person to incite a registered health practitioner to engage in unsatisfactory professional conduct. It also ensures that those not directly involved in unsatisfactory professional conduct are also held accountable for their actions. Again, the changes are about accountability, which is fundamental for health services and their patients.

I am also particularly heartened to see the proposed amendment relating to the Mental Health Act 2007. The proposed amendment would ensure that the statement of rights given to a person detained in a mental health facility includes the obligation of the facility to provide the person with appropriate street clothes and grooming items prior to appearing at the Mental Health Review Tribunal. It saddens me that such a basic right has not been implemented before. We have come a long way as a State and as a nation in reducing the stigma around mental health, but we still have much more work to do. Unfortunately, there is still a tendency to judge a book by its cover; however, that amendment change will help alleviate that issue.

I also applaud the proposed amendment to the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966, which will allow the Health secretary to order the forfeiture and destruction of goods seized under the Act. That includes e-cigarettes containing nicotine. I have spoken to countless residents throughout the Heathcote electorate regarding their concerns around e-cigarettes, also known as vapes. Those concerns centre mainly around the marketing of e-cigarettes and their use by children. As we all know, young people under the age of 18 are still able to obtain e-cigarettes even though the sale to minors is illegal. The flavours, price and accessibility make vapes more appealing and an easier option for minors to obtain—and hide—compared to traditional cigarettes. Given that, I welcome the amendment to the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966.

The proposed amendments to the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008 are also a positive step. Through those amendments, the bill updates and clarifies the powers of tobacco inspectors to search areas of non-residential

premises that store tobacco products and e-cigarette products, noting that products must be hidden from public view; allows illegal tobacco products to be seized by officers entering premises under other legislation such as the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act; and allows inspectors to direct a retailer to open rooms and containers to allow for inspections for the purposes of compliance activities.

Again, that will ensure that those selling tobacco products like vapes will be held accountable. I know those changes will be welcomed by many residents in the Heathcote electorate. Finally, I acknowledge the hard work of my good friend the Minister for Health on the bill. The Minister has an enormous task on his hands to restore the public health system, which decayed under members opposite over their 12-year reign. I know he is up to the task and the proposed amendments will make a difference.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (16:02): I make a contribution to debate in support of the Health Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2023. The bill proposes a range of amendments to various health Acts. It makes two amendments to the Health Administration Act of 1982 to ensure that the Health secretary has the ability to request that a healthcare services organisation conduct a comprehensive review when the secretary deems an incident reportable or may be a result of a serious problem in the health system. In that case, a reportable incident relates to the unexpected death of a patient unrelated to natural causes or a patient's medical condition. Additionally, the amendments aim to empower the secretary to appoint an alternate assessor for a serious adverse event review in the occurrence that the initial assessor is unable to continue in their role due to factors such as injury and illness.

The bill rectifies an error made by the Health Legislation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 2022 to the Health Care Complaints Act of 1993 regarding the definition of a "disciplinary body". The 2022 amendment removed the reference to a "professional standards committee". The bill amends that error and clarifies that a professional standards committee is a disciplinary body where complaints can be lodged against registered health practitioners. The bill makes amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). The amendments make it an offence for a person to incite or persuade a registered health practitioner to engage in unsatisfactory professional conduct and clarify the definition of a prohibition order. The bill amends the Human Tissue Act of 1983 to clarify that a donor's next of kin can consent to the release of information about the donor once the donor has died.

The bill amends the Mental Health Act of 2007 to ensure that a person is given a statement of their rights when detained in a mental health facility and that the statement includes the obligation of the facility to provide the person with appropriate grooming items as well as appropriate street clothes before they appear before the Mental Health Review Tribunal. Amendments in the bill allow the Health secretary to order the forfeiture and destruction of goods seized under the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act of 1966. That includes e-cigarettes containing nicotine as well as in circumstances where the secretary holds a reasonable belief that the Act has been contravened.

Further, the bill makes amendments to the Public Health Act of 2010. The amendments involve the removal of procedural requirements for developing a code of conduct for non-registered health practitioners and health service providers, keeping in line with the standard prerequisites for creating subordinate legislation. The bill also amends the definition of "immunisation certificate". The changes ensure that the definition of an immunisation certificate now aligns with the current and accurate name of the Australian Immunisation Register, reflecting any recent updates or changes to the register's official name.

Finally, the bill amends the Public Health (Tobacco) Act of 2008. It updates and clarifies the powers of tobacco inspectors to investigate areas of non-residential premises that store tobacco products and e-cigarettes that may not be on public display. It allows the confiscation of illegal tobacco products by officers when entering premises under different legislation such as the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act. Further, it will empower inspectors to issue directives to retailers requiring them to open rooms and containers that they wish to inspect for the purpose of compliance activities.

It would be remiss of me to contribute to this health legislation debate without making a brief mention of the amendment inserting new section 44 (4) into the Public Health (Tobacco) Act concerning regulated products as they relate to e-cigarettes and e-cigarette accessories. As chair of the law and safety committee, I recently announced that the committee has launched a public inquiry into e-cigarette regulation and compliance in New South Wales. In recent years e-cigarette use, or vaping as it is commonly known, has become a popular alternative to tobacco smoking, particularly among children and young people.

Although it is illegal to sell vapes and vaping accessories to people under 18, children and young people are still obtaining those products with relative ease. Recently, teenagers in New South Wales were hospitalised with nicotine poisoning from e-cigarettes purchased on social media apps. The committee's inquiry will examine how to improve the regulatory framework as well as ways to address challenges in enforcement and compliance.

The committee will also consider how New South Wales can work with the Federal Government to implement reforms on e-cigarette products. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (16:09): I am delighted to make a brief contribution to debate on the Health Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2023. I commend the Minister for Health and Minister for Regional Health along with his team, his staff and his Parliamentary Secretary, the member for Bega, for their hard work and engaging approach to addressing the many and varying health issues across New South Wales. Where they go is not isolated; we commonly see the Parliamentary Secretary and Minister for Health out and about right across regional New South Wales. They take a holistic and equitable approach to the representations that are made to them about the health system. Most importantly, the Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary—who I note is in the Chamber—know the importance of supporting staff in our health system, whether they are physicians, clinicians, allied health workers, nurses, boilermakers or cleaners.

By supporting those people in our health system, we know—the Minister knows and, indeed, the Parliamentary Secretary knows—that we are supporting patient care. Ultimately, that is what our health system is about. Supporting those who support our patients, their families and their carers is the right thing to do for any government. The Government took that agenda to the election. The Minister for Health and Minister for Regional Health and his entire team, including the Parliamentary Secretary, spoke of that in the lead-up to the election and they are following through on it after the election. The budget was given by the Treasurer, the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, under the leadership of Premier Chris Minns and with the assistance of all Ministers. They have done an exceptional job under very extraordinary circumstances, all while sustaining our pre-election position. That was on display today.

We displayed what good governments do, or should do. It is a great example of what good Labor governments do, and it is an even better example of the pillars that will form the foundation of this Government, which will benefit and progress generations into the future. I am pleased to make a brief contribution to the bill, which is part of the Government's regular review and monitoring of legislation to ensure that it remains up to date, relevant and consistent. The bill seeks to make a number of miscellaneous amendments to various Acts within the Health portfolio to ensure that these Acts are operating effectively and are fit for purpose. While this is part of the mechanics of government, it is a further display of the Minister and the Government's proactive and engaging approach to health services.

I turn to the nature of the amendments. First, in relation to the Health Administration Act 1982, the amendments in schedule 1 to the bill will ensure that the NSW Health Secretary can require a health services organisation to conduct a serious adverse event review where the secretary considers that an incident has occurred that is sufficiently serious to warrant investigation. Serious adverse event reviews look at serious incidents that have occurred in the health system. These reviews are important to ensure that hospitals can understand what went wrong when an incident happens and consider how to mitigate the risk of the incident happening again. Currently, a serious adverse event review must be conducted if the chief executive of the organisation considers that the incident was a reportable incident or if the incident is one that may be the result of systems issues. The bill also makes a minor amendment to allow relevant health organisations to appoint alternate or additional assessors to a serious adverse event review.

Currently, there is no express mechanism under the Health Administration Act to appoint alternate assessors if an assessor is unable to continue in their role. Assessors may become unable to continue in the role for reasons of illness or unavailability. The change aims to mitigate any potential delays with serious adverse event reviews to help better protect the public. I turn now to schedule 2 to the bill, which makes a minor change to the definition of "disciplinary body" in the Health Care Complaints Act 1993. Under the Act, the director of proceedings can decide whether to prosecute a complaint against a registered health practitioner in a disciplinary body, which is intended to mean both a professional standards committee and the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Professional standards committees usually hear less serious complaints about medical practitioners and nurses than the Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Due to an amendment to the Act in 2022, the reference to the professional standards committee in the definition of "disciplinary body" was inadvertently removed. The bill will fix this error and reinstate a professional standards committee in the definition of "disciplinary body". The Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) regulates registered health practitioners, such as medical practitioners and nurses, and is an applied law scheme. This means that New South Wales applies, via the Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009, the schedule to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Queensland), which I will call the Queensland National Law. However, New South Wales did not adopt the complaints processes under part 8 of the Queensland National Law and instead retains its own complaints processes involving the Health Care Complaints Commission and the health professional councils.

From 2022 any amendments to the Queensland national law do not apply in New South Wales unless a regulation is made applying the changes, with or without modification. The combined applied Queensland provisions and the specific New South Wales provisions are known as the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). The bill includes a new offence in the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) relating to directing or inciting a registered health practitioner to engage in unsatisfactory professional conduct. There is currently an offence at section 136 of the New South Wales National Law that relates to directing or inciting unprofessional conduct or professional misconduct. This is an applied provision and applies in all jurisdictions that apply the Queensland National Law.

However, the offence does not work as intended in New South Wales because the term "unprofessional conduct" is not used in New South Wales. Unprofessional conduct is equivalent to "unsatisfactory professional conduct" in New South Wales, which is conduct that is below the usual standards expected of registered health practitioners but is not as serious as professional misconduct. The bill also creates a clarifying definition of a "prohibition order" for the purpose of the public register provisions in the New South Wales National Law. Currently, national boards, such as the Medical Board of Australia, are required to keep a register of all registered health practitioners and those who have had their registration cancelled or are subject to a prohibition order.

I will end my contribution where I began, by thanking the Minister and all of his staff, who have worked very hard in the lead-up to the budget. This amendment bill shows that they are very engaged and proactive. I thank also the many hardworking staff throughout our health service industry, particularly in our hospitals, whether they are an allied health worker, paramedic, clinician, physician or doctor—it does not matter what they do. All members on this side of the House know that they are there for one sole reason, and that is to care for people and their carers. On behalf of the Minister, who is a friend of mine, and each and every one of my colleagues in this place, I say to those health workers: We have your back. Today's budget is just the foundation that will provide generations of healthcare workers and their patients the support that they need and a prosperous and good health system.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (16:19): The Health Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2023 is part of the Government's regular review and monitoring of legislation to ensure that it remains up to date and relevant. To that end, the bill seeks to make a number of amendments to various Acts within the Health portfolio to ensure that those Acts are operating effectively. As members have heard through the course of this debate, through the numerous amendments that have been put forward in the bill and the work of both the Minister for Health and the Parliamentary Secretary for Health, we are preserving the integrity of our health system and preserving the trust and the respect of the many citizens of New South Wales that carry faith in the health system. The bill addresses some existing challenges to ensure the smoother functioning of our health processes going forward.

A number of stakeholders were consulted in the process of bringing these amendments forward. The Ministry of Health consulted with key stakeholders on the proposals, including the Medical Services Advisory Committee, the Australian Medical Association, the NSW Nursing and Midwives' Association, the NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Service, Legal Aid NSW, local health districts, BEING Mental Health Consumers and the Department of Communities and Justice. These are all important stakeholders because from a psychosocial and holistic understanding of health care we understand that the health system interacts and intersects with many other systems. Consulting widely ensures that we are able to conserve integrity in processes. One change I bring attention to relates to the Health Care Complaints Act. As deputy chair of the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission of this House, it brings me great pleasure to go through some of these changes. [*Quorum called for.*]

[*The bells having been rung and a quorum having formed, business resumed.*]

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I thank members. A quorum is now present. If members are not staying in the Chamber to hear the wonderful contribution by the member for Liverpool, I ask them to leave quietly. I have been reminded that today is one of my favourite days of the year: Talk Like a Pirate Day. So, aaarr, the member for Liverpool will return thee to the lectern.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA: Aaarr, we can all join in the fun. I note that it is Talk Like a Pirate Day. It is important to acknowledge that we have many social determinates of health, which require a range of different stakeholders to be consulted. I am pleased to see in the range of stakeholders consulted on these amendments that many aspects of those social determinates of care are represented. As the deputy chair of the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission, it is good to see that an error that was made in a 2022 amendment to the definition of a disciplinary body in the Health Care Complaints Act has been rectified. This will ensure that a professional standards committee falls within the definition of a disciplinary body under the Act.

Under the Health Care Complaints Act, the director of proceedings can decide whether to prosecute a complaint against a registered health practitioner in a disciplinary body. Until 2022, a disciplinary body was intended to be the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal or a professional standards committee. Professional standards committees are bodies that hear complaints about medical practitioners and nurses. Generally, professional standards committees deal with less serious matters than the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal and are less formal than the tribunal.

The Health Legislation (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act (No 2) 2022 amended the definition of disciplinary body in the Health Care Complaints Act to properly reference the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. That amendment inadvertently removed the reference to a committee as a disciplinary body. The bill will ensure professional standards committees can continue to hear complaints against registered health practitioners. This is important as our system is based on trust and respect for our many hardworking healthcare workers and providers, as well as the understanding that there will be natural justice and fairness of process where mistakes are made or standards are not met. It is in the interests of every citizen of New South Wales that people have recourse to ensure that fairness of process is available to them where possible.

Another amendment being proposed in the bill is to the Mental Health Act 2007. Under the Mental Health Act, when a person is detained in a mental health facility they must be given a written statement of their rights, which is set out in schedule 3 to the Act. The statement sets out the rights a person has when they are detained in a facility, including the person's rights regarding treatment and when a mental health inquiry must be held by the Mental Health Review Tribunal with regard to the person.

The statement also sets out the facility's obligation with respect to the detained person. Under the Act and the mental health regulation, a facility must provide a person with appropriate street clothes and grooming items, such as shaving equipment and make-up, before they appear before the tribunal. The statement of rights as currently set out in the Act does not include details about this obligation on the facility to provide grooming items and street clothes. This bill will ensure this right is included in the statement of rights so that a person is aware of the facility's obligations to help them present their best self when they appear before the tribunal. [*Extension of time*]

As a mental health worker in my life prior to entering this place, I know that situations requiring inpatient support or detention in a mental health facility can be distressing and highly destructive for an individual and their family or care and support system. Mental health issues impact on a person's appearance and grooming. Some of the harmful impacts upon a person who is not aware of their rights and the obligations of a facility to help support them may be exacerbated. One of the most common reasons why people refuse treatment and seek to avoid health facilities in regards to mental health treatment is due to the loss of autonomy experienced by that person when they are detained in that mental health facility. Ensuring that there is clarity and attention given to the importance of grooming and the obligations of that facility to support them may redress some of the distress and avoidance that people may experience in those circumstances. Therefore, I commend that amendment to the House.

A further amendment proposes to amend the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 to give the Health secretary the ability to order the forfeiture and disposal of goods seized under the Act in certain circumstances. The Act regulates scheduled poisons and medicines such as drugs of addiction and prescription-only medicines, including liquid nicotine. Such medicines are highly regulated and generally can be supplied only by medical practitioners and other authorised practitioners and pharmacists on prescription. Under the Act, inspectors have powers to seize goods where the inspector believes there has been a contravention of the Act. However, a magistrate's order or consent to forfeiture is required for those products to be destroyed. Seized goods can include drugs of addiction that have been diverted and increasingly include liquid nicotine, which unfortunately has become commonly sold in some retail settings.

Due to the increasing number of seizures, it is becoming impracticable to seek a magistrate's order for the destruction of seized goods. As such, the bill makes changes based on the yet-to-be-commenced Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 2022 and creates a more streamlined approach to seized goods. Under the changes, the secretary can order seized goods to be forfeited and destroyed if satisfied of one of a number of grounds, including that the person has been convicted of an offence in connection with the seized goods; the owner cannot be found despite reasonable efforts being made; the return of the seized goods would pose an unacceptable risk to health or safety; the seized goods cannot be lawfully used or supplied by the owner; and with the consent of the owner. The person from whom goods were seized may make submissions to the secretary, which must be considered before the secretary makes a forfeiture order. This change is in line with the new Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act, which Parliament passed last year and which will, upon commencement, replace the existing therapeutic goods Act.

Finally, I speak briefly to the amendments to the Public Health Act 2010 contained in the bill. The bill removes the procedural requirements for making a code of conduct for non-registered health practitioners and

health service providers. The Public Health Act allows regulations to be made setting out a code of conduct for non-registered health practitioners and health service providers. A breach of the code can result in the Health Care Complaints Commission making a prohibition order if the person poses a risk to the public. While the code is made by regulation, the Act includes specific procedural requirements over and above what is normally required to make a regulation.

The current procedural requirements for making a code of conduct, which include placing the code and an impact assessment on public exhibition and considering any submissions received, are in addition to the requirements for making subordinate legislation under the Subordinate Legislation Act 1989. The procedural requirements for making the code of conduct have been in place since 2006, when New South Wales became the first jurisdiction to introduce the concept of a code of conduct and prohibition orders. While the additional requirements for making a code of conduct would have been appropriate when the code provisions were first developed, the code provisions are now well established and having additional procedural requirements for prescribing a code of conduct is no longer considered necessary. Mr Temporary Speaker, I seek leave for a further brief extension of time.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I am sorry; there is no provision for additional time.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA: In that case, I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I thank the member for Liverpool. I appreciate that her contribution was interrupted by the call for a quorum.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (16:35): I contribute to debate on the Health Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2023. The bill proposes to make a range of amendments to various health-related Acts, eight in total. However, it is the Human Tissue Act 1983 that I will pay particular attention to in my contribution. The bill amends the Human Tissue Act to clarify that a donor's next of kin may consent to the release of information about the donor when the donor has, sadly, passed away. Specifically, section 37 of the Human Tissue Act creates an offence for medical practitioners or staff at a hospital where a transplant occurred to publicly release information about an organ donor or recipient except in limited circumstances, including with the consent of the donor or recipient. Concern has been raised that section 37 may limit the ability of families to publicly talk about a deceased organ donor. While the Act does not prohibit family members from speaking about their loved one's experience, the aim of the bill is to clarify that family members are not prevented from sharing information about a deceased donor.

On Friday 1 September many members would have donned a jersey for Jersey Day. I donned my Liverpool third kit, which is red and green, sharing its colours with South Sydney. Souths and Liverpool are two of my favourite sporting clubs. As members know, Jersey Day celebrates the life of Nathan Gremmo. Nathan passed away at 13 years of age, but the donation of his organs saved six people. We celebrate that each and every year. It is a wonderful occasion where people of all ages put their jerseys on and push what is a wonderful cause. It would be a tragedy if, through some unintended drafting, his family and that organisation were unable to do the amazing work they do. This particular amendment clears that up. It means that other families and friends can go out there and speak about the amazing contribution their loved one may have made through organ donation.

I am passionate about organ donation. Members might not know that very few people can become an organ donor when they pass away. There are specific criteria. A person must die in a hospital in specific circumstances in an intensive care unit or emergency department. The organs need to be functioning well to be considered for transplantation. Only around 2 per cent of people who die in Australian hospitals meet those criteria. Around 1,400 of the 80,000 people who die in Australian hospitals do so in a way that allows their organs to be considered for donation. Sadly, there are about 1,800 Australians on the waitlist for an organ transplant and 14,000 people who are on dialysis several times a week waiting for their kidney transplant. In fact, just before I came down to the House I had a meeting with the Meningitis Centre Australia and heard from someone who has been battling the effects of meningitis infection. She was lucky enough to receive her kidney transplant a few years ago—quite a coincidence. It is wonderful that the bill makes that easier for people.

While the majority of Australians support organ and tissue donation, only around one in three is registered to be a donor. Members may remember years ago we ticked a box on our driver licence. That is not the way to do it anymore. There is now the Australian Organ Donor Register. I have long been registered as an organ donor and I encourage everyone to look into it, do the research and seriously consider being an organ donor. I am glad that we are here today making amendments to allow families to speak on the amazing impact that their loved ones may have made in the act of donating their organs. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (16:40): I speak in favour of the Health Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2023. This is an important piece of legislation for New South Wales, as it addresses several

outstanding concerns relating to health across eight existing Acts to ensure their continued effective operations. I thank the Minister and his staff for developing and modernising the laws. These amendments have been worked through by the Ministry of Health in extensive consultation with key stakeholders including, but not limited to, the Medical Services Committee, the Australian Medical Association, the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association, the NSW Organ and Tissue Donation Service, the local health districts, Legal Aid NSW and the Department of Communities and Justice.

The proposed amendments to the Health Administration Act 1982 would give the Health secretary the ability to compel local health districts or other relevant health service organisations to conduct reviews into events where the secretary considers a reportable incident has occurred or that an incident may be the result of a serious systematic problem in the health system. These incident reviews would ensure accountability, transparency and continued confidence in the New South Wales health system. The bill also rectifies an error to the Health Care Complaints Act 1993 made in 2022, where reference to a professional standards committee as a disciplinary body was accidentally removed. This amendment will once again ensure the professional standards committees can hear complaints against registered health practitioners. Schedule 3 to the bill proposes amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law. These are designed to bring the New South Wales complaints process in line with the corresponding Act in Queensland. Additionally, these amendments will include a new definition of "prohibition order" for the purposes of public register provisions in New South Wales.

The bill also clarifies concerns regarding the Human Tissue Act 1983. There have been concerns that, as the Act currently stands, section 37 may limit the ability of family members to talk publicly about a deceased organ donor. While the Act does not explicitly prohibit this, the amendment is designed to rectify this ambiguity. Importantly, the bill aligns with the Commonwealth Australian Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Authority Act, following amendments which received royal assent in August 2023. I encourage people to take up registration on the organ donation register. One in three people in New South Wales is on the register. I am happy to note that I have added my name. I do not know if anyone will want what is left of my organs by the time I am gone. I do not know how many people I would save, if any.

The bill also includes amendments to the Mental Health Act 2007, which will ensure that when a person is detained in a mental health facility, they are given a written statement of their rights as outlined in schedule 3 to the Act. The statement will include the rights of a person when they are detained and the obligations of the facility to the detained person. The amendment will also include an addition to the statement, that a facility must provide a person with appropriate clothing and grooming items before they appear at the tribunal. I believe there is a nickname for that Act, "Michael".

Additionally, the bill amends both the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966 and the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008 to crack down on e-cigarettes containing nicotine. Amendments to the former are designed to streamline the approach to seize goods by empowering the Health secretary to order the forfeiture, disposal and/or destruction of goods where currently a magistrate's order is required. Amendments to the Public Health (Tobacco) Act are designed to clarify the powers of the tobacco inspectors and poisons and therapeutic goods inspectors. This includes that the tobacco inspectors may search areas of retail premises where e-cigarettes are usually stored but out of public view, where a visual inspection alone will not allow for routine compliance activities. It also empowers inspectors who find illegal tobacco to seize it where it is found. These are necessary amendments in order to combat the steep increase in the importation and sales of illegal goods such as e-cigarettes.

I note that in the Blacktown area, anecdotally, cigarette usage is declining but unfortunately the use of vapes and disposable vapes is increasing. I also note that the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety, chaired by the member for Mount Druitt, has established an inquiry to examine the current situation in New South Wales regarding e-cigarette use, or vaping, its prevalence among children and young people and the impact of the programs and services aimed at preventing uptake. The inquiry will look at the effectiveness of the current New South Wales regulatory framework and explore ways to address challenges in enforcement and compliance.

Finally, there are proposed amendments to the Public Health Act 2010, which remove the procedural requirements associated with making a code of conduct for non-registered health practitioners and health service providers, and updates the definition of "immunisation certificate" to be up to date with the name of the Australian Immunisation Register. These are all meaningful, commonsense amendments to the legislation to maintain confidence and improve the public health system in New South Wales. I congratulate the Minister for Health and his staff for their continued commitment to New South Wales having the best public health system in the country. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (16:46): In reply: I thank the member for Bega, particularly in his role as Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Health. I thank the members representing the electorates of Heathcote, Mount Druitt, Campbelltown, Liverpool and Blacktown for their

contributions to the debate, and the member for Hornsby in his role as the shadow Minister. That is a job I know well and do not want to return to. We have all talked about the importance of the bill. It is my first piece of legislation, so it is very important to me. While it makes some minor amendments broadly in its role as a miscellaneous amendment bill, they are important amendments.

I thank my team from the Ministry of Health. Often the Ministry of Health can be overlooked when we acknowledge the importance of healthcare workers and healthcare professionals. It is certainly not overlooked by me. It provides outstanding advice and support to the Government, to me as the Minister and to the other Ministers in the Health portfolio. I thank the team and all of their staff for this work. I thank my personal staff for the incredible amount of work in getting across the bill in the lead-up to a budget. When we spend more than most in a budget, my office is already under enormous pressure. I thank them for their hard work.

This is an important bill, minor in some of its amendments, but critical in making sure that our health system is up to date and fit for purpose. I thank everyone who has contributed to the debate. The bill makes a number of amendments across various Acts. In the Health Administration Act it gives the Health secretary the ability to require health services organisations to conduct a serious adverse event review when a sufficiently serious incident has occurred. I talked about that in my second reading speech. That is an important power. The bill will make minor technical amendments to the Health Care Complaints Act to ensure that the legislation remains current and fit for purpose, as well as the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW), the Public Health Act and the Mental Health Act.

The bill will amend the Human Tissue Act to allow the next of kin of a deceased donor to consent to the release of information about that donor. That is an important reform. The bill will amend the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act to allow the secretary to order the forfeiture and seizure of goods regulated under the Act and amend the Public Health (Tobacco) Act to clarify that inspectors may search areas where tobacco and e-cigarettes are usually stored and hidden from public view and to direct a person who appears to own the premises to open locked containers for the purpose of inspection. The bill is an important part of the Government's regular review of legislation. The bill is my first piece of legislation as Minister. I thank my staff and the departmental staff. I thank stakeholders across the health industry for their engagement. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr RYAN PARK: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

PAINTBALL AMENDMENT BILL 2023

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 13 September 2023.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (16:51): I lead for the Opposition in the debate on the Paintball Amendment Bill 2023. The Liberals and The Nationals are pleased to support the reforms, which come on the back of significant work undertaken in the area by the former Coalition Government. The provisions in this bill are the product of consultation with industry, consumers and the public conducted by the former Coalition Government. This bill builds upon the Coalition's strong legacy of major reform to the paintball sector, which has been broadly successful. The stakeholder feedback I have received reflects that. Those reforms ensured that the regulatory framework for the paintball industry was fit for purpose while enhancing safety for both players and the public.

The bill is informed by the statutory review into the Paintball Act 2018, which commenced in 2021 and was tabled in 2022. That was the first statutory review since the Act's July 2019 commencement and, whilst recognising that COVID-19 caused significant disruption to the industry and reduced the time for the Act to be run in, it found that the Act's provisions remain largely appropriate and effective. The review did identify several improvements that would benefit the industry and made six recommendations. They are technical, routine and overwhelmingly non-controversial adjustments that the paintball industry has broadly welcomed. The Liberals and The Nationals made major reforms to the regulation of paintball in 2018 by removing it from the scope of firearms legislation and instead providing for a separate system of regulation. Those reforms recognise that paintball is a legitimate recreational activity and sport. We made it easier for people to enjoy and run a paintball business, and we cut unnecessary red tape while maintaining strong standards and public safety.

Prior to the reforms, paintball markers were classified as firearms under the Firearms Act, required a firearms licence to purchase and needed to be registered as a firearm. Proudly, under the Coalition, oversight of paintball was transferred well from Police to Fair Trading. The statutory review confirms that new system has been working well. Paintball is a game enjoyed by many across New South Wales both competitively and recreationally. In New South Wales, Fair Trading has issued 1,885 paintball marker permits. The 45 licensed paintball venues across the State are mostly small businesses, often family-run, and 70 per cent are based in the regional areas of New South Wales.

I now make some brief observations on several of the bill's key provisions. An issue has arisen through the Act that paintball markers purchased from interstate were not appropriately captured. There is no requirement that the interstate supplier be vetted or approved, and the sale is not required to be recorded on the paintball register. The bill levels the playing field between New South Wales and interstate suppliers, closes the gaps that exist and ensures that the New South Wales paintball register has fuller visibility of paintball markers in the State.

The bill also addresses an unintended consequence that has arisen as a result of limiting the use of paintball markers to only within authorised venues. While that was well intentioned to ensure appropriate safety and supervision of markers, it has prohibited other legitimate uses outside of authorised venues that were previously allowed. That includes uses such as in the special effects and film industry as well as in research contexts. The Opposition welcomes the commonsense solution of allowing the secretary to authorise the use of paintball markers outside of authorised venues and notes that the regulations will prescribe reasons that the secretary must consider in making such a decision.

The Opposition also welcomes the bill's strengthening of disclosure and visibility requirements for permits. That will give confidence to consumers that venues are registered and provide a safe environment as well as acting to deter illegal activities. That includes requiring a paintball marker permit holder that wishes to use their own marker to show their permit prior to entering an authorised venue and for the permit to be sighted. It also requires venue operators to clearly display their venue permit and registered name at the venue and on their website and social media. The bill makes other amendments that clarify the original intent of the law.

I thank the many stakeholders who had input to the statutory review and the bill, including paintball venues, suppliers, players, the NSW Police Force, the general public and Fair Trading. That included consultation through the previous Coalition Government's discussion paper of late 2021 that informed the statutory review and a draft bill released for further public consultation in January 2023. That draft formed the basis of the bill before the House. I thank the former Coalition Ministers for Better Regulation and Fair Trading and the department staff for their work on the reforms. I acknowledge the current Minister's support for that work and hard work on the bill too. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (16:56): I make a brief contribution in favour of the Paintball Amendment Bill 2023. The bill represents a significant step forward in the regulation of paintball activities within our State. Its purpose is twofold: to enhance consumer safety and to establish a harmonised playing field for New South Wales and interstate paintball marker suppliers. This pivotal legislation emerges as a direct response to the statutory review conducted in 2022 that identified crucial areas of improvement in the existing Paintball Act 2018.

The Paintball Act 2018 was a watershed moment for the industry, introducing a modern permit system and a regulatory framework designed to streamline operations for paintball businesses while prioritising the safety of participants. Its core objective was the elimination of redundant bureaucratic hurdles, fostering an environment in which paintball establishments could flourish responsibly. As of today, there are 41 paintball businesses across New South Wales holding 45 active paintball permits. Moreover, there are 2,876 active paintball marker permits registered in New South Wales with over 3,163 applications made since the Act's introduction. Currently there are 39 permanent applications for international competitors, a testament to the popularity of paintball in our State.

Under the current arrangements of the Act, an individual is required to hold both a paintball marker permit and imitation firearm permit under the Firearms Act 1996 where the paintball marker falls within the definition of an "imitation firearm". As such, if a paintball marker is used to commit an offence, it will be treated as a firearm for the purposes of the Crimes Act 1900. These amendments will improve consumer safety by requiring a paintball marker permit holder to display their permit prior to entering a paintball venue. Additionally, venue operators will be responsible for verifying that the permit is valid. Venue operators will also be obliged to clearly display their venue permit or permit number and registered business name, both at the physical premises and their online platforms, such as on websites or social media pages.

The bill will clarify that the paintball marker permit allows for ownership of multiple markers and will also require paintball markers to be transported in a securely locked container or bag. These containers or bags should

be designed to conceal the paintball marker and should not indicate in any way what it contains. It must be unable to be readily accessed by any unauthorised person.

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

ASSET PRIVATISATION

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (17:00): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that this budget does not resort to privatisation to reduce the State's debt.
- (2) Opposes the privatisation of government assets.

I note that the cost-of-living crisis in New South Wales is worse because of a decade of privatisation. The sale of tens of billions of dollars' worth of public assets has made families in the State the prey of private monopolies instead of the beneficiaries of State support. That is why New South Wales is known as the most tolled city in the world. It is why families in the State are paying more for their power. The privatisation of State power stations is why New South Wales families have less control over their energy future than families in States like Queensland that still own their electricity assets. The closure of Wallerawang Power Station soon after it was acquired from the Government by a private operator in 2013 caused power prices to rise. The recent closure of Liddell Power Station caused power prices to rise. The controversy over the closure of Eraring Power Station will cause power prices to rise unless we have sufficient renewable energy on stream to replace it.

The Liberal-Nationals Coalition conservatives sold Eraring Power Station to Origin Energy for \$50 million. Former State energy Minister Matt Kean said it would cost \$3 billion for Origin Energy to keep that power station open until the power generated by the power station could be replaced with renewable energy. Under the management of the Coalition, the State was facing a \$3 billion cost—under its reckoning—from which the Treasury has received a mere \$50 million. Privatisation has made it harder for the Government to manage the energy transition and build renewable energy zones, which is a bipartisan commitment of this House. It is a mess left for this Government to clean up, and privatisation is draining family budgets.

From its very first term until its last term, the Liberal-Nationals Coalition showed it was the party of privatisation. As a result, Sydney became the most tolled city in the world, where a private company owned all or part of the M2, the M4, the M5 East, the M5 South-West, the M7, the M8, the M4-M8 Link, NorthConnex, the Lane Cove Tunnel, the Cross City Tunnel and the Eastern Distributor. They told us the sell-off would pay for new roads. Instead, it took hundreds of dollars from the budgets of families across Western Sydney and the State. When they sold the land titles office, fees increased by 25 per cent. When they sold the ports, container fees rose by 40 per cent. Costs were increased for everybody across the State.

The budget today has confronted and addressed this disastrous position inherited by the Minns Labor Government. We inherited the largest debt ever passed from one government to another in the State's history. It is forecast to reach \$188 billion by 2025-26 on the budget settings we inherited from the conservatives opposite. Labor's careful and responsible approach to budget repair has reduced debt growth by \$4.8 billion on the forward estimates to 2025-26. This is the largest ever reduction in gross State debt—actual or forecast—that has ever been achieved without privatisation. By reducing debt, we save the State \$2.3 billion in interest payments.

Our comprehensive expenditure review, which is a huge body of work and a huge task in which the Treasurer and the finance Minister were well supported by the public servants of their departments, found \$13 billion in savings that have been redirected to the State's top priorities. We froze politicians' pay. We froze the pay of the top public servants in the State for two years. We are reducing the record 4,000 top executives employed across the State by the former Government and making the public \$700 million better off. We put the planners back together in one department instead of being spread across several departments. Under the Minns Labor Government the people of New South Wales are going to get more for the resources of this State that are mined by coalmining companies, with coal royalties increasing by 2.6 percentage points from 1 July 2024. That is money for the State to put back into budget repair.

Labor's budget repair is delivering \$8.2 billion in cost-of-living relief through 130 different measures built into the budget that are available to people across the State as of today. We are providing cost-of-living relief, capping toll costs and removing the cap on wages of our public servants, who deliver the services that the people of the State want and need. With today's budget, Labor has ended privatisation in the State. We have repaired the budget without privatising the State's assets so that we can rebuild our essential services and help families with

the once-in-a-generation cost-of-living crisis. Labor's budget delivers the fresh start that the people of the State voted for.

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (17:06): I am proud to lead for the Opposition in the debate. I note that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer spoke about a number of toll roads. He spoke about the M7, the Eastern Distributor, the Cross City Tunnel and the Lane Cove Tunnel. I remind the member that those tollways came in under the previous Labor Government. It is important that we set the record straight on privatisation, and who better to do that than a person called Carl Scully who has written a book called *Setting the Record Straight*. He makes an interesting observation that former Labor Premier Morris Iemma said back in 2006-07:

We are going to do something much bigger after the election, but we can't talk about it now ... We're going to sell the power industry, but we can't talk about it until after the election.

In *Setting the Record Straight*, Carl Scully says:

The Carr and Egan failed attempt to privatise power in 1997, as with the disastrous 2007/08 attempt by Iemma and Costa, both had a party and union movement deal on the table, to sell one generator for a few billion dollars and sell no more. The deal was twice rejected and the plan to privatise as a result, twice failed.

So that is setting the record straight in relation to Labor on privatisation.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): Government members will come to order.

Mr MATT CROSS: I move:

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

- (1) Notes the Labor Government from 1995 to 2011 privatised assets including TAB in 1997, FreightCorp in 2002, Country Energy in 2006, Energy Australia in 2007, NSW Lotteries in 2010 and the Gentrader transaction in 2011.
- (2) Notes the Minns Labor Government is funding projects using the Restart NSW Fund that has been funded by asset recycling.
- (3) Notes the Premier ordered Ministers to find surplus land to rezone for homes, which is a form of privatisation. I find it interesting that in 2009 there was a correctional centre in the electorate of the member for Riverstone called Parklea. In 2009 *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported:

... the Minister for Corrective Services in the Rees Government, used a party committee dominated by his allies to overturn a ban on the privatisation of jails. He is now able to contract out the running of Cessnock and Parklea prisons.

It is interesting who was on the committee, but more interesting is who was the chief of staff to the Minister for Corrective Services.

Mr Gareth Ward: Who was it?

Mr MATT CROSS: It was none other than a person called "CJ", or Premier Chris Minns. Clearly, it is a case of "do as I say but not do as I do". The original motion before I amended it claimed that the budget contains no privatisations. I am happy to pick up *Budget Paper No.03*, Infrastructure Statement.

Mr Gareth Ward: Are you happy with it?

Mr MATT CROSS: I am happy to pick it up. Page 1-6 states:

An additional \$9.1 million has also been allocated to assess housing supply opportunities across government-owned sites, with 30 per cent of surplus government land to be set aside for social, affordable and universal housing.

Page 1-8 states:

\$300 million in reinvested dividends to enable Landcom to deliver an additional 1,409 affordable homes and 3,288 market homes to 2039-40.

Clearly, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer has not even read the budget papers because the budget papers do contain privatisation. Who would have thought? The selling of public land is a form of privatisation. I note that earlier this year there was an interesting article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* titled "Minns orders ministers to find surplus land to rezone for homes".

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Mr MATT CROSS: *The Sydney Morning Herald* obtained information under freedom of information laws. It refers to:

... 11 suburbs that have been prioritised for state-led rezoning and could be ready for large-scale development by the middle of next year.

I will list some of them: Macquarie Park, privatised; St Leonards, privatised; Camellia, privatised; Riverstone East, privatised; and West Schofields, privatised. I could go on, but I do not support the motion.

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (17:12): I contribute to this public interest debate on privatisation. The Minns Government is committed to our promise to the people of New South Wales to stop selling or privatising essential State assets that were owned by the people of New South Wales. The previous Government tried to duck the label of "lords of privatisation" and started to call it "asset recycling", but no-one was fooled. During the election campaign, the third highest issue raised with me was stopping privatisation. Of course, the first two issues were health and education. The mantra from Penrith residents was, "The privatisation has to stop. We were told we would pay less, but we're paying more." In effect, the people of New South Wales were burnt at both ends.

The great sell-off started soon after the Liberal-Nationals Coalition came to government and continued every year until March this year. I will run through the list, but I may be here a while. There was WSN Environmental Solutions, Sydney Desalination Plant, Port Botany, Port Kembla and Port Newcastle. When the ports were sold, container fees rose by 40 per cent—so much for cheaper services. I will not even speak about Eraring Energy because it has recently come back to prominence. There was Mount Piper Power Station, Wallerawang Power Station, Green State Power, Bayswater Power Station, Liddell Power Station, Colongra Power Station, Vales Point Power Station, Transgrid, Brown Mountain hydro, Ausgrid, Country Energy, EnergyAustralia and Integral Energy. Is it any wonder our power bills have doubled or tripled over that time?

If members think that is the end of it, wait, there's more. There was Construction Services Group; NSW Public Works; Kooragang Island advanced water; Land Titles Office, and its fees subsequently increased by 25 per cent; Pillar Administration; Home Care Service of NSW; titling registry business of land and property information; Sirius public housing; and Millers Point housing. Shame on members opposite. Other sales included Bligh House; the former Children's Court, Bidura, in Glebe; and the Australian Technology Park.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): Opposition members will cease interjecting.

Ms KAREN McKEOWN: In 2021 TAFE NSW was forced to sell \$90 million worth of assets in a privatisation by stealth plan, with almost 700 frontline TAFE jobs slashed. That is a shocking indictment on the previous Government. In March 2021 the Scone campus was sold to Racing NSW so that it may continue to use the state-of-the-art equestrian facility for training. The sale of the Scone campus was incredibly short sighted because the Hunter region already suffered from a youth unemployment rate of 18 per cent. There is WestConnex parts one and two. We were promised that roads would be better but instead we got tolls of \$2,000 per year.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): Opposition members will cease interjecting.

Ms KAREN McKEOWN: West and south-west Sydney were hit the hardest. Sydney became the most tolled city in the world, with a private company owning all or part of the M2, the M4, the M5 East, the M5 South-West, the M7, the M8, the M4-M8 link—

Mr Matt Cross: Point of order—

Ms KAREN McKEOWN: —NorthConnex, the Lane Cove Tunnel, the Cross City Tunnel and the Eastern Distributor. We heard from the Treasurer today that by the time the last of those privatised roads returns to public ownership—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): Order! The member for Penrith will resume her seat.

Mr Matt Cross: I clarify that the M7 was privatised under the former Labor Government.

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

Ms KAREN McKEOWN: We heard from the Treasurer today that by the time the last of those privatised roads returns to public ownership, a child born today will be celebrating their thirty-seventh birthday. The above list is in no way exhaustive. I could easily add the privatisation of transport services, ferries, buses and prisons. I had to laugh at a quote I heard today. It said, "If they could have privatised question time, they would have." I recognise that inflation is the pre-eminent economic challenge for New South Wales, and the Minns Labor Government takes that seriously. We understand that the State must deal with our own contribution to the overall problem, and that is exactly what we are doing with the first fiscally responsible budget we have seen in 13 years.

I am happy to say that the New South Wales Government still owns electricity infrastructure. Labor came to the rescue just in time because the next cab off the rank for the former Government was the privatisation of Sydney Water. It commissioned KPMG to do that. The shadow Treasurer in the other place is not walking away from that idea, even after losing an election. It is in the former Government's DNA. He said that it needed to look at privatisation to secure water supply. The nonsense of selling off income-generating assets has stopped. We keep our promises to the people of New South Wales. There will be no more privatisations under a Minns Labor Government. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (17:17): The member for Penrith spoke about TAFE, which is interesting. Labor members keep talking about TAFE and saying that they are the great saviours of TAFE. Page A2-17 of *Budget Paper No. 01*, Budget Statement refers to "Smart and Skilled – Vocational Education and Training (VET) concessions and exemptions". We funded Smart and Skilled knowing how tough it was for people who wanted to upskill, learn a trade, retrain or provide a better life for themselves. We set aside \$20 million for that program for the additional full qualifications and fee-free training. Guess how much is allocated in this budget? There is \$2 million. The Government has cut \$18 million from Smart and Skilled. What about "Skilling for Recovery - Additional fee gap on existing full qualification training places"? The Government has cut that down to \$9 million from \$35 million. That is ridiculous.

It is the same for "Skilling for Recovery – Additional full qualifications fee free training places." They talk about the great saviour of TAFE, yet they are cutting the guts out of TAFE. They are cutting the guts out of regional New South Wales. They are absolutely speaking with forked tongue about the cost of living, the Creative Kids vouchers, the regional seniors travel card or the Regional Growth Fund. When they talk about how they are going to fund their budget for 2023, they are taking it out of regional New South Wales. The strategic asset recycling paid for the betterment of people in regional New South Wales. The Regional Growth Fund, Restart NSW—gone. Destination NSW is now looking over its shoulder, going, "What are we going to do?"

Mr Matt Cross: Cancelling Christmas.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Cancelling Christmas. What about Made in NSW and the cuts to post, digital and visual effects funds? What about Screen NSW? Let me read a quote from Matt Deaner, who is the CEO of Screen Producers Australia:

This is nothing short of a disaster for NSW, for the state's screen industry, and for the credibility of the NSW Government amongst creative workers.

Those opposite have absolutely cut the guts out of regional New South Wales. Look at New South Wales' screen funding for an example or the Creative Kids vouchers or the regional seniors travel card. Regional New South Wales does not have the luxury of public transport, but people in the city can catch the 506 out to Gladesville. Oh no, they cannot do that. They have to fund those programs in the city, while cutting the guts out of the Creative Kids vouchers. What have those opposite got against kids playing sport? They talk about a healthy lifestyle. They just do not back in those programs or the regional seniors travel card or the Regional Growth Fund.

We have thought about this for quite some time. How do we fund our hospitals? How do we fund our schools? How do we fund our roads or those organisations, volunteer groups and community groups? When talking about the Stronger Country Communities Fund, it is about those programs and those grant opportunities that make a difference—for example, sporting organisations that want to put in a female toilet. What about the fire stations that want to put in a female toilet? Gone. All those grant programs are gone. What about upgrading stables for the Kootingal and Moonbi pony clubs? Gone. Those grant funding opportunities are out the door.

The 2023-2024 budget delivered by the New South Wales Labor Government today is mean. It is absolutely mean. Those opposite have taken their eye off the ball. They are funnelling money out of regional New South Wales and shoving it all into Western Sydney. What about the privatisation that they wanted to do with Sydney Water? What about regional water assets? Are they not good enough for this Government? This is an absolute joke. With strategic asset recycling and our triple-A credit rating, we made sure that New South Wales was a better place than the rest of Australia. This Government is going down the gurgler and will be paying for its wages by borrowing money, and the rest of us will be poorer for it.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:22): I start my contribution by thanking the member for The Entrance and Parliamentary Secretary for the Treasurer for bringing on today's public interest debate to the House. Today's budget demonstrates that we can provide essential services that the people of New South Wales expect us to deliver on public education, public health care and transport without privatising assets. We have put our money where our mouth is. We went to the last State election with a deep commitment that there would be no further privatisation, and one of the first bills that we passed through this place was fulfilling our promise that we would enshrine public ownership of Sydney Water and Hunter Water into the New South Wales Constitution.

We did that because we know that when public assets are privatised, profits come before people, shareholders come before communities, and it is the broader community that always misses out. That is why, on this side of the House, this Government is deeply committed to stopping the privatisation of key public services that people depend on every single day. The previous Government sold at least \$72 billion worth of public assets. Those opposite sold off those assets to pay for new roads—or they told us that it was to pay for new roads; instead, they gave us tolls of over \$2,000 a year. When they sold off Land Titles Office, fees increased by 25 per cent. When the ports were sold, container fees rose by 40 per cent.

The stupid thing about selling off assets like the Land Titles Office and the ports is that they are huge revenue-making assets that feed the coffers of New South Wales. For a short-term sugar hit, those opposite destroyed financial stability for future generations, and a part of today's budget showed that generations are paying for the privatisation that those opposite did when they were in government. We know the damage that privatisation does to our essential services: soaring utility costs, job losses, inequality, infrastructure neglect and creation of monopolies. As the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, I am overseeing the bus passenger forums, and, unfortunately, I have a front-row seat to how the privatisation of our bus networks—

Mr Matt Cross: What are you doing about it?

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: We are addressing it. We are undoing what you have done in your contracts. It is your privatisation. There is not a day that goes by when I am not addressing it.

[Opposition members interjected.]

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): Order! Opposition members will cease interjecting.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: There are some glass jaws on the other side. Those opposite are unhappy with the fact that their communities are impacted by the privatisation contracts that they have done.

Mr Gareth Ward: We already have privatised buses in the regions.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: U-Go Mobility? Our constituents cannot get their kids to schools or get to hospitals because of contracts signed under the previous Government. Privatisation of our buses has been an absolute disaster, and that was done under the leadership of the New South Wales Liberals. The privatisation was so bad that it triggered an upper House inquiry last year. Members from all sides of the Chamber participated in the inquiry, which said that it did not result in any real competition and only resulted in increasing costs and people being left behind.

The Bus Industry Taskforce, led by John Lee, has hit the ground running and has already made key recommendations and is doing work to address the driver shortage as a result of the privatisation of the buses and unequal pay. There is a whole variety of reasons that people have wanted to leave the private providers, and we are working to undo the damage that has been done. It is a huge task, but the task force is coming to everyone. With privatisation, many of the contracts were assigned where the bottom line and profits were prioritised rather than community objectives and community needs. That has been evident in recent times with U-Go Mobility in region 10. As I said, not a day goes by when I am not receiving correspondence from people in our communities because of privatisation and those failed contracts.

Mr Mark Coure: Mine has been privatised for 85 years. What are you talking about?

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: You signed the contracts, and your community has been left behind. They cannot get to their schools, and we are now cleaning up the mess of the privatisation and ideological agenda of those opposite. We are working through to fix it. That is why there will be no further privatisation from this side of the House.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (17:27): I am pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to this public interest debate and to set the record straight. Members opposite like to rail against privatisation. In fact, they ran a whole election campaign based on lies, fearmongering—

Mr Mark Coure: Mediscare.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE: —and Mediscare. Labor claimed that we were going to sell off Sydney Water. The reality is that we were not. There is nothing new when it comes to Labor running misleading and false scare campaigns that have no basis in fact. What is a fact is that one of Chris Minns' first acts as Premier was to order his front bench to find surplus areas of government land to sell to developers for new housing. Is that privatisation? I would argue that it sounds very much like privatisation. I know that the people in my electorate of Vaucluse and beyond in many communities are asking which parcels of land the Minns Labor Government wants to sell to developers. I have asked that question a number of times. I do not have a formal answer. But there is an admission in writing that that is part of the Government's plan.

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Queens Park.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE: It is everywhere. Those opposite like to act like privatisation was invented in 2011 by the Coalition. I am sure Margaret Thatcher would be very disappointed to hear that. I actually came across a document in the Parliamentary Library on Labor's history of privatisation. I will name a few examples: Country Energy Gas, NSW Lotteries, Energy Australia, Emmlink, Powercoal, Integral Energy Gas, FreightCorp and TAB. I could keep going.

Mr Matt Cross: Keep going.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE: I will not keep going because it is long and boring. Those opposite forget that the Carr Government first sought to privatise all aspects of electricity in New South Wales in the late 1990s and it did not succeed because the unions voted it down at conference. Of course, the one thing that we know about Labor is how beholden it is to its union paymasters. Premier Iemma tried again to privatise electricity in 2007. We know how that ended: He was also rolled by the union movement. We have seen on full display today the stranglehold the unions have over this Labor Government. The Labor Government's budget today relies on increased taxes and cuts to programs to offset its union pay deals.

I remind members that before the election the Treasurer and the Premier said that scrapping the public sector wage cap would not cost a cent. We know today that it will cost \$50 billion in the 2026-27 budget cycle. That is 47 per cent of the budget. That is huge. Before the election Labor said that any costs would be offset by productivity gains. We have not seen those productivity gains listed. Where are they set out? This is a budget of cuts and unfunded promises. It is going to hurt my community and every member's community. The triple-A credit rating that the Coalition secured is going to evaporate—just watch and wait. The reality is that the asset recycling strategy that the Coalition introduced in 2011 aimed to effectively manage the State's balance sheet by unlocking equity, de-risking the balance sheet and recycling proceeds into new economic and social infrastructure. We used that money to build stuff.

Labor likes to act like asset recycling delivered nothing for New South Wales, but it is happy to turn up to ribbon cuttings of projects and infrastructure that was funded by that asset recycling program—projects like Sydney Metro, WestConnex, Sydney Light Rail and Parramatta Light Rail. Asset recycling has helped make the State what it is today. It has released billions of dollars into productive infrastructure. It helped build the roads and public transport infrastructure that so many people rely on. Labor does not build anything. It did not build when it was last in government; it is very apparent from today's budget that it does not plan to build anything else. The schools that were announced most recently were in the pipeline too. We were a government of building, promises and plans; this is an unimaginative government with no long-term plan for New South Wales. I oppose the motion.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:32): I speak on behalf of The Greens on this motion in relation to privatisation. I thank the member for The Entrance for moving it in the Chamber. Let me be clear that The Greens are very pleased to see those privatisation-obsessed members of the former Liberal-Nationals Government on the Opposition benches. But, given the new Minns Labor Government has handed down a budget today and given Labor's big claims prior to the election that it would end the privatisation agenda, it is critical that The Greens put some things on record. We have not seen a massive boost to increase public housing either in this budget or so far by this Government. We have seen nothing in this Labor budget to bring the buses privatised by the former Government back into public hands, and nothing to end the privatised public housing maintenance contracts that are a complete disaster and that public housing tenants have to deal with every day.

It is one thing for Labor to say that it will stop the privatisation agenda and not privatise any other big assets—again, let me say that it is great the Liberals and The Nationals are sitting on the Opposition benches—but it is not enough when those members privatised nearly all the assets in the State. Not much more could have been privatised. What is still there that could be privatised? The State of New South Wales and the people of New South Wales own a whole lot of public land. I have heard stories of an amazing audit of surplus public land being undertaken by the new Minns Labor Government to deal with the housing supply crisis in the State. I have heard that 30 per cent of that land will be for social and affordable homes.

I will do a bit of maths for a second. That is 100 per cent public land. Thirty per cent of it is for social and affordable homes. Seventy per cent is not. On my reading of it, that 70 per cent of public land is going to be privatised under the Minns Labor Government as its flagship housing supply solution. That is privatisation. That is not ending the privatisation agenda. That situation is unacceptable to The Greens. We want a situation where we recognise the importance of public land and where we do not go down the path of the former Liberal-Nationals Government. The Government should not use the selling off of invaluable public land to fund the delivery of housing in the middle of a housing crisis. It should not hand that land or that development over to private developers so they can profit from it.

I will talk about today's announcement of build-to-rent housing. What is build to rent? It sounds to me like a privatised version of public housing, because public housing is ongoing rental accommodation for people who need it. But the State is now delivering build to rent. Build to rent is the private market delivering housing as a supposed solution when we should be investing that money directly in the delivery of public housing for the community and for people. What about the toll handouts? In the State budget announced by the Treasurer in the Chamber today, \$615 million of public money will be handed over to the likes of Transurban and private toll companies because Labor failed to oppose the delivery and the building of WestConnex in the first place.

The then Labor Opposition failed absolutely to oppose that outrageous project at the beginning, when the community and everyone else was saying it would be a privatisation disaster that would deliver climate catastrophe and slug huge tolls on Western Sydney. Now it is in government and what is it doing? It is handing over \$615 million to a private toll road company to subsidise the outrageous costs that people in Western Sydney are being sluggish with. That is unacceptable. I end on this point: We have a situation where community housing providers [CHPs] are being put forward as part of the solution to the housing crisis in this State. I put on record that there is no requirement in New South Wales for CHPs to be not for profit. I encourage the Government to look closely at that if it is really committed to ending the privatisation agenda.

Mr GARETH WARD: I seek leave to make a contribution to the debate.

Leave not granted.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (17:38): In reply: I thank all the members who have contributed to this important debate. The Government opposes the amendment proposed by the Opposition. I encourage all members of the House, including crossbench members, to support the Government's original motion that notes that the budget has been achieved without privatisation and that the Government opposes the privatisation of government assets.

I note the concerns raised by The Greens and the criticism thrown at the Labor Party about its troubled past—let us be honest—with privatisation. The party has always been sceptical of privatisation. It has always been dragged to the answer of privatisation rather unwillingly. Within the party, I and a bunch of members on this side of the House have always opposed it. We tore ourselves apart over privatisation. We have landed in a position, which was supported by the people of New South Wales at the last State election, in which privatisation has to stop in this State.

This budget clearly shows that we can do what we must to invest in the public services we need for the State without privatisation. The member for Tamworth talked about a lack of investment for the regions. I was reminded by the Government Whip of page 8 of the former Government's pre-election budget update, which proposed \$127.3 million of savings—cuts—to the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade by "reducing funding levels" from 2023 to 2026. Those savings were cuts to regional spending. The Government's budget delivers \$29 billion a year to regional hospitals and schools. That is a larger amount than was delivered on average by those opposite in the previous four years, which was \$25 billion.

In the budget of the new Labor Government, without privatisation we will deliver \$29 billion a year, year on year, for the next four years to regional hospitals and schools. We are investing in the regions in a way that the Coalition never could because it could never do so without the poison of privatisation, which is in its blood. Privatisation promised to do things without racking up debt. Under the Coalition 80 per cent of the infrastructure spending in this State was financed through debt. Labor is doing it without that debt. I encourage the House to support the Government's motion.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): The member for The Entrance has moved a motion, to which the member for Davidson has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes35
Noes51
Majority.....16

AYES

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

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

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

NOES

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

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

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

PAIRS

Cooke, S
Toole, P

Car, P
Minns, C

Amendment negatived.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

JENNIFER PAREEZER AND KATRINA DORDEVIC

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (17:52): I take this opportunity to recognise the exceptional service of Jennifer Pareezer and Katrina Dordevic, who have each served 20 years with WILMA Women's Health Service this year. Katrina joined in March 2003 and is a health promotions worker and naturopath. Jenny joined in September 2003 and was the first caseworker to be employed in women's health—a role that she is still in today. Both these women do exceptional work, often going above and beyond to support some of the most vulnerable women in need in Campbelltown and the Macarthur region. I thank them for their years of service. I also thank WILMA for the incredible work it does in the Campbelltown community, and I thank all of its staff for the work they do for so many women across our region.

TRIBUTE TO CATE NEWMAN

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (17:53): I was deeply saddened to hear of the sudden passing of Cate Newman, the president of Hills District Netball Association. I had the pleasure of meeting Cate only a couple of weeks ago at the Hills district netball grand final. During my conversation with her, it was clear to me that she had a real, genuine passion for netball and for sharing that passion with others. She dedicated much of her time to Hills District Netball Association and held a number of important roles there over almost a decade. She was a part of the umpires committee, and she acted as the office administrator and treasurer before becoming the president. Cate was also an administrator for Netball Australia and worked closely with Netball NSW. Cate was a dedicated coach too, having coached her own daughter Dom's team and witnessed their recent grand final win, which was a moment of great pride. Cate has been described as being incredibly passionate about netball—a passion that was infectious. I send my deepest condolences to Cate's family and friends and the entire Hills District Netball Association, who I know will miss her terribly.

EMILIAN JERJI

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:54): I congratulate Emilian Jerji of St Paul's Catholic College, Greystanes, on receiving the Bishop of Parramatta Award for Student Excellence on Thursday 7 September. The award was presented by Bishop Vincent Long at St Patrick's Cathedral. As mission prefect, Emilian is a pillar of leadership, demonstrating faith, mission and compassion. I commend his sincere commitment to social justice and helping those in need, especially during the Syrian Earthquake Appeal. The Bishop of Parramatta Awards

celebrate all-round excellence, acknowledging the empathy, courage and generosity students offer their schools and the broader Western Sydney community. The awards recognise Catholic Education's mission of championing every person for the common good. I thank Bishop Vincent and the Catholic Education community for facilitating this showcase. I also thank principal Paul Finnigan and the St Paul's Catholic College school community for guiding high-calibre students in their faith. I congratulate Emilian again on this prestigious award.

MARK HUMPHRIES

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (17:55): The Tweed recently celebrated the 2023 Tweed Business Awards. I acknowledge the inimitable Mark Humphries, who was the Hall of Fame recipient. Mark is a tireless champion for the Tweed in all avenues, including business, community, sport, health and beyond, and he is a very deserving recipient of the Hall of Fame award. Mark's list of achievements in the Tweed community is lengthy. He is an active member of the Kingscliff chamber of commerce; a member of the Cudgen Surf Club, both behind the scenes and in the red and yellow; a former chair of the Northern NSW Local Health District Board; and a very successful and well-known real estate agent and auctioneer. He also dedicates much of his time to assisting local charities, supporting fundraising, and mentoring up-and-coming business owners and entrepreneurs. He is committed to ensuring that the Tweed is the best it can be in all aspects. Mark Humphries is a vibrant, dedicated and tireless worker for the Tweed. He has made, and continues to make, an enormous contribution to our community. I congratulate Mark.

MARIE LITTLE SHIELD

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (17:56): The Marie Little Shield brings together Australia's top female netball players with an intellectual disability, giving them the opportunity to represent their State on a national level. Last weekend the State representative teams met up in Victoria for a three-day competition totalling eight games. The 2023 New South Wales team played spectacularly, bringing home the silver medal. The team is made up of players from across the State, including five players from Newcastle Netball Association. Representing Newcastle on the court were Brittany Anderson, Taylor Anderson, Dallas Austin, Melissa Gallagher and Mackenzie Wills. They all played courageously and should be proud of their amazing achievement. I also applaud manager Ellen Monaghan and medical team assistant Jess Harrison, who also hail from Newcastle Netball Association, for their dedication and passion. I congratulate the team.

KING'S HONOURS LIST

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (17:57): Last month we commended three exceptional individuals from our community who were recognised in the 2023 King's Honours List. Heather Bieman, Kim Hill and Val Stewart each received an Order of Australia medal for their remarkable contributions and efforts to improve our local area. We also commended those who serve in emergency services roles and local government. Andrew Macdonald, a Camden resident, was awarded the RFS Australian Fire Service Medal for his dedicated service. Hayley Turner from Wollondilly was honoured with the Ambulance Service Medal for her exemplary work in emergency medical care. These recipients, along with all of the 1,191 Australians acknowledged, have enriched our communities through their selflessness. This year's honours also marked a significant milestone, with women outnumbering men in the Order of Australia awards for the first time. We encourage all Australians to consider nominating those who have made a significant impact in their communities. We applaud the achievements of the recipients.

PARRAMATTA POLICE AWARDS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (17:58): Recently I was honoured to attend the NSW Police Force Parramatta Police Area Command medals and awards ceremony, which acknowledges police officers who have executed their duties to the highest standard and gone above and beyond to serve our community. I acknowledge all award recipients, with a special mention to the following recipients. Detective Senior Constable Melissa Costa, Leading Senior Constable Philip Bogaerts, and Plain Clothes Senior Constable Eliza Jurd were awarded the Parramatta Police Area Commander's Commendation. Plain Clothes Senior Constable Ahmad Abawi, Sergeant Peter Thomas, Senior Constable Paul Windon, Constable Adrian Reed and Constable Tyler Wills were awarded the Police Area Commander's Unit Citation. Mr Murray Bingham and Mr Jeffrey Moore were presented the Police Area Commander's Certificate of Appreciation, and Constable Adam Smith was the recipient of the Amie Clark Memorial Award – Parramatta Police Area Command 2022 Probationary Constable. Former Detective Sergeant Matthew Munro received a Certificate of Service. I thank them all very much for all they do to keep us safe.

MIRANDA RSL SUB-BRANCH

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (17:59): I acknowledge the importance of the Battle for Australia Day and the commemorations held by Miranda RSL Sub-Branch on 6 September. Held annually on the first Wednesday of September, Battle for Australia Day honours the bravery of those who served on Australia's home

front as well as the islands, seas and skies to Australia's north between 1942 and 1945. To mark the occasion, the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch hosted a commemorative service at the Miranda War Memorial to mark the occasion. The service provided the opportunity for our community to come together and reflect on the sacrifices our veterans made in defending our nation. I recognise former sub-branch president, Mal Booby, Reverend Jennie Everist and bugler Tim Benson for their contributions during the service. I also take this opportunity to commend the hardworking executive of the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch. I recognise Alan Lark, Joanne Beavis, Shane Hall, Zac Miner and Steve Bull for their efforts. I thank the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch for hosting this commemoration and ensuring that this important day is remembered in our community.

STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE BANKSTOWN UNIT

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (18:00): Earlier this month I had the pleasure of attending the NSW State Emergency Service Bankstown Unit awards ceremony to recognise everything it does for our community. The unit has been the backbone of Bankstown's storm and flood response, responding to more than 2,500 operational jobs since January 2020. Those jobs were no small feat. They truly made a difference, including the work of Adrian Phu, who earned a Group Bravery Citation for his efforts in a flood rescue in Milperra. In between all of that, the unit has built and maintained capability—in fact, 12,000 hours of non-operational activities last financial year alone, making it a first-class emergency and rescue service. I thank Unit Commander David Niven, Deputy Unit Commander Graham Tomkinson and the wider team for their bravery, selflessness and keeping us safe.

MUNRO FAMILY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (18:01): I recognise the achievements of the Munro family, which is celebrating its sesquicentenary—150 years—of Shorthorn cattle on their property Weebollabolla in Moree. I congratulate the Munro family on this significant milestone, on having its breed remain relevant and on evolving its business to meet the changing demands of the beef industry in Australia and internationally. Behind the success of the enterprise is inimitable director Sandy Munro, managing director Jen Jeffreys and manager Dave Watts, with help to the team from John Jeffreys, Dan Spencer, Kirsty Spencer, Catriona Crookes and Jude Munro. I commend the Munro family for its contribution and commitment to Shorthorn cattle breeding in New South Wales and to the cattle industry and agriculture as a whole across Australia. Weebollabolla and the Munro family are synonymous with the Shorthorn breed—and deservedly so.

ALBERT AU

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (18:02): I recognise 13-year-old Albert Au of Vincentia, who recently received the Hugh Macken Award, presented annually to a young Shoalhaven resident showing great promise as a pianist. Albert's musical journey began when he was just three years of age. I am told that even as a baby he instinctively produced melodies that resembled his compositions. Albert's formal training began when he was five under the guidance of Olivia Cornish of Vincentia. In 2018 Albert was recognised at the Shoalhaven Eisteddfod as a Promising Shoalhaven Resident in the under-16s section. In 2019 he received the Patron's Award for Outstanding Performance and secured the St Cecilia Piano Classical Music Scholarship. Currently Albert is playing in the BlueScope Youth Orchestra. I look forward to following Albert's musical endeavours and know that he will do amazing things in the future.

BE CENTRE

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (18:03): Today I acknowledge and celebrate the incredible work of Be Centre, a pioneering institution located in our very own northern beaches. Offering a unique and highly effective early childhood intervention, Be Centre utilises art and play therapy, revolutionising how we approach the mental wellbeing of our young ones and their families. Though play therapy may be relatively novel to Australia, its effectiveness cannot be understated. We are fortunate that right here, in this region of Sydney, Be Centre stands out not only as an exclusive beacon of hope for our northern beaches families but also as one of the world's largest specialist play therapy centres. Recently I had the privilege of attending its fundraising gala, a testament to our community's dedication to this great cause. I have also been fortunate enough to partake in a group session—it was hard to tell who was the bigger kid. Be Centre is reshaping countless futures, leading Australia in making play therapy accessible and transformative. Let us all commend its monumental impact. I thank the Be Centre team for the incredibly positive difference it is making. I look forward to one day welcoming the health Minister to the centre. I thank the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I thank the member for Wakehurst for his contribution. I am sure nobody had trouble telling who the bigger child was!

BAREENA PARK PLAYGROUND

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (18:04): On 5 August 2023 I had the honour of representing the Hon. Paul Scully, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, at the opening of the Bareena Park Playground in Canley Vale, together with Mr Frank Carbone, mayor of Fairfield City Council. The project was jointly funded by the New South Wales Government and Fairfield City Council. I commend the New South Wales Government for providing \$2.75 million for this project. Some 2,200 or so nearby homes in my electorate now have a new public space on their doorstep to play, socialise and relax. The upgraded park features a unique bright orange eight-metre-tall koi fish slide—the koi fish being a symbol of luck, prosperity, good fortune and family harmony to many local residents. I acknowledge and congratulate the mayor, all councillors and staff of Fairfield City Council for completing this wonderful project.

MARCUS VALJAK

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills) (18:05): I acknowledge the Winston Hills representative in the Youth Parliament this year, Mr Marcus Valjak. Youth Parliament is a political education and leadership initiative to provide young people with an opportunity to learn about the parliamentary process and engage in discussions on issues of local, national and global importance. The week-long camp allowed students to engage in parliamentary debate, open-floor discussion, private members' statements and even question time. Marcus was assigned to the justice committee along with ten other youth members. They debated issues such as the right to protest, adequate legal aid and power within the police force. The amendments that Marcus and his committee team formed were successfully passed in the Youth Parliament, which is a fantastic achievement. I congratulate Marcus Valjak for representing the Winston Hills community with pride and integrity in this year's Youth Parliament and wish him every success for his HSC.

MATER DEI FOUNDATION DINNER

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (18:06): On 9 September I had the privilege of attending the 2023 Mater Dei Foundation Dinner. An incredible event, it was fantastic to raise funds for the Mater Dei Foundation to continue the essential work it does. Mater Dei works with families and carers to provide contemporary education and therapy services to babies, children and young adults with an intellectual disability or development delay. The dinner allows the foundation to continue its mission of making a positive impact on the lives of children, students and young adults with an intellectual disability. The highlight of the night was the brilliant performances from the talented Mater Dei students and NextPath young adults who outshone Anthony Callea—but only by a little bit. I congratulate the hardworking committee led by Jim Marsden and thank the Marsdens Law Group for supporting this incredible organisation. I look forward to next year's event.

DUNDALOO SUPPORT SERVICES

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes) (18:07): Tonight I recognise and celebrate Dundaloo Support Services for 70 impressive years of business in the Myall Lakes. Founded in 1953, Dundaloo was the first disability support service in the Manning Valley and has remained a dedicated source of empowerment for individuals living with disabilities. Dundaloo's dedicated team of over 200 staff members serves the Manning Valley-Great Lakes region, supporting 50 clients in achieving independent living. Its comprehensive services include NDIS fund management, housing assistance, life skills development, community engagement and long-term employment initiatives through Dundaloo Enterprises. Reaching a 70-year milestone is a significant achievement and I commend Dundaloo for its continued commitment to our community. I thank it for its dedication to creating inclusivity and support for our community members living with disabilities. I hope its platinum ball celebrations were a fitting tribute to its decades of impactful work.

FRANCES LAWSON-COHEN

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (18:08): I congratulate Ms Frances Lawson-Cohen, a Quakers Hill High School teacher, on receiving the Secretary's Award for Excellent Service. Her contributions to Quakers Hill High School are a testament to her profound impact on education. Frances has played a pivotal role in fostering cocurricular and extracurricular learning opportunities, particularly those benefiting First Nations students, agricultural and textiles programs and Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme participants. Through these avenues she has enriched the educational experience of all students. Frances has consistently placed students at the heart of her educational planning and decision-making processes, a quality that has improved academic outcomes and positively transformed the school's culture. Teachers like Frances Lawson-Cohen are the backbone of our educational system. They inspire, nurture and empower the next generation, leaving an indelible mark on their lives. I thank Frances for her tireless efforts, passion and dedication, which have been instrumental in shaping the future of her students.

SHOALHAVEN ASTRONOMERS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (18:09): Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Shoalhaven Astronomers. I acknowledge Mr John Gould from Shoalhaven Astronomers and the amazing volunteers who on 6 September 2023 helped put together a successful official launch at the Shoalhaven Observatory at the University of Wollongong [UOW] Shoalhaven campus. I acknowledge Shoalhaven City Council Deputy Mayor Councillor Paul Ell. As a former student of UOW Shoalhaven, I appreciate that this facility will be a great research opportunity for students. I was pleased to help Shoalhaven Astronomers secure a grant from the New South Wales Government to deliver this tremendous project. I particularly thank Mr John Gould of Shoalhaven Astronomers for his dedication and hard work getting this project delivered. I also thank the University of Wollongong for its support of the project, along with the former member for South Coast, Shelley Hancock. To quote Galileo, "Curiosity is the key to problem solving" and I have no doubt this equipment will intrigue and inspire many local stargazers in our region. It will also be a major historical event, being the first public astronomical observatory in the Shoalhaven. Congratulations to Shoalhaven Astronomers.

JACINTA FRAWLEY-WERGER

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (18:10): Jacinta Frawley-Werger is one incredibly brave person. In September 2019 the Sutherland resident was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. The shock of the diagnosis was even more devastating, given it came on her fifty-ninth birthday. Jacinta then underwent chemotherapy and surgery as well as oral medication to beat the cancer, a process that ended 12 months ago. Jacinta's five-year survival rate was 19 per cent; however, that increased to 45 per cent after taking a new drug to treat the cancer. It took strength and courage for Jacinta to fight the disease and undergo the treatment. That strength was again on display when Jacinta appeared on the podcast *On The Lowdown: Speaking About Ovarian Cancer*. Jacinta said she was motivated to share her experiences to educate others about ovarian cancer—also known as the silent killer. It is estimated that last year 1,016 females died from the cancer. I thank Jacinta for her bravery in speaking about a cancer that impacts so many women throughout Australia.

MIA HOGAN

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (18:11): I take this opportunity to congratulate year 5 student Mia Hogan of St Patrick's Parish School Albury for her outstanding achievement in winning 10 gold medals at the August 2023 School Sport Australia swimming championships in Sydney. Mia's competitive swimming journey has been quite extraordinary at such a young age. For the benefit of the House, Mia has an eye condition that leads to progressive vision loss. Her dedication and commitment to her sport are evident from her countless hours of training with the Albury Swim Club. Her aspiration is to one day represent our country at the Paralympic Games. Well done to Mia. I wish her the best as she continues to pursue her swimming dreams.

WILLIAM CAREY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (18:12): On Saturday 2 September I was treated to a fantastic evening at William Carey Christian School for the closing night of its production of the Roald Dahl classic book turned stage musical *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. For a week-long run the kids at William Carey transported audiences to a world of pure imagination, full of fun, colour and, most importantly, chocolate. I give a special shout-out to year 11 students Tara Chapman and Matilda Turnbull, who alternated in the role of Willy Wonka, as well as year 7 students Phoebe Ridikas and Charlize Sansone, who shared the titular role of Charlie Bucket. They led a multi-talented ensemble and serve as a reminder of the wealth of talent in my part of the world. Another special mention goes to producer Brom Morphett and directors Laura Neggo and Cain McCleary. It is the dedication of staff like these that enables such high-quality productions to take place.

KIAMA HEART FOUNDATION WALKING GROUP

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (18:13): Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises a local Heart Foundation walking group in Kiama. John Lennon, originally from Ireland, has lived all over the world but settled in Kiama many years ago. He was one of the original walkers when the group started 22 years ago. There are now 77 walkers registered, with about 20 regular members turning up each day. They are all ages but the group is mostly 40-year-olds plus. The oldest member is Fred Coulson, who just celebrated his ninety-sixth birthday and still joins the group for walks. The group meets each weekday at 8.00 a.m. at Black Beach opposite the post office. The aim is to keep healthy and get some good exercise with friends. It is also a great opportunity to make and enjoy new friends, as well as the fresh air at the same time. To encourage group members to walk regularly, Heart Foundation Walking has a walker registration and recognition scheme. At milestones it rewards walkers with certificates, incentives and discounts on Heart Foundation merchandise. Walk data is recorded by the local walk organiser and is based on the number of walks completed with the Heart Foundation walking group. Congratulations to all.

SHELLHARBOUR STINGRAYS UNDER-14S RUGBY LEAGUE TEAM

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:14): I congratulate the Shellharbour Stingrays under-14s rugby league team, who are Illawarra Group 7 merged junior premiers for 2023. On 9 September 2023 at WIN Stadium the Stingrays defeated the Dapto Canaries by 22-10. The Stingrays played valiantly to honour their teammate Gervis Wililo, who tragically passed away in June 2023, aged just 13. The Stingrays are a fantastic club and continue to develop the stars of the future. I hope to see at least a few of the under-14 champions in the National Rugby League in the years to come. I congratulate all the Stingrays players, coaches and volunteers on a magnificent season.

LINDFIELD LEARNING VILLAGE

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (18:15): Over the past few weeks it has been a pleasure to visit the Lindfield Learning Village. On 30 August 2023 I had a tour and met with the principal, Stephanie McConnell. On 10 September 2023 my wife, Gessika, and I supported the Friends of the Village Family Play Day, which was themed "Year of Play". Lindfield Learning Village is the newest State school in Davidson, with an innovative educational model that seeks to create independent, resilient students from kindergarten to year 12. In this year's budget I note that the work commenced by the NSW Liberal-Nationals was continued with stage 2 works worth almost half a million dollars. Although stage 2 was completed according to the Department of Education website, I will find out more information. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the Friends of the Village President, Lisa Griffiths, and the committee, Chris Goringe, Linda Hearne, Lee Edgerton, Dayna Webb and Vic Munro. Education is important and I look forward to working with the Lindfield Learning Village to ensure its continued success in the future.

BRISBANE WATER SECONDARY COLLEGE

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:16): Congratulations to the Brisbane Water Secondary College [BWSC] for its success at the recent New South Wales Department of Education Minister's and Secretary's Awards for Excellence. BWSC provides a fantastic education to local students in our community, taking a holistic approach to fostering our next generation by offering wraparound support across academic, sport, welfare and alternative vocational education and training pathways. Alongside the prestigious award of Excellence in School Achievement, the Brisbane Water Secondary College team was recognised across multiple areas, showcasing the amazing team and the great student community. Congratulations to award recipients Charlie Grant for Excellence in Student Achievement; Andy Westerhoff for Excellence in Teaching; and principal Rebeca Cooper for Excellent Service. During my former career as a teacher at BWSC Woy Woy campus I saw firsthand the commitment and passion of the team at the college, who continue to think outside the box to give the students the best possible education available. I have continued to watch the college go from strength to strength since my retirement from teaching. Congratulations to BWSC on its excellent 2022 HSC results and the well-deserved awards.

CENTRAL COAST SHARK NETS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:17): Recently I had the pleasure of joining my community to rally against shark nets on the Central Coast. I thank the many residents for voicing their concerns and showing their support for the removal of shark nets and the use of alternative technologies. Our region has made it very clear that we do not want these shark nets. The previous Liberal-Nationals Government invested a record amount in new technology. Our community has accepted it and the data shows it works. All we need are the additional drumlines to be provided to Central Coast Council for three extra beaches, lakes, Killcare and ocean beaches, allowing the nets to be removed.

Mr David Mehan: Point of order—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr David Mehan: This is supposed to be a community recognition statement, but it has turned into an expression of Liberal Party policy and has delved into an area that should be the subject of a private member's statement.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: To the point of order: I attended a community event at Terrigal Beach with community members and it was a community gathering.

Mr David Mehan: Further to the point of order: The member for Terrigal could address his attendance at a community event in a way that recognises the community without talking about Liberal Party policy.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): Community recognition statements are an opportunity to pay tribute to communities and community groups for the work they do. Members should stay away from policy and talk about the people—

Mr ADAM CROUCH: Their gathering, that I attended.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): Talk about the people and how wonderful they are.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: It is very interesting the Government opposes this community recognition statement considering none of them attended that community event. I think it speaks volumes that none of the four Labor members of the Central Coast attended the shark net rally in my community. It is sad to see the Government dodging the issue and not bothering to turn up to a community rally to highlight our community's concerns. Their interjections during this community recognition statement highlight the fact that they will not support the issue.

LIVERPOOL ELECTORATE EDUCATION AWARD RECIPIENTS

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (18:19): Dedicated teachers are vital to the education and development of our State's students. I was delighted to see so many of Liverpool's teachers and schools recognised at the Minister's and Secretary's Awards for Excellence earlier this month. It was great to see Liverpool Boys High School recognised for its implementation of the Take Over Two initiative, which lets students take over the classroom and explore their learning passions. The Miller Mindset initiative at Miller Public school was also lauded for its success in fostering positive student wellbeing and culture. Marsden Road Public School, where I started my schooling, was congratulated for its excellence in all elements of teaching and learning. I especially note the contribution of Dr Ken Edge, principal of Miller Technology High School, who was acknowledged for his commitment to equity and excellence through his expertise in quality teaching, diligence and unwavering integrity. I can attest to that having personally experienced Ken's passion for his students and school. I congratulate all the schools, students and teachers across New South Wales whose contributions were deservedly recognised.

VETERANS MOTORCYCLE CLUB

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (18:20): I recognise the Veterans Motorcycle Club, Southern Tablelands Chapter. The Southern Tablelands Chapter hosted a ride on 9 September to honour Vietnam veteran Corporal Walter Raymond Buckland. Mr Buckland was born on 11 February 1939 in Goulburn. He commenced his service with the Australian Army in 1966 and served in two tours of Vietnam. Mr Buckland was in the troop which fought in the Battle of Long Tan. Mr Buckland was an only child with no next of kin and was supported by a close-knit group of loyal friends who ensured he was able to attend Long Tan commemorations in Belmore Park in Goulburn. As he aged, he moved into care at the Gill Waminda Nursing Home in Goulburn until his death on 18 September 2019. The Southern Tablelands Chapter president, Michael Wilson, proudly acknowledges this year's ride was the fifth around the Goulburn area and the first in honour of, and named after, Corporal Buckland. The rides are a tribute to the organisation and are an event promoting an opportunity for veterans, families and friends to connect.

CITY OF CANTERBURY BANKSTOWN

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (18:21): I congratulate Bilal El-Hayek for his remarkable achievement last week in retaining his role as mayor of City of Canterbury Bankstown. Bilal's unwavering dedication to the community both as a youth worker and a volunteer has made him an exemplary leader. His track record as a mayor is impressive, including his strong support for addressing homelessness and his recent initiative in hosting a domestic violence summit, which demonstrates his commitment to tackling critical social issues. Furthermore, Bilal's historic role as the first Muslim mayor in Australia is a testament to his ability to break barriers and promote diversity and inclusivity in public service. In addition, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Rachelle Harika on her appointment as deputy mayor of City of Canterbury Bankstown. Rachelle has consistently demonstrated her dedication and passion as a councillor, and this new role is a well-deserved recognition of her contributions to the community. I wish Bilal El-Hayek and Rachelle Harika continued success in their roles as they continue to make a positive impact on the community of Canterbury-Bankstown.

MARIST COLLEGE EASTWOOD STUDENT LEADERS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (18:22): I congratulate the new leaders of Marist College Eastwood who were recently elected to serve for the upcoming academic year. As a former captain of the Marist leadership team, I know firsthand the incredible opportunity and responsibility the roles represent. I congratulate the new captain, Benjamin, and his vice-captains, Charlie and Jai. I know they will lead a team that will uphold the strong values and traditions of the college. They are joined by the new leaders of religious life, Jerry and Elie; leaders of academic life, Benjamin and Darius; leaders of culture, Joshua and Mina; leader of mission, social justice and stewardship, Archie; and leader of sports, Luca. No team would be complete without house captains. I congratulate Elliott leader, Peter; Leopold leader, Luke; Cusack leader, Austin; and the leader of my old house Maloney, Logan. I hope they are doing better in the swimming carnivals than they did back in my day. Each of

them are leaders not just for the future but also for the present. I wish them every success for the term ahead. I know they will continue to make the school proud.

Private Members' Statements

CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (18:24): I speak on the recent government response to the inquiry into improving crisis communications to culturally and linguistically diverse [CALD] communities. Communication has long proven fragmented and difficult for people who speak a language other than English at home. That was most evident during the COVID-19 pandemic where the disparity of access to key information was a major barrier for CALD communities. In south-west Sydney, large numbers of the population speak a language other than English—for example, in the Liverpool local government area that statistic stands at 49 per cent. As a result, communications with those communities during a crisis can prove problematic at best and deadly at worst. Some of the identified issues include insufficient translation services, and in some cases incorrect translation; a lack of diversity and inclusion in public agencies and policy development; and negative representations of CALD groups, especially from lower socio-economic geographies.

During the pandemic there were mixed messages and double standards from the previous Government. Selective lockdowns created an east-west divide or, as it became known, the tale of two Sydneys. That was not just a barrier that dictated freedoms; it also impacted communication. The outbreak on the northern beaches, then followed by an outbreak in the eastern suburbs, was met with an information campaign funnelled through mainstream media channels which proved effective. By contrast, when the same approach was applied to the western suburbs, it was far less effective. That was through no fault of the local population but rather the approach applied by the Government and agencies at the time.

Unlike our cousins in the north and east, we in the west consume media and information in a much more decentralised, informal and multilingual manner. The former Government failed to recognise that western and south-western Sydney are distinct cultural and social regions from the rest of Sydney. That means we need specialised and dedicated resources, rather than relying on what works for those in the east of Sydney. Ethnic media, informal community networks and WhatsApp often prove more effective at disseminating key messages than a run on the nightly news. Trust in institutions also acts as a key barrier. Therefore, it was not until small organisations, grassroots community movements and community leaders worked with the Government and NSW Health that they started to effectively get the message across to communities.

I was one of the many people who gave evidence in the hearings to a committee last year. In the hearings I brought up many of the concerns facing CALD communities in my area. Along with staff at the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre, we made five main recommendations: expand the range of languages in which crisis communications are disseminated while tailoring messages in more simple ways; dedicated media infrastructure for south-western Sydney, potentially subsidised by government to enable tailored and trusted messaging to CALD communities; develop public health campaigns in partnership with local community-based organisations to ensure visibility of CALD communities in communication planning and delivery; employ strength-based and empowering strategies when addressing CALD groups, especially from vulnerable backgrounds, which normalise diverse CALD family structures, living arrangements and cultural values; and proactively include CALD communities in crisis communications, planning and integrate them with emergency management systems for tailored response and recovery.

I note that in the NSW Council of Social Service's submission to last year's budget it highlighted the roles NGOs play in emergency management during a crisis. It noted that being able to embed place-based NGOs in emergency management systems improves local emergency responses and recovery. It also emphasised strengthening our emergency management system and building on recovery initiatives such as community resilience networks. Understanding community strengths, challenges, cultural factors and the unique make-up of the local social service system will significantly improve the local and regional emergency management planning. The NGOs would be a nexus between emergency management structures and social services, with tasks including the allocation of roles and responsibilities, scenario planning, simulation exercises, training and coordination across social services.

I acknowledge all who made a submission and gave evidence to the inquiry. I especially thank the staff of Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre for their tireless work in gathering this information from countless community groups, community leaders and grassroots organisations in Western Sydney. I am pleased that the government response to the inquiry report has considered many of the recommendations. We know that communication during crisis situations can save lives and we know that communication can be improved and made more accessible, especially for CALD communities.

ALBURY ELECTORATE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (18:29): Regional members would appreciate that good, safe, reliable road transport is the lifeblood of regional New South Wales. I take this opportunity to bring my representations on behalf of the Albury electorate on a number of projects in our region. Firstly, the Mulwala Bridge project continues its long journey. This is something that is important for the community of Yarrawonga and Mulwala. Every day 11,000 motorists and freight drivers use the bridge. We have had battles over route selection; the route is now settled. With the traffic and, particularly, the heavy freight passing through our region, it will allow the region's businesses to grow and allow the council and the tourism industry to make its plans.

The Mulwala Bridge has been a priority for me and for the community as a key project for some time now. The passing of the years on this project continues to be detrimental to the local economy. The business case is still to be finalised, in terms of a priority listing for Murray River crossings, and we expect that before the end of the year. Funding is yet to be budgeted for Mulwala and for a number of other Murray River crossings. I acknowledge and thank the Minister for updating our community and myself recently in that regard. We look forward to seeing the design of this important piece of public infrastructure, to the Murray River crossing being priority listed and to the program being funded. We certainly look forward to working with the Minister as we bring three governments—the two States and the Commonwealth—together to work out a funding arrangement to take all of the Murray River crossings forward but, in particular, the Mulwala Bridge.

The other transport hotspots in our region are undergoing necessary investigation and costings through the excellent Transport for NSW management and staff. Another growth area in the Albury electorate is the suburb of Thurgoona where rapid growth of new housing and business development has created a number of needs when it comes to transport pressure on our community. In that regard, the growth is reflected in the new school that our community is seeing. Substantial population growth has placed pressure on the road infrastructure, in particular on Thurgoona Drive and its interchange with the Hume Freeway. An options report was prepared, for which I am grateful to the former Government and Minister. It is something that I took to the community and it has been out for community consultation. Consultation has now closed, and the development of a business case is underway. Again, I press the need for that business case and look forward to working with the Government to secure the much-needed funding to achieve a positive outcome.

As Thurgoona expands and grows there are implications for school bus stops and student safety. Focusing on that, where once it might have been routine for our children to stand and wait by the side of a road with traffic going by at 100 kilometres per hour, it is surely time to address the dangers that poses in our regional and rural communities. Recently a parent wrote to me talking about their local bus pick up, saying:

... the pickup and drop off points are incredibly dangerous. The bus is required to use the passing lane to stop and us as families are forced to park on the grass on the side of the road or walk our children across the busy road which currently has a speed limit of 100 km/hour.

Crossing and traffic issues have impacted students at Border Christian College, at Jindera and at Spring Park. I have raised these concerns with Transport for NSW on behalf of residents. I am pleased to report that, following an inspection by Transport for NSW officers on a chilly and foggy July morning, the Spring Park estate bus stop has now moved to a safer location inside the estate, a crossing guard will be supplied to manage traffic outside Border Christian College on Ava Avenue, and Transport for NSW is working with the bus company and with the Greater Hume Council traffic committee to further investigate solutions for the Jindera crossing.

I take this opportunity to extend my appreciation to Transport for NSW, from the director to the inspectors and staff, who have been responsive to calls for advice. They are making a real difference through their understanding. I also thank for their direct input and experiences parents such as Alison Griffiths, Dave, Ken, Councillor Jenny O'Neill, and Domonique and Jess at Spring Park. I appreciate the value and input that our community makes so that things are safer for our students.

STATE BUDGET AND ILLAWARRA REGION

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:34): Earlier today the Labor Government delivered its first budget in over 12 years. I congratulate the Treasurer and the entire Labor team on beginning the long journey of repairing the finances of the State. This year's budget was put together in difficult circumstances that were caused by the absolute mess that the previous Government left when it was booted out of government, including a staggering \$187.5 billion debt. In addition to this record amount of debt, the Liberals and The Nationals made more than \$7 billion worth of promises that they could not possibly pay for.

The Minns Labor Government is now making responsible decisions to address the holes left in the budget by the former Government. The budget outlines the Government priorities for Shellharbour and the broader Illawarra, including significant investments in health, education and transport. Importantly, the budget ensures that we can deliver excellent services to the people of New South Wales, not only for this year but for many more

to come. The Minns Labor Government is investing in essential services and infrastructure in the Illawarra region to meet the growing needs of local communities well into our future. These investments are desperately needed for such a fast-growing region, which for too long was neglected by the Liberals. My fellow Illawarra Labor MPs and I are committed to seeing the Illawarra reach its full potential and today's budget reflects this vision. I acknowledge the new member for Heathcote, who is one of the Illawarra MPs I mentioned. I am delighted that she is finally in this place. She is a magnificent MP and I am so glad that she is here.

Our commitment to health in the Illawarra includes a \$721.9 million investment in the new Shellharbour Hospital and \$21.9 million for upgrades to Wollongong Hospital. The new Shellharbour Hospital will be built on a large greenfield site in Dunmore, with plenty of opportunity to expand services as the population of the Illawarra increases. A State significant development application for the new hospital is now on public exhibition. I invite all members of the Illawarra community to provide their input.

Our commitment to public education in the Illawarra includes planning for a future primary school in West Dapto, a future high school in Flinders and another school in Calderwood. These areas desperately need extra public schools. Unlike the previous Liberal Government, the Minns Labor Government recognises that hardworking families moving to these areas should be able to access excellent public schools close to home. For students at Dapto High School, a new covered outdoor learning area, or COLA, is on its way. It will include a resurfaced basketball court, new fencing, lighting and a sound system. The amazing students from Dapto High School will finally have access to an outdoor learning area that the vast majority of students across the State already have. They will not be treated like second-class citizens under a Minns Labor Government as they had been treated by those opposite.

Our commitment to transport across the Illawarra includes \$277.8 million to replace the existing intersection of the Princes Motorway and Mount Ousley Road and \$10 million to commence planning for additional entry and exit ramps on the M1 Princes Motorway between Dapto and Yallah. The previous Government ignored the residents of Dapto for over a decade, and I am pleased that we are one step closer to ensuring fair access to the M1. For women who are victims of family or domestic violence, the budget includes funding for a new Women's Trauma Recovery Centre in Shellharbour. This will be the first publicly funded trauma recovery centre not just in the Illawarra, not just in New South Wales and not just in Australia but in the world. It is a world first. I acknowledge Sally Stevenson from the Illawarra Women's Health Centre and her team for the excellent work that they do.

These commitments represent just part of the Minns Labor Government investment in the Illawarra region. The budget demonstrates that Labor cares about the residents of Shellharbour and the broader Illawarra. It makes it crystal clear that the previous Liberal Government ignored legitimate requests from these residents for their fair share of spending on services and infrastructure. The time for the rorts is over. The people of New South Wales voted for a fresh start after a decade of damage by the Liberals and the budget has delivered it in spades.

BURRABADINE RURAL FIRE SERVICE

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (18:39): I recently attended the seventy-fifth anniversary celebration of the Burrabadine Rural Fire Service. I pay tribute to all current and former members. The Burrabadine RFS began with the formation of the Bunglegumbie brigade in November 1947, a time when the spirit of community service and resilience was beginning to take shape. A year later in October 1948 the Burrabadine brigade commenced, demonstrating the unwavering commitment of local residents to protect lives, homes and the environment from the devastating effects of fires.

In October 1985 the Bunglegumbie and Burrabadine brigades merged, forming the Burrabadine Rural Fire Brigade that we know today. That union represented not only a logistical consolidation but also a symbolic unification of the community's spirit and determination. The brigade also played a pivotal role in the establishment of aerial firefighting capabilities for the entire Orana team. The commitment to service includes some of the most trying times in the Orana region. From the Cranbrook section 44 incident in March this year to a range of other major incidents throughout its history, the Burrabadine brigade has provided steadfast support, displaying unparalleled dedication and readiness in the face of adversity.

Members have also ventured beyond their immediate area to lend support to RFS operations in other regions. That level of dedication speaks volumes about the kinds of individuals who make up the brigade. They are selfless, courageous and driven by a sense of duty to protect not only their own community but also communities far and wide. Whether it is attending motor vehicle accidents, battling bushfires and grassfires or tackling structure fires, members of the brigade have proven time and again that they possess the skill, resilience and fortitude required to face a diverse range of challenges head-on.

The seventy-fifth anniversary celebration also provided an opportunity to present 21 members of the brigade with the long service medal. Members have collectively dedicated an astounding 581 years of their lives to the RFS. I congratulate Paul Metcalfe, Matthew Manny and Tracy Blackburn, who each received the long service medal for 10 years of service. Well done to Glen Stockings, Alan Sloan, Michael Parris, Peter Hamilton, Andrew Schloeffel, Derek Sykes, Shirley Gruber, Helen Nairne, Joanne Hamilton and Richard McAnally, who received the long service medal and first clasp for 20 years of service. Five members of the brigade received their long service medal and first and second clasp for 30 years of service: Colin Ferguson, Jan Ferguson, Lawrence Howard, and Sis and David Honner.

Brian Lynch, Ross McCarthy and Gordon Cox have been recognised for their remarkable service with the long service medal and first, second and third clasp for 40 years of service. Brian joined the Burrabadine brigade in 1983 and has held multiple positions, including brigade station officer, community engagement officer and brigade training officer. Brian also held the position of senior deputy captain until 2005. He was awarded the Commissioner's Commendation for Service in 2000. Ross also became a member in 1983 and has been very active, responding to incidents in the local area and holding operational and administrative positions within the brigade. Ross was deputy captain from 2008 to 2013 and then captain from 2013 to 2017. He has held the position of senior deputy captain since 2017.

Gordon joined the RFS as a member of the Cobbora brigade in 1976 and held the position of deputy captain for 10 years before becoming a deputy group captain, a position he held from 2007 to 2010. Gordon has been very active in the RFS, both as a member of the neighbouring Castlereagh district and as a Burrabadine brigade member since 2017. In recognition of the service and contribution provided to the Burrabadine brigade, the brigade nominated Superintendent Paul Metcalfe as a life member. Well done to Paul. He has been a member of the brigade since September 2010 and has held various roles.

As we celebrate 75 years of the Burrabadine brigade's remarkable service, I not only applaud their history but also acknowledge the depth of their impact. It is not just about years on a calendar; it is about lives saved, homes protected and futures preserved. It is about the countless hours of training, the sleepless nights and the enduring dedication of individuals who choose to put others before themselves. It is always worth noting that their families play an important role in supporting them to do what they do. As the member for Dubbo, I am honoured to represent a community that embodies those principles through the remarkable men and women of the Burrabadine brigade. Well done on 75 years. I wish the brigade the best of success, and continued success for the next 75 years.

CAMDEN ELECTORATE SPORTS

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (18:44): The dawn of spring brings about new beginnings. As the weather warms up, communities transition from cool weather activities to activities mainly done in the summertime. On that note, I use my time today to talk about sport in my electorate of Camden, more specifically the thrills and triumphs that the end of the winter sport season brings and, with that, looking ahead to warmer weather and summer sport in the local community. Camden is home to a range of sporting activities available to people of all ages, from those just starting out at the youngest age to those who want to keep active as they get older.

With a range of activities available come a range of sports on offer. We are so lucky to live in a country with such a variety of sports on offer and the facilities to participate in outdoor activities. Sport is integral to the lives of so many in the community. It is a great way to stay active and get outdoors, be social and, most importantly, have fun. Winter sport in Camden provides the community with all those benefits. The biggest winter sports in Camden at the grassroots level are soccer, netball and rugby league. They are played by all ages, from young children to seniors, but many people participate in other sports throughout the year across the local community.

In recent weeks, different sporting organisations whose winter seasons have now concluded held their finals series. In soccer, the local Macarthur Football Association has now concluded its finals. I congratulate all the participants in each of the grand finals. There were well over 50 different matches played, with all ages involved. I give an extra special congratulations to all of the winning teams, whose hard work and dedication has been rewarded with an end-of-season trophy. Well done. An enormous amount of work goes on behind the scenes to ensure the matches are able to take place, including by referees, match officials and those who, in my day, brought oranges and set up the canteen.

I give a special shout-out to those involved in the administration for all the clubs involved and the broader football association. Many people who do those vital jobs are unpaid and use their own time to ensure that the matches go ahead. For the job they do, we cannot thank them enough. The same can be said for the local rugby league competition, which saw several teams winning their respective competitions at the conclusion of the recent

season. The Macarthur division of rugby league has once again supported rugby league at all ages through the season. Organising matches and awards nights is no mean feat and deserves congratulations to all those involved in the recent season.

I also acknowledge the award winners for the season gone by. Awards are no small feat and they recognise outstanding achievement for an individual in their chosen sport who showed determination, courage and teamwork throughout the season and is recognised as the best in their team, category or competition. Once again, I congratulate the award winners participating in winter sports throughout the community. Whether somebody has played the most popular or least popular sport does not matter at all. Sport is about more than just the game; it is about teamwork, communication, friendship, determination and having fun throughout the season. It is a true gift for sport to be so widely available in our community. Whatever sport people participate in, they will learn the same principles and have a lot of fun in the process.

On the back of the fantastic winter season that has just finished or is finishing this weekend in Camden, we can now look forward to the summer and to summer sport getting underway. As a result, people will put away the football boots and get out the cricket bats, softball mitts, basketball hoops and tennis rackets, or go swimming. As we look back on the season gone by, we look back on the teams we have played in, the friends we have made and the fun we have had playing and being involved in sport in the previous winter season. We can now look forward to the summer. Once again, I thank all volunteers who make these sports happen. I have not spoken about all sports but, do not worry, I will get there.

WYANGALA DAM

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (18:48): The decision by the New South Wales Government not to proceed with the Wyangala Dam wall raising project has raised significant concerns within my communities. That recent announcement has reignited the communities' imperative need for the provision of water security. Water is more than a resource; it is the lifeblood of our communities. We have recently seen the devastating impacts of drought where farmers in our rural landscapes have faced soul-crushing decisions as water resources dwindled. Families grapple with the realities of escalating water bills and tightening restrictions. However, our water crisis does not stop at drought. Flooding, an equally devastating adversary, has shattered lives and disrupted the harmony of many in our communities. Recent events in the Central West and Lachlan Valley have underscored this vulnerability, reminding us of the urgent need for effective flood mitigation.

Enter the Wyangala Dam debate. An iconic infrastructure, more than a mere reservoir, it stands as a testament to our enduring commitment to water security. But we have recognised a pressing truth: It is time to augment the dam's capabilities. This is not just about expanding an old structure but securing the future for our region. One of the primary purposes of the Wyangala Dam wall raising project was to increase water storage capacity. With the unpredictable nature of rainfall and the ongoing threats of drought, ensuring water security for both urban and rural areas is crucial. Without the expansion, the community fears there may not be adequate water storage into the future and that will jeopardise agriculture, industry and household needs.

The view to raise the Wyangala Dam wall was founded upon rigorous environmental and economic evaluations. The aim of embarking on this project was to amplify water storage, bolster agricultural productivity, strengthen regional growth and attract investment. More broadly, and equally importantly, it would protect the vital elements of our community fabric: citizens' mental health, industry and community bonds. In a world grappling with unforeseen weather and economic challenges, water security will dictate our resilience against prolonged dry spells, flood and fire emergencies.

Many viewed the dam project as an economic catalyst. The construction and associated activities would have created jobs, stimulated local businesses and paved the way for future investment in the region. By halting the project, those potential economic benefits have been lost. While there are valid environmental concerns associated with dam projects, the raising of the dam wall was seen by many as a balanced approach to meeting human needs while managing environmental impacts. Without this project, there is uncertainty about how the region will balance its water needs with environmental preservation.

A feeling of being left out of the decision-making process has added to my constituents' anxieties. A collaborative approach, where community insights and concerns are addressed, ensures more inclusive and informed decisions. The halt to the project has left many feeling sidelined. Orange has faced its hurdles; the shelving of the Wyangala Dam wall raising project is yet another. There is a clear need for adaptability and renewed commitment from both State and Federal governments. Challenges present opportunities to review, reassess and recalibrate. The way forward involves not only physical barriers and dams but also strategies that emphasise sustainability and environmental responsibility. We owe that to the generations to come.

Innovation beckons—from water-efficient agriculture to research into drought-resistant crops, the solutions lie in our willingness to evolve and adapt. Flood mitigation, a challenge in its own right, demands collaborative efforts at every administrative level, harnessing state-of-the-art technologies and insights from past experiences. The community's trust in the Government's ability to plan for future challenges is at stake. After initial announcements and investments, the decision to not proceed brings into question the former and present Government's commitment to long-term infrastructure projects of this type and its preparedness for future challenges.

In essence, the decision to not proceed with the Wyangala Dam wall raising project raises questions about future water security, economic growth, regional planning and community involvement. The community's apprehensions reflect broader concerns about sustainable development and preparedness for an unpredictable future. Let us not view water management as a mere logistical challenge but as a moral imperative. The decisions we make today and the investments we champion will mould the future for the State. It is not merely about safeguarding infrastructure but also about cherishing lives and the battler spirit of our communities to ensure a future where our communities prosper and where every individual has consistent access to water, and to better protect towns from future flood events.

EASTERN SUBURBS BUS SERVICES

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (18:53): A happy Talk Like a Pirate Day to you, Mr Temporary Speaker. Aaarr! On the weekend, we held our second eastern suburbs bus passenger forum. I thank the hundreds of people who have attended our bus passenger forums over the past couple of weeks. We have now received thousands of submissions from people all across the eastern suburbs, talking about the impacts that privatisation, bus cuts and changes to routes have had upon region 9, and how people can get around the eastern suburbs, as we rely on buses.

We know the damage that privatisation has done to buses in the east. I personally thank each and every person who has been participating in this process. I know it is incredibly frustrating and that people are incredibly angry. I wish that we could snap our fingers and fix the problems that we have inherited from the previous Government—the removal of 32 bus routes and over 60 bus stops. My ongoing commitment is that we are working each and every day to undo the damage that has been done to our buses, which is a key transportation service in our area, and to address the impacts of privatisation on service delivery in our area. This is an absolutely huge task.

We made a commitment that we will address this issue. One of the first things that our Government did when we got elected was to establish the Bus Industry Taskforce, headed by John Lee, and it has hit the ground running with key objectives and strategies. A key issue is around the bus driver shortage. We have been working tirelessly to recruit more bus drivers and make it a more attractive job for people. Most recently, we made an announcement that all bus drivers would have Opal cards. That is important because it allows our bus drivers to get to work for free. Another known challenge for our bus drivers has been the lack of bathrooms that they can access. That was a key ask from bus drivers. We have not been in government for that long, but we are already delivering on those things.

We made a commitment that we would do things differently if we got elected; the establishment of our bus passenger forums and the Bus Industry Taskforce has been part of that. We are putting passengers back at the heart of decision-making about transport in the areas where people live. From the forums and the feedback that I have had over the past four years, we know that the removal of bus routes has had a profound impact on our community. Routes that were once essential for connecting people—for commuters to get to work, for people to access health care delivery and to remain connected with friends and family—have been removed. This has also led to the isolation of people, particularly of the elderly and the disabled in our community, who absolutely rely on public transport to get to where they need to go.

Technological advancement is also a big issue. In an era of huge rapid technological advancement, it is incredibly disappointing to see how much our transportation system has been lagging in this area—things like ghost buses and them not being registered—because of a lack of investment from the previous Government. I say to my community, and to all the communities that have been impacted by this privatisation, that we are working to address these failures. We know that it is a problem. We know that we can have better technology to make transport more accessible for people.

We also know that commuters face declines in the reliability of service and the frequency of buses, which has also made it harder. Accessibility continues to be an issue. One of the big changes from the previous Government has been a change from the universal accessible symbols for buses and trains to letters. This has created a unique problem, particularly for people of intellectual disabilities, where a symbol for a train or a bus has been changed to a B or a T. Despite these challenges, our eastern suburbs community has shown remarkable

resilience and unity. I thank everyone for their unwavering commitment to finding solutions. We are working to address this. Thank you and stay tuned.

BAYSWATER POWER STATION

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (18:58): Tonight I speak on the future contribution by the Bayswater Power Station in my electorate of Upper Hunter to the Australian electricity market and to the State of New South Wales. First, I congratulate AGL Bayswater on a charity ball held at Singleton Civic Centre last Friday night. It was a pleasure to spend the evening with power workers raising money for Aussie Ark in the Barrington Tops. I also thank the Premier for acknowledging my call to include Bayswater in the State's "plan B" for future energy security when he was answering the question of the member for Monaro during question time last Tuesday. I assure the Premier that it was not a knee-jerk reaction to the comments of others on this side of the House.

When I wrote to my constituents following the March State election, I made it clear that I would not spend this term waiting to see what happens. Rather, I want to see Bayswater remain operational until the transition to renewable energy can be carried out free of the risk of blackouts. To be frank, the number one concern in my electorate is being left with no power in the dark if or when the electricity supply stops. I note the recently released *NSW Electricity Supply and Reliability Check Up*. The check-up found there will be reliability challenges for New South Wales in the next couple of years. The response from the Minns Labor Government is to engage with Origin Energy on its plans for the Eraring Power Station on the western shore of Lake Macquarie at the same time as it pursues all alternative solutions to deliver the renewable generation, transmission and storage solutions that New South Wales needs. The check-up states:

Even with an extension to Eraring, a more multi-faceted approach to managing NSW's electricity supply and reliability in the current decade is required.

...

The key to the successful management of electricity supply and reliability is a better alignment of capacity exit and entry.

So let us look under the bonnet at the specifications of the two coal-fired electricity generation plants. Eraring was commissioned in 1984 and has a capacity of 2,880 megawatts. It is forecast to close in 2025. Bayswater was commissioned in 1985 and has a capacity 2,640 megawatts. The Muswellbrook power plant is targeted for closure sometime between 2030 and 2033. One thing that is clear about the energy transition underway is that, like many things in life, not everything is running smoothly. I acknowledge the contribution by the Speaker, and member for Lake Macquarie, Greg Piper, who even-handedly said in his private member's statement on 24 August:

I acknowledge the work of both the current and former New South Wales governments in recognising the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions and transition to clean energy.

...

I acknowledge the commitment shown by the Federal Government by setting up of the national Net Zero Authority, but I am concerned about the pace at which this work is happening. At a State level we also need to start futureproofing our local communities, workers and local economies for this transition.

The mayors of the energy-producing council areas of Muswellbrook and Singleton have both put on record their concerns about that last point. AGL already has its eye to the future to replace some of the generating capacity that will go when Bayswater joins Liddell in the pages of history. The Liddell site is being prepared for future use as a low-carbon, integrated industrial energy hub, with planning approval already underway for a 500 megawatt- or two gigawatt-hour grid-scale battery. Other clean energy projects being explored include wind, pumped hydro, solar generation and green hydrogen. I do appreciate the company's desire to venture into the brave new frontier of renewable energy and the "green" industrial revolution that awaits. I am optimistic that those will be the industries and jobs of the future in the Upper Hunter.

However, there is a "but". That is why I argue we should not be too quick to consign Bayswater to the demolition crews. As I noted in my media release calling for the Government to have a diversified approach to keep the lights on, AGL has established a strong record of stewardship with the former publicly owned asset. It is currently spending \$120 million on maintenance, continuing significant investment at Bayswater. If the almost 40-year-old plant is in sound operating condition, then ensuring Bayswater's longevity should be part of New South Wales' plans for energy security.

My argument is neither about sentiment nor the fear of uncertainty. Bayswater has attributes that I believe Eraring may not. Among those attributes are the availability of coal supply, a skilled workforce to operate and maintain the plant and, most importantly, the social licence to operate from the local community. I say to the Premier that my call was not an ambit claim but rather, given the current status quo, a request to examine all options and potentially avoid the scrutiny should New South Wales black out before its renewable revolution is completed.

STATE BUDGET AND CENTRAL COAST

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:03): I am proud to be in the Chamber today as a member of the Minns Labor Government following the handing down of the 2023-24 New South Wales budget. The budget sets a foundation for a better and more secure future for New South Wales. It sets out a long-term plan to repair the State's finances in a sustainable way, rebuilding our essential services and taking pressure off New South Wales families and businesses. We inherited a budget position that was left in a mess by the former Government. It was riddled with skyrocketing debt; short-term, unfunded political spending; and billions of dollars' worth of privatised assets. In short, we inherited a budget position that failed the people of New South Wales.

The Minns Labor Government has approached the 2023-24 budget with a clear focus, managing New South Wales finances to create a secure future for our State and keep our election promises. It is time for structural repair and I am thrilled to see a budget of future-focused initiatives absent of the waste of the former Government and committed to fair and equitable priorities. After more than a decade of intentional neglect, we have recognised our essential workers, investing in them and the services that run our State. We get better outcomes for our community if we invest in essential services and our Government has worked hard to secure true reform in that sector. We now have teachers who are among the best paid in Australia, permanency for our fantastic educators, study incentives and salary improvements for our healthcare staff, a boost of \$436 million to increase paramedic numbers in regional New South Wales and many more initiatives that recognise the importance of our essential services workers to our community.

We are rebuilding our health system, investing \$572 million in making permanent some 1,112 nurse positions that were left unfunded by the previous Government. Fifty-seven of those nurses will be based on the Central Coast. The people of the Central Coast are seeing true investment in our community across infrastructure, essential services, planning, environment, the arts and housing to fund a strong future. Today's budget saw true investment, with over \$8 million in funding over four years to assist Central Coast Council with footpath projects, \$8.5 million for the Gosford waterfront feasibility study, and \$40 million over the forward estimates for stage four of the Gosford bypass "missing link" between Narara and Lisarow, a project that was neglected since 2015 by the previous Government.

In addition, six smaller community projects across the Gosford electorate are being funded. It is important to work with the council to rebuild Pelican Park, which our community made clear. There is also funding to make sure that Pacific Link Housing has safe and secure measures to protect its property and residents, and investment in the restoration of a koala habitat recovery project at Walkabout Wildlife Sanctuary. The fantastic Naughty Noodle Fun Haus will receive funding to continue its inclusive arts program for the LGBT community, and a cricket pitch roller will be funded for the Southern Spirit Cricket Group. We will invest in the social and affordable housing system to ensure that everyone in New South Wales has a safe place to call home. The budget will invest in social housing on the Central Coast, with \$2.9 million for social housing upgrades and improvements in the Gosford electorate.

I worked with the fabulous Dr Gordon Reid on the recently announced Housing Australia Future Fund. Hopefully we will see more investment in social housing in our community. We will also support new housing supply, with \$1.5 billion from the Housing and Productivity Contribution to deliver enabling infrastructure in key growth areas, including the Central Coast, the lower Hunter and Illawarra Shoalhaven. That is sorely needed in our electorate. I also thank the group at Haven Foundation from Mind Australia in Victoria, which runs fantastic mental health facilities for 16 to 20 people living with mental illness. We have a commitment of \$20 million to invest in three of those across New South Wales. One of them will be located on the Central Coast.

The Government is also investing in children and families of the future, with \$100 million to boost preschool education and provide cost-of-living relief. That includes \$500 in fee relief per child per year for parents of three-year-olds in long day preschool programs, and \$20 million for the Flexible Initiatives trial to expand access to early education and care. The budget begins a new era of responsible governance with a clear focus on managing our finances responsibly to provide a better future for the people of New South Wales. I am proud to be part of the Minns Labor Government. I commend the Treasurer, Daniel Mookhey, and the Minister for Finance, Courtney Houssos, for the fantastic work they have done. They worked a lot of hours over the day to day for the workers of New South Wales and to give a fair budget for a better future for everybody.

ROTARY CLUB OF THE HILLS-KELLYVILLE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills) (19:09): It is a pleasure to talk about the Rotary clubs in the Winston Hills electorate and surrounding communities. Rotary clubs have a long and important history in the State of New South Wales. The Rotary organisation was founded by Paul Harris on 23 February 1905. Its initial vision was for professionals with diverse backgrounds to exchange ideas and form important connections with each other. The Rotary movement has expanded far beyond that original vision. Today the broader organisation

is characterised by its record of humanitarian service, its loyal membership and its community-centred nature. The Rotary movement made a name for itself in 1979 as the organisation's global leadership began its important project to immunise over six million children in the Philippines against polio and to further the broad goal to eradicate polio across the world. Due in large part to the efforts of the Rotary organisation, polio was successfully eliminated from 123 countries around the world.

Today the global Rotary movement has over 1.4 million members and continues to make history as it sets the standard for service, sacrifice and community. The Rotary Foundation of Australia shares the international Rotary mission of promoting peace, fighting disease, supporting education and growing local economies. The foundation was established by distinguished past Rotarians in Australia, led by past Rotary President Clem Renouf. I am lucky enough to have a number of local Rotary clubs in the electorate of Winston Hills and the surrounding community. They are active participants in our local area. The Rotary Club of The Hills-Kellyville was founded after the amalgamation of clubs in Baulkham Hills, Kellyville and Winston Hills. The Hills-Kellyville Rotary club is supported by active members of our community. Several projects, both ongoing and historical, are worth mentioning.

The historical Sydney Hills Garden Competition was first held in 1959 and has since been organised by the Hills-Kellyville Rotary club. Local home owners compete to win a number of coveted prizes based on the presentation of their front gardens. This competition is a fantastic way for community members to take pride in their local area and meet like-minded individuals. Other events organised by the local club include the annual writing competition. Last night I was lucky enough to attend the 2023 awards presentation at the Castle Hill RSL, where I heard from the wonderful entrants and winners. The night celebrates the annual competition for year 6 students. Beginning in 2005, the event has become a staple in our community, and each year schools across the Winston Hills electorate look forward to it.

This year 16 local schools entered students into the competition for a chance to win awards for individual students and the overall best-performing school. I particularly congratulate Ruyi Yang from Matthew Pearce Public School for winning the writing competition and Excelsior Public School for winning the best overall school award. The writing competition is a great example of the Hills-Kellyville Rotary club contributing to its local community. The club started the competition to support local youth, promote achievement, recognise success and liaise with local schools to encourage literacy development. The writing competition is based on two important principles from the international Rotary cause: literacy and international education. Rotary clubs across New South Wales contribute to the international Rotary scholarship fund, which provides tertiary educational opportunities for over 1,000 students each year.

The Hills-Kellyville Rotary club has a long history of fundraising for organisations in our local community and providing support to those who need it. The club regularly holds events like its famous sausage sizzles, disaster relief drives and local dinners, and it donates to causes that are important to our community, like The Children's Hospital at Westmead as well as other local organisations and various international causes. The club also uses its resources to host other events throughout the year, including Australia Day celebrations, a Christmas tree sale and the annual Jazz at the Pines. All of those events are highlights for local residents, and they become opportunities for the community to join together and celebrate the local area.

I extend my thanks to the Hills-Kellyville Rotary club for its continued strong presence in our community. I particularly note the club's executive: president Ian Pascoe, secretary Wilf van Emmerik and membership director John Collignon. It is through the work of the executive team and local club members that our community has access to such a wonderful organisation and the events that it puts on. I wish the club nothing but success for its future endeavours and look forward to visiting again soon.

BUSHFIRE READINESS

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (19:14): The weather over the last few days has served as an early warning for the potentially worrisome bushfire season that may lie ahead. Excessive fuel loads and hotter than average temperatures have led many experts to issue concerning forecasts regarding bushfires in 2023 and 2024. Whilst we cross our fingers and hope the worst does not eventuate, it is reassuring to know that there are so many members of our community who are willing to stand up and fight to protect our community. I am referring to those brave men and women who are members of the Rural Fire Service.

I represent the most picturesque electorate in the State—the Illawarra escarpment, Heathcote National Park, Royal National Park and the stunning coastline. We know that bushland can quickly turn from stunning to alarming—and potentially fatal. It takes a special type of person to run towards a fire, whilst the rest of us are running away from it; that is exactly what Rural Fire Service members do. Whilst there are paid positions in the Rural Fire Service, the majority are volunteers. They prioritise the safety of the community over their own

welfare—and they do it for free. They do not do it for the praise or the accolades either. The desire to protect their community from a fire is all that motivates those members.

Recently I held the first two of four bushfire forums in my electorate. The aim of the forums is to get every agency and organisation that may be involved in a bushfire emergency in the one room to talk to the public about how to best be prepared for an emergency. The first two forums were held on a Saturday yet members of the RFS, SES, police, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Wollongong City Council, Ambulance NSW, and Fire and Rescue NSW had no issues with donating their time for the cause. It was another example of emergency services, including the RFS, going well above and beyond the call of duty for their community. The feedback I had from those who attended was particularly welcoming and the presence of those agencies and organisations did not go unnoticed.

The deadly Black Summer bushfires in 2019-20 are still raw for many of us. The clouds of smoke that filled the skyline and the never-ending smell of fire that summer are etched into our memories. So, too, are the pictures on television screens of lost houses, burnt-out bushland and families who mourned lost loved ones. I can also still remember the Woronora River bushfires years ago where a resident died after seeking shelter in their swimming pool. My brother lived nearby and said the roar of the blaze tearing through bushland was unlike anything he had ever heard. The thought of a similar fire occurring this bushfire season, or in subsequent bushfire seasons, sends a shiver down my spine.

Both the Sutherland shire and Illawarra regions are known for having tight-knit, supportive communities that are eager to help one another during their time of greatest need. That is particularly evident when you look at the number of local RFS members throughout both regions. Without such a large number of volunteers, local brigades would cease to exist. If brigades ceased to exist then our communities would be even more vulnerable to bushfires. That is often taken for granted by those who are not on the front line. On behalf of the entire electorate of Heathcote, I thank every RFS member for their dedication and bravery. I truly hope the experts are wrong and that the upcoming bushfire season is not as bad as predicted. However, if it is, I thank you in advance for putting your life on the line to protect your community. I thank also your families for their love and support during these very difficult times.

CADDIES CREEK SPORTS COMPLEX

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (19:18): I bring to the attention of the House the failure of government departments to work cooperatively to achieve an outcome for the community. That failure of government departments continues to delay very important outcomes for our local communities. The future expansion of the Caddies Creek Sports Complex in Kellyville has been earmarked for quite some time now. It will be an important recreational area for the Hills shire community and future residents in the growing north-west region generally. In particular, the sporting complex will respond to significant residential growth on land surrounding Bella Vista and Kellyville stations, much of which is already owned by the State Government.

In December 2017, as part of the planned precinct program, the Department of Planning and Environment rezoned land surrounding Bella Vista and Kellyville station precincts, creating potential for around 8,400 new dwellings and 10,400 new jobs by 2036. As part of this, approximately 10 hectares of land was also identified adjoining the existing Caddies Creek Sports Complex for the expansion of the existing sporting facilities, and this land was rezoned by the Department of Planning and Environment as RE1 Public Recreation. The majority of the land identified for future public recreation is owned by the Planning Ministerial Corporation, which is administered by the Office of Strategic Lands [OSL]. Given the significance of this recreational area in both a regional context and in supporting the development outcomes on government land surrounding Bella Vista and Kellyville stations, the Department of Planning and Environment committed to The Hills Shire Council that the land would be transferred to council at no cost.

It is understood that the Government had intended to account for the value of this land internally using regional infrastructure contributions, and while this was an item identified in the draft North West Growth Area Special Infrastructure Contributions scheme that was publicly exhibited by the department in late 2019, the scheme has not subsequently proceeded to finalisation. Despite this, in good faith, The Hills Shire Council has continued to plan for this facility in cooperation with OSL. Council has identified a funding source for construction of the facility within its local infrastructure contributions framework and has progressed with the preparation, exhibition and adoption of a master plan for the expansion of the reserve. The master plan demonstrates how the existing facilities at this location could be expanded to include four more football fields, as well as opportunities for facilities for smaller court sports, amenities facilities, car parking and passive recreational space.

Council has also worked with local sporting communities and identified the potential for this site to be the home for elite football or, as some call it, soccer, in the Hills region. With our Matildas so admirably representing this country on the world stage as part of the Women's World Cup, it is timely to reflect on the opportunity and

responsibility for government to do its part in continuing Australia's strong sporting legacy by ensuring that sufficient areas and facilities are available for our communities to participate in all levels of sport. The site also sits on land that is currently being developed by the New South Wales Government in cooperation with council as part of the successful Parks for People program established some years ago under the former Coalition Government. The master plan for the expansion of the Caddies Creek Sports Complex presents an exciting vision that can be achieved through partnership and collaboration between council, the State Government and the local sporting community. However, this area of land is currently sitting stagnant, vacant and unused while residential development in the surrounding localities progresses rapidly and new residents continue to arrive each day.

The next critical step for this project is for the land to be transferred to council, so that council can progress with the delivery of the facility. If we do not resolve this matter expeditiously, it will further delay the provision of this critical community infrastructure. I am concerned that the transfer has been delayed due to accounting across different government portfolios, which has resulted in a situation where after more than five years since the Government's 2017 commitment to transfer the land to council, we have seen minimal progress towards an outcome. I am aware that constructive dialogue and collaboration has been occurring between council officers and the OSL, who together are working to try to achieve this important outcome for the community. I call on the Government to continue this positive momentum and take the necessary actions to expeditiously transfer the land to council as was committed, so that this exciting and important project can finally proceed for the benefit of my community.

RETURN AND EARN CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (19:23): I recently had the pleasure of accompanying the Minister for the Environment on a tour of the Cleanaway recycling facility located at Eastern Creek and was delighted to learn some very exciting news about the New South Wales Return and Earn scheme. The scheme is on the threshold of reaching a remarkable milestone: Ten billion recycled cans and bottles have been returned at Return and Earn collection points across the State. This is testament to the power of collective action and environmental stewardship in our community. The New South Wales Government, in collaboration with scheme coordinator Exchange for Change, has been tirelessly encouraging households to participate in the program.

Since the inception of the Return and Earn scheme in 2017, users have earned an impressive \$1 billion in container refunds. This not only benefits individuals and families but also plays a vital role in supporting charities and local community groups. It is heartwarming to know that the simple act of recycling can have such a positive impact on so many lives. Families and individuals across New South Wales have been using Return and Earn to alleviate the cost of living. Whether it is funding a new sports uniform or swimming lessons, or offsetting everyday expenses like food and petrol, the scheme has become a lifeline for many people in our communities. It is a shining example of how sustainable practices can directly benefit individuals and communities.

What is even more astounding is the environmental impact of this initiative. Over 923,000 tonnes of materials have been recycled through the scheme, conserving resources and significantly reducing our reliance on new products. In turn, this has saved enough energy to power 110,000 homes for a year and enough water to fill 23,000 Olympic-size swimming pools. The Return and Earn scheme is not only about recycling; it is about making a real difference in our environment. Additionally, the scheme has had a serious impact on recycling rates in New South Wales. Two out of every three eligible drink containers supplied in the State are now redeemed. This is not only increasing recycling rates but also reducing the beverage industry's dependence on virgin plastic, glass and aluminium. It is a win-win situation for both our environment and our economy.

The success of the Return and Earn program has led to its expansion. Currently there are more than 620 return points operational across New South Wales, making it more convenient than ever for residents to participate in this initiative. This growth is a testament to the commitment of the New South Wales Government and its partners to create a more sustainable future for all. The Return and Earn scheme significantly reduces litter and promotes cleaner surroundings. By offering a financial incentive for returning empty drink containers, the program discourages littering and encourages responsible disposal. This leads to cleaner streets, parks and waterways, enhancing the aesthetics of our communities and improving the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Return and Earn is a powerful tool for resource conservation and environmental sustainability. It helps reduce the consumption of new raw materials by promoting the re-use and recycling of existing ones. This translates to energy savings and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, making a substantial contribution to combating climate change. Additionally, the program reduces the pressure on landfills, minimising their environmental impact and extending their lifespan. Ultimately, Return and Earn empowers individuals to take an active role in protecting our planet while offering financial rewards for their eco-friendly choices, creating a winning scenario for both people and the environment. Let us continue to make New South Wales a shining example of environmental responsibility and community engagement.

STATE BUDGET AND HOLSWORTHY ELECTORATE

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (19:27): Earlier today the Treasurer delivered the New South Wales 2023-24 State budget in this place. Quite simply, it confirmed everything we knew about this new Labor Government—more cuts and more cancellations. Cuts to the Active and Creative Kids vouchers come at possibly the worst time. Going from a universal program, where every child had equal opportunity, we now have a situation where only those on Family Tax Benefit Part A will be eligible. This means that if a dual-income family with one child aged between zero and 12 years old earns more than \$117,348, the family will no longer be eligible for the Active and Creative Kids vouchers. It is particularly concerning during a cost-of-living crisis and current interest rate increases.

The suburbs of Prestons, Casula, Lurnea and Moorebank in my electorate are considered among the most vulnerable, according to a Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology study conducted in June this year. This change will put a significant burden on the families of south-western Sydney, where vouchers like this increase participation in extracurricular activities and, most importantly, get our children active and off electronic devices. Every child deserves the opportunity to take part in creative and physical activities to learn and grow, no matter their parents' income.

The defunded Park'nPay app is also a significant disappointment. It had around one-quarter of a million downloads. This was a hit in the Liverpool CBD, where paying for parking could be done with a few clicks on your mobile phone. The former Coalition Government's record on technological innovations to make interacting with government easier is being dismantled one program at a time. South-west Sydney is also bearing the burden of higher Opal fares, increasing by 3.7 per cent this year. This is combined with scrapping the half-price fares after eight journeys in a week. Regular commuters who travel to and from work by public transport have to pay more.

In a letter I wrote to the Premier and the Treasurer in August, I provided a list of projects that are in dire need of funding. During the election campaign the Coalition committed upwards of \$30 million to local community projects to make Holsworthy a better place to live and raise a family. Unfortunately, it seems as though our local area has missed out on State budget funding under Labor. We have seen no investment in a new aquatic and leisure precinct in Hammondville, funding for a walking and cycling track along the Georges River between the Liverpool CBD and Sandy Point, and funding to fix and upgrade Buckle Reserve in Menai and Meere Park in Lurnea. Perhaps most disappointingly, not a single public school in the electorate of Holsworthy has received funding for upgrades. This Government has claimed education is at the forefront of its priorities, with its pay increases for teachers. This is not the case, as the bricks and mortar have been forgotten. Our public schools require constant and recurrent investment.

It is pleasing that the Government has recommitted to the former Coalition Government's extensive infrastructure plan for my electorate, including \$36.2 million to widen Alford's Point Road and \$268.9 million for the M5 Moorebank Avenue to Hume Highway intersection upgrade, also known as "the weave". I note the \$5 million commitment to planning for the duplication of key sections of Heathcote Road. Whilst this funding is for the planning stage, the upgrades must focus on improving the intersections out of Pleasure Point and Sandy Point. At the Pleasure Point intersection there is no turning lane onto Pleasure Point Road southbound, causing traffic congestion as cars need to slow down significantly to navigate a sharp bend. Multiple rear-end collisions have occurred as a result, making this stretch very unsafe, particularly at night. At Sandy Point, St George Crescent requires a traffic study to better understand car and truck patterns. In wet weather, vehicles travelling down the hill northbound towards Liverpool risk sliding toward inbound traffic. On the other hand, it has become increasingly difficult to exit Sandy Point, with irregular patterns of traffic caused by upstream traffic from Holsworthy headed to the shire.

Finally, I mention koalas. It is claimed that this budget is a significant boost for the endangered New South Wales koala population. In the Holsworthy electorate a \$1.5 million commitment has been made to establish the Georges River Koala National Park. However, koalas continue to be killed along Heathcote Road. I am concerned that this reserve will be on the side opposite the defence land from where the koalas are reportedly migrating. Many are killed along Heathcote Road on their migration journey. I thank the House.

STATE BUDGET AND MONARO ELECTORATE

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro) (19:32): I also note the impact of the budget on my electorate of Monaro. Not surprisingly, my take on the budget is somewhat different from that of the last speaker, the member for Holsworthy. At times I am amazed to hear the pleadings of members of a party that was in office for 12 years who say that everything was perfect when they left and has apparently gone to pot in six months. Sometimes I am even more amazed by members of a party who think it is electorally appealing to say you can spend as much money as you possibly can on untargeted assistance for people and get good results from it. The only result you get is some

votes out of people. Untargeted assistance simply means that budgets go out of control, which is exactly the backdrop we had coming up to this budget.

We have seen from the Government the responsible process of bringing the budget under control and funding targeted measures to help people in our communities without privatisations and putting our State into debt. Today during question time members heard about the literally billions of dollars a year that the State will save in interest payments because we will not engage in the sort of profligate spending seen in the last year of the former Liberal-Nationals Government. Its amazing members stand in this Chamber and bleat about how you can fund everything but still have a triple-A credit rating. But then some of them, to contradict each other, say that the triple-A credit rating is more important than anything, not understanding that it is just a mechanism to assess the cost of borrowing.

In the Monaro electorate the budget has delivered a number of important election commitments that I made during the last election campaign. Planning is underway now for Googong High School, which will be in an area of high growth that will have a significant population. It is a new town outside of Queanbeyan and it is growing very fast. The Nationals, in government, decided that the town did not need a high school. It was somewhere further down the track and it did not allocate any funds to it. We will build it and we will open it in the first term of 2027. Stage two of Jerrabomberra High School will be built. Stage one was finally built by the Coalition 12 years after it first committed to the people of the area that it would build a high school. It will be 13 years since that commitment was made before it is open, so I am very pleased that we will build stage two of that straightaway.

There is work on the Ellerton Drive-Kings Highway intersection included in the budget. Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council will receive \$4.3 million from the Regional Emergency Road Repairs Fund. Snowy Monaro will get a \$6.791 million share of that fund, which is absolutely vital for a shire with 2,600 kilometres of council roads and roads that have been significantly impacted by recent weather events, and for the council itself. It is one of the many councils in regional New South Wales that has been forced to put substantial rate increases to place to be able to keep up the level of services that people expect. Those things are important. A high-profile promise that I made during the election was for \$840,000 to go to the Currawarna aged-care facility in Bombala. I have spoken before in this place about that facility. I am thrilled that it is in this year's budget, along with a commitment down the track to add 30 more aged-care beds at the Bombala Multipurpose Service.

This is about providing services to the people of Monaro. The number one thing I talked about in the election, and the number one thing I talk about now—and the number one thing that previous speakers from the Opposition do not get—is that it is about more than just having buildings. It is about having the people inside the buildings who provide the services, such as the nurses and the teachers. Our work on improving working conditions will have a real impact on minimum safe staffing levels in our hospitals, and a real impact in Cooma and Queanbeyan and our multipurpose services as well.

I heard over and over again about school students spending so much time in the playgrounds instead of the classrooms. I had complaint after complaint, but during the election campaign there was not one acknowledgement of the problem, even by The Nationals member. There was not one acknowledgement of the problem by the then Minister, but this Government, in its first six months, has taken action that will make a real difference in that area. It was particularly an issue in Queanbeyan where the much more competitive salaries in Canberra were attractive. I am very proud to be the member for Monaro in delivering today's budget.

HUMELINK TRANSMISSION LINES

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (19:37): On 31 August this year the Legislative Council Standing Committee on State Development finished its inquiry into the feasibility of undergrounding the transmission infrastructure for renewable energy projects. The final report sadly concluded that the correct decision for the HumeLink transmission lines is not to go underground. That means that rural communities across New South Wales are likely to be saddled with transmission lines that increase fire risk, impede firefighting operations, harm agriculture and tourism, degrade the environment and ruin the landscape. Transgrid's environmental impact study shows the HumeLink project will impact more than 48,000 hectares of land and potentially remove more than 670 hectares of native vegetation, including the destruction of habitats for 91 threatened or endangered species. I understand that powerline faults cause 2 per cent to 4 per cent of all rural fires in Australia, and that rises to 50 per cent in conditions of elevated fire risk. Firefighters have told us again and again that overhead powerlines obstruct firefighting operations and are a safety concern.

The Black Summer bushfires cost 33 lives and an estimated \$230 billion. More than a billion animals died. We should be doing everything possible to prevent such a tragedy from occurring again. I have been at the vanguard of this issue for over three years now. That is why I called for an inquiry. I acknowledge the Government heeding that call. Although the final recommendation of the committee is disappointing, the inquiry has fired up

the issue. The Standing Committee on State Development appears to have made its decision to support the Government, largely, and it appears to be based on evidence from Transgrid that highlighted a conservative fear of cost increases and time delays that would be a year or two at most and a cost that is in fact much less than originally thought.

Expert evidence highlighted the dangers and the overestimates of cost, evidence that appeared to be ignored in the final recommendation. But at least now there is a greater recognition of the problem across the political spectrum, across the Chambers of this Parliament and in the Federal Parliament. Regional communities have once again done a spectacular job in raising their concerns and awareness of this issue. I especially thank all of those from my communities who put so much into preparing for and appearing before the committee, particularly in Tumut. They did a great job. They know and their communities know the stakes are too high and the risk is too great for Australia to take the cheap and nasty path of rushed overhead transmission lines.

I welcome the efforts now by a cross-Parliament coalition of members to establish a select committee of inquiry in the upper House into the feasibility of undergrounding transmission lines. Our Parliament needs a more balanced consideration of the facts to examine with expert, independent evidence the real benefits of underground transmission infrastructure. I support the transition to renewables and clearly there cannot be transition without transmission, but it must be done with a community social licence and without unnecessary cost and risk to regional communities across Australia. There must also be better compensation for landowners, neighbours and communities. I note that the Government has accepted the recommendation of the *NSW Electricity Supply and Reliability Check Up* that states:

That consideration be given to complementing the Strategic Benefit Payments Scheme (SBPS) with a NSW framework for neighbours and visual impacts.

I believe expanding the Strategic Benefit Payments Scheme to include neighbouring properties would be welcomed by regional communities as in many instances the transmission infrastructure does impact the visual amenity of their properties. Finally, I highlight that the recent inquiry has also shown that the approval system for electricity projects in this country needs an overhaul. There must be clear community consultation and strict regulatory and legislative measures to avoid the negative impact on prime agricultural land, biodiversity loss and escalated fire risk. The system needs urgent and radical surgery. We need to cut out the obsession with getting the cheapest product and transplant genuine concern for a social licence. By social licence I mean respecting people, their communities and the land they live on. To this end I note the recommendations of the recent inquiry to ensure better community consultation and in fact the appointment of an ombudsman to:

... oversee consultation upon, and rollout of, renewable energy projects and transmission infrastructure in New South Wales and to receive and handle complaints about these processes.

That would be a start. I call on the Government to accept those recommendations and improve compensation, and above all do the right thing and put the overhead transmission lines underground.

CONCORD GARDEN CLUB

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (19:43): It gives me great pleasure to recognise the seventieth anniversary of Concord Garden Club. Concord Garden Club was established in March 1953 in a nursery on Burwood Road opposite Concord Public School when Eric Leggett, the nurseryman, decided to hold a rose pruning demonstration. The initial event was well attended, with many interested in learning more about gardening and taking care of their greenery. Concord Garden Club—formerly Concord Horticulture and Home Gardening Society—was established off the back of this event over half a century ago. Meetings were held under the pavilion in the sportsground, which is now Concord Oval. Later they moved to a building on the grounds of Concord council, where Concord Library now stands. Today the Concord Community Centre is the proud home of the garden club, and meetings regularly take place there.

Previous president Alan Hancock developed the strong floral art group at the club, and this extended to the club's garden shows. The first show was held in March 1954 and displayed floral arrangements and exhibits that I am told were well supported by family and friends of the garden club. It was a show that the community could attend to appreciate and learn about the skill of gardening. Since then, many Autumn and Spring shows have been held to foster the love of gardening and create an opportunity to showcase the beautiful flowers, plants and vegetables that members have grown in their backyards. Concord Garden Club has also organised various excursions and friendship days to grow local connections.

I acknowledge former presidents Mr G. Elliott, Mr Vane and Mr Norman Spearman. Following Mr Spearman's long reign in the position, Alderman Geoff Payne took over as president in 1972. Geoff brought a great deal of humour to the club but, most importantly, he cemented the ties between the then Concord council and the garden club. The strong relationship between the council and the club continues today. I make special mention of Ruth Payne, a loyal member of the club since 1972 who is still on the committee. Ruth has been

instrumental in the survival of the club, especially during harder times. I acknowledge Pam Orr and Pat Allport, who have been members for 40 years and have contributed greatly to Concord Garden Club; as well as Madge Dickson, for her years of work on the committee; Warrill Evans and Secretary Marjorie Hogan.

In 2017 Concord Garden Club was awarded City of Canada Bay Council's citizens of the year award for the arts and culture category. That further shows the impact the club has had on many locals. Since fully resuming activities and events since COVID-19, which meant the majority of the club's events were put on hold, many new members have joined Concord Garden Club. I am told that this is partly due to the green thumb that a lot of people picked up during COVID over the past couple of years. I am pleased to report that Concord Garden Club is still thriving. For those who are no longer with us, vale Alan Hancock, Geoff Payne, Colleen Harland, Fred Starlow and Charlie Lawn. May they rest in peace. They all made a great contribution to Concord Garden Club and the community. They leave a legacy that is proudly continuing.

Concord Garden Club has not only brought together a community of people with a common interest but also inspired many locals to take up gardening. The club has taught many in the community the ins and outs of what they need to know to keep their gardens thriving and has created a welcoming environment for all. Concord Garden Club remains an important organisation, fostering an inclusive environment around a passion for gardening. It is a great example of the importance of community groups in my area. The club provides a great source of friendship, collaboration and sense of community, and it is an important link to the heritage and flora of our local area.

On 25 August I attended Concord Garden Club's seventieth anniversary celebration at Massey Park Golf Club. I congratulate the club and its members on the seventieth anniversary and thank them for the kind invitation to attend the special event. It was a day to reminisce on the old and be hopeful for the future of the club. I acknowledge the dedication and community effort of volunteers for the time they have dedicated to garden shows and fostering a love of gardening. I recognise and acknowledge President Maureen Ward and the dedicated and hardworking committee for their efforts in volunteering for the club and for their service to our community. I once again sincerely congratulate Concord Garden Club on the special occasion of its seventieth anniversary. I wish the club and all of its members all the very best.

MEN'S HEALTH

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (19:48): Tonight I talk about our boys and men—about our sons, our brothers, our dads and our grandfathers. It has been important, and most certainly overdue, that in recent years the conversation has been heavily focused on the gendered issues of workplace assault, the pay gap between men and women, domestic violence and unhealthy stereotypes. But while it has been important that women worldwide have said, "Me too," and while it is important that we continue the journey for gender balance, I am worried about our boys. I am worried about their mental and physical health. We must pay more attention. We must address the issues that uniquely impact boys and men from a diversity of backgrounds. This is not about shifting the focus away from women. This is not about gender wars. This is about taking a long hard look at half the population and asking some important questions like: Should we be doing more for boys and men?

Let me paint a picture. Today a baby boy and baby girl—let us call them Noah and Olivia, because they are the most popular boys and girls names currently—born in the same hospital on the same day are not born equal. Olivia can expect to live four years longer than Noah. When Noah is a young man, he will hide his feelings a lot and he will be three times more likely to self-harm than Olivia. Suicide will be the leading cause of death amongst Noah's peers between the ages of 18 and 25. When he is a bit older, between the ages of 25 and 49, half of Noah's friends will drink to risky levels. Jump to late adulthood and Noah and his male friends will face higher rates of avoidable cancers, diabetes and coronary heart disease. Seventy per cent to about 89 per cent of heart attacks are experienced by men. Of all prisoners in Australia, 93 per cent are men. Of rough sleepers, 87 per cent are men. Those statistics are staggering.

Olivia has a Minister for Women developing specific policies to give her a brighter future. There is no Minister for Men. The Government department Women NSW looks out specifically for females and does incredibly important work. My point is not to diminish that work and the very real struggles that many face due to power imbalances at home and in the workplace. But given that men have different health and wellbeing issues, including having higher suicide rates, dying younger, being more likely to have cancer, undertaking risky behaviour and having depression, why are we not caring for our men in equal measure?

A couple of weeks ago a UK MP called for the creation of a ministry for men. Nick Fletcher argued that males had been neglected amid the drive for equality. The point he made, valid or not, was unfortunately lost and diminished by the fact that he delivered the statements in an inflammatory manner on a prime-time radio show called *Woman's Hour*. That did not go down well. We heard on that show and beyond the usual flow of retaliatory responses like—and I hate these words—male privilege, misogyny and toxic masculinity. They are angry war

cries and not at all helpful. Our debate these days has too often become divisive and toxic. That is a shame because, for the love of men and for women, we need to have a sensible debate which considers the differences and challenges of the different genders, and has a productive and inclusive approach. We cannot leave our boys and men behind.

Two decades ago, New South Wales was one of the first jurisdictions in the world to specifically acknowledge the health needs of men with the launch of the Liberal Government's Moving Forward in Men's Health policy. Since then, NSW Health has worked with key partners to deliver a wide range of programs. The work is being done within the Department of Health. The Coalition also launched the New South Wales men's health framework in 2018, a guide for policymakers. The policy response in recent times has largely been focused on women, and that again has been necessary. COVID has distracted us from a lot of men's issues, but again I ask: Are we doing enough for men, not instead of but as well as?

Seven years after that first framework, I am calling on the new Government to not just revisit that old framework but provide a comprehensive and updated strategy to address men's health, especially priority populations within that demographic including young men; men from regional areas; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men; gay, bisexual and transgender men; and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. I want Olivia and Noah to grow up safely with brighter futures, and we can help them get there.

STATE BUDGET AND RYDE ELECTORATE

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (19:53): One of the first things I did upon my election to this place was to write to a dozen Ministers to put a host of issues on the agenda that I believe were important for my electorate of Ryde. I give credit to the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government who took me up on that offer, but they were the only ones. As a result, a whole host of issues that have been reflected through the most recent election and previous elections have gone ignored. I maintain that the offer to meet still exists. It is therefore no surprise that whilst the budget announced today had some benefits for my community, it unfortunately missed a number of key areas that would have been addressed had we been able to proceed with those meetings and had Ministers paid attention to my speech last week in advance of the budget. I spoke about some of the key critical pieces of infrastructure and social programs that are needed for Ryde. I will list a few of them and address them based on my preliminary analysis of the budget thus far.

We have heard lots of discussions about the need for new education infrastructure in Macquarie Park, and yet today's budget had no start date and no end date. It is very easy to make statements in this place. It is very hard to deliver. Similarly, there has been no money allocated for the acquisition of TG Milner. Notwithstanding the City of Ryde, having engaged in good faith with the Minister for Local Government, moving copious numbers of resolutions in a bipartisan and unanimous way, and putting it on the agenda as a serious if not high-priority issue for the local community, there is no money in the budget. The Ryde Hospital redevelopment, which is continuing and on which construction commenced in the previous term of government, does not have the additional injection of funds that have been asked for by the medical council, the staff and me as the local MP. In fact, what I have observed from the budget papers today is that only \$18 million or thereabouts has been announced. This is potentially concerning for the delivery of this project on time and on budget, and I am foreshadowing risks of delays in this project.

The Victoria Road widening will benefit the member for Parramatta, who is in the Chamber, and the members for Lane Cove, Drummoyne and Balmain. Prior to the election there was an \$8 million commitment to proceed with a feasibility study to widen the road. In the budget there is \$500,000. That is a \$7.5 million cut to an important piece of preliminary work that must be done in order to embark upon this visionary and important piece of road infrastructure. I have spoken many times, both before the election and after, about my commitment to the Northern Centre, which provides important work for women escaping domestic and family violence. It is helping them via a program called Safe T to stay away from many of those very difficult circumstances. Prior to the election, there was a \$600,000 commitment to fund and finance this program. The Government was only able to muster up \$40,000, or less than 7 per cent of that funding commitment. Within the budget, even that small minuscule amount is unspecified. I spoke about vouchers last week and the important role they play. They are gone. They are no longer providing that important support for local communities by getting kids involved in sport and creative ventures.

There was an Anzac Park upgrade for West Ryde, completely unspecified in the budget. This was an election commitment of the Government, not of mine, and even that is not in the budget. There was a multicultural centre for Eastwood. It is unspecified. It does not exist in the budget. I spoke last week about Park'nPay and the important work that does for people living with disability to be able to get to and from events with ease and to know in real time and up-front if they will be able to find a car spot at their local community events. That is gone. It is a huge travesty not only for people who enjoy the technology nature of the app but for people who have a very real need. There is some additional funding allocated for Ryde in this budget. Of particular interest was the

\$1.1 million North Ryde local roads improvement project from the Housing Acceleration Fund. Ordinarily I would be welcoming new road infrastructure, but the lack of context and the lack of explanation around this project leads me to believe that this could be a precursor to the major privatisation and development of the North Ryde Common and Macquarie mental health hospital, which is causing great consternation in the community.

As I said, it was not all bad. I thank the Government for continuing programs that were announced and funded under the former Government, such as the fire station at North Ryde, the RNA facility at Macquarie University, Eastwood Public School upgrades, which are progressing well, and for listening to our years-long campaign to amend the Parramatta Light Rail route, which has been reaffirmed. I am looking forward to its construction.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (19:58): I share with the member for Ryde that the Active and Creative Kids vouchers, which are means tested at \$50 twice a year, and the preschool learn to swim \$50 vouchers are still in the budget.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to resolution, at 19:59 until
Wednesday 20 September 2023 at 10:00.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

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

ANNIVERSARY OF PICTON STATION

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—I rise today to celebrate the momentous occasion of Picton Station's 160th anniversary. On 1st July 1863, the Main Southern Railway reached Picton, and the official opening of the station marked a significant milestone in our community's history. For the past 160 years, Picton Station has served as a vital transportation hub, connecting our town to the broader railway network including Sydney. It has played a crucial role in facilitating travel, enabling commerce, and fostering social and economic growth. The station stands as a symbol of progress, resilience, and community spirit. Throughout its rich history, Picton Station has been a bustling centre of activity, welcoming commuters, visitors, and goods, and providing a vital link for our community. As we commemorate this remarkable anniversary, let us reflect on the enduring legacy of Picton Station and the contributions it has made to the growth and development of our town. We owe a debt of gratitude to all those who have been involved in its establishment and maintenance over the years. May Picton Station continue to serve as a gateway, connecting us to new opportunities, and reminding us of the proud heritage and aspirations of our community.

ENGAGING YOUNG WOMEN IN NON-TRADITIONAL TRADES

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—I would like to recognise the exceptional efforts of Wollondilly Shire Council in securing a Youth Opportunities Grant from the Department of Communities and Justice for their project, "Engaging Young Women in Non-Traditional Trades." This initiative aims to empower local young women by offering them FREE training in the trade industry. Through comprehensive modules covering essential skills, such as Yellow Card (Traffic Control), White Card (Workplace Health and Safety Induction), Chemqual (Chemicals), Senior First Aid, Employment Preparation, and Resume Writing, these talented individuals will gain the necessary skills for a successful trade career. The Council is committed to providing a supportive environment and ensuring safety by providing Personal Protective Equipment [PPE]. Additionally, they will collaborate with My Gateway to help participants access traineeships and apprenticeships. This project is a wonderful example of empowering youth and breaking down barriers. Congratulations to Wollondilly Shire Council for their dedication to creating opportunities and promoting gender equality.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Earlier this month at Bargo Sports Club in my electorate, we marked a poignant milestone: the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. Representing the council and speaking alongside our veterans, I was deeply moved by the ceremony. The haunting tones of a didgeridoo and the presence of our current soldiers lent weight to our tribute to the 60,000 brave Australians who served. The cost of this conflict is still felt by our veterans and their families, both physically and mentally. I extend my sincere gratitude to Bargo Sports Club for hosting this vital commemoration. Their support ensures that the sacrifices of our Vietnam veterans remain in our collective memory, a lesson and reminder for us all. Let us not forget.

SYLVANVALE PRE WORLD WAR II VINTAGE CAR SHOW

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Ken Warburton of Burraneer who organised the seventh Sylvanvale Pre World War II Vintage Car Show, held on Sunday 17 September in Sutherland. Large

crowds gathered in the hot weather to see over 100 vintage cars, as well as kids' pedal cars, scooters, prams and a 100-year-old wooden Penny-Farthing bicycle. The vintage cars included four owned by Ken, including "Hoover", a 1929 AA Ford flatbed two tonne truck used in building the Hoover Dam in Arizona in the 1930s. Ken Warburton is the 2023 Sutherland Shire Citizen of the Year and created the show to further the work of his parents, who were among Sylvanvale founders. All funds raised will go to Sylvanvale's new, state-of-the-art specialist disability accommodation in Illawong. Sylvanvale is a registered NDIS service provider to clients with disability. Sylvanvale supports more than 750 children and adults throughout the Sydney Metropolitan Area and the Blue Mountains to live and participate in the community, as they choose.

PORT HACKING DRAGON BOAT CLUB

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate one of Sydney's oldest dragon boat clubs, the Port Hacking Dragon Boat Club, which this month will celebrate its fortieth anniversary at its Yowie Bay clubhouse. The club promotes its activities to people of all abilities by having men, women and mixed social and competitive teams. The club was established in 1983 by John Hayes and contested Australia's first dragon boat race. It also won the inaugural Australian dragon boat race at Farm Cove. The club trains all year round, having both Tuesday and Thursday night sessions, Saturday, and Sunday mornings. I congratulate the committee members President Maureen O'Neil, Secretary Michael Luchi, Treasurer Mary Shannon, Vice President Jane Dwyer, other members Neva Wendt, Robyn Watson, Jane Dwyer and Patricia Burgess; as well as coaches Vicki Fulton, Maureen O'Neil and Gail Howard.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—On 15 September I attended the seventy-first annual presentation dinner of the Sutherland Shire Football Association. The Association is the largest football Association of any code in Australia and the largest sporting association in the Southern Hemisphere, with over 19,300 players and 26 clubs on the field this year. It fosters and develops football in the Sutherland Shire at both a grassroots and representative levels. Congratulations to the executive team for receiving such outstanding statistics this season. The SSFA executive committee is made up of hard working volunteers. I thank current committee members President Matt Brady, Vice President Laura Cowell, Treasurer Giulio di Stefano, and Committee members Jim Hankins, Chris Lockwood, Russell Marsden, Keith Ward, Kelly White and Mark Williams. I also acknowledge Chief Executive Officer Jeff Stewart, Operations Manager Jenny Stephen, Football Manager Jon Long, SSFA Academy Officer Jonathan Dmoch, Member Protection Officers Laura Cowell and Jim Hankins.

CLR SUSAN WYNNE

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney electorate, I thank Clr Susan Wynne for her service to the Woollahra Municipality as Mayor. Clr Wynne has been a collaborative and forward looking leader for four years and I want to put on record my appreciation of the work she has done supporting the community and working within council to improve services, facilities and governance. I especially value Clr Wynne's efforts with the Yes23 referendum campaign, her work with the LGBTIQ+ communities and her focus on environmental sustainability. She led the council during challenging times with COVID-19 and major demographic and social changes. I look forward to continuing to work with Clr Wynne in her ongoing role as a councillor and I am sure as a leader into the future.

WESLEY PRESCHOOL, 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—The Wesley Preschool Castle Hill was opened fifty years ago. Over the past fifty years the Preschool has been a much-loved Preschool within our community. Fifty years is a milestone achievement. The foundation Chair of the Management Committee when the Pre-School first opened was Brian Lewis. Brian returned to the Management Committee about four years ago and his contribution remains invaluable. Jane Harvey has served as the Director for the last thirty-two years. Lynette Case has been an early childhood teacher for thirty-eight years. The birthday party for the pre-school was held at the pre-school. With Mayor Gangemi from the Hills Shire Council, I was privileged to attend the birthday celebrations. It was wonderful to see so many children having fun and enjoying the day. On display were photographs through the years, there were balloons, a barbeque and a magnificent birthday cake. It was a great celebration. Thank you to Uniting Representatives Donna Lee, Sue Shilbury, Suzanna Stanton, Malina Newman and of course Brian Lewis. Thank you also to Reverend Carmel Ierice, from the Wesley Uniting Church. It was a wonderful birthday party. Thank you to Wesley Pre-School.

CASTLE HILL KIDS ENRICHMENT EXPO

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—The Castle Hill Kids Enrichment Expo was recently held at the Castle Hill Pioneer Theatre. I was delighted to attend the Expo and to see so many parents and children enjoying the activities. There was a Chess Competition, a Lego Competition, a Rainbow Dreams Colouring Adventure

Drawing Competition, a Piano Competition to mention some of the activities. The categories for each competition ranged from five year to 12 years. The Expo commenced on 15 September 2023 and continued until 17 September 2023. The lego display was amazing and when I spoke to the children about their display, I could tell how much fun they had constructing their display. I spoke to one child about the chess competition who said to me "I had so much fun." I was honoured to present trophies and certificates to the children in each of the categories. The children were excited to receive a trophy and certificate. I thank the organising staff from E-Learning Distributor Pty Ltd. I thank Ying Kweh and Johnathan Koay for organising a wonderful Kids Enrichment Expo. The children are now looking forward to next years Expo.

NORWEST SUNRISE ROTARY CLUB

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I congratulate the Norwest Sunrise Rotary Club for its remarkable work in my community. On Friday, 15 September 2023 I was delighted to attend the Norwest Sunrise Rotary Meeting. The Rotary District Governor, Christine Owen, was in attendance. Christine addressed the Rotarians as to the great community work of all clubs. Christine presented the Club with the Rotary Foundation Level 1 Award for contributions by the Club to Rotary. Norwest Sunrise gives back to our community. The Club supports great charities organisations within the Hills including Relay for Life, Hills Winter Sleepout, to name a few. The club supports the Hills Older Mens Network. On 18 September 2023 I attended the Hills Older Mens Network with Robert Bredin where I shared stories and had a chat with Peter, Hans, Bob, Greg, Neil, Frank, Melvyn, Rob, Moorthy and Alan. I recognise Norwest Sunrise Rotary Club for the commitment to our community over many years. I recognise and thank the service given by Robert Bredin, Azita Abdollahian, Mercedes Durante, Maria Conducto, Azita Abdollahian, Cherelyn Suzuki, Martin Collins, Mason Webb, Deborah Salkeld, Melanie Chee, Bev Jordan, Jeremy Carter, Ranga Ranjara, Alex Hezari, Krissie Webb, Manish Govender and Shanker Padmanabhan.

PJS COUNTRY FRUIT AND VEG AT LISMORE CENTRAL

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—When a shop reopens in Lismore it is a cause for celebration and there was a party atmosphere at PJs Country Fruit and Veg, along with free face painting, when they reopened on September 4th. PJs has moved from their temporary site upstairs at Lismore Central shopping centre to their refurbished original site downstairs. As proprietors Brendon and Natasha Garred said, 'back downstairs - in our home'. PJs is opposite my electorate office, and on the Sunday afternoon before the 2022 flood, when everyone was moving stock, I saw their 12-year-old daughter Lacey struggling to move a trolley of watermelons onto the escalator to store out of danger, as she thought, on the upper level. I helped her manage the load. Later we managed to laugh about our efforts, because of course the upper level was also inundated in the unprecedented flood. Now there are plenty of watermelons and other produce on the shelves, and the new layout looks as fresh as the fruit and vegetables on display. Every reopening or new business opening adds life to the CBD and gives us all a feeling of optimism.

BEATING HEARTS OF LISMORE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I want to commend The Beating Hearts of Lismore program for its success in bringing enjoyment to older residents through music, movement and socialising. The program started in May this year as a free weekly social gathering and sing-along program for older people, including those with conditions such as dementia, Parkinson's disease or social isolation, and their loved ones or carers. Lismore Geriatrician, Dr Rachel Jones, is the driving force. She saw the need to address the negative impacts of the 2022 floods on the mental wellbeing and social connections of older residents. A team of volunteers set up the venue, welcome people, play the piano, lead the singing and pack up. The Lismore Heights Bowling Club provides the venue free of charge. I've seen for myself how lively and entertaining the sessions are. In just four months it has grown from 16 to 70 attendees and there are already stories of how this is changing lives. One man with depression now joins in the singing, new friendships have started, people are socialising outside of the group, and participants say how much they look forward to it each week. Small things that make a big difference.

GIRL GUIDES CENTENARY

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—The Lismore Girl Guide District recently celebrated 100 years of Girl Guides Australia with a High Tea event which I was pleased to attend. A centenary is a significant milestone and a testament to the strength of an organisation, and in the case of Girl Guides, a testament to what they stand for and what they do. The Girl Guides is the largest volunteer organisation for girls and young women worldwide. For a hundred years it has been transforming the lives of girls and young women by building leadership skills, supporting volunteering and community action, and fostering civic duty locally and globally. The High Tea was well attended by past and current local Guides, along with Virginia Hey, the Regional Manager North Coast Pacific Region, and Joy Ord, the International Consultant for Girl Guides Australia. I congratulate the Lismore Guides on this milestone and for continuing to thrive, with around 30 active members across three units.

Congratulations as well to the three local Girl Guide leaders, Elizabeth Cheater, Leonie Davis, and Vanessa Robinson. These women are role models for their members and are doing a great job supporting Girl Guides to be actively involved in their community.

JAMIE GROUCHER

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Jamie Groucher, from Warilla High School, for receiving the Minister's Award for Excellence in Teaching at the Minister's and Secretary's Awards for Excellence which were announced on 5 September 2023. Jamie received this award for their foresight and deep knowledge of how students learn supports them to become the best versions of themselves through understanding, acceptance and hard work. Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning, Prue Car MP, said she was delighted to highlight the incredible achievements of the public system's outstanding students and teachers. "These awards are a great opportunity to call out the fabulous educators, who every day are making a difference in the lives of children, and the inspiring students demonstrating academic, cultural, sporting and leadership excellence." Minister Car said. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our congratulations to Jamie on this outstanding achievement.

HUNTER BARRETT

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Hunter Barrett, from Shellharbour Public School, for representing the South Coast SSA for Rugby Union in August. This was a three-day tournament where selectors were watching each game intently to select a NSW State PSSA team. Hunter's South Coast team came 3rd in their pool which meant that they were able to compete for the Governor's Shield. The South Coast SSA team were winners of the Governor's Shield and Hunter was selected for the NSW State PSSA team that will play at the Kings School in Sydney. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our congratulations to Hunter and wish him well in his future sporting endeavours.

CHASE MATHEIN

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Chase Mathein, a Year 6 student at Shellharbour Public School, who has been announced as a finalist for the nation's leading science awards, the Australian Museum Eureka Prizes. The awards offer \$180,000 in prize money across a broad spectrum of science, from environmental sustainability to cutting-edge technology, citizen science initiatives, leadership, and mentoring. Chase was named a finalist for the Sleek Geeks Science prize, for his home-made video around the secrets of trees which was made completely at his home. He used drones and stop motion to produce a high-quality video that he worked on during the Term 1 holiday. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our congratulations to Chase and wish him well with his future endeavours.

HONEYBEE HIVES

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—Clarence Valley business HoneyBee Hives is buzzing with excitement after taking out the Excellence in Agriculture and Primary Industries category at the 2023 Northern Rivers Business Awards held on the weekend. The awards are designed to recognise the strength, resilience and talent of small business owners in rural and regional areas. Established in 2018, the business is run by husband-and-wife team, Scott Richardson and Di McQueen-Richardson and focusses on providing customers with the highest quality and sustainable products and services. The business specialises in creating and selling bees as well as producing award-winning boutique honey and honeycomb products and all-natural beeswax-based balms which are lovingly handcrafted using superior quality ingredients. Some of these products have been purchased by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as gifts for visiting dignitaries. Despite facing a challenging few years with drought, bushfires and floods, the business continues to thrive because of Scott and Di's commitment and passion for excellence in their craft along with the invaluable support and loyalty of their customers. I congratulate Scott and Di on their most recent success and wish them every success in the future.

CONGRATULATIONS ORLANDO HICKLING

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—A mighty congratulations to rising rugby league player, Orlando Hickling of Gulmarrad who has been selected to represent the NSW First Nations Goanna team in the Australian Secondary Schools Rugby League 14-15 Years National Championships. I recently had the pleasure of meeting Orlando during a recent visit to Maclean High School where he is a student in Year 10. Whilst he is very modest about his achievement, he is very excited to be donning the boots. It presents a wonderful opportunity for him to showcase his amazing talent at national level. Orlando is a standout player for Lower Clarence Magpies Junior Rugby League Football Club under 16's coached by John Elisaia and aspires to play for the Cronulla Sharks one day. His biggest supporters are his mum, Deeann, father Anthony, his brothers, AJ, Bronx and Roman and

his nan, Noeline Kapeen who are rightly very proud of him. I have no doubt Orlando is one to watch and I wish him every success in the future.

GRAFTON HIGH SCHOOL GIRL'S OPEN HOCKEY TEAM

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I offer my congratulations to Grafton High School Girl's Open Hockey Team who took out gold at the NSW CHS Hockey Girls knockout finals on 14 September at Moorebank. The girls defeated Hunter Sports High School 2-1 in a fast-paced and hard-fought final having previously beaten Bellingen, Armidale, Mackellar Girls and Crookwell High Schools to progress to the finals. This is the first time the girl's team has won the title since the competition started some 51 years' ago which is a remarkable achievement, and one in which they should be extremely proud. All 15 players ranging from Years 7-12 gave their all as a team delivering a solid performance all round. They are Martina Williams (Captain), Jess Sear (Vice-Captain), Jordyn McSkimming (Goalkeeper), Mikayla Chambers-Ward, Jessica Marsh, Sophie Hinterholz, Julia Hennessy, Mia Hayne, Maia Adamson, Shelera Williams, Shaniqua Williams, Shani Firth, Shanae Crispin, Eliza Berrick, Annabel Dungee (Goalkeeper), Milla Stephenson and off-field supporter and current NSW rep player, Mackenna Ensbey who was recovering from injury. Hats off also to coaches Alana Keats and Brenda Baker who have dedicated their time, energy and skills to help produce a gold winning performance by the girls.

ST MARYS NORTH PUBLIC 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)—Congratulations to the staff at St Marys North Public School, who received the Secretary's Award at the NSW Minister and Secretary's Awards for Excellence 2023. St Marys North Public School won this award for their outstanding school initiative, the ACO Foundations String Program. The ACO Foundations Program collaborates with the Australian Chamber Orchestra to deliver quality music education to all students in Years 1, 2 and 3. This program has been met with great success, improving students' cognitive, emotional and behavioural development throughout their learning. This is a significant achievement that recognises the hard work of schools to better the learning and development of school students. Congratulations St Marys North Public School, thank you for your hard work and ongoing commitment to our future generation.

ST PAUL'S GRAMMAR YEAR 11 STUDENTS ADDISON AND LILY

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 two outstanding young women from St Paul's Grammar School, who received the prestigious Victor Chang Award. Recipients Addison and Lily in Year 11 received this award to recognise their commitment and passion to science. Both students have made amazing progress in the subject, dedicating themselves to their senior studies at St Paul's Grammar. Addison and Lily were nominated by their teachers to receive this award, who have expressed their tenacity and commitment to science. Congratulations Addison and Lily, you both have bright futures ahead of you and I look forward to witnessing your achievements in the future.

PENRITH BMX CLUB

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, Minister for Western Sydney, and Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education)—The riders at Penrith BMX Club have achieved outstanding results at the last round of the NSW/ACT HutSix BMX State and Territory Series for 2023. Over 20 riders competed in a range of different events, showcasing their talent and representing our local community. The Penrith BMX Club received some outstanding results at this event and are working towards competing at the State Titles. What great representatives of our local community, who are inspiring the next generations of BMX riders in Penrith. Congratulations to all who participated at the event as well as the volunteers who worked hard to ensure the smooth operation of the event. Best of luck at the State Championships!

SOPHIE GALAMBOS

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt)—I wish to recognise Ms Sophie Galambos who is a resident of my electorate, on her recent award at the 2023 Bishop of Parramatta, Awards for Student Excellence, presented to students who achieve well in their academic, sporting creative vocational or community endeavours. Sophie, is a Student Leader at CathWest Innovation College, who is currently studying a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care as well as Business Services. Sophie is a talented swimmer and dancer and uses her passions to give back to her community through fundraising and entertainment for aged care residents, showing her true kindness. I congratulate Sophie on this much deserved recognition and wish her all the best in her future studies and community work.

WARNERS BAY HIGH SCHOOL TECHGIRLS BLUE SCREEN TEAM

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—Congratulations to Imogen Smith, Sophie Elston and Ami Bromhead of Warners Bay High School, for winning the 2023 Tech Girls NSW Secondary School category. The Tech Girls Movement Foundation campaigns for a future where women will lead and innovate across STEM fields, thus empowering themselves and bringing broader social and economic benefits. Imogen, Sophie and Ami developed, designed and produced an app called TEACHU—an app aimed at addressing the education gap which developed over the COVID-19 lockdown period. Along with an in-built chat feature which allows students and teachers to communicate, the app empowers learners to build their skills or practice their learning with tutors, study buddies and study groups. Congratulations to the girls on working together, putting in an amazing effort and building something extraordinary and helpful. What fantastic work! I would also like to acknowledge and thank to the team's coach, Lisa Chawner, and team mentor Lyndal Hamwood.

STATION 505 TINGIRA HEIGHTS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—Firefighters from 505 station at Tingira Heights recently conducted a feather-raising rescue in Lake Macquarie—but thankfully they've ruled out fowl play! The Charlestown Electorate-based firefighters safely rescued six ducklings from a drain on Melroy Drive in Mount Hutton on Thursday 14 September. Father and Mother Duck safely made it across the drain, but their hatchlings fell about three metres through the grate into the water below. A FRNSW crew responded to the scene and after using a gas detector to confirm the drain was safe, Qualified Firefighter Ben Abbott descended down into the grate to reach the stranded little ducklings. Over half an hour, Ben carefully lifted the animals over several trips up and down the drain's ladder. After what I'm sure was a tense waiting period for Father and Mother Duck, they were happily reunited with their little ones and went on their way. My thanks to Ben and the entire crew from the Tingira Heights station, for providing the cutest news story I've seen in a while and working every day to help those in need—whether human or duck!

MATISSE MURRAY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—Congratulations to Matisse Murray, one the outstanding 2024 school captains at Whitebridge High School in the Charlestown Electorate. On Tuesday 13 September, Matisse took some time out from her preliminary exams study to represent the school at the Charlestown Lions Club Youth of the Year competition. Matisse was interviewed by a panel of four judges and was then required to respond to two impromptu questions before delivering a prepared speech. Matisse was asked about her knowledge of the referendum on the Aboriginal Voice to Parliament—and she gave a wonderfully powerful speech about women in sport, which is a very timely topic. Matisse was awarded the first place in the Public Speaking part of the competition and to top this off she was also awarded first place in the Charlestown Lions Club Lions Youth of the Year. She will now go on to the next round of this competition, and I wish her all the best. Congratulations Matisse, and good luck with the HSC!

BISHOP'S STUDENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS - HANNAH GALEB

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—Cerdon College Merrylands' Hannah Galeb was recognised at the 2023 Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese annual Bishop's Student Excellence Awards at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta on 7 September. Bishop Vincent Long, Bishop of Parramatta recognised the achievements of students who have exemplified hard work, discipline, and dedication in Catholic education. These virtues, rooted in Christ's teachings, are a cause for celebration. The awards honoured not only academic excellence but also excellence in sports, arts, and various fields of endeavor, reflecting the holistic nature of Catholic education. Hannah Galeb is an exemplary role model in the way she has made an outstanding contribution to the College. She has been an effective Peer Support Leader, House Captain and House Vice Captain, Class Captain, member of the Enviro Squad and social justice advocate. She is currently the College Captain. Hannah always strives to achieve personal best in everything she does. She is always supportive of other students as they seek to involve themselves in College life. Furthermore, Hannah demonstrates witness to Catholicism in all her endeavours. She is truly a worthy recipient of this award for student excellence. My congratulations to Hannah on this marvellous achievement.

BISHOP'S STUDENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS – CLARESSA BECHARA

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—Delany College Granville's Claressa Bechara was recognised at the 2023 Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese annual Bishop's Student Excellence Awards at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta on 7 September. Bishop Vincent Long, Bishop of Parramatta recognised the achievements of students who have exemplified hard work, discipline, and dedication in Catholic education. These virtues, rooted in Christ's

teachings, are a cause for celebration. The awards honoured not only academic excellence but also excellence in sports, arts, and various fields of endeavour, reflecting the holistic nature of Catholic education. Claressa Bechara is an active member of the College and part of our College Student Representative Council. She embodies the charism of Daniel Delany with her faith and resilience in all aspects of her life. Claressa is a servant leader who has represented the College with pride and has volunteered for a number of charities and organisations. She has participated in College liturgies, assemblies, and was instrumental in designing the College chapel. She always strives to reach her potential and is one of the College's high achievers. Claressa is highly respected by all and is an impressive ambassador for Delany College. My congratulations to Claressa on this marvellous achievement.

1ST EAST ROSEVILLE SCOUTS

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Sunday, 17 September I was invited to the 1st East Roseville Scout Group in Roseville Chase for their annual BBQ, awards afternoon, and 2025 Jamboree program launch. The 1st East Roseville Scout Group has been venturing for 77 years since 1946. In 2023, they consist of 28 cubs, 17 scouts and 12 venturers. I was delighted to attend and congratulate Max Moran who completed his King Scout Award. It is an honour that involves commitment, thoughtfulness and stamina. I note the previous award at 1st East Roseville Scouts was 27 years ago in 1995. This demonstrates the tremendous effort Max undertook. It was also pleasing to acknowledge outgoing Group Leader Graeme Stevenson, who contributed over seven years of service. He was recently awarded a Meritorious Service Award. In good news, the Scout Hall laneway was recently upgraded due to the Community Building Partnership grant. I trust this will help greatly. I look forward to working with 1st East Roseville Scouts into the future. They are a wonderful organisation.

RURAL FIRE SERVICE NORTHERN BEACHES DISTRICT MEDAL PRESENTATION 2023

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—It was an honour on Thursday 7th of September 2023 to be invited and attend Northern Beaches Rural Fire Service [RFS] District Medal Presentations for 2023. 18 National Medals and 33 Long Service Medals were awarded. The Long Service Medals recognise service ranging from 10 years to over 50 years. I acknowledge Allan Brett, who has been a member for 52 years, who received the National Medal 3rd Clasp; Ronald Hughes, for his 50 years of service; and Retired Chief Superintendent Alan Brinkworth, for his 50 years of service. Alan is also the RFS Honorary Historian. In addition I acknowledge Superintendent Guy Baddock, the District Manager. The Northern Beaches RFS is vital to our community, and many other communities in their times of need. I thank them for their efforts already to minimise the danger facing us this bushfire season.

KU-RING-GAI MALE CHOIR

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Sunday, 10th of September 2023 I attended the Ku-ring-gai Male Choir's Concert at the Hornsby RSL, joined by my wife Gessika. The Ku-ring-gai Male Choir is the one of the oldest performing male voice choirs in Australia, founded in 1946 by returned servicemen from World War 2. Attendees were graced with many songs, including classic tunes by Rogers and Hammerstein, Simon and Garfunkel's Bridge over Troubled Water, and Les Misérables' Bring Him Home. Additionally, we heard from two guest artists Anita Kyle (formerly of the Manly-Warringah Choir) and Lucinda Beck. Both were great sopranos, singing renditions of Un bel di from Puccini's Madame Butterfly and Vivaldi's Laudamus te from Gloria. I acknowledge all the choir members, Hank Xiang, the accompanist and Musical Director Dr Paul Whiting OAM. As a 'Friend of the Choir' I look forward to attending their next concert and recommend all Davidson residents do the same.

CALVARY MATER NEWCASTLE HOSPITAL SUPPORT FOR TONGA AND THE PEOPLE OF VAVA'U

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—The small Tongan island of Vava'u has suffered its fair share of misery and destruction in recent times. As a result of cyclones in 2014 and 2018, a volcanic eruption, tsunami and ash cloud in 2022, the residents were in need of help. Originally from Vava'u, Sandy and Sani Vea from the East Maitland Rotary Club requested donations of medical and educational equipment for Tongan hospitals and schools. At the Calvary Mater Newcastle Hospital, Acting Clinical Nurse Consultant for Oncology, Casey Hutchinson, Director of Mission Integration, Kellie Goldsworthy, and the Support Services team, including Darrin Jenkins, Hayden Linich and Corey Pepperall, were ready to help. In early July, the Support Services team helped them load the truck with wheelchairs, beds, commodes, blood pressure machines, bandages, bed side tables, walking frames, recliners, crutches, walking sticks, and various other medical equipment that could be used or re-purposed in Tonga. These donations will have a positive impact on the local community of Vava'u. Well done to the kind and generous individuals at our Calvary Mater Newcastle Hospital!

BATYR

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Suicide remains the leading cause of death for young people in Australia. Batyr, a preventative mental health program, was founded in 2011 and has a growing team over 1,000 young storytellers who share their personal experiences, helping others to lead a mentally healthy and fulfilling life, striving to keep them from reaching the point of crisis. A quarter of university students will experience mental ill-health in any one year. Dr Hannah Brown, the Program Coordinator for Batyr University of Newcastle [UoN], said that the program, which started at UoN in 2022 and is run by students, aims to educate and empower students to prevent chronic diseases through mental health and wellbeing initiatives, increasing knowledge of the diverse avenues of support available to the university community. University is a critical transition period in students' lives, going from the comfort of high school and family to having new pressures and stress which students find hard to cope with. Congratulations and well done to Dr. Brown, and the staff of Batyr for improving mental health at UoN.

ALEX HUNTER AND LOCAL CONNECTIONS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Restaurant Local Connections is a fusion of farm-to-table dining, sustainable with zero waste and an authentic engagement with the local community, showing just what Newcastle is capable of. Its ethos revolves around quality, healthy, sustainable and local ingredients and forging links with the local community. Head chef Alex Hunter, cooking since 2008, with experience in Michelin-starred restaurants, is all about traditions, rich ingredients, pleasure, passion and creativity. Local Connections promotes local suppliers, growers and producers by serving dishes using only fruit and vegetables from a group of local growers called Newcastle Greens - microgreens, heirloom vegetables and edible flowers - in addition to produce from a nearby community garden. Hunter's food philosophy is all about texture, umami and letting flavours speak for themselves. The menu always adapts to available produce, the wine is from the Hunter Valley, and there are lots of local beers. His team includes students from University of Newcastle, strengthening the connection between the University and the community. Alex Hunter, congratulations for helping to put Newcastle firmly on the food map in NSW.

WESLEY BERTRAM

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I wish to celebrate an outstanding young individual from our community, Wesley Bertram, a Year 8 student who has been duly recognised as the NSW RFS Young Volunteer of the Year (12-15 years) at the prestigious RFS Headquarters in Sydney Olympic Park. This accolade speaks volumes not only of Wesley's dedication but also of the future leaders emerging from our community. Both the Minister for Emergency Services and the RFS Commissioner were effusive in their appreciation for Wesley's exemplary commitment to the Mamre Cadet Rural Fire Brigade and the Orchard Hills Rural Fire Brigade. Despite his young age, Wesley embodies the very values that the NSW Rural Fire Service holds dear. What is particularly heartening is the way Wesley, in his acceptance speech, left a mark on every individual present. It is not every day that we come across young minds with such determination and a clear sense of purpose. We are immensely proud of you, Wesley. Your dedication, spirit, and commitment serve as an inspiration to us all. Here's to our young heroes who lead by example!

BROOKE BAILEY

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I wish to shine a spotlight on an exceptional talent from Glenmore Park, Brooke Bailey. From the tender age of five, Brooke's sporting prowess in OzTag has captured the attention of many. Over the years, she has represented Penrith and the West Sydney Tigers in various State Cup tournaments. By the age of 21, her dedication led to her donning the green and gold, representing Australia annually since 2018. Most recently, she took to the field in Ireland, filling our community with immense pride. However, her sporting talents are not confined to OzTag. In 2021, Brooke ventured into the world of AFL, joining the East Coast Eagles. In her debut season, she showcased such finesse and skill that the team finished the season undefeated. Recognising her natural flair, the Sydney Swans extended an invitation to Brooke for their AFL Winter Series/Academy in just her second year. In recognition of her outstanding sporting achievements, Brooke was recently crowned the winner of the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation Senior Sports Award. As Brooke sets her sights on becoming an AFLW sensation, our community eagerly supports her. Here's to Brooke Bailey, Glenmore Park's rising star and an inspiration to us all.

BROCK STINSON

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I wish to acknowledge a remarkable young talent from Mulgoa, Brock Stinson. A name that has become synonymous with speed and precision, Brock, at the tender age of 19, has achieved commendable accolades in the world of motor racing. Having grown up amidst the roar and energy of racetracks, influenced by his father, Mark Stinson, a fervent race car enthusiast, Brock's trajectory

seemed almost preordained. However, it's not merely about genes. By the age of 17, following eight formidable years in go-kart racing, young Stinson had already amassed a considerable number of achievements. Recently, he showcased his prowess at the Sydney Motorsport Park in the Toyota Gazoo Racing Australia 86 Series, securing an impressive placement in his debut. Yet, Brock's brilliance is not limited to the racetrack. He is also a Mechanical Engineering student at the University of NSW, works assiduously as a race mechanic and driver training instructor, and notably represented our nation in the 2019 F1 in Schools programme in Abu Dhabi. His dedication, intelligence, and passion mark Brock out as an exemplary figure in our community. I would urge potential sponsors to support Brock's burgeoning journey. Mulgoa has always been home to hidden gems, and today, I'm proud to spotlight one.

PORT CITY BREAKERS GROUP 3 PREMIERSHIP WIN

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today, I inform the House that the Grand Final winners of the Group 3 Rugby League Women's League Tag are the mighty Port City Breakers. An emphatic victory was recorded on Saturday, 16th September as Port City Breakers thrashed Taree City Bulls 16 points to 0 in a clinical performance, showcasing the team's experience and talents on the football field. It was a fitting result for player Kara Lewis who recorded her 150th game with the Breakers. During the match Jayme Averillo scored a double, Nicole Pender, one try in the opening two minutes, while Sarah O'Connor kicked two goals. Chloe English was also acknowledged for playing strongly throughout the match. Player of Match was presented to Sarah O'Connor. Sarah not only helped to secure a premiership win for the Breakers but the previous evening played in a winning side with the Cundletown Jets, taking out the Football Mid North Coast Southern League Women's Grand Final. Ecstatic with the girls win, Coach Brent Nixon commended his teams superior defence and ruck plays which placed pressure on the Bulls throughout the match. Congratulations to the girls on a sensational win!

VOLUNTEER TEAM OF THE YEAR - KENDALL COMMUNITY OP-SHOP VOLUNTEERS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise the dedicated team of volunteers from the Kendall Op Shop and to congratulate them on being awarded 'NSW Volunteer of the Year, Mid North Coast Volunteer Team'. The Centre for Volunteering Australia held their regional ceremony in Port Macquarie on Friday 25th August, where several Op Shop Committee members and volunteers attended to receive the award. Money raised through the Kendall Op Shop goes back into local community development grants. These grants have helped to provide more than \$830,000 for the local community over the past decade, including funds to help build the community pool as well as new cattle sheds at the Showground to name just a few. Funds raised through retail sales have also supported local tennis, football and cricket clubs, schools, bike paths, craft and historical groups and recreational and environmental upgrades. I am so pleased to have the opportunity to acknowledge this outstanding organisation in Parliament and express my gratitude to the over 85 volunteers, who contribute their time, energy, knowledge and skills to the management and operation of the Kendall Op Shop.

WASCALS – MAKING A DIFFERENCE ON DAFFODIL DAY

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I rise today to recognise the efforts of a motivated team of secondary students who attend Hastings Secondary College, Westport Campus. These tireless volunteers are known as the WASCALS (Westport Aware Students of Cancer and Leukaemia Sufferers). This dedicated group of students includes Benji, Ashley, Blake, Jemma, Austin, Jorja and Ellen. Recently, the team visited six local partner primary schools to spread the message of hope, raise awareness of cancer and collect funds for research and patient support. I am incredibly inspired when a school community comes together to support each other and this is exactly what happened when WASCALS needed to prepare and package over 800 craft packages. As one of their major fundraising ventures for the year, students created meaningful daffodil pendants in exchange for a gold coin donation. The symbol of the daffodil represents resilience and the ability to endure adversity. Its colour symbolises hope and optimism for all those impacted by cancer. WASCALS have baked 'Sweets for Sufferers,' participated in 'Relay for Life' and donated funds to their Principal when he participated in 'Dancing with the Stars.' I am proud to commend these generous young people to the Parliament.

BAYSIDE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport)—Recently, I was privileged to open the School Development Day conference, which was organised by the Bayside Learning Community of Schools and held at Brighton Le Sands in my electorate. It was held after an extended break due to Covid-19 restrictions. Bayside Learning Community consists of a group of primary and secondary schools, with the majority located in my electorate. The focus of this conference is to empower teachers by building teacher collective efficacy. This conference was attended by over 250 teachers across the member schools with special guest speakers presenting on the importance of teacher wellbeing. Being a product of the public school system myself, I am a strong advocate for the public school community, and fully understand the need for, and importance of such training days.

Conferences like these are vital to our teachers, whose resilience, tenacity, passion, and commitment have been further highlighted during the pandemic. These sessions not only enable teachers to upskill, develop and share their knowledge and experiences, but enable them to learn different strategies for motivating and engaging students. This leads to increased teacher work satisfaction and improved student outcomes. I commend Bayside Learning Community and wish them continued success.

KIM POLLACK – GUMNUT CHILDCARE CENTRE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to congratulate Kim Pollack for 25 years' service to the children and families within Gundagai, who call the Gumnut Childcare Centre home. Kim was the centre's Director since 2003, and her remarkable tenure with the centre regrettably ended on Tuesday 18 July 2023, marking two decades in the role. I was fortunate enough to catch up with Kim earlier this year in February and spend some time at the centre with the other early childhood educators and children. During her time at the centre, Kim has taught the children of parents, who she taught many years ago and this is truly special. Kim is currently studying her Master of Special and Inclusive Education, specialising in Early Childhood, and was one of just 76 recipients of this scholarship from the former NSW Government. While working for the centre, Kim was also teaching early childhood education part-time for the past twelve years through Tumut TAFE, which she will now pursue on a permanent basis. Kim, I wish you every success for whatever your future may hold.

GANMAIN HOTEL SOCIAL CLUB

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I wish to recognise the tireless effort of the Ganmain Hotel Social Club and their endeavours in supporting a local family. The communities that make up the Coolamon Shire are rallying behind the Ganmain Hotel Social Club in their efforts to raise money for business owner and Ganmain local of 30 years, Sharon Walsh. Mrs Walsh is currently receiving chemotherapy for pancreatic cancer. To help support Mrs Walsh during her treatment the Ganmain Hotel Social Club has organised a mega raffle and a Masquerade Ball. Ms Walsh previously worked for the Ganmain Hotel for 10 years and when Board member, Jamie Angove heard of Sharon's health, she wanted to organise an event that spoke true to Mrs Walsh's character. The Ganmain Hotel Social Club decided that a Masquerade Ball was the perfect opportunity to achieve this. The Ball will take place on 14 October 2023. All profits made will be going directly to Ms Walsh and her family to ensure that she receives the best treatment and care. I wish the Ganmain Hotel Social Club a successful evening.

EMMA HASLAM – HAIR DONATION

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—My congratulations to Cowra Local, Emma Haslam on her participation in the World's Greatest Shave. Emma will be shaving her hair off on October 18 at St Raphael's Catholic School. With the aim of raising \$1000 for the World's Greatest Shave, Emma is extremely close to this goal and is looking at increasing this goal to raise even more money for the charity. Now in its 25th Year, The Leukaemia Foundation's World's Greatest Shave is one of Australia's longest running and most well-loved fundraising campaigns. More than two million people have sacrificed their hair or donated to someone who has during this time. All money raised by Emma will help those facing blood cancer receive the support and information they need, while also driving breakthrough research projects discovering better ways to diagnose and treat this awful disease. I wish Emma all the very best of luck in her fundraising endeavours and thank her for her generous donation to this very important foundation.

SCHOOLS SPECTACULAR 2023

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I'd like to congratulate all the schools that participated in the annual Schools Spectacular this year, including a number within the Oatley Electorate. This is a flagship event for our State, showcasing the creativity and talent of students within public schools throughout New South Wales. This year's Schools Spectacular celebrated 40 years of outstanding performances, featuring a 2600-person choir, 2,300 dancers, a stage band, and an orchestra. I'd like to recognise Connells Point Public School, Georges River College Oatley Senior Campus and Peakhurst Campus, Oatley West Public School and Oatley Public School, who all participated in this year's event. The talent we have here in the Oatley Electorate is second to none. I'd also like to thank all the teachers who sacrificed their time to ensure that this year's event was a smashing success! Your hard work and dedication to your students is unmatched. I urge everyone to support all our wonderful local students on stage. The event will be held at Sydney's Qudos Bank Arena from the 24th and the 25th of November.

ST GEORGE POLICE AREA COMMAND AWARDS CEREMONY

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I rise to recognise some of our communities' finest police officers and first responders, who were honoured at the St George Police Area Command Awards Ceremony last month. I was privileged to attend as a special guest, and I would like to foremost thank Commander of the St George Police Area Command, Superintendent Rohan Cramsie, for his hospitality on the day. It was wonderful to see so many police officers receiving recognition for their hard work, sacrifice, and dedication to the local

community. Being a police officer is certainly no easy task, and they often do not get the recognition they deserve. Police officers work incredibly hard within our community to ensure that our area is the best place to live, work and raise a family. Whilst the awards ceremony recognised several officers for outstanding service in the field, I would like to formally thank all police officers within my community and across New South Wales for their exceptional work. It was certainly an enjoyable morning and I look forward to hopefully attending next year. Congratulations to all the award recipients!

PENSHURST RSL VIETNAM VETERANS - COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I rise to recognise the sacrifices, bravery, and efforts of Vietnam War veterans in our local area. Eight Veterans from the Penshurst RSL Sub-Branch recently had the opportunity to take part in a commemorative service, held at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial in Canberra. The commemorative service marked the 50th anniversary of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. From all accounts, the battles in Vietnam were unlike anything Australia or the world has ever seen. We acknowledge over 500 Australians who sadly lost their lives during the War, and the further 3000 that were wounded. Whilst over 60,000 Australians served during the Vietnam War, many of them returned home to scathing criticism. Whilst attitudes have certainly changed over time, it is still important to remember their sacrifices through commemorative events. Recognising the service of our Vietnam War Veterans is so important, and we owe a debt of gratitude to everyone who served. I'd like to thank President of the Penshurst RSL Sub-branch, Mr Keith Pratt, as well as all those who had the privilege of attending this important ceremony.

VALE BRETT CHRISTIANSEN

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Last week Maitland Pickers club legend Brett Christiansen was farewelled at Maitland Sportsground by his family, friends, and players past and present. Brett was named at fullback in the Pickers team of the century in 2015 alongside names such as Terry Pannowitz, Robert Finch, John Graves and Noel Pidding. Brett was a Newcastle and NSW Country representative, and a cherished Maitland Pumpkin Pickers Old Boy. Brett was a founding member of Maitland Old Boys in 2002, setup to assist past and present players and support junior players in their career pathway. Affectionately known as 'Crito' Brett passed away unexpectedly aged 52, on the eve of Maitland Pickers recent grandfinal win. The Pickers squad wore black armbands as a sign of their respect as they thrashed Souths 46-10 in the grandfinal. Halfback Brock Lamb later dedicating his man-of-the-match award to Brett. My thoughts are with Brett's father Megsy, brother Jamie, and his three children Luke, Lara, and Lili. Vale Brett Christiansen.

EARTHCARE PARK LANDCARE GROUP

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Landcare does such important work for the environment around our country and our communities. I would like to recognise particularly the results being achieved at Earthcare Park near Tenambit. Earthcare Park was established on 50 hectares of Crown land and encompasses the Tenambit wetlands. Through carrying out mass tree plantings, setting up a bushfood garden and establishing walking trails, members have transformed what was a degraded space into a wildlife haven. The land, which was once heavily cleared and used as a dairy farm, rifle range and stock holding area, has been regenerated. The site went from having very few trees to now having more than 60,000 trees, shrubs and grasses. In just the past 10 years, it has gone from being home to 37 bird species, to now boasting 120, and it has been recognised as a Hunter River long-necked turtle hotspot. A recent planting day put in hundreds of plants before lunch. The plants included native guava, sarsaparilla, wombat berry, bottle brush and native grape, all which are indigenous to Maitland. Thank you, Earthcare Park Landcare Group, for your dedication and hard work.

JOYCE PINCHIN

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—I wish to acknowledge Joyce Pinchin for her service to the people of Maitland. Joyce is 86-years-old and has volunteered for the Justice Advocacy Service at Maitland Local Court for the last 12 years. Joyce has spent her life giving back, working in our courts supporting vulnerable people, many with cognitive impairments, to change the trajectory of their lives. Clients actively seek out Joyce and ask for her support because of her reputation as someone who does not judge and genuinely wants to help and see them do better. The clients Joyce supports feel disempowered and come with a multitude of issues, but Joyce gives them a voice. The respect Joyce has from services, court staff, Magistrates and the legal fraternity demonstrates the valuable work she does to advocate in an incredibly vulnerable setting with a diverse clientele. Joyce fills in the gaps of an often-unjust system which often sees the most vulnerable in our community slip through the cracks. Joyce is no longer able to drive which has meant that she will no longer support clients at Maitland Local Court. However, Joyce will continue to support clients at Cessnock, where she lives. Thank you Joyce.

SALTWATER CAFÉ KIAMA

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Saltwater Café in Kiama winners of the Most Outstanding Restaurant Award at the Illawarra & South Coast Local Business Awards 2023 which were held on Wednesday 13th September 2023. Gülçin Töpel, the driving force behind Saltwater, also earned recognition as a finalist in the Business Person of the Year Category. Gülçin reminisced about the journey that led to this proud moment. Taking over Saltwater in May 2021, she faced the immediate challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic, which dramatically altered the small business landscape. Saltwater boasts a dedicated team of 24 employees, primarily locals. Their dedication extends far beyond the coffee and food business, with many of them pursuing education and their future dreams. Saltwater is a very popular local business in the Kiama CBD and provides exceptional products and friendly customer service to everybody. A huge congratulations and well done to the staff and owners at Saltwater Café in Terralong Street, Kiama on reaching this incredible achievement.

KIAMASALA

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises that Kiama is set to host an Indian-themed festival called 'Kiamasala' that aims to bring the spirit of India to the South Coast on Sunday 5th November 2023. This 'mela' (fair) will feature vibrant colours, flavours and sounds of India, a country well-known for its joyous street festivals that unify communities in celebration. The theme of coming together is deeply ingrained in Indian culture. Attendees can expect a family-friendly day that includes music, classic dancing, Bollywood, street food, yoga, market stalls, henna artists and more Indian-themed attractions. This will be a free event for our local community to get together with their family and friends, enjoy a picnic and celebrate the rich contribution of our growing Indian migrant community in the region. I would like to acknowledge the Festival Director, Mr Tom Oxley. The Kiamasala organising committee comprises key local Indian business and community leaders to ensure a truly authentic cultural experience for festival attendees. Kiamasala aims to promote the Illawarra region as an attractive destination for skilled migration and establish new businesses, with plans to partner the festival with a sister city in India.

CORE STORE, GERRINGONG

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Core Store which has officially opened in Gerringong, which is the dream of business partners, surf shop enthusiast Mick Morgan and artist and designer Grant Findlay. Both were co-owners of On Print Gerringong, the T-shirt printing business next to Gerringong Petroleum in Fern Street which has now closed. They have transferred to the Core Store in the main shopping block of Gerringong at Shop 1/131 Fern Street opposite Old School Park. Mick has operated a number of surf shops over the years including The Core in Nowra about 25 years ago which was unfortunately lost to fire, so it is a dream come true to rebirth the old store. The Core Store is designed to cater to the young and active who want that comfortable loose clothing feel, which celebrates their relaxed outdoor lifestyle. Core is unique in offering its own brands, all designed by Grant which are printed on site. The Core team are Tom, Peta (who helps manage the store), Grant and Mick, who are all from Shoalhaven Heads and embedded in local surfing culture.

BAYVIEW GOLF CLUB

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I recently had the opportunity to visit Bayview Golf Club and officially open their course after the completion of irrigation and flood-proofing works. As golf continues to capture the hearts of Australians, with over 425,000 club members and 2.7 million regular golfers nationwide, Bayview Golf Club's innovation and desire to invest in enhancing accessibility year-round is truly commendable. Notably, the increase in women's membership by 4 per cent and men's membership by 2.5 per cent highlights the importance of such initiatives. Golf is a sport for all ages, offering a unique avenue for staying active, it plays a vital role in our community's health and well-being. I recognise Bayview Club President, Irene Newport, for her visionary leadership, and work to secure funding for the upgrades, her dedication to strengthening our local community is admirable. I commend local contractor, NeverStop Water, who completed the works in an efficient manner, always ensuring the full 18-hole course would be available each weekend. I look forward to seeing more people in Pittwater enjoy the benefits of golf. I am pleased that recognition of Bayview Golf Club's leadership and innovation is now preserved in the records of the oldest parliament in our nation.

CHARLOTTE YAN

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I congratulate local student Charlotte Yan on winning the 13-18 years category of the 2023 Northern Beaches Environmental Art & Design Award. Charlotte's work was selected from over 600 entries by young artists across the country. Charlotte's winning piece, titled, "Devolution", is a beautiful piece of art inspired by one of the jewels of Pittwater, the Narrabeen Lagoon. Her ability to harness the techniques

of the impressionists, bringing dimension and life to her work, showcases her remarkable artistic talents. "Devolution" beautifully portrays the unspoiled allure of nature, reminding us of the importance of preserving our precious environment. Currently pursuing a degree in architecture, Charlotte uses art as an outlet. Winning this award is a testament to Charlotte's talent and dedication and has inspired her to continue pursuing her passions. I am pleased that this local award has encouraged artists within my community to explore their creativity and potential. I wish Charlotte all the best in her artistic journey and career as an architect. I am pleased that recognition of Charlotte's success is now preserved in the oldest Parliament of our nation.

BOOKLOVERS NORTHERN BEACHES

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I congratulate The Booklovers Northern Beaches Club on their 70-year anniversary. The "Booklovers Club Warringah" started in 1953 as a humble gathering of young mothers in a Collaroy home and has now become an enduring community institution. In 1962, the club found a home in Berry Hall, Narrabeen, where a permanent library was established. In 2016, the club's name evolved to The Booklovers Club Northern Beaches Inc., but its essence remained unchanged – a diverse group of people united by their love of literature. The Northern Beaches are undoubtedly the most beautiful place in the world, but it is groups such as Booklovers Northern Beaches that make our community the best place in the world. The club meets multiple times each month, including their regular meetings featuring talks by guest authors and other exciting events. I applaud the volunteers that work so hard to share their love of books with our community. Thank you to the current committee: Maria Tomaino, Carolyn Darmanin, Jill Thompson, Susan Blakeney, Glenys Murray, Louise Matthews, Felicity Pulman and Margaret Zanardo. I am pleased that recognition of Booklovers Northern Beaches is now preserved in the oldest parliament in our nation.

ILLAWARRA BEEKEEPERS AT SUTHERLAND

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote)—The importance of bees can and should never be understated. Simply, without bees, our entire environment would collapse. That is why groups that help promote and preserve bees are so incredibly important. One of those groups is the Illawarra Beekeepers at Sutherland. The group was originally formed more 60 years ago and was based out of Menai. 20 years after its inception, the group relocated to Waratah Park in Sutherland. The organisation now has a number of facilities on its premises including an apiary – where guests can enjoy a hands-on experience. There is also a hexagonal clubhouse that can seat almost 100 people. The honey house – which was renovated five years ago – is fitted with honey extraction and processing equipment. There is also a beekeepers' shop, bee garden and beekeepers' library. The organisation has more than 170 members and offers several courses from the apiary in Sutherland. In just two weekends, the team at Illawarra Beekeepers at Sutherland can show someone everything they need to know about beekeeping. Well done to everyone who has been involved with the Illawarra Beekeepers over the past six decades.

BISHOP OF PARRAMATTA AWARD FOR STUDENT EXCELLENCE – ISAAC PAULINO

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Isaac Paulino on receiving a Bishop of Parramatta Award for Student Excellence on Thursday 7th September 2023, presented by the Rev. Bishop Vincent Long OFM at St Patrick's Cathedral. Isaac is an exceptional student at Patrician Brother's College, Blacktown. As College Captain, Isaac approaches all situations with humility, compassion, and care. His generous nature extends to his volunteering for social justice initiatives at school, including at fundraising appeals, liturgies, and the College Community Breakfast. Isaac is deeply connected with his faith and is a shining example of actively embodying the College Patrician Pillars. The Bishop of Parramatta Awards celebrate all-rounded excellence, acknowledging the empathy, courage and generosity students offer their schools and the broader Western Sydney community. The awards recognise Catholic Education's legacy to champion every person for the common good. Thank you, Jack de Groot, Executive Director Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese, Bishop Vincent Long and the Catholic Education community for facilitating this showcase. Thank you Mr Frank Chiment, Principal, Patrician Brother's College Blacktown and the school community for guiding high calibre students in faith and compassion. Congratulations again, Isaac, on this prestigious Award.

BISHOP OF PARRAMATTA AWARDS FOR STUDENT EXCELLENCE – JESSICA GAFA

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Jessica Gafa on receiving a Bishop of Parramatta Award for Student Excellence on Thursday 7th September 2023, presented by the Rev. Bishop Vincent Long OFM at St Patrick's Cathedral. Jessica is an extraordinary student at Nagle College in Blacktown. Her natural leadership enthusiastically directed the College Band and Vocal ensemble, bringing liturgies to life. A focused and diligent learner, Jessica excelled in the Step Up to Teaching Program at the Australian Catholic University. Jessica epitomises the Nagle College motto, "In Deed Not Word," with faith guiding her energetic pursuit to make our world a better place. The Bishop of Parramatta Awards celebrate all-rounded excellence, acknowledging the empathy, courage, generosity and service students offer their schools and the broader Western Sydney community. The awards recognise Catholic Education's legacy to champion every person for the common good. Thank you,

Jack de Groot, Executive Director Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese, Bishop Vincent Long and the Catholic Education community for facilitating this showcase. Thank you as well to Mrs Delma Horan, Nagle College Principal, and the school community for developing high calibre, compassionate students. Congratulations again, Jessica, on this prestigious Award.

BISHOP OF PARRAMATTA AWARDS FOR STUDENT EXCELLENCE – KATHERINE BAKER

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Katherine Baker on receiving a Bishop of Parramatta Award for Student Excellence on Thursday 7th September 2023, presented by the Rev. Bishop Vincent Long OFM at St Patrick's Cathedral. Katherine is an exceptional student at Our Lady of Mercy College in Parramatta. A role model to many, Katherine lives the Gospel values of humility, kindness and justice. Her service as Liturgy Leader, dedication to study, genuine interactions with the College community and participation in sporting teams, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Central Australian Immersion program attest Katherine's sincere care for others. The Bishop of Parramatta Awards celebrate all-rounded excellence, acknowledging the empathy, courage, and service students offer their schools and the broader Western Sydney community. The awards recognise Catholic Education's legacy to champion every person for the common good. Thank you, Jack de Groot, Executive Director Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese, Bishop Vincent Long and the Catholic Education community for facilitating this showcase. Thank you as well Ms Lucie Farrugia, Our Lady of Mercy College Principal, and the school community for their dedication to developing excellent students, guided by faith and compassion. Congratulations again, Katherine, on this prestigious Award.

SENIOR CONSTABLE PAUL DEAN

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I would like to acknowledge a popular safety initiative of Tumut resident Senior Constable Paul Dean of the Riverina Police District. Paul, as a highway patrol officer, serves regional communities by keeping our roads safe and sees firsthand the devastating impact of road accidents. A 2017 study conducted by the University of NSW (New South Wales) found that wearing a helmet while cycling reduced the risk of head injury by 51 per cent, serious head injuries by 69 per cent and facial injuries by 33 per cent. Not wearing a helmet while cycling attracts a fine of \$360. So, when Paul noticed a group of Tumut youths on bikes not wearing helmets he pulled them over and discovered that their parents were unable to afford helmets. Fining them would not improve community safety. Through Paul's initiative he sourced over 60 helmets from Transport for NSW's Rodney Simpson. The helmets are designed with First Nations artwork and are being donated to any youths in Tumut who need them. The helmets will help keep Tumut youths safe on regional roads and sustain a healthy and healthy lifestyle.

ARMENIAN FILM FESTIVAL

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Ryde's rich Armenian community was recently out in spirit for the screening of 'Amerikatsi' at Event Cinemas, Top Ryde. It was all part of the Armenian Film Festival's program for 2023, which opened with great spectacle, colour and richness of culture. I acknowledge the Co-Founder's and Directors, Margaret Chater and Hourie Demirjian for their professionalism and dedication to sharing stories and creativity with our local Armenian community, and those interested in learning about its extraordinary history. Locally in Ryde, it felt particularly fitting to showcase such an event alongside our local Mayor, Cr Sarkis Yedelian OAM, himself of Armenian descent and a great leader particularly in multicultural communities. The film screening was the central highlight of the evening, drawing attention to the richness of Armenian storytelling and heritage. From all accounts, its impact was profound, sparking discussions and reflection among many local attendees. This opening night of the Armenian Film Festival in Ryde served as a testament to the cultural significance of the event and the unity of the local community. It was a poignant reminder of how the arts can bridge cultures and foster deeper understanding in multicultural communities like Ryde.

DENISTONE BOWLING CLUB

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—The recent accomplishments of Denistone Bowling Club are truly commendable. The Women's Bowling Club's outstanding performance in the Macquarie District, securing Pennant Flags in both Grade 2 and Grade 3, is a testament to their skill and teamwork. The pinnacle of their success lies in the Women's Bowling Club Grade 2 side's victory in the Region Pennant Flag, propelling them to the State Finals. This achievement reflects their dedication and competitive spirit, making them a formidable force in the bowling community. The Men's Bowling Club's retention of the Jack Stuart Shield in a highly competitive 9-a-side event is another remarkable feat. Supported by the Ryde Sports Foundation, their triumph showcases their commitment to excellence on the bowling greens. At the recent Zone 10 (North West Sydney) Presentation Night, Denistone Sports Club also received two prestigious awards. The Club Encouragement Award for commitment to nurturing emerging talent; and Volunteer of the Year which went to Ron Court, the Denistone Mens Bowls Club Secretary. Ron's dedication and contributions to the club's success are invaluable, and this

recognition is well-deserved. Ron's passion and hard work epitomise the spirit of volunteerism that makes clubs like Denistone Sports thrive. Congratulations Deno!

EASTWOOD HEIGHTS PS FIREWORKS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Last weekend, I had the pleasure of attending the Eastwood Heights Public School fireworks night, and it was truly a remarkable evening. The event was filled with an abundance of stalls, adding to the overall excitement of the night, with the highlight for me being able to spend some time at the snow cone stall. The EHPS Fireworks night is an annual fundraiser, where the school brings together the local community and reinvests proceeds into the ongoing maintenance and improvement of local school facilities and programs. If my time on the snow cone machine was anything to go by, I am confident it was a highly profitable event! The combination of the vibrant atmosphere, the dazzling fireworks lighting up the sky, and the joy of crafting snow cones for others made the evening a memorable one. It's experiences like these that remind me of the wonderful sense of community that events like the Eastwood Heights Public School fireworks night can foster. I congratulate the Principal and P&C for all their work bringing this event together, and I look forward to being back again next year.

MEREWETHER CARLTON RUGBY CLUB

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—The Merewether Carlton Rugby Club, better known in Newcastle as the Greens, really showed up this season with six teams making it to the grand final, and great footy played around the board. The under 12s Merewether White team, came out on top with a convincing 14 point lead against Maitland. Well done to the whole team and to coach Steven Allen. The under 11s, under 15s, Premier 3, Premier 2, and Premier 1 teams all also made it to the grand final, coming second place after a great season. Despite not being able to come out on top, each game was exciting and every team played with passion and energy right to the last minute. Congratulations to Oliver Crowe from the Premier 2 team on being named the Hunter Rugby MVP of the match. I look forward to next year with another season of exhilarating Greens rugby.

HAMILTON HAWKS RUGBY CLUB

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Another huge season of rugby union has come to an end with three wins for the Hamilton Hawks Rugby Club. The under 10s team came out on the top of their ladder after an exciting season for these young superstars. If it couldn't get any better, the under 11s and under 14s teams took out both the minor and major premierships in their respective competitions. Congratulations to all three teams and their coaches Paul Collins, Chris McCourt, and Peter Foot. In the senior league, the women's team made it to an intense grand final where they just fell short of the premiership. It was a fantastic game nonetheless and congratulations to you all. Keep up the energy and we'll see you all on the field next year.

WANDERERS RUGBY CLUB

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Well done to the Wanderers Rugby Club on a fantastic season of rugby union in Newcastle. The women's team came out on top of their competition for another season after defeating the Hamilton Hawks in the grand final. It was a tough game but they fought hard for their victory. Congratulations to captains Britney Duff and Kirsty McGrorey, coach Geoff Davy, and the rest of the team, you've played so well. Ms Duff was also named as the Hunter Rugby MVP of the game. The Premier 2 team also took home their grand final for a second year in a row. It was a very close game but a last minute try got the team across the line. Well done to the whole team, try scorers Jared Nott and Sebastian Kavanagh, and coach David Tynan on another premiership. Congratulations to all the other Wanderers teams this season, especially the under 16s team who just missed out on a premiership in a tough grand final. Bring on next season!

CHARLOTTE TAYLOR

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—A young performer with dreams of seeing her name in lights on Broadway is closer to making that a reality after receiving a Variety Heart Scholarship. Bathurst's Charlotte Taylor received the scholarship to help fund her speech, drama and performance classes that will prepare her for a life in the spotlight. As a member of the Carillon Junior Theatrical Society, local dance school and other drama clubs Charlotte dedicates many hours to her passions, but this comes with struggles given her multiple diagnoses. The scholarships support young people living with illness or a disability but show immense talent. Charlotte is one of 63 children across NSW and the ACT who have been awarded a total of \$294,000 in scholarships to help them pursue their sporting and artistic dreams. This is a well-deserved achievement, and we wish Charlotte all the best in her endeavours to attend NIDA (National Institute of Dramatic Art) and audition for Aussie All-Stars.

GREG INGERSOLE

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—A man of many volunteer roles, Greg Ingersole has made his mark on the Bathurst community supporting them in a variety of ways. Greg has notched up over 45 years volunteering

for the Rural Fire Service after making a commitment to serve and protect his community in 1977. The veteran firefighter received an Australian Fire Service Medal which recognises distinguished service by members of the country's fire services. He spent weeks away at a time fighting the 2019/2020 Black summer fires that surround Bathurst from Lithgow and the Blue Mountains. More recently, Greg has received another honour for his time at Bathurst Scouts. In a commemoration service Greg accepted the Edward John Davidson Medal for exceptional and outstanding service to the 3rd Bathurst Scout Group. Greg has also been honoured with an Order of Australia Medal for service through the scouts and emergency services. Greg is a fantastic and passionate member of the Bathurst community, and we are very fortunate to have people like Greg making this an even better place to live.

CALLUM HOTHAM

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—An inspiring young artist has taken the streets of the Central West by storm. Calum Hotham is known for his realistic mural artworks that are brightening the streets and buildings of places like his hometown Bathurst, Blayney, and across to Western Sydney. His large-scale works have included portraits of local icons, the beautification of blank spaces around buildings, murals at community sporting clubs and schools as well as specialised wall paintings for local businesses such as barber shops and bakeries. Callum's latest work is a mural of a baker and his gingerbread creations on the side of a new bakery opening in Blayney. He also completed a second mural inside the store that depicted the baker eating doughnuts. Best known for his mural honouring champion cricketer Shane Warne in Sydney and NRL superstar Nathan Cleary in Penrith, Callum's work can also be found as part of the Australian Silo Art Trail. Like many street artists, Callum's work evokes conversations and revolutionises spaces through embellishing walls and expressing the lives and culture of people who live there. Callum has a raw talent that I and the community hope to see more of across the region.

ORANGE TAFE CAMPUS WORLDSKILLS EFFORT

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I would like to congratulate the Orange TAFE trades campus's on an outstanding result at the 2023 WorldSkills Australian championships held in Melbourne last month (August). Harrison Field, who travels from Bathurst to study at Orange TAFE, led the way by claiming gold in the welding category, earning him a trip to France to represent Australia on the world stage. Matt Vardanega also scored a medal, the fitting and machining apprentice with Orange company Scott Camery Welding and Fabrication, won a bronze medal in his trade category. Molong's Jackson Gersbach and Narromine's Lachlan Devlin also performed with distinction, receiving Certificate's of Excellence for their work. Jackson's was in the field of construction steelwork while Lachlan competed in turning. A shortage of skills in the trades has been well-documented with the 2022 Skills Priority List identifying the trades as an area suffering a major shortage which is having an impact on construction and development. The success of these young men shows Orange TAFE is producing its share of trades personnel of a high calibre.

PARKES MEALS ON WHEELS

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the accomplishment of Parkes Meals on Wheels, with the service this year celebrating its 60th anniversary with a move into bigger, better premises. Each week, Parkes Meals on Wheels produces, on average, 150 nutritious and delicious fresh meals and 150 frozen meals from its new kitchen on Forbes Road, for clients across the Parkes shire. It's then up to 180 volunteers to distribute the meals and while they're on the road, they take time to check in and chat with clients. Manager Gill Kinsella and her team are responsible for the move to the new premises, which has enabled the production of meals which were previously outsourced. Meals on Wheels represents a wonderful sense of community with some of its volunteers having been involved in for decades. For example, Mary McIntyre has served for 38 years and Betty Sommers, has been involved for 35, both earning life membership. Adrienne Bradley, Sue Connors and Carolyn Rice OAM have also clocked up more than 30 years' service while there are also members with 20 years or more under their belts. Congratulations to manager Gill Kinsella and her team on their achievements.

WILLIAM (BILL) CONNOLLY

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I would like to recognise the incredible contribution of William 'Bill' Connolly to his community through his involvement with March RFS. 'Bill', who recently celebrated his 101st birthday, has been a member of March RFS since its foundation 80 years ago. Born on August 30, 1922, Bill grew up on the family property 'Maryvale' at the end of Connolly's Lane in March, north of Orange. The family had a mixed farming business which Bill took over in 1947 with wife Betty. Formed by a group of enthusiastic landowners including Bill, the March brigade was established in 1943 but equipment was scarce – rising smoke was usually how members were alerted to fires and they brought their own gear. In 1957 Bill was instrumental in reviving the brigade, taking on secretary and treasurer duties, which he held for 11 years. In 1977 the brigade was allocated a 150-gallon tractor-drawn tank and pump to help its fire-fighting efforts but

things have progressed and March RFS is now looking forward to celebrating 10 years in its 'new' Fire Shed. Bill retired from firefighting in 1984 but he will be one of the VIPs at the Fire Shed's October 10-year celebrations.

DEPUTY MAYOR RACHELLE HARIKA

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—Last week, I joined our community in welcoming the new Deputy Mayor of the great City of Canterbury, Councillor Rachelle Harika. Rachelle is a lifelong Yagoona resident and has been a Councillor representing residents of the Bass Hill Ward since 2017. Having known Rachelle for more than 6 years, I am so proud of all her achievements. She continues to be a tireless worker for our community and brings a wealth of experience to the Canterbury Bankstown City Council. This was clearly evident when over 100 members of her family, friends, and community leaders attended the election to support Rachelle. Rachelle will now be the Deputy Mayor of the City of Canterbury Bankstown for a second term having served as Deputy Mayor in 2020-2021, and I know this will not be her last. Rachelle is an inspiration for all young women from diverse backgrounds in our community and I am glad to see how she inspires the next generation on young people to make a difference in our community. I wish Rachelle all the best in her new role, and I thank her for speaking and leading from her heart.

KIDS IN BUSINESS MARKET

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—On Saturday 2nd September 2023, the first Kids in Business Markets were held at Carysfield Reserve, Bass Hill. With over 60 stalls and more than 50 businesses being launched, we got to see firsthand how these amazing kids put what they have learned over the past few weeks into practice. Kids in Business was founded on the belief that every child has the potential to be an entrepreneur and was designed to teach children the skills needed to be self-reliant, financially literate, and successful in business. Kids in Business teaches kids how to build sustainable businesses and inspire growth, developing skills such as communication, decision-making, leadership, teamwork, confidence, and self-esteem. With businesses ranging from homemade soaps, popping candy drinks, and jewellery to face painting and lolly stands, the children enjoyed great success. I would like to acknowledge the Kids in Business initiative for providing this opportunity for our young children in the community to learn and develop the skills they need to be successful in business. It is truly inspiring to see so many children in our community possess the drive, creativity, and passion to innovate and make a difference in our society.

BELLABODY CLINICS

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—There are over 840,000 small businesses in NSW which employ over 1.8 million people. BellaBody Clinics is one of these businesses which contribute to my community. BellaBody Clinics is a new establishment founded by the aspiring Rhonda Allam in 2021. Rhonda, having amassed over 15 years of invaluable experience in the cosmetic industry while working abroad in England and Qatar, made the bold decision to return home and contribute to her community by establishing her clinic in the heart of Punchbowl. BellaBody Clinics stands as a testament to Rhonda's dedication to the community, employing the most advanced and effective machines available in the market to ensure top-tier services. This commitment to excellence has not gone unnoticed, as BellaBody was honoured as a finalist in the prestigious 2023 Australian Women's Small Business Champion Awards, a recognition that fills our community with immense pride. While celebrating her accomplishments over the past two years, the team at BellaBody Clinics is eagerly anticipating the future with great excitement. BellaBody has ambitious plans, including substantial growth and the introduction of exciting new services to better serve our community. I wish Rhonda and her team all the best.

STONY RANGE SPRING FESTIVAL

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—I notify the House that on Sunday 10 September Stony Range held its annual Spring Festival. For those of you who are unaware, Stony Range is a Regional Botanic Garden located in my electorate on Pittwater Road in Dee Why. Stony Range has been operating as a Flora and Fauna Reserve since 1961 and was promoted to a Regional Botanic Garden in 2006. The Garden is run entirely by volunteers (with the support of the local Council) and as I have witnessed during a recent visit, is a quiet haven just off a busy main road and Brookvale Industrial area. I want to pass on my thanks to the volunteers for their ongoing commitment and dedication in caring for and defending this special sanctuary for hundreds of native and non-native plants as well as wildlife.

DUBBO REGIONAL COUNCIL

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to congratulate Dubbo Regional Council for breaking the mould and embracing new building technologies. Dubbo Regional Council has become the leader in

innovative thinking across the nation, being the first to utilize 3D printing to build public infrastructure officially opening a brand-new toilet block in Lyons Park. The idea, originally suggested by Cr Matthew Wright, was thrown about as a potential solution to help alleviate Dubbo's housing shortage, so the printing of this amenities block is just step one in a much bigger plan. Fascinating to watch, the gantry was set up one weekend, and a few days later, printing was complete! Local tradespeople were employed to complete the fit out of the building and it is exciting that the doors are officially open and being used by the public. Having had multiple councils from around Australia already reach out to discuss the project, it's clear there is strong interest in this building technique for the future and I'm so proud Dubbo Regional Council is showing just what's possible when innovation meets forward thinking! Well Done Dubbo Regional Council! I can't wait to see what's next in the 3D printing line-up!

VINNIES SLEEPOUT

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to recognise Julie Webster and all of those who participated in the Vinnies Sleepout. This year's event, with twenty-five individuals and six teams participating, has exceeded all expectations by raising an impressive sum of over \$12,000. This remarkable achievement will go a long way in supporting the St Vincent de Paul Society's invaluable work within our community. The event's growth, from just a handful of sleepers last year to this year's substantial turnout, demonstrates the power of collective action in addressing the challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness or at risk. The video links to sleepouts in other areas and the shared meal provided by 'Down the Lane' added to the sense of unity and purpose. Julie Webster, your leadership as the organiser deserves special recognition. Your dedication and commitment to this cause have undoubtedly played a crucial role in its success. We applaud your tireless efforts in bringing people together for such a worthy cause. Thank you to all to all those who contributed. Your actions remind us all of the importance of empathy, compassion, and community spirit.

PHIL BATES

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to acknowledge and recognise the incredible dedication and unwavering commitment to the Mudgee PCYC of Phil Bates. Phil's remarkable 20 years of volunteering have made a profound impact on the organisation and were recently celebrated with a surprise party at the club. PCYC (Police Citizens Youth Clubs) is a vital community organisation dedicated to supporting and empowering young people across New South Wales. With a history dating back to 1937 and a network of over sixty clubs and centres. Throughout Phil's two-decade journey with the club, he has witnessed numerous changes in leadership, with four managers, five Police Officers, and three CEOs coming and going. Through it all, he has remained a steadfast and knowledgeable presence within the club, a source of continuity and wisdom. Phil's involvement with PCYC began in 2003 after a six-month work placement, and it did not take long for his passion to shine through. He was offered the opportunity to join as a volunteer, a decision he embraced wholeheartedly. Thank you, Phil, for being an outstanding volunteer. Here is to 20 more years of enriching the lives of young people and strengthening the community.

GUIDE DOGS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—Guide Dogs NSW and Guide Dogs Australia do incredible work helping those who are blind or have low vision secure their freedom and independence. The interests of the visually impaired is an area of personal passion for me. It was a pleasure to visit the impressive St Leonards offices of Guide Dogs. The charity does wonderful work to carefully match the right guide dogs with the right clients to offer that ideal combination of companionship and independence. Every guide dog training support program is tailored to the personal needs and preferences of the client. I would like to thank all the dedicated staff and volunteers of Guide Dogs NSW who contribute to such a great cause. Their work is inspirational and by supporting Guide Dogs NSW, we can achieve the goal of providing a guide dog to everyone who needs one.

ROTARY CLUB OF CHATSWOOD INTERNATIONAL CHANGEOVER

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—On Wednesday 23 August, I was honoured to be a guest at the annual changeover of the Rotary Club of Chatswood International. Held at the King Dynasty Chinese Restaurant, Chatswood, the changeover was an opportunity for the Rotary Club to thank its outgoing leadership team for all it had achieved in the past year and to welcome the new leadership team for 2023-24. I would like to thank the outgoing President, Dr Anthony Ching, for his dedicated leadership of the Chatswood International Rotary Club. Dr Ching is an outstanding community leader who has long played an active role in the Rotary Club helping to raise funds for Destiny Rescue in rescuing children from child trafficking, the Taiwan earthquake appeal, and the Deb Bailey Foundation for Motor Neurone Disease. Dr Ching and the Chatswood International Rotary Club typify all that is good about our vibrant multicultural community, of citizens from different cultural backgrounds banding together to make a positive difference to our community and world. I congratulate the incoming President Dickson Mak and wish the Club all the best for this new Rotary year.

CHATSWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL TWILIGHT CONCERT

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I am always impressed by the student talent from the local schools in my electorate and I commend Chatswood Public School for the superb quality of their annual twilight concert at the Chatswood Concourse. Once again, the School showcased its excellent choir and instrumental music ensembles that were well-received by an appreciative public audience. In a tradition the School has been maintaining since 2002, the Twilight Concert brought together Chatswood Public's many bands, ensembles, choirs, orchestras and musical groups. I appreciate all the time and dedication the students, parents and teachers of Chatswood Public have put into many weeks of regular rehearsals to make this night a success. I congratulate the School for a wonderful evening of entertainment and am grateful for the contribution it makes to the cultural life of our community.

TOUKLEY DISTRICT AND ART SOCIETY

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)—

Toukley District and Art Society were a successful applicant in the Community Building Partnership program, receiving a \$20,449 grant. The grant went towards new vinyl flooring laid throughout the gallery and carpet laid in the smaller rooms giving the space a fresh modern look. Derry's Flooring Warehouse from Tuggerah did a fantastic job installing the vinyl floor along with the helpers who dismantled the cabinets. The art gallery has over 100 members who have artwork on display in the gallery including paintings in oil, acrylics, watercolour, and pastel, along with handcrafted giftware and original cards for every occasion. President Wendy Symons and members were very pleased of the outcome with their project. The group discussed future projects on how they want to improve the premises for the locals and visitors.

SUSAN ROSE

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to acknowledge and recognise the work of a prolific volunteer, Ms Susan Rose, who has been giving up her time and energy to volunteer at St George Public Hospital for a number of years. Ms Rose volunteers in the Emergency Department and provides non-medical support by assisting the medical and administrative staff and spending quality time visiting patients and their families. Ms Rose is well known by her patients as a kind, sincere and selfless person who consistently goes above and beyond to make them feel loved and supported. She is a calming presence to those waiting, by offering conversation as well as helping with whatever is needed. Susan has also had a significant role in training new volunteers and being there to mentor and orientate them to the hospital environment. Susan and her team of volunteers at the hospital make an invaluable impact in what is often a stressful and anxious environment. I want to sincerely thank Ms Rose and all the volunteers at St George Hospital for their dedication and commitment to treating and supporting our local community.

LINDA FLETCHER

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to acknowledge and recognise the work of a prolific volunteer, Ms Linda Fletcher, who has been giving up her time and energy to volunteer at St George Public Hospital for over 10 years. Ms Fletcher volunteers in the hospital's Birth Centre, providing invaluable support in various administrative tasks. Linda selflessly takes on these administrative responsibilities to reduce the workload on the nurses and allow them to spend more time caring for patients in need. Ms Fletcher has built a fantastic relationship with everyone in the centre and is well known as an energetic, loving and caring person who always puts her hand up to help in whatever way she can. This year Linda reached the milestone of 10 years of volunteering in the Birth Centre, exemplifying her unwavering commitment and dedication to helping others. Linda and the team of volunteers at St George Hospital serve as a beacon of hope in what is often a stressful environment, for which we are all extremely grateful. I wish to sincerely thank Ms Fletcher and express my deepest appreciation for the wonderful work she does supporting the St George community and our local nurses.

ALESSANDRO BALAGUER

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to acknowledge and recognise the work of a volunteer, Mr Alessandro Balaguer, who has recently been giving up his time and energy to volunteer at St George Public Hospital. Mr Balaguer volunteers in the hospital's Wayfinding Program, helping patients get to their appointment on time or find their friends and relatives. With on-going redevelopments, it can often be intimidating for patients to find where they need to go. Alessandro provides much-needed welcome relief to ensure patients feel supported and receive the vital treatment they need. Mr Balaguer selflessly takes on this demanding responsibility to reduce the workload on the nurses and allow them to spend more time caring for patients in need. In just three months, Alessandro has shown great enthusiasm, he has embraced his role and received numerous compliments for his ability to greet and escort patients and families as they navigate the hospital. I wish to

sincerely thank Mr Balaguer and express my deepest appreciation for the wonderful work he does supporting the St George community and our local nurses.

MANNING REGIONAL ART GALLERY NAKED AND NUDE ART PRIZE

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I rise today to congratulate Manning Regional Art Gallery on their 33rd biennial Naked & Nude Art Prize. This year saw 61 finalists vying for the \$37,000 major prize. The theme Naked and Nude refers to both the tradition of the nude human form in art history as well as a wider meaning that something is revealed or vulnerable. The prize was open in a variety of mediums and is the only one of its kind in Australia attracting a wide variety of artists to enter their artworks this year. This year's guest judge was Laretta Morton OAM, the director of the Newcastle Art Gallery. Laretta has more than 35 years of experience in the visual arts and creative industries sectors. She is the first female director in Newcastle Art Gallery's 66-year history. Thank you, Manning Regional Art Gallery, gallery supporters and Friends of the Manning Regional Art Gallery for putting Taree on the map for such a prestigious national event in Australian Arts.

FORSTER FORTNIGHTLY

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I rise today to recognise Forster Fortnightly, a local independent community newspaper that has been serving the Mid Coast for three years. This family-run newspaper plays a significant role in our community. Managed by Ian, Mary, and Geordie Yule, they have no paid staff with Mary and Geordie sharing most of the roles. Forster Fortnightly is known for its commitment to local issues, stories, and events, providing a reliable source of community news. It serves as an essential communication hub, delivering informative content about local news and events, being inclusive by encompassing all aspects of our community, and offering entertainment with features like star pets, captivating photography, and local stories. With a circulation of 7000 copies every fortnight, Forster Fortnightly has maintained its popularity and relevance within our community. This free newspaper relies on advertising support to sustain its operations. In celebrating Forster Fortnightly's three years of service, I also acknowledge and appreciate the local businesses and community members who contribute to its continued success. Your support ensures that this valuable community resource remains accessible to all. Thank you, Yule family, for your dedication to our community.

KILLABAKH DAY IN THE COUNTRY

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I rise today to recognise the Killabakh Community Association as they celebrated their 35th annual fair 'Day in the Country' earlier this month. Day in the Country is a vibrant showcase of local talent, skills, and creativity. With demonstrations from locals, creative arts and country living workshops, captivating performances, live music, inspiring art displays, and participation from numerous local businesses. A true showcase of everything the wonderful village of Killabakh has to offer. This event not only brings the community together but also supports the maintenance of the community hall and various community groups such as the garden club, art group, games club, yoga classes, Landcare, and Rural Fire Brigade. This year's event had a few special guests, the beloved children's book character Grug, who was accompanied by his creator, author Ted Prior, and local author of Homegrown Healthy Living, Anna Axisa. Ted read to young members of the audience while Anna demonstrated how to prepare sauerkraut. Thank you to the dedicated organisers and the 150-200 volunteers from our community who make 'Day in the Country' a resounding success year after year.

NAMBUCCA HEADS SHINE AT TOURNAMENT OF MINDS

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Brilliance is shining in the Oxley Electorate, and I am thrilled to acknowledge that spark today, by congratulating Nambucca Heads Public School on their performance in the Tournament of Minds. The Nambucca Heads Public School team achieved remarkable success at the state final in Sydney. They secured top honours from their display and rightfully earned a spot at the international finals in Melbourne in October. Tournament of Minds is an academic competition for all primary and secondary students that allows them to solve authentic, open-ended tasks while encouraging creative and diverse thinking. Our bright students have demonstrated their collaborative entrepreneurship and excellence beyond their years. The tournament consists of many challenges from topics covering arts, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, language literature, and social sciences. They are no doubt equipped to problem-solve any obstacle and become the leaders of our future. Our entire community is bursting with pride from this achievement and It's a pleasure to recognise the dedication, commitment and outstanding performance of the students and staff involved. Well done!

DURRI ACCREDITATION

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—I rise today to commend, Durri Aboriginal Corporate Medical Centre in Kempsey which has achieved a significant milestone by receiving accreditation for its dental sector. This accreditation demonstrates their commitment to providing quality dental care to our community, particularly to

the Indigenous population. It's a commendable achievement for Durri, as dental health is an essential aspect of overall well-being. Durri successfully fulfilled the first six national safety and quality health service standards. They underwent a thorough assessment by an independent accreditation agency, and this recognition highlights the dedication to improving oral health outcomes and access to dental services for our local community. Durri Aboriginal Corporate Medical Centre has collaborated with the University of Sydney's Bachelor of Oral Health program to offer placement opportunities for its students. This collaboration allows our aspiring oral health professionals to gain valuable hands-on experience at the Durri centre while contributing to a wonderful service that provides a unique opportunity for individuals of Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander heritage with free treatment. It's a remarkable service that Durri provides to our small but important. Congratulations on this remarkable achievement.

DORRIGO HIGH SCHOOL HITS THE MARK

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—They are kicking goals while making an entire town proud. Today, I rise today to acknowledge the impressive performance of the under-18s Dorrigo High Schools' Rugby 7s team who battled it out at the State Finals in Sydney. This became a memorable and triumphant experience for our under 18s boys, showcasing their hearty performance, determination, and teamwork. These qualities secured them an impressive 3rd place in the NSW. This achievement also serves as a testament to their collective school spirit. This is a small rural and competed against the big ranks from selective, public and private sports high schools. Despite the differences in resources and facilities, our boys showcased their resilience and tenacity, refusing to be intimidated by their opponents. They pushed themselves to the limits and proved success is not solely determined by the size of the school but by the passion and dedication of the players. A third-place finish across the entire in the state is an extraordinary achievement for our under 18s boys 7s rugby team as well as our small town of Dorrigo. Congratulations.

MATILDA JR. MUSICAL ORAN PARK

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden)—On Saturday the 9th of September I had the privilege of attending a brilliant performance of Oran Park Anglican College's inaugural musical, Matilda Jr. It was fabulous, with the sets, costumes and lighting all spectacular. This was the first ever musical put on by Oran Park Anglican College, a true testament to the creative talent within the school community. The cast were brilliant in bringing this adaptation of Roald Dahl's old classic to life. The behind-the-scenes team led by director Dean Irwin and involving dozens of individuals worked incredibly hard to put the whole musical together and make the event a fantastic spectacle to watch. Congratulations to all of those involved with this incredible production, it truly was revolting!

PICNIC IN THE PARK

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden)—This year, Camden Festival's signature event, Picnic in the park returned. Held on the 10th of September in Picturesque Macarthur Park. Picnic in the park had a brilliant family friendly program, including activities, food and drink stalls, live music entertainment and more for all to enjoy. This year's event also featured garden games, face painting, beaded keyring making and roving giant bubbles as well as several workshops available. The success of picnic in the park is a testament to the work that goes on behind the scenes to make sure every year that individuals and families have a fun day out of entertainment and relaxation. I would also like to thank Wests Group Macarthur for sponsoring this wonderful event and Camden Council for putting it on again, it was an excellent community event.

CAMDEN COUNTY QUILTING GUILD ANNUAL EXHIBITION

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden)—A few weeks ago, on the 5th & 6th of August, the Camden County Quilting Guild hosted their 31st annual quilt exhibition at the Camden Civic Centre. The Camden County Quilting Guild is a fantastic local community organisation that connects local people with a keen interest in quilting. This year was the 31st year the Guild has hosted this wonderful event. The annual exhibition is a chance for members of the quilters guild to showcase the wonderful quilting work that they have been meticulously working on. The exhibition boasts several stalls, a raffle and of course the famous quilt display. I would like to acknowledge the behind the scenes work that goes on to ensure the annual exhibition returns every year, from the administrative side and organisation that goes on in the background to ensure everything runs smoothly. Congratulations for another successful exhibition.

CONGRATULATIONS BEN AND WENDY MAYNE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I would like to recognise Warialda locals Ben and Wendy Mayne on their Angus Bull 'Texas Thunderstruck T383,' achieving the second most expensive beef stock ever traded at the Warialda Bull sales recently. I congratulate Ben and Wendy on the success of their breeding program and taking the Angus breed to the next level. Their stud 'Texas Angus' has had exclusive semen rights to Thunderstruck's sire, Americal based Poss Rawhide, for the past two years. Thunderstruck is the only Rawhide

son to be sold in the Southern Hemisphere this year. I commend Ben and Wendy for not only achieving this milestone, but also for their valuable contribution to Angus breeding, the beef cattle industry and to Australian Agriculture.

RECOGNITION OF HANN FAMILY OF BELLATA

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I would like to recognise the Hann family from Bellata on their Hereford Bull 'Truro Sherlock S188,' achieving the Bassingwaighte Trophy Champion of Champions bull title at the 2023 Brisbane Ekka, along with the Supreme Champion Hereford exhibit of the Sydney Royal in April of this year. I congratulate Scott, Pipp and daughters Sophie and Tilly, on the success of their breeding program through their 'Truro White Face' stud and for taking the Hereford breed to the next level. I commend the Hann family for not only achieving these accolades, but also for their valuable contribution to Hereford breeding, the cattle industry and to Australian Agriculture.

MOREE JUNIOR SOCCER CLUB CARNIVAL

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I would like to recognise the fundraising achievements of Moree Junior Soccer Club on raising over \$4,000 at their carnival recently. Money raised have been donated to Ronald McDonald House at Tamworth, to assist those families travelling from regional areas with seriously ill children in their care. I congratulate President of the Moree Junior Soccer Club Kevin Rigby, along with committee members Mick Young, Beth Kelly, Beth Livett, Carita Lablack, Vivian Pinner and Mark Cubis, for working tirelessly behind the scenes to stage this event. Special thanks also to Kara Carrigan, Kirsty Tomlinson and Sascha Estens for photos, along with Moree Plains Shire Council for maintaining Ron Harborne Oval, the teams who travelled for the carnival, along with the many parents, supporters and competitors for making the day such a success. I commend all involved with Moree Junior Soccer on their hard work, not only during the carnival but also in preparation for this event. The time and effort you put into these young people and is appreciated by the entire community.

ALBURY HS STUDENT - MIA LAVIS WINS NETBALL GOLD FOR AUSTRALIA

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to extend my congratulations to Mia Lavis a student at Albury High School who has competed in the 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games Fast5 netball tournament at the Shaw Park Cultural Complex in Tobago, North America. Mia, at the age of 17 years old, was part of the Australian Team which left the Games with a gold medal. Mia's sporting skills see her have the ability to switch between roles as goal shooter and goal attack. This gold medal reflects a great comeback for Mia who has worked hard on her fitness and form after having a stress fracture last season. The team performed well over many months of vigorous training and fierce competition, and I commend Mia, her team-mates and coaches.

BROCKLESBY PUBLIC SCHOOL CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF EDUCATION

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to extend my congratulations to Brocklesby Public School, Principal Melanie Shelley, staff and students as you commemorate a milestone of 125 years of education. The school was first established in 1898, with 12 students enrolled, many of whom commuted in horse drawn carts. The school emblem, inspired by a historic mid-air collision in 1940 of two Royal Australian Air Force Avro Ansons, today serves as a reminder of resilience, unity and the challenges rural and regional families faced in WWII. In honour of this historic journey the school will be hosting an afternoon tea for former students, dedicated staff and the cherished community. Well done to all those individuals past and present who have contributed to the school's enduring legacy, a dedication that has shaped the remarkable institution we celebrate today and as we toast the ongoing journey that defines Brocklesby Public School.

FIRE FIGHTER MATT SMITH RETIRES AFTER 37 YEARS

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to extend my appreciation to Matt Smith who has decided to embark on a well-deserved retirement after 37 years as a fire fighter. Matt is one of those special breed of heroes, who stand in the face of danger whilst safeguarding lives and property for our community. A senior fire fighter for the Fire and Rescue NSW, Matt's journey first began in 1986 in Sydney, then on to Broken Hill until he reached the city of Albury for the next 25 years. Through his years of service he has witnessed changes in technology, methodologies and support systems. He was the first generation of fire fighters to have breathing apparatus to prevent smoke and fumes in the lungs. Fire-fighting has taken Matt to the frontlines of significant events which impacted Albury, such as the 2012 fire at the Lake Hume power station that raged for days. Thank you Matt Smith for your dedication and protection you brought to the people of Albury. Best wishes for the future from an appreciative community.

OPENING OF NEW POLISH CLUB ASHFIELD

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—Congratulations to the Polish Club at Ashfield on the opening of their brand-new premises. The Polish Club has a proud history dating back to the 1940s when Polish immigrants came to Australia at the end of World War Two. It has long been a place where people could meet and socialise with their friends and families, that provided some reminder and comfort of their old home. Originally founded by 208 members the Club was officially opened on the Ashfield site in May 1967. Patrons can now enjoy the new Club Bar and Lounge or the Polka Café and Deli all week. For a more formal meal the Sto Lat restaurant is open Wednesday to Sunday. The new facilities are indeed the best-looking Polish Club to be found outside of Poland and will be opened during celebrations at a Gala Black Tie event on September 23 September. Congratulations to Club President Richard Borysiewicz, the leadership team, members, and volunteers on the opening of this wonderful new premises and for your decades of dedication and commitment to commemorating the contribution of our Polish community.

PETER KAYE SES RETIREMENT

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—I wish to acknowledge the long and distinguished career of Mr Peter Kaye AM ESM who has recently retired from his leadership role with the NSW State Emergency Service [SES] after 47 years of dedicated service. Mr Kaye retires as one of the longest-serving Unit Commanders in the SES having led the Ashfield-Leichhardt Unit since 1983. Supporting not only the local community Mr Kaye has also responded to disasters in Victoria, Queensland, after the 1989 Newcastle earthquake and the 1997 Thredbo landslide. Mr Kaye is well known as a strong advocate and mentor for many volunteers, supporting equity and diversity in the SES. Mr Kaye has also given his time and talents to support many other organisations including the Duke of Edinburgh International Award, SIDS and Kids, and as a Microfinance Development Educator and Volunteer for the South Pacific. Mr Kaye was awarded the Member of the Order of Australia in 2014 and recognised with the Emergency Services Medal (ESM) in 2021. Mr Kaye continues as a volunteer with the SES. Congratulations Peter and thank you for your many years of selfless service!

CULTURE X FESTIVAL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—Congratulations to the organisers of the Culture X Festival held recently at Pratten Park in Ashfield. Culture X continues the work of the Sydney Sacred Music Festival, showcasing new music and projects that engage with our diverse communities. Extending over three days the festival celebrated the many different cultural backgrounds that call the Inner West and broader Sydney home. The opening sunset ceremony included a beautiful performance by the Barayagal Aboriginal Choir and moving smoking ceremony. Crowds were treated to a wide range of amazing performances from the energetic display by the Indian Drumming Group, to Aboriginal dance workshops, night-time dance parties and captivating performances by refugee artists. A special thankyou to Inner West Council, Multicultural NSW and Create NSW for supporting this fantastic event. I encourage everyone to check out the videos of many performances online and enjoy the diverse music on offer. Congratulations Culture X Festival!

HAMMONDVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL'S 90TH BIRTHDAY FAIR

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—On Saturday 16 September 2023 I had the pleasure of attending the Hammondville Public School 90th Birthday Fair. The event was filled with jam-packed activities for current students, ex-students, and parents alike. The Holsworthy High School band performed early in the morning, as well as performances from Hammondville Public Kinder, Junior, Senior Dance Groups and Choir, Australian Dance & Drama Co, GY Dance, Select Dance CO, Octave8 Hammondville, To Shine Cheerleaders, Army Cadets, GB Dance Co, and the Hammondville Public Teacher's band. There were also plenty of market stalls, jumping castles, slides, a petting zoo, and face painting for the children to enjoy. I would like to extend my sincerest congratulations to the entire staff and P&C team at Hammondville Public, including Principal Jodie Clark. Deputy Principal Angela Fleming, Office Staff Nicole Johnson, Julie Hudson-O'Farrell, Tracy Talevski, and Kylie Cadden, as well as P&C President Stephanie Philpott, Vice President Nichole Burrows, Secretary Marisa Edwards, Treasurer Stephen Gauld, and fundraising committee Sarah Williamson, Kristen Kenny, and Sophie Copeman. The school's community spirit was certainly on show, and I look forward to Hammondville Public's 100th Birthday Fair!

LUCAS HEIGHTS COMMUNITY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the remarkable student leadership team at Lucas Heights Community School on their work throughout the year. Securing the trust and support of their peers through a democratic election is a truly commendable accomplishment, and these students should take great pride in this achievement. I urge them to seize this incredible opportunity to make meaningful contributions to their school community and to cultivate the skills that will mould them into future community

and professional leaders. It is my privilege, in this session of the NSW Parliament, to recognize and commend the outstanding student leadership team for the year 2023, comprising of Sophie Allerton, Katelin Hazen, Jacob Allerton, Hannah Le Riche-Smith, Christian Mitchell, Scarlett Jagger, Brodie Smith, and Grace Langjkar. I have every confidence that these committed students will skilfully lead their peers through what will undoubtedly be a pivotal year in their educational journey, setting an inspiring example for the entire school community. As they continue to embody the values of Lucas Heights Community's motto, "Education excellence in a safe and caring environment". I extend my warmest wishes to these student leaders.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION'S 71ST ANNUAL DINNER

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—On Friday 15 September 2023 I had the pleasure to attend the Sutherland Shire Football Association's 71st Annual Dinner in Sylvania. At the dinner, I had the honour of presenting a Merit Award to Menai Hawks Club President Nigel Essex, recognising his voluntary work for the club and the wider football community in the Sutherland Shire. During Nigel's 26-year involvement with the Hawks, he has volunteered as a coach, groundsman, player's representative and as club President for over a decade. Nigel was also recognised for his commitment to soccer in 2015, when he was made a life member of the club. I would also like to extend a big congratulations to the rest of the Menai Hawks team, as well as the SSFA management team – CEO Jeff Stewart, President Matt Brady, Vice President Laura Cowell, Treasurer Giulio di Stefano, and Committee Members Jim Hankins, Chris Lockwood, Russell Marsden, Keith Ward, Kelly White, and Mark Williams. SSFA is the largest football association of any code in Australia, with 19,000 players in 2023. I congratulate the association on another successful season and I look forward to the upcoming season in 2024!

BAXTER BOOTS

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—Today I recognise the Baxter Boots Company. The story of the iconic family-owned footwear company started in Goulburn back in 1850. Designing and crafting footwear for the needs of the community, Baxter Boots is synonymous with comfort, high quality, and durability. Proudly, Baxter Boots is the oldest family-owned boot making company in Australia, now into the fifth generation. The high standard of craftsmanship together with the right choice of leather, meticulous construction methodology, welted soles, and cork filling, is a formula that has ensured the longevity of the footwear brand. Baxter Boots work collaboratively with family-run business partners, utilising the latest manufacturing technology, maintaining consumer satisfaction in quality and price. Baxter Boots supplied Australian diggers with boots in World War I and II, and those who fought on the shores at Gallipoli, continuing to supply the Defence Forces. Baxter Boots strives to uphold community wellbeing, donating to the Dolly's Dream charity, other local charities and a generous donation of 500 pairs of waterproof / snow boots to those affected by the northern NSW floods. It is with great sincerity and pride that I thank Baxter Boots for their significant contribution to not only our community but our country.

BOWRAL HOSPITAL STAFF

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise the staff of Bowral Hospital. Despite Bowral Hospital not being in the Goulburn Electorate, the hospital does service constituents from within the Goulburn electorate, and it is from these constituents that I receive feedback relaying their experiences and journey through the health service. I believe that it is important to acknowledge and intervene through constituent representations when issues arise that can be either remedied and/or progressed to maintain, improve, and extend services as appropriate. Equally, I believe that it is essential to acknowledge and praise the multidisciplinary and ancillary services when constituents provide feedback that highlight the exemplary care, support, and services that they have received during their hospitalisation. It is with appreciation of the many and varied circumstances in which patients present for treatment and care, which may often be associated with stress, anxiety, and uncertainty. With staff responding in a professional and compassionate manner, patients and families may have some of this stress and anxiety alleviated. I take this opportunity to express my thanks and recognise the many staff who work simultaneously as a team to deliver a broad range of services. Thank you to the staff at Bowral Hospital.

YASS AND BOOROWA LEGACY GROUP

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise The Yass / Boorowa Legacy Group. Legacy Australia proudly celebrated its one hundredth birthday in July. The organisation was established to support veteran's families, inclusive of those who had lost family members in the war. Services offered includes emotional, social, and financial support. The Yass / Boorowa legatees work collaboratively to support up to fifty widows of deceased war veterans, their work is funded through community donations. The Group proudly held a ceremony on the 1st September to commemorate the Centenary of Legacy. Legatee John Heggart provided the welcome address, with the arrival of the Legacy Torch, celebrated by Yass High School leaders and Maisie's Choir. It is with sincere praise that I acknowledge this significant milestone for Legacy Australia, the longevity of work, and many proud and serving members of the Yass / Boorowa Legacy Group.

FATHER CHRIS DE SOUZA

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—After nine years as Parish priest of St Oliver's Catholic parish in Harris Park, Father Chris de Souza has been promoted to General Secretary of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in Canberra. I was honoured to attend a huge community farewell for Fr Chris in which 200 parishioners from all backgrounds brought an amazing variety of food and desserts to thank him for his outstanding and caring service to them. It was also a chance to celebrate Father Chris's 40th anniversary as a priest. Fr Chris attended school Patrician Brothers Fairfield and was ordained a priest in 1983. He rose within the Diocese of Parramatta to become Vicar-General a position which serves as the Bishop's deputy and his trusted adviser. There was a remarkable outpouring of love and appreciation showed by his parishioners, as well as many retired priests and other clergy. Clearly, Fr Chris has made a personal and spiritual connection with so many of them. It was a clear indication of the profound influence Fr Chris has had on so many lives and I know he will continue to do so in his new position. Congratulations Father Chris.

TAMIL STUDY CENTRE

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—Colour and excitement filled Bowman Hall in Blacktown at the celebration of more than 35 years of the Wentworthville Tamil Study Centre, dedicated to teaching, promoting and preserving the Tamil language, literature and culture. The Tamil Study Centre is the largest language school in NSW. It provides many of my constituents with strong cultural ties to their community. One of the oldest known languages in the world, with a rich history spanning thousands of years, the preservation and strong presence of the Tamil language in NSW is testimony to the dedication and effort of parents, teachers, and students all eager to maintain strong Tamil cultural connections as part of Australia's rich diversity. Watching the vibrant dances and artistic plays, I was reminded of the very essence of our strong Tamil community. It is language schools like this, who gather every Saturday with the objective of enriching our future generations that build our cultural identity. Thank you to the organisers of the Kalaivizha, including President of Wentworthville Tamil Study Centre, Jegan Kirupatharan, event organiser Kumaran Jeyapalan and most importantly the parents, students and staff of the study centre for enriching the future of Australia through culture and language.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF SAINT NECTARIOS

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—On Sunday 10 September, I was grateful to attend the 70th Anniversary commemoration of the Translation of the Holy Relics of Saint Nectarios at Saint Nectarios Greek Orthodox Church in Burwood. His Eminence Archbishop Makarios officiated the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy for this special day honouring the Church's patron, Saint Nectarios. It was a meaningful service and it was beautiful to see so many parishioners join the celebrations and be united in prayer. I would like to acknowledge Mr Yannis Mallikourtis, Consul General of Greece in Sydney, Cr John Faker, Mayor of Burwood, Mr Jason Yat sen Li MP, Member for Strathfield and Ms Sally Sitou MP, Member for Reid who also joined the local Greek Orthodox community on this day. I want to thank all of those involved in organising this event for the kind invitation. I acknowledge the St Nectarios Greek Orthodox Parish and Community of Burwood and District, led by Father George Liangas, President Penelopy Kioussis, Secretary Christina Efthymiades AM, board members and all Parishioners. It is a welcoming and supportive church community and I wish the Parish all the very best.

NICK ANCONA

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—On Saturday 16 September, I attended the Football Canterbury 2023 Volunteer Recognition Dinner organised by the Canterbury & District Football Association [CDSFA]. I would like to acknowledge and congratulate Mr Nick Ancona who was recognised for his service as a volunteer to Abbotsford Juniors Football Club (AFJC). Nick was awarded with a Cec Barlow Award which celebrates the work undertaken by volunteers at a club level within the Canterbury District. He has been recognised for his outstanding service to the promotion and development of club-level football in the local area. I was grateful to meet Nick and to be present to see him receive his award, presented by the Mayor of Canada Bay, Angelo Tsirekas. The Cec Barlow Award is a testament to Nick's hard work and tireless dedication to Abbotsford Juniors Football Club, its teams and players. I would like to sincerely thank Nick for his volunteering efforts, and I know that it is appreciated by the club, its players, the families who he has a positive impact on, and the greater football community. Congratulations and well-done Nick!

FRANK VIDOVIC

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—On Saturday 16 September, I attended the Football Canterbury 2023 Volunteer Recognition Dinner organised by the Canterbury & District Football Association [CDSFA]. I would like to acknowledge and congratulate Mr Frank Vidovic who was recognised for his service as a volunteer to Russell Lea Women's Soccer Club. Frank was awarded with a Cec Barlow Award which celebrates the work undertaken by volunteers at a club level within the Canterbury District. He has been

recognised for his outstanding service to the promotion and development of club-level football in the local area. The Cec Barlow Award is a testament to Frank's hard work and tireless dedication to Russell Lea Women's Soccer Club, its teams and players. I would like to sincerely thank Frank for his volunteering efforts, and I know that it is appreciated by the club, its players, the families who he has a positive impact on, and the greater football community. I acknowledge his commitment to promote and support women in sport. Congratulations and well-done Frank!

BARADINE CWA

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—The first meeting of Baradine CWA was held on 18th July 1928 has recently celebrated their 95th anniversary. Throughout the 95 years the long list of previous and current members have worked together to raise funds to help the local community and participate in cooking, crafts, and international and cultural projects. I would like to thank Baradine CWA and its past and current members for their commitment to the local community. Groups like CWA are so important for small country towns and to reach a milestone of 95 years, shows true dedication and local spirit.

CLASS OF '23 – ST JOHN PAUL II CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—Mr Speaker, today I speak to congratulate all 97 year 12 students of St John Paul II Catholic College on completing their schooling journey. These students have worked hard for the past 13 years, going through up and downs and importantly learned vital lessons along the way. As the future of our great state and country, students should be recognised for their diligence, and our Government must ensure that our education system continues to improve so it can provide students the very best possible grounds for growth. I also want to take this opportunity to specifically congratulate captains Ashley and Stephanie – and vice-captain Jayden in your roles as leaders for your school. Being role models for your peers and younger grades is a commendable status, and to be elected to such a post is remarkable achievement. I thank you for being diligent and earnest young citizens and I wish you and all other students completing year 12, the very best for your future.

CLASS OF '23 – THE PONDS HIGH SCHOOL

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—Mr Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the 245 Year 12 students at the Ponds High School on completing their schooling journey. These students have worked hard for the past 13 years, going through ups and downs and, importantly, learning vital lessons along the way. As the future of our great state and country, these students should be recognised for their diligence, and our Government must ensure that our education system continues to improve to provide students the very best possible grounds for growth. I also want to take this opportunity to specifically congratulate outgoing captains Giovanna Tabanag and Alexander Zastavnikovic—and outgoing vice captains Darci Pfister and Dominic Litchfield for your service to your school community over the past year. Being role models for your peers and younger grades is a commendable status, and to be elected to such a post is remarkable achievement. In that light, I also congratulate the newly elected captains Leeya Alves and Derell Akrong and newly vice captains Ana Zastavnikovic and Lachlan Boyd. I thank you for being diligent and earnest young citizens and I wish you and all other students completing Year 12, the best of luck for the future.

SYLVANIA HEIGHTS FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I commend the incredible team of men and women who form Sylvania Heights Football Club's new female sub-committee. Following the wave of support for women's football, Sylvania Heights Football Club celebrated Female Football Week on 1 July 2023. While this club has previously honoured women in the game and improved the available amenities, it was pleasing to see this renewed focus to pay tribute to the officials, volunteers and pioneer female players including Kathy Allingham, Vanessa Pignatelli, Janine Cunningham, Katie Allingham, Rachel Jospe, Kristy Turner, Jenny Thornton, Kylie Maguire, Justine Holmes, Rochelle Heart and Carol Askew. I also acknowledge the club's new female sub-committee that was launched on the day. I recognise Laura Ayoub-Nodile, Aiman Gouda, Kristy Farr, Mathew Hughes, Troy Davis, Angela Kapo, Jasmin Loke, Ally Denman, Heather Taylor, Robert Ayoub, Teneale Kinnas, Tagrid Gouda, and Angie Gallo for their efforts. I congratulate all involved at Sylvania Heights Football Club for highlighting women's football and for encouraging the next generation of Matildas to participate in the global game.

CHRISTINE TANG-PEARCE

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate Christine Tang-Pearce of Miranda, for her recent nomination at the Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network Awards [CESPHN]. Christine was a finalist in the CESPHN Awards for her contribution to our Chinese community. The annual awards are a wonderful way to honour individuals and groups that have made a difference in delivering primary healthcare in Sydney's Central and Eastern region. An accredited mental health social worker for over 12 years, Christine provides services to Cantonese and Mandarin speaking members of our community. During the COVID-19

pandemic, Christine supported our local Cantonese and Mandarin speaking community by setting up group training sessions to assist with the impact of isolation, stress, and anxiety. Christine is currently recording mindfulness sessions in Cantonese for the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District with an aim of helping people relax, sleep, and reduce anxiety. I congratulate Christine on being one of the finalists in the Central and Eastern Sydney Primary Health Network Awards and extend my best wishes for the future.

ELIZABETH RUDDER

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate Elizabeth Rudder on her deserving appointment as Principal of Bonnet Bay Public School. Opened in 1979 by Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, this little school with 'the rock' is the heart of the local community. Bonnet Bay Public School's values of care, cooperation, integrity, responsibility and respect are traditional values that make the school the success it is today. Mrs Rudder comes to the role following the retirement of former Principal Karen Deacon at the end of term two. She brings over 25 years experience to the role as a classroom teacher, Assistant Principal and Deputy Principal. For the last five and a half years at Oyster Bay Public School, Mrs Rudder worked tirelessly to ensure that all students, regardless of their abilities, had access to high-quality education and was actively involved in school events such as the Oyster Bay Arts and Craft Festival. Oyster Bay Public School's loss is indeed Bonnet Bay Public School's gain. Mrs Rudder is a committed and innovative educator and leaves an indelible mark wherever she goes. I look forward to seeing the positive impact Mrs Rudder makes in her role as Principal at Bonnet Bay Public School.

DAFFODIL DAY 2023

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker, I would like to recognise the efforts of the Cancer Council NSW for the organisation of Daffodil Day on August 31st earlier this year. The Cancer Council has already raised over \$1.5 million this year, and Daffodil Day has proven itself over the years to be a powerful fundraising event for cancer. I would like to thank everybody in our community who supported Daffodil Day through your generous donations. I give further thanks to all those who volunteered at stalls in our community, and who were involved generally in the organisation of the fundraiser. I was personally involved in fundraising for Daffodil Day, taking donations and selling daffodils outside North Sydney Station. I would also like to give special thanks to Lily Gubbay, our local ambassador for the Cancer Council NSW, for her advocacy and research concerning smoking and vaping amongst young people in the local community. I recently met with Lily, who shared her views on how reducing the risks of cancer might be best approached in our community.

JERSEY DAY 2023

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker, I would like to recognise the work of the Gremmo family for all of their efforts towards the raising of awareness of organ donation through their founding of Jersey Day. Michael and Kylie Gremmo established Jersey Day after the unfortunate passing of their son Nathan in 2015 in honour of Nathan's organ donation, which saved the lives of 6 other people. It was very fitting that Nathan posted on his Instagram account prior to the accident, "You only live once, but if you do it right once is enough." Approximately 1,800 people are currently waitlisted for an organ transplant and 14,000 people are on dialysis in need of a kidney transplant. The purpose of Jersey Day is to raise awareness about the possibility of organ donation, spark discussion about the issue and ultimately encourage others to join the Australian Organ Donor Register. Participants are encouraged to wear their favourite jersey to school or work, and to post a photo of themselves in their jersey on social media. I myself wore my jersey on September 1st in support of this year's Jersey Day.

MOSMAN PREPARATORY SCHOOL CREATIVE ARTS CELEBRATION

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker, I would like to recognise the recent Mosman Preparatory School Creative Arts Celebration held on the 31st of August 2023. I was fortunate enough to attend the event and was rather impressed by creativity and talent of the boys. The purpose of the event was to display the diverse array of artistic, musical and dramatic talents of students and to allow them to demonstrate their hard work and creativity to the entire school community, especially their families. Among many of the displays were the JP, SP and Canrobert choirs, a String Ensemble, a Gig Band, storytelling, dance performances and a Visuals Arts wander. I would also like to congratulate Harry for his wonderful speech from our Bear Pit Public Speaking Competition. I would like to thank all of the staff of Mosman Prep who were involved in the organisation in the event. I give my special thanks to Ms Juliana Zatz, the Director of Creative Arts, and Mrs Xina Crowther, Mrs Anne Moss and Mrs Lisa Maiden for your contributions. I hope to see more events like this in the future to show off the rich artistic talent in our community.
