

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Tuesday 7 May 2024**

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

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

### *Announcements*

#### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

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

#### COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

**The SPEAKER (12:04):** If members could indulge me for a moment, it is some six weeks since we have been in this Chamber, and a lot has happened in New South Wales and across Australia. In those six weeks some of our communities have been traumatised, including by the murders at Westfield Bondi Junction, the stabbing of a priest in Wakeley, the tragic death of Molly Ticehurst in Forbes and the murder of a 10-year-old girl at the hands of her sister in my electorate.

I acknowledge the members who have been directly affected and their communities—the member for Coogee, the member for Vacluse, the member for Fairfield, the member for Orange and all those members whose communities have been affected. It has been a very difficult period and emotions will be raw throughout our communities. I imagine many members are struggling with that. I also acknowledge the difficulties for the Ministers who have been dealing with those matters, and I thank them for all they have been doing. I particularly acknowledge the Premier, who, as well as dealing with those matters, has faced his own personal issues. I am sure members join me in extending our condolences to him, to Anna and to their family.

#### DEATH OF JOHN FREDERICK FLOWERS, FORMER MEMBER FOR ROCKDALE

**The SPEAKER (12:06):** I advise members of the death of John Frederick Flowers, former member for Rockdale, on 12 April 2024. I extend to his family the deep sympathy of the Legislative Assembly in the loss sustained.

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

#### VISITORS

**The SPEAKER:** It is a very full house in the galleries today. I am sorry that the visitors in the northern gallery can only see the members to my left, but I am sure there will be a lot of action over there. I welcome the visitors in the Speaker's gallery and the Cooper gallery. I extend a warm welcome to guests of the member for North Shore, who I believe are in the northern gallery, student leaders from Middle Harbour Public School as well as Principal Laura Barry. I also welcome guests of the member for Ryde, students from St Michael's Catholic Primary School in Meadowbank. I welcome guests of the member for Fairfield, students and staff of St Mary's Catholic Primary School Georges Hall. I acknowledge guests of the member for Oatley, students from Georges River College Peakhurst. Finally, I acknowledge attendees at the introduction to the Legislative Assembly public sector seminar, who are joining us in the Speaker's gallery. It is wonderful that they can be here, and it was lovely to meet with them this morning.

### *Question Time*

#### DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (12:10):** I begin by also acknowledging the Premier and his family's loss. Losing a parent is tough. On behalf of Opposition members, I extend our deepest sympathy.

My question is directed to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Only five of the 118 extra specialist domestic and family violence workers funded by the Commonwealth Government are already in place. Will the Government deliver the others by 30 June as promised?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (12:10):** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for

the question. Before I start, I reiterate the New South Wales Government's sympathies to the family of Molly Ticehurst and to the entire community of Forbes. I know that all of us here today and everyone across New South Wales mourns with them. As the Premier and I said yesterday, we are sorry. This should not have happened. As a government we have to do better, and we are committed to doing exactly that. In relation to the additional domestic and family violence specialist workers, it goes without saying that the Government, along with the sector, wants those positions filled as quickly as possible. But the last thing we need is a poor implementation of those workers. We need those workers in locations where they are required.

The Government has worked to ensure that those workers go to the places where they are most clearly needed. Because demand for the workers is high, we made a commitment to the sector to be transparent in the way that we went about procuring those positions. In trying to get the right balance between rolling out the positions as soon as possible and our commitment to transparency, the Government has responded through a mix of direct negotiation with services and select tender procurement. The department undertook rigorous quantitative and qualitative analysis to determine the correct locations for the workers. There has been significant consultation with the domestic violence sector, including Domestic Violence NSW, No to Violence, ACON, People with Disability Australia, Yfoundations, Settlement Services International and the Aboriginal Women's Advisory Network.

In allocating the positions across the State, the department has focused on the communities that are most in need and considered how that overlays with existing funding arrangements with frontline organisations. The Department of Communities and Justice undertook direct negotiations earlier this year with a number of dedicated priority groups, including representatives of LGBTQI+ groups and Aboriginal community controlled organisations. Select tender processes are underway, and I expect the contracts to be in place from June and for recruitment to be finalised following that. The last thing we need in this space is a kneejerk reaction that puts resources into places where the evidence does not back that up.

#### DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (12:14):** My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier please update the House on measures the New South Wales Government has announced to address the rates of domestic violence in New South Wales?

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (12:14):** I thank the member for South Coast for her question. Members would of course know of and have been shocked by, as would the wider community, the incidents of family and domestic violence in our community, particularly those that have been reported in recent weeks. It is important to note that these incidents are traumatic but they are not rare. They are not one-offs. It happens each and every day in our State, and it is everybody's responsibility to take action and do something about it.

It is my sad responsibility to report to the House that 27 per cent of women in this State have experienced domestic or family violence, and that is likely to be an under-reporting of the number. Domestic violence assaults recorded by New South Wales police increased significantly to 36,000 incidents as at December 2023, up 6.7 per cent over two years. Those are not good statistics. There has been an overall increase of 3.6 per cent over an average of five years. Domestic violence is particularly challenging in regional New South Wales. From 2004 to 2023, reported rates of domestic violence related assault in regional New South Wales increased 23 per cent compared with 12 per cent in metropolitan Sydney.

In last year's budget, the New South Wales Government announced \$417 million in funding for domestic and family violence programs. The key element was the Core and Cluster program involving \$213 million for a housing project that, once completed, would see nearly 3,000 women and children placed in care, funded by the New South Wales Government. However, I must report to the House the measure of those experiencing domestic violence in our community. Over the past two years the prevalence in this State has been 3.4 per cent. Over the same period across the country the number is lower, at 3 per cent. In Victoria, which has historically had a higher level of investment in domestic, family and sexual violence reduction and prevention programs, the number is 2.1 per cent—significantly lower than in this State.

For that reason, on Monday the Government announced a significant increase in the funding for domestic, family and sexual violence programs in the State. That is \$230 million in new funding for primary prevention programs and early intervention programs, including specialist workers for children who follow mothers into care, hostel care or refuges in New South Wales. [*Extension of time*]

That package includes the crisis response program, and in particular an expansion of Staying Home Leaving Violence. That program was previously rolled out to 91 local government areas across New South Wales, but did not have universal coverage across the State. The program is designed as an intervention program. A support worker or counsellor can take a phone call from a woman at risk and assist to either keep that woman

in the house with her kids, for example, or ensure that the individual is in a safe and secure environment somewhere else in New South Wales. Measures may include the installation of CCTV and panic alarms. The program has been rigorously analysed, and the analysis coming back to the Government indicates that it works.

I make particular mention of the Benevolent Society in New South Wales, which has dedicated and committed workers in this space working each and every day for women in need. Their message to us on Monday was that their books are full and that they need more funding. That is why the Government's emergency package includes \$48 million specifically for that program. I report that there is much more to do. The Government wants to work with all members of this Parliament to ensure that we have programs and initiatives in place that make a difference and that we do everything we possibly can to prevent the prevalence and incidence of family and domestic violence, which is terrorising some families in this State.

#### **DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PRIMARY PREVENTION STRATEGY**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (12:19):** My question is directed to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. What metrics will be used to assess the outcomes of the \$38 million Pathways to Prevention: NSW Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence 2024-2027?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (12:19):** I am pleased that those opposite have started paying attention to primary prevention, because it is well and truly needed. The Government will be releasing its primary prevention strategy shortly, which will have significant information in it. It has been informed by consultation with over 100 councils in New South Wales. It has been informed by domestic and family violence stakeholders and by community groups. A considerable amount of work has been done on the primary prevention strategy over the past 12 months, led by the Women's Safety Commissioner and her strategic plan. It is an incredibly important piece of work that the Government will be releasing when it is finalised.

The Government has committed \$38 million for the implementation of the primary prevention strategy. Primary prevention is important. We need to be having conversations within our communities about domestic and family violence. The strategy will provide community members, members of Parliament, schools, sporting organisations and corporate New South Wales with grants and tools around how to go about preventing domestic and family violence in their local communities. It is targeted to local communities and based on evidence-based information, consistent with what Our Watch has been working towards nationally. The primary prevention strategy was developed by Our Watch for the New South Wales Government. I totally back in the work of Our Watch. It does fantastic work and has led the strategy through its development. I look forward to releasing the strategy when it is finalised, and I am proud to be a member of a government that has committed \$38 million to implementing the primary prevention strategy. We cannot continue to focus on crisis; we need to turn the dial, which we will do through primary prevention.

#### **KNIFE CRIME**

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (12:22):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. Will the Minister update the House on the New South Wales Government's new measure to get more knives off streets and boost community safety?

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (12:22):** I thank the member for Coogee for her question and for her advocacy in her community. New South Wales has suffered several horrifying, violent attacks on members of the community in the past months. In the past three weeks we have witnessed a stabbing at a bus stop in Doonside, where a young lad lost his life and his brother was badly injured; the horrific mass stabbing at Westfield Bondi Junction; an alleged terror attack in Wakeley; the tragic alleged murder of Molly Ticehurst; and other dreadful stabbings in Lake Macquarie, Narromine and Coffs Harbour. The community is grieving. I suspect that all members are in shock and anguish. It is the Government's role to ensure that the community can live in peace without the fear of violence. It must ensure that the community feels safe and, as far as humanly possible, is safe. The NSW Police Force is doing that through continuing operations. It works tirelessly to keep us safe. Once again, I thank the police for their courage and commitment.

I am pleased to inform the House that those capabilities will soon be expanded as the Government works towards allowing police to conduct wandering operations to take knives off streets through legislation modelled on Jack's law, which is in place in Queensland. It is about getting knives out of public places and changing the culture that sees some people, all too frequently young men, think it is acceptable to leave home carrying deadly weapons. It is not acceptable, and we need to change that culture. My message to the people of New South Wales is that it is not okay to carry a knife in public places. It is never okay to commit violent crime with a knife. The NSW Police

Force takes knife crime seriously. The Government will not accept people carrying knives on streets with no good reason. The changes to legislation will allow us to remove more knives from public places. The police are proactively doing everything they can, but the reforms will give them extra capabilities to take knives off streets and make the community feel safe. [*Extension of time*]

The Government wants communities to feel safe and to ensure that the police have every tool available to help tackle violent knife crime in the community. That is why the Government announced this morning that it will develop legislation, modelled on the Queensland Jack's law, that will give the police powers to wand or scan people for knives without a warrant in designated areas, including locations such as transport hubs, shopping centres and other crowded places. The Government will develop the legislation in the New South Wales context, advised by the expertise of the NSW Police Force as well as learnings from the operational experiences of the Queensland Police Service.

I acknowledge the fantastic work that the NSW Police Force already does to tackle knife crime on our streets. It regularly targets the possession of knives and other weapons in public places through Operation Foil, with the view to reduce violence-related incidents in the community and on streets. Operation Foil runs regularly and has resulted in the seizure of thousands of knives. New South Wales police have seized 3,855 knives from public places in the 12 months to April of this year. That is nearly 4,000 fewer knives on streets in New South Wales. In addition to the regular seizure of knives, the NSW Police Force Youth Command is engaging young people across the State through Operation PIVOT. Our police do a great job, and the Government has given them the power to do an even better job.

### WATER BUYBACKS

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (12:28):** My question is directed to the Premier. The Victorian Government has ruled out allowing the Federal Labor Government to buy Victorian water as part of the 450-gigalitre water buyback plan. Why will the Premier not protect New South Wales communities like the Victorian Government is protecting Victorian communities? Who is the Premier more loyal to—the people of New South Wales or the Federal Labor Party?

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (12:28):** I do not pretend to be an expert in the latest policy manoeuvring of the Victorian Government. Judging by some of its public commentary, I do not know if I would be able to get a meeting to find out what it is up to. The New South Wales Government has been consistent on this issue. It does not support water buybacks. It is pursuing alternatives to buybacks from the Commonwealth Government. The New South Wales Government is keen to tap into Federal resources to fund alternatives to buybacks, including expanding the Computer Aided River Management of the Murrumbidgee River project, expanding Murray Irrigation Limited's Restoring Murray Waterway project and a range of other regulations and irrigation measures, particularly along that waterway, that the Government believes are important and are more equitable and better for the economy than the brute force of a buyback from the Commonwealth Government.

It is important to note that I do not profess to be an expert about the Victorian Government's water policy management, but the suggestion that it has, for example, introduced legislation to stop a moratorium is not correct in my understanding. The member for Murray talks about who is loyal to who; we have got to get the facts on the table. I point the member to correspondence from the Federal Minister for the Environment and Water, Tanya Plibersek, in which she noted the Victorian Government's participation in a Commonwealth Government scheme and its agreement not to introduce legislation that would implement a moratorium on water buybacks in Victoria. She went on to say about the Federal Government scheme in relation to the Victorian Government:

This commitment unlocks for Victoria the full range of water recovery options already available to other Basin states.

She goes on to say:

Victoria's commitment announced today will allow for similar opportunities over the coming months ...

Then she says—and this is important and valid, particularly if you take as supposition the member for Murray's suggestion that we are more loyal to one State or government over another:

I take your acknowledgement that the legislation is in effect as a commitment by the Victorian government not to take any action, including legal action, that would frustrate the Commonwealth's delivery of these obligations.

That is the Commonwealth Government praising the Victorian Government for not intervening in relation to water buyback policies from the Commonwealth Government. For the past year the member for Murray has come into this place and said, "There is a difference in the policy arrangements between New South Wales and Victoria", and I have repeatedly said, "It does not matter whether you are a signatory to the agreement or not. The Commonwealth Government can come in over the top and do buybacks." That is what that correspondence from the Federal Minister for the Environment and Water unambiguously says.

**Mrs Helen Dalton:** Mr Speaker, I seek additional information.

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier has completed his answer.

### **STAYING HOME LEAVING VIOLENCE PROGRAM**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (12:32):** My question is addressed to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Will the Minister update the House on how the expansion of the Staying Home Leaving Violence program will support more women and children to remain safe in their homes after leaving a violent relationship?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (12:32):** I thank the member for Gosford, who has been an absolute advocate in this area and is always passionate about the issue of preventing domestic and family violence. Staying Home Leaving Violence, for those who are not aware of what the program does, is a program that empowers victim-survivors and children to be safe from violence while maintaining stability in their home. Too often it is the victim that has to leave the home. The program turns that on its head and allows the victim to stay at home safely while the perpetrator is dealt with. We know that not all victim-survivors share the same experience of violence. The program tailors our response to fit the circumstances of each person who is in need.

Staying Home Leaving Violence services are assisting people in large swathes of New South Wales at the moment with the support that they need to live safely in their homes, whether it be safety planning, security upgrades, helping with managing finances, providing support for children or giving assistance in complicated legal matters. The program works in conjunction with police in making sure that the perpetrator is removed from the family home where there is an apprehended violence order in place, because we know that, fundamentally, the perpetrator needs to be held to account and the victims need to be supported. Victims should not be penalised for domestic and family violence, and that is clearly the message from this Government. Staying Home Leaving Violence is about keeping victim-survivors and children connected to their support network, schools, communities and neighbourhoods, because that is where they need the support. They need it locally with people that they know. They should not be forced to abandon those connections to escape a violent situation.

The program is evidence informed. It was evaluated by the University of New South Wales in 2022 and it was a really positive evaluation. Last financial year the program supported 6,500 victim-survivors, including 1,293 children who have experienced domestic and family violence. As a government, we know that we need to expand the program. Staying Home Leaving Violence has been around for a number of years now, but it has only been partially rolled out. Yesterday the Premier announced a rollout right across New South Wales to the other council areas beyond the current 91 to the whole of the 128, so that every council area has access to Staying Home Leaving Violence. That means that more victim-survivors will get the support that they need to live safely in their homes, because your postcode should not determine whether you are safe or not.

### **DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE**

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (12:35):** My question is directed to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Will the Minister guarantee that the \$230 million in her domestic violence package will not result in cuts elsewhere?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (12:35):** Yes. I will provide some more information in relation to a really key part of that package, which is Staying Home Leaving Violence. I note that there have been some strong advocates for Staying Home Leaving Violence in this place, and I acknowledge the hard work of the member for Wakehurst, who currently does not have access to Staying Home Leaving Violence in his local area. There is no current access to Staying Home Leaving Violence on the North Shore, and the member for Wakehurst has worked constructively with the Government on that, constantly talking to me about the program needing to be in his local area. The increased funding for Staying Home Leaving Violence means that it will now be operating in council areas such as the northern beaches, Mosman, Lane Cove, Willoughby, Ku-ring-gai, Blacktown and, in fact, right across New South Wales.

It would be lovely if everybody in this Parliament worked constructively with the Government in the way that the member for Wakehurst has done. I know that Staying Home Leaving Violence will not be able to cater for every circumstance, and we have to continue to support victim-survivors with alternatives. That is why we will continue with the rollout of the Core and Cluster program which, when it is rolled out fully by 2026, will provide places for an additional 2,900 women and children across New South Wales. The majority of those refugees will be in regional New South Wales.

I acknowledge that there is no silver bullet to fix domestic and family violence, and I think that all of us acknowledge that. The status quo, however, is simply not acceptable. The package that we announced this week—the \$230 million of new money into domestic and family violence—is a really important commitment by this Government to supporting victim-survivors of domestic violence, to holding perpetrators to account and to saying to every single person across New South Wales, whether they are at school, entering into their first relationship, in a long-term partnership or on the singles scene, that domestic and family violence is not acceptable, and this Government will back their safety every step of the way.

### DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (12:38):** My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Education and Early Learning. Will the Minister inform the House why educating children about respectful relationships is crucial in ending the scourge of domestic and family violence?

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (12:39):** I think it goes without saying, and many Ministers and members have spoken about this already today, that the past few weeks have certainly been a wake-up call that despite how far we have come as a community, despite all the actions that successive governments of various political colours have taken, it has not been enough. We have to be honest about that; it has not been enough. Domestic, family and sexual violence against women, gender-based violence against women, is our national shame, and we must do more. We heard the Minister and the Premier speak a lot about some of the crisis response investment that this Government is proudly making. Realistically, we are saying to the communities of New South Wales that this is an emergency response for right now, but in answering the member for Camden I will talk about some of the work that we know we need to do in primary prevention and in driving cultural change in our communities. That cultural change has to be tectonic in its scale.

When people say, "Where do we enact cultural change when we're trying to drive that in our communities?", naturally, we look to our schools. Before I say what we are doing in our schools and what we can do in our schools, I acknowledge that this is not a problem for schools alone to fix. I need to say that to our teachers, our principals and our schools. Schools are a microcosm of communities. Schools are safe places, where children who are living in violent families might go to their teacher as their safe person. The teacher might be able to pick up that something is not quite right without the child saying anything, because that is their expertise and the love and care they have for their students.

This work has to be done with schools, and I acknowledge that there is not one teacher who I have met as Minister who is not doing work around respectful relationships each and every day, anyway. Half an hour in the hall on a Thursday morning is not going to change the culture of this country—what will is investing in helping teachers to do this work. They are doing it each and every day. When they see things happen on the playground, they say, "That is not how you should talk to your peers. When you're having a disagreement, that is not a respectful way to relate to another human being." I have to make the point that that is being done by teachers every day, and I appreciate that as their Minister. [*Extension of time*]

At our emergency Cabinet meeting we heard about primary prevention being a very important part of what we need to do. Rosie Batty said to us, "If you focus too much on the women at the bottom of the cliff then you're not going to get the women who are about to fall off", so I am really proud that we have invested \$38 million for the implementation of the first dedicated primary prevention strategy in New South Wales. We have heard from the Minister that this will be done in partnership with Our Watch. This is a significant investment in the history of this State, because we have not invested enough in primary prevention. We have largely focused on the crisis response, which we must do better at as well, but we have to get to the prevention part. I do not think any State, jurisdiction or government around the world has cracked how to prevent domestic and family violence, but we have to do better on primary prevention.

I can report to the House that we have updated the current personal development, health and physical education syllabuses to strengthen the focus on respectful relationships. They are age appropriate. In primary school the focus is on how to deal with bullying and in secondary school, as students navigate becoming teenagers, it is on learning about relationship issues and developing the skills for identifying and challenging abuses of power, and things like that. That is the stuff our teachers are doing now that we will work with them to expand. We will continue to work with our schools and invest in our schools to make that happen. We are also investing \$8.1 million in the ALL IN early childhood pilot, a unique program delivered by the Women's and Girl's Emergency Centre. Teaching respectful relationships can start very early if done by expert practitioners, based on evidence. We need to drive that cultural change. It is something that I will continue to drive as Minister, because the people of New South Wales need that cultural change to help make women safer in our community.

## DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (12:44):** My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading. It has now been one year since the High Court found that under New South Wales law a man who kicks down the door of his former partner's home is not committing trespass if his name is still on the lease. When will the Government act to protect women from this particular risk of domestic violence?

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields—Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections) (12:45):** I thank the member for Miranda for her question. The case the member is referring to was a High Court ruling. I understand that particular type of access relates to the Crimes Act, which is under the Attorney General's purview. Nevertheless, I inform the House that under the Residential Tenancies Act there are very strong provisions regarding those who are the victims of domestic and family violence. For example, the Act allows a tenant who is a victim to take immediate action to end their contract without being penalised, enabling victims to move out of homes as quickly as they can. The provisions around domestic violence were enacted in 2019. A statutory review must take place every three years, meaning that a review should have taken place by February 2022 and been tabled in Parliament within 12 months. That was not done.

**Mr Paul Scully:** Not done? Who was in government then?

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG:** Nevertheless, this Government is undertaking a statutory review and that will be tabled later this year. Some of the provisions being reviewed include a ban on listing tenants who leave a tenancy due to domestic violence on a tenancy database, a ban on a tenant being held responsible for damage caused during a domestic violence offence committed by another person, and allowing a victim-survivor to change their locks. A report will be tabled later this year.

**Ms Eleni Petinos:** Point of order: Whilst I recognise that the House very much appreciates the information from the Minister, we were specifically seeking information about what the Government is doing to address the risk of domestic violence that has arisen as a result of people intruding into a former partner's home. It is a live issue because of the High Court ruling, and we would like specific information around that.

**The SPEAKER:** Is the member's point of order taken under Standing Order 129?

**Ms Eleni Petinos:** It is in relation to relevance, yes.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will return to the leave of the question.

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG:** On top of doing the statutory review, which should have already been done, the Government will continue to improve and enhance the Act. We are also working with the community and the Federal Government regarding the particular case the member refers to. The Government is going to review the Residential Tenancies Act to ensure we improve the current provisions so that victims are able to end their contracts as easily as possible.

## DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (12:48):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Corrections. Will the Minister inform the House how the New South Wales Government is improving the justice system for victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence by engaging with offenders to lessen the chances of recidivism?

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields—Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections) (12:48):** I thank the member for Heathcote for her question and for her interest in this topic. We are all aware that the past few weeks have been particularly disturbing and stressful for many in our community. That is why the Government is stepping up to address these issues with its \$230 million package to enhance services and improve the safety of women in New South Wales. We have lifted funding for the programs that aim to break the cycles of violence. A few minutes ago the Deputy Premier talked about early prevention in our schools, but we must also make sure we connect with those in other parts of our community. That includes our correctional facilities.

In New South Wales there are around 16,000 alleged offenders on remand or convicted offenders in custody or under community supervision. If we are serious about ending family and domestic violence, we cannot ignore those who have already offended, and we must ensure that they do not reoffend. The New South Wales Government is ensuring that offenders can access the specialised programs they need to help to change their

behaviour. Boosting evidence-based programs to change behaviour is a key part of this Government's action on domestic violence, including in our prisons.

We are bolstering the Corrective Services NSW EQUIPS domestic violence program with an additional \$2.1 million. Through that program offenders will receive intensive ongoing treatment that is aimed at, firstly, explaining abuse and intimate partner violence; secondly, helping them accept responsibility for their offences; and, thirdly, developing the skills they need to change their behaviour. The new funding will extend and improve that work. We are keeping the safety of women and children at the centre of these interventions. That is why only specialist counsellors can undertake this very important work.

EQUIPS complements the range of in-custody and in-community programs we are already running to reduce reoffending. We will use every opportunity to stop offenders from offending again. Domestic violence offenders are at high risk of offending again, and intervening whilst they are in custody is an opportunity to stop the cycles of violence. More people are in our jails for domestic violence than ever before. There are currently around 2,900 inmates in custody who have been convicted of domestic violence offences or are waiting for their day in court. More than 13,500 offenders are on parole or on a community-based order. Sadly, the numbers keep going up. For domestic violence offences, we are also seeing the remand population increase sharply. It is increasing more than the sentenced population. [*Extension of time*]

I give those statistics in order to put it bluntly: This is a captive audience. If we are going to take the opportunity to intervene and change behaviour, we must also focus on our corrections facilities. In addition to behavioural change programs, we are working to keep victims safe through electronic monitoring and community supervision. Of course, some offenders will not change their behaviour, or they are far too high risk. That is why Corrective Services also works across multiple agencies on the Domestic Violence Electronic Monitoring program.

Since the program was initiated, more than 700 convicted offenders have been tracked. But electric monitoring is not the end of the story. It must work hand in hand with our Community Corrections teams. Our Community Corrections officers are trained to spot the red flags and, more importantly, to intervene before a perpetrator can offend again. I have visited some of our Community Corrections teams in parts of regional New South Wales, and I have been very pleased at their dedication to public service and to keeping our communities safe. Changing behaviour face to face is something that technology cannot do, hence the importance of our Community Corrections teams.

I know that all members have been shocked by recent cases and horrific events of violence against women. While those cases have brought this criminal behaviour into sharp relief, we all know that this insidious violence has eaten away at our community for too long. I am proud to be working alongside all my colleagues, across the Parliament and with our community groups to address this challenge. It is the responsibility of us all to address violence against women and children. The New South Wales Government is supporting victims and keeping them safe, and working to address the root causes of the violence. Corrective Services has a crucial role to play as one of the major points of intersection between offenders, victims and the Government.

#### DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE EMERGENCY SHELTERS

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (12:54):** My question is directed to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. With hundreds of homeless individuals on the South Coast relying on Safe Shelter Shoalhaven and Safe Waters Community Care, Ulladulla, for a safe refuge, including women and children fleeing domestic violence, will the Minister guarantee the ongoing funding of those vital services?

**The SPEAKER:** The Attorney General will come to order. Government members will come to order. I call the Minister. She will be heard in silence.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (12:55):** Emergency shelter for women, as well as women and children being able to remain in their homes when it is safe to do so, are important issues. I state absolutely that the additional \$230 million that this Government is committing to support women and children leaving domestic violence, to fund primary prevention initiatives, to hold perpetrators to account and to undertake research will not result in any cuts to existing services funded by the New South Wales Government. We know that we must continue to provide safe shelter and appropriate accommodation for women and children who are leaving domestic and family violence.

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



**Ms JODIE HARRISON:** We are committed to continuing to fund every single service that we provide funding to in relation to domestic and family violence in this State. We are not going to see a copy of Going Home Staying Home. We are committed to providing appropriate safe shelter to women and children across New South Wales.

#### WAKELEY CHURCH INCIDENT

**Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (12:56):** Mr Speaker, I publicly thank you for checking in over the past couple of weeks. It means a lot. I sincerely thank you.

My question is addressed to the Minister for Multiculturalism. Will the Minister inform the House about how the Government worked with the Faith Affairs Council, faith leaders and others during and in the aftermath of the Wakeley incident?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (12:57):** I thank the member for Fairfield for his question, and I acknowledge his work guiding and supporting his constituents during these challenging times. He has been nothing less than exceptional. Three weeks have passed since a knife attack at Christ the Good Shepherd Church in Wakeley, three weeks in which we witnessed the best and the worst of human behaviour. I do not want to dwell on the negative, but it is important that we record what happened on the evening of 15 April. An attack was made on a religious leader in his place of worship. Violence was directed at police and paramedics as they tried to do their jobs. Social media promoted misinformation and disinformation, and was used to incite division and disorder in our community. But if there is one thing that the last three weeks have shown, it is that those who favour violence, hate and division will never win. When we could have chosen conflict, we chose peace. When we could have divided, we chose to unite.

The New South Wales Government's response to the Wakeley incident has relied heavily on the cooperation and advice of our faith leaders. When we established the NSW Faith Affairs Council last year, we knew we may need to call on it in a crisis. That is what we did. Within hours of the incident, the leaders of the diverse religious communities of New South Wales made a united statement against all forms of hate and violence. The members of the Faith Affairs Council joined with religious leaders of other faiths to call for calm. They spoke with one voice to say that religion is never a justification for violence, and that places of worship are for peace and prayer. Our faith leaders also affirmed their trust and confidence in our police and first responders.

Much of the good work over the past three weeks has happened behind the scenes. There have been regular briefings and ongoing dialogue with faith leaders. There has been engagement at a grassroots level, such as the excellent Multi Faith Forum, organised by the member for Fairfield, which I was pleased to attend. The police Minister and the NSW Police Force acted swiftly to establish Strike Force Patrino to investigate the stabbing and Strike Force Dribs to investigate the public order incident. The Premier has written to the Prime Minister about ensuring material on social media platforms that may incite violence can be taken down immediately. [*Extension of time*]

We have offered the Commonwealth Government support for laws to hold social media platforms to account with substantial fines and other sanctions. I thank everyone who has contributed to this important work. It is by working together that we ensure that our immediate responses are appropriate, our long-term policies are effective, and our community is kept united and safe.

#### REGIONAL MEDIA

**Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (13:01):** My question is directed to the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government. Paid advertisements, particularly government advertising, is the baseline of revenue for regional media. We have recently seen the closure of the *Barrier Truth* in Broken Hill after 126 years of publishing. How is the Government supporting regional media? Is the Government open to discussions with the owners of these businesses who live and operate in regional communities?

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (13:01):** I thank the member for Barwon, who is a thoroughly decent person. Only a couple of weeks ago I had the great pleasure of meeting him in his electorate and I look forward to my next trip. I acknowledge the important role the *Barrier Truth* played in the Broken Hill community until its recent closure. As the member for Barwon and many members of this House know, my door is always open. I am quite happy to meet with him over a range of issues, very much in a solutions-based approach. I will be happy to have that meeting.

Last week I met with Country Press NSW as well as a delegation from Australian Community Media. I had met with them before and we are working through a whole heap of matters. I made it very clear that this

Government is taking its role very seriously of ensuring that all communities across New South Wales—metropolitan, regional, but also remote and small communities—have access to public information and support from government programs and services to ensure that they are supported. Approximately 170 regional community papers operate in New South Wales, many of which are struggling to stay afloat because of the changing nature of the way that media is delivered. We know that receiving a physical newspaper is now much more difficult, but we also must acknowledge that in some communities, particularly those represented by the member for Barwon, digital access is perhaps not quite as simple as is receiving a newspaper. It is important to acknowledge that newspapers play an important civic role.

Anyone who goes to a small country town and picks up the local paper will very quickly discover that the paper is pretty much the thing that keeps the community together by telling people what is going on by publishing the local golf results, what is happening down at the Country Women's Association, who is dating whom and, of course, community messages, and reports of the debutante ball. The local paper is great for keeping people up to date on the role that communities play—something that this Government keeps very much in mind. The point I make is that the reach or importance of a newspaper cannot be measured by its readership or the amount it makes in sales. There is a role to be played in endeavouring to keep those newspapers alive to keep communities as well informed as possible. As many members should know, the New South Wales Government delivered additional new money of \$3 million in advertising to support print media in regional papers over a three-year period. The Government is on track to deliver \$1 million for this financial year. [*Extension of time*]

As well as that, the Department of Customer Service is working to increase regional press advertising for targeted campaigns. We have already ensured that this year's campaigns that are booked have included bushfire Get Ready safety messages, reminders about vaccinations that include COVID and flu, and Service NSW Business Bureau services. Some upcoming campaigns that have already been booked will include information about available TAFE courses as well as road safety. I note that this week is National Road Safety Week. In addition, the Government is ensuring that all government advertising is efficient and effectively gets the word across in a manner consistent with the Government Advertising Act. Campaigns need to build public awareness and ultimately deliver value for taxpayers' money.

It may not be known across the board that government agency guidelines commit 26 per cent of advertising spend to regional media. The point made by the member for Barwon during our discussions with Country Press was the need to ensure that amount heavily features the print media so that newspapers not only continue to be a lifeblood of the community but also are readily accessible. The Department of Customer Service is working with Country Press NSW and is happy to work with all members of Parliament. I am pleased to inform the House that for this financial year alone, \$21,000 has been allocated to Bourke's *The Western Herald*, \$31,400 to the Broken Hill *Barrier Truth*, \$13,000 to the *Coonabarabran Times*, and \$10,000 to Narrabri's *The Courier*. I acknowledge there is more work to be done. I know that Regional NSW is working on it. I am happy to work with the member for Barwon, whose community is exceptionally lucky to have him. I know Country Press NSW would be well pleased with his advocacy, which he always demonstrates.

#### NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY WEEK

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (13:07):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on this year's National Road Safety Week?

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (13:07):** I thank the member for Wallsend for her question. I know she is a very active advocate for road safety in her community. National Road Safety Week is from 5 to 12 May. On Sunday I was honoured to speak at the launch of the 2024 campaign with the yellow lighting of the Sydney Harbour Bridge alongside my colleague the Minister for Roads, Minister Graham. Many members of this House know the origin of this week was the work of Mr Peter Fraser after the tragic loss of his daughter Sarah in 2012. Last Sunday night I met with him and his children, Ben and Jess, who are incredible advocates for road safety. I especially thank Nathan Steenbergen and Sergeant Stephen Pidgeon, who attended the launch and who shared their story of Nathan's crash in Yass just a year ago. That was an incredibly brave moment. They highlighted in an incredibly moving way that all road trauma is local. It was difficult to hear, but important.

The Sydney Harbour Bridge was lit to remember all those who have been killed on our roads. Last year, 351 people died on New South Wales roads. To put that number into perspective, take the 100 or so people who are in this Chamber, double it, add another 150—that is how many people died on our roads last year. That is incredible. We need to do better. Two and a half times the number of people in this Chamber, 245 people, died on regional roads, and we know that regional areas are home to only one-third of the State's population. When we think of these figures not just as numbers but as people we sit near every day, our family members and our loved ones, it makes an impact. In addition to those people who died, 1,869 people were hospitalised and were traumatised and left with injuries that changed their lives for weeks, months or, in some cases, permanently.

I say especially to the students in the gallery that the theme for road safety this week is about the next generation, and we want them to receive the road safety message. Friday is National Walk Safely to School Day. We want students to do that safely, as we want everyone in this Chamber to commit to better road behaviour. The day of the crash is not the end of the process. Once the media's interest wanes and the TV cameras and newspaper journalists go away, the weeks, months, years and decades of trauma, grief and loss begin. Yesterday in Coffs Harbour I met with Katie Dokmanovic from the Road Trauma Support Group. Katie and other members were there to support the establishment of a chapter of the group in northern New South Wales. [*Extension of time*]

The group was there also to support the City of Coffs Harbour with National Road Safety Week activities. As someone who comes from a regional area, I know how important those wraparound support services are, and I give a shout-out to Vocal in the Hunter, which has done a lot of work with road trauma victims over many years. I was pleased to see at the Coffs Harbour event so many people from Transport for NSW supporting their colleague Tania Brown, who lost two children—Kayden and Sharna—in a crash on 11 March 2023. It was incredibly moving and important. I want everyone to internalise these messages. In her speech, Katie said, "Grief steals the person we used to be, and we grieve that too. It has changed absolutely every facet of my being. I am no longer the person I used to be." Not only did she lose people in that crash, but also she was later to be a victim of a road crash. Everyone is impacted.

Many well-loved landmarks across New South Wales will be lit up in yellow in honour of this week. Regional landmarks that will be lit include Morpeth Bridge at Maitland, Hume Bridge across Yass River, Warialda Visitor Information Centre, the Sir Henry Parkes monument in Parkes, Deni Ute Muster site, Forbes Town Hall, Shellharbour City Council chambers, council chambers at Moree, the Big Merino in Goulburn, Kiama and Wollongong lighthouses, Wagga Civic Theatre, Bingara Park, Monaro Street in Queanbeyan and bridges throughout the Murray Riverina. To address road safety, the Government has proactively and energetically embarked on new initiatives. Most recently, we announced that on 1 July we will roll out the State's first ever automatic seatbelt detection cameras. That will help to reduce the number of people who die because they were not wearing seatbelts. Currently they number 30 a year. We have announced another \$121 million in April for tranche 2 of the Safer Roads program.

*Presiding Officers*

#### **TEMPORARY SPEAKER**

**The SPEAKER:** Pursuant to Standing Order 20, I inform the House that I have nominated Michael Peter Kemp as Temporary Speaker in place of David Layzell. I congratulate and thank the member for Oxley.

*Bills*

**ANIMAL RESEARCH AMENDMENT (PROHIBITION OF FORCED SWIM TESTS AND FORCED SMOKE INHALATION EXPERIMENTS) BILL 2024**

**ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS) BILL 2024**

**ELECTORAL FUNDING AMENDMENT (LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL EXPENDITURE CAPS) BILL 2024**

**ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (SEA BED MINING AND EXPLORATION) BILL 2024**

**HUMAN TISSUE AMENDMENT (ANTE-MORTEM INTERVENTIONS) BILL 2023**

**AGEING AND DISABILITY COMMISSIONER AMENDMENT BILL 2023**

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS (CARE AND PROTECTION) AMENDMENT BILL 2024**

**COMBAT SPORTS AMENDMENT BILL 2024**

**INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION AMENDMENT BILL 2024**

**BAIL AND CRIMES AMENDMENT BILL 2024**

**CONVERSION PRACTICES BAN BILL 2024**

**ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (STRONGER REGULATION AND PENALTIES) BILL 2024**

*Assent*

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

*Governor***ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT**

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of messages regarding the administration of the Government.

*Documents***SUPPLEMENTARY ORDINARY RETURNS**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with the Constitution Act 1902, I table a copy of the Supplementary Ordinary Returns by members of the Legislative Assembly as at 31 December 2023. I order that the document be printed.

**SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSIONER****Reports**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with section 25 of the Small Business Commissioner Act 2013, I announce receipt of the report of the Small Business Commissioner for 2023, received on 26 March 2024. I order that the report be printed.

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

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with section 74 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, I announce receipt of the report of the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Investigation into the awarding of Transport for NSW and Inner West Council contracts (Operation Hector)*, dated April 2024, received on 30 April 2024. I order that the report be printed.

**OMBUDSMAN****Reports**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with section 31AA of the Ombudsman Act 1974, I announce receipt of the Special Report of the NSW Ombudsman entitled *Revenue NSW - The lawfulness of its garnishee order process*, dated 30 April 2024 and received that day. I order that the report be printed.

**PARLIAMENTARY ETHICS ADVISER****Correspondence**

**The SPEAKER:** I announce receipt of a copy of correspondence from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser enclosing advice provided to the Hon. Robert Stokes, dated 10 March 2024 and 11 March 2024, received on 6 May 2024. I order that the document be printed.

**INSPECTOR OF CUSTODIAL SERVICES****Reports**

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 16 (1A) of the Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2012, I announce receipt of the report of the Inspector of Custodial Services entitled *Inspection of Six Youth Justice Centres (2022)*, dated March 2024, received out of session on 22 March 2024 and authorised to be printed.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL****Reports**

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 421D of the Local Government Act 1993, I announce receipt of the following reports:

- (1) Financial Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Local Government 2023*, dated 26 March 2024, received out of session that day and authorised to be printed.
- (2) Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Cyber security in local government*, dated 26 March 2024.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL****Reports**

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 38EC of the Government Sector Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Workers Compensation Claims Management*, dated 2 April 2024, received out of session that day and authorised to be printed.

**NSW BUSHFIRE INQUIRY****Reports**

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 138 of the Rural Fires Act 1997, I announce receipt of the *NSW Bushfire Inquiry 2020 Progress Report: Implementation of the NSW Government's response to the NSW Bushfire Inquiry: Reporting Period October to December 2023*, received out of session on 28 March 2024 and authorised to be printed.

**INDEPENDENT PRICING AND REGULATORY TRIBUNAL****Reports**

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 59 of the Water NSW Act 2014, I announce receipt of the report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled *Water NSW 2023 Compliance Audit - Report to the Minister*, dated April 2024, received out of session on 8 April 2024 and authorised to be printed.

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

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 49 (1) of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007, I announce receipt of the report of the Office of the Inspector of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled *Report under Section 49 (1) of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 for the period ending 31 December 2023*, dated April 2024, received out of session on 19 April 2024 and authorised to be printed.

*Committees***MODERN SLAVERY COMMITTEE****Reports**

**The CLERK:** I announce receipt of the erratum to the report of the Modern Slavery Committee entitled *Review of the Modern Slavery Act 2018*, dated 19 December 2023, received out of session on 27 March 2024 and authorised to be printed.

## JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON PROTECTING LOCAL WATER UTILITIES FROM PRIVATISATION

### Reports

**The CLERK:** I announce receipt of the report of the Joint Select Committee on Protecting Local Water Utilities from Privatisation entitled *Protecting Local Water Utilities from Privatisation*, dated March 2024, received on 28 March 2024 and authorised to be printed.

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

### Government Response

**The CLERK:** I announce receipt of the Government response to the report of the Public Accounts Committee entitled *Parliamentary Budget Office 2023 Post-Election Report*, received out of session on 3 May 2024 and authorised to be printed.

## LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

### Reports

**Ms LYNDA VOLTZ:** As Chair: I table the report of the Legislation Review Committee entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 12/58*, dated 7 May 2024. I move:

That the report be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

## PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

### Inquiry

**Mr JASON LI:** As Chair: In accordance with Standing Order 299 (1), I inform the House that the Public Accounts Committee has resolved to conduct an inquiry into a framework for performance reporting and driving wellbeing outcomes in New South Wales, the full details of which are available on the committee's home page.

### Petitions

## PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

### Goulburn Mulwaree Council

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Minister for Local Government to reject the special rate variation application by Goulburn Mulwaree Council and to instruct the council to only increase the rates in line with the consumer price index or New South Wales rate peg, whichever is higher, received from **Mrs Wendy Tuckerman**.

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

**The CLERK:** I announce that the following ePetitions signed by fewer than 500 persons have been lodged for presentation:

### Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly address issues at the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange, received from **Mr Richie Williamson**.

### Batemans Bay Emergency Department

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to not close the Batemans Bay emergency department, received from **Dr Michael Holland**.

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

### Waste-to-Energy Incinerators

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly stop waste-to-energy incinerators in New South Wales, lodged by **Ms Janelle Saffin**.

### Scripture and Ethics Lessons

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to run optional scripture and ethics lessons outside class time in State public schools, received from **Mr David Mehan**.

### RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

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

The Hon. Ron Hoenig—City of Newcastle—lodged 12 March 2024 (Ms Sonia Hornery)

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

The Hon. Rose Jackson—Parsley Bay Environmental Impact Statement—lodged 12 March 2024 (Ms Kellie Sloane)

The Hon. Michael Daley—Road Crimes—lodged 12 March 2024 (Ms Charishma Kaliyanda)

The Hon. Jo Haylen—Student Transport Concessions—lodged 12 March 2024 (Ms Jenny Leong)

The Hon. Jenny Aitchison—South Maitland Rail Corridor—lodged 12 March 2024 (Mr Clayton Barr)

The Hon. Rose Jackson—Camden Haven Transitional Accommodation—lodged 19 March 2024 (Mrs Leslie Williams)

The Hon. Jenny Aitchison—Snowy Mountains Highway—lodged 20 March 2024 (Dr Joe McGirr)

*Business of the House*

### BUSINESS LAPSED

**The SPEAKER:** I advise the House that in accordance with Standing Order 105 general business notices of motions (for bills) Nos 1147 to 1173 and general business order of the day (for bills) No. 1, Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024, have lapsed.

### SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: BILLS

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (13:17):** I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit:

- (1) Consideration today, after conclusion of the public interest debate, of the introduction and second reading stages of the Bail Amendment (Serious Personal Violence and Electronic Monitoring) Bill 2024, of which notice was given by me this day.
- (2) Resumption of the second reading debate on the bill prior to consideration of Government business on Tuesday 14 May 2024, and consideration of all remaining stages, as follows:
  - (a) debate on the bill to be interrupted at 5.00 p.m. for the public interest debate;
  - (b) debate on the bill to resume after the public interest debate, unless concluded prior;
  - (c) if not concluded by 7.00 p.m., debate will be interrupted and the member with carriage of the bill shall give their reply on the second reading debate (time unlimited); and
  - (d) after the second reading debate is concluded, the bill to proceed through all remaining stages at the same sitting. I seek the support of the House to allow me to urgently introduce and second read a bill that will amend the bail laws of this State. The suspension will allow me to introduce and second read the bill after the conclusion of the condolence motion regarding the Bondi tragedy that was foreshadowed today by the Government. A copy of my bill has been supplied to the Government and the crossbench. It concerns a policy announced seven days ago. The circumstances of urgency for my suspension motion should rightly be above politics. Just two weeks ago, our State was shocked and appalled when a resident of Forbes, Molly Ticehurst, had her life tragically brought to an end in what is alleged to be a murder. Fifteen days prior to Molly's tragic death, her alleged killer was given bail. Bail was granted by a registrar rather than a judicial officer of the rank of magistrate. A condition of the bail granted was that the accused was not to go near Forbes, where Molly lived and worked. But the police allege that Molly was murdered in Forbes, in breach of the bail conditions. At the moment, there is no electronic monitoring of bail conditions. This needs to change. My bill makes that change.

Fifteen days prior to Molly's alleged murder, bail was granted on three charges of sexual intercourse without consent, four counts of stalk-intimidate, two charges of property damage and one count of cruelty to an animal, being Molly's dog. Since 2016 in this State there has been electronic monitoring of people on parole. New South Wales led the nation in that initiative. Electronic monitoring identifies breaches, notifies the person in breach and, if not remedied, notifies police and participating victims to enact their personal safety plans.

In May 2023, after the State election, the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research gave a positive evaluation of the electronic monitoring of people on parole in New South Wales. The review found that electronic monitoring substantially reduced reoffending, as well as breaches of parole and apprehended violence order

conditions. That successful program should now be extended to bail. Our State has the infrastructure and experience to roll out electronic monitoring in bail matters involving serious personal violence offences in a domestic relationship where police ask that bail be refused or that electronic monitoring be a condition of bail.

It is time that the Bail Act was amended to introduce electronic monitoring. The bill that I seek to be urgently introduced will allow that to be done. It is time that registrars stop deciding bail cases for serious personal violence offences. We have the audiovisual equipment in our courts to allow magistrates to do it remotely. Women in serious personal violence offences in a domestic relationship should be protected when a decision is made to appeal. If the decision is not to impose a condition of electronic monitoring on the accused, then the alleged offender should remain in police custody for up to three business days while an urgent appeal is heard.

The community expects this House to operate in a collaborative way to enable these practical reforms to urgently occur. We ask the House to put aside politics as usual and support this suspension of standing orders so that the changes to the Bail Act can be urgently debated. Molly's life must not be in vain. I ask the Government to put aside political business as usual and allow the Opposition to advance this bill in the public interest. I ask the Independents and The Greens to also support it. The communities that we all represent are screaming out for us to work together to find urgent solutions to the scourge of violence against women.

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (13:22):** The Government does not agree to this proposal to suspend standing orders for a variety of reasons. Firstly, it contains some serious shortcomings; secondly, it is contrary to the view of the sector; and, thirdly, rushing through a bill when the community is in mourning and suffering shock is not an appropriate response. One might think that a senior counsel and a reputable member of the bar, as the Leader of the Opposition is, would not seek to exploit a tragedy for political gain and would be genuine in their approach. The Government's position was expressed no better than by the Premier when he said too many lives have been lost and too many families have been broken, and that violence against women is a blight on society. The Government took urgent action, alongside the Prime Minister and all the State Premiers, and allocated almost a quarter of a billion dollars for a sustained focus on stopping homicide and achieving the shared goal of ending violence against women.

The Government has consulted extensively with a variety of experts who have provided information to the Cabinet, including Rosie Batty; the royal commissioner, who proposed 272 recommendations following the royal commission in Victoria; and the Women's Safety Commissioner. One of the fundamental things they told the Government was that there should be no piecemeal legislative approach. They insisted that they were consulted in respect of any legislative response because they know from their experience that certain legislative responses, particularly if they are piecemeal, do not work.

When the then Attorney General, now Leader of the Opposition, shepherded the coercive control legislation through this House—something that had been advocated for years by the member for Shellharbour—he must have received the same advice that this Government has received in respect of domestic violence and various strategies to address it. I know that the Homicide Victims Support Group was unimpressed with the response of the then Attorney General, now Leader of the Opposition.

I turn now to the bill that the member for Wahroonga thinks is urgent. It is not urgent because the commencement date is six months after the date of assent. I draw to the attention of the House also—and this is what happens when ad hoc bills are made without going through a proper consultative process, let alone with the industry—it is proposed that the offence of a "serious personal violence offence" has to carry a term of 14 years before it cuts in. That is from a senior counsel, who is supposed to be able to read the Crimes Act. The definition leaves out a whole range of offences like strangling and choking. Are they not serious personal violence offences, or has the member got that wrong? That is what happens when something is rushed through. As *The Daily Telegraph* said only four days ago when referring to the Leader of the Opposition, "What have you been doing for 12 years?" Registrars and justices of the peace have been determining bail applications since 1902. What has he been doing for 12 years?

**Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (13:27):** By leave: I speak on behalf of The Greens to the suspension motion. Clearly the issue is one of incredible importance and something that we should not take lightly. The Greens only received a copy of the bill in the past couple of hours. We have offered to work collaboratively with the Opposition to ensure that the issue can be dealt with as a matter of urgency over the next sitting period, which concludes next week. It is disappointing that the Opposition has sought to seek a suspension without giving us enough time to read through the bill thoroughly to understand exactly what it is proposing.

The Greens do not want to undermine in any way the urgency of the situation and the importance of the issue, particularly in light of what has happened in recent weeks. We want to work in a truly collaborative way across the Parliament—as the domestic violence sector has been urging us to do. We want to take our time and make sure that the changes are appropriate. We want time to read the bill to understand exactly what the



Opposition is proposing. We cannot support this suspension motion because we have not been given enough time to fully read through the proposal. We look forward to working together.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order. The member for Riverstone will come to order. The member for Kellyville will come to order. The member for Newtown will come to order. The comments of the member for Kellyville were particularly unhelpful in the context of this debate. Members will bring down the temperature of debate. Members have been very respectful to this point. I would like them to continue in that way.

**Ms KOBİ SHETTY:** This is exactly the kind of division we were hoping to avoid by asking the Opposition to give us more time to consider the legislation prior to this suspension motion being moved today. I look forward to working collaboratively across this Parliament with the Government, the Opposition and the crossbench in a sensible way to ensure we get good outcomes and are not politicising this issue.

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (13:30):** By leave: I support the Opposition's motion to suspend standing orders. I support the idea of electronic monitoring as long as it is done carefully and fairly. If the Opposition's bill is not adopted in its current form, I encourage the Opposition to work with the Government to address the scourge of domestic violence in our community. If there was ever a time to do away with political infighting, it is now. Let every single one of us work together.

**Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (13:32):** By leave: I thank all members. I support the suspension of standing orders and do so in the knowledge that everybody plays politics in this place. I really wish they would not. Last week the Coalition and The Greens did not show up for the joint announcement. That was wrong. The Government not wanting to deal now with this matter raised by the Liberals is also wrong. It is such an important issue. I am happy to support the motion. I want all members to stop supporting their party rooms and instead start supporting the women affected. People say, "The Libs were there for 12 years and what did they do? They did nothing." People say it is better if the Government introduces legislation. I actually do not care. It is not about us. It is about the people out there without a voice and the people who are at home right now who cannot leave, who are afraid of their partners returning this evening. It is about the people who cannot speak up and are afraid. It is about the one woman who dies every few days and all the other women who are sitting there terrified and whose children are vomiting because they are worried about going to school. We need to do something right now.

Sexism is rife in Australia. In the past couple of weeks I have experienced it myself. I really should not support members on this side of the House, because they are friends with the people who have been doing it to me. But I do not care. All I care about is doing the right thing for our community. I was elected to always vote with my conscience. We can agree on what is not acceptable. We need to do something right now for the people out there who are under threat. Who here has not had a resident come to them with concerns about their life, needing shelter or help, or who just needs us to be there because they cannot come to terms with what they live with? Who here is unaware of the current statistics? My community may be different from others. We need to start thinking more broadly and more openly.

I do not care where the legislation comes from. I do not care if it comes from Labor, the Liberals, The Nationals or The Greens. The legislation should be considered on its merits. On such an important issue, we should work together to achieve every measure that must be taken and do everything we can do. I compel members to think hard about this measure. If it prevents only one death, it is worth it. We will not ever know who we save, but that is better than knowing who we did not.

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS:** I seek leave to contribute to the debate.

**Leave not granted.**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (13:35):** By leave: I make a brief contribution to debate on the suspension of standing orders. Since early this morning I have been working with colleagues on the proposal from the Opposition. I do see merit in the legislation that it has put forward. Having just received a copy of the legislation, I have not been able to engage with stakeholders on the contents of the bill or its urgency. I have made it clear to the Opposition that I am open—following consultation and a review of the bill over the next day—to support introducing legislation during private members' time on Thursday, and to work with the Government and my crossbench colleagues to facilitate that. I note the goodwill of the Opposition in engaging with the crossbench on this matter, and I thank Opposition members for that.

The crossbench has a diversity of opinions. One thing that brings us together is the knowledge that intimate partner violence, domestic violence and family violence are at crisis rates in our communities. We want to see this entire Parliament work together. If the proposal from the Coalition is one way to achieve that, we will work with the Coalition and the Government to facilitate it. However, at this point I do not support the suspension of standing orders.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (13:36):** In reply: I thank the member for Wollondilly and the member for Murray for supporting the suspension of standing orders. It was disappointing to hear some of the things that were said during the debate today. For a start, the suggestion that this legislation is some piecemeal reform ignores the fact that since 2016 we have had electronic monitoring for those on parole. We have a system that is working and that stakeholders are working with. This is an extension of an existing program. To suggest that it is some piecemeal, ill-considered reform goes against the reality of the situation. It will take time to implement the changes. In the bill that has been circulated we have allowed for a period for the Government to get the practical measures in place. We have put a six-month cap on that time period as a clear indication to this Parliament that we will get on with this serious work.

We publicly released our policy and three-point plan, which is encapsulated in the bill, seven days ago. We started getting a bill drafted after it became clear from the Cabinet's meeting on Friday that no legislation would be introduced by the Government this week. On Sunday we gave the crossbench a one-page briefing note on the bill. After the bill went through the usual processes and was finalised, it was distributed to the crossbench and the Government. There has been ample time to consider it. We are proposing that the bill be laid on the table for seven days so members can consult. We are not asking members of this House to vote on the bill. We welcome any changes that may be suggested. For example, the Leader of the House complained about the definition of "serious personal violence offences". It is the same definition that is currently within the Bail Act. But if he thinks there should be a different definition for these provisions, we are willing to have that discussion. We are open minded. We want a good bill. We want the best bill to protect our community.

The real problem is that Opposition members want the bill to pass through both Houses of Parliament in the next two sitting weeks. If we keep delaying, with the usual vacation in July, it could be months before the practical steps even start taking place. Parliament needs to take a position and force the implementation of those important and practical measures. How many lives of women are the members of this place willing to put at risk by that kind of delay? The changes cannot wait for months; we need to move quickly. We want to be in a position to get the bill through both Houses of Parliament in these two sitting weeks, and that is why I ask for support for my motion. I ask all members of this House to examine their conscience, do the right thing and support the suspension so that the bill moves through the House appropriately. I end with the words of Molly's father. He said:

I can say all the normal stuff that people say about how their daughter was beautiful, but Molly really was ... Someone's got to be responsible.

We have to be responsible. We are the elected representatives of all of the citizens of this State, and we need to be responsible. I ask the House to support this reasonable suspension of standing orders so we can all get on and pass reasonable legislation that we can all discuss in the next seven days, to make sure that our State is a better place and that women in our State, particularly, are safer than they are today.

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

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....40  
Noes .....48  
Majority.....8

#### AYES

Amon, R  
Anderson, K  
Ayyad, T  
Butler, R  
Clancy, J  
Cooke, S  
Coure, M  
Cross, M  
Crouch, A (teller)  
Dalton, H  
Davies, T  
Di Pasqua, S  
Donato, P  
Hannan, J

Henskens, A  
Hodges, M  
James, T  
Kean, M  
Kemp, M  
Lane, J  
Layzell, D  
Marshall, A  
McGirr, J  
Perrottet, D  
Petinos, E  
Preston, R  
Provost, G

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

## NOES

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

## PAIRS

Griffin, J	Warren, G
Roberts, A	Minns, C

**Motion negatived.**

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

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

- (1) That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit:
  - (a) The Premier, at 2.30 p.m., to move a motion of condolence in relation to the Bondi Junction attack;
  - (b) The Premier, followed by the Leader of the Opposition, each to speak for an unspecified period of time; and
  - (c) If debate on the condolence motion is not concluded by 5.00 p.m., the commencement of the public interest debate to be postponed until debate on the condolence motion has concluded.
- (2) That standing and sessional orders be suspended on Wednesday 8 May 2024 to permit the routine of business to be interrupted at approximately 10.15 a.m. to permit the member for Northern Tablelands to give his valedictory speech.

**Motion agreed to.**

*[Notices of motions given.]*

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

*Condolences*

**WESTFIELD BONDI JUNCTION INCIDENT**

**The SPEAKER:** I acknowledge the presence in the public gallery and in the Speaker's gallery of family members of victims of the Bondi Junction attack.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (14:33):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Expresses its deep sorrow at the loss of six innocent lives on 13 April 2024 in Bondi Junction.
- (2) Extends its sincere condolences to the families of those who lost their lives and those who were injured.
- (3) Recognises the bravery and professionalism of our frontline workers in responding to this tragedy.

On 13 April a peaceful Saturday in Bondi Junction was shattered by an unforgivable act of violence. Three weeks on from that terrible afternoon, we are still picking up the pieces as a State. For the family and friends of the six victims, some of whom are with us today, I know these have been amongst the hardest weeks of your life. Nothing could prepare you for something so painful, so shocking and so public. For most of us, death is a private tragedy but, in these circumstances, for you, it was a public emergency reported as breaking news. Today, as a Parliament, we send you our solidarity and whatever small comfort we can offer. We also send you our love. At the same time

we acknowledge everyone touched or affected by the attack: the first responders, still processing everything they saw that day; the injured, still recovering in body and certainly in mind; other survivors, still living with terrible moments and terrible memories; and everyone else mourning the dead and feeling real grief. What happened in Bondi was unforgivable. Nothing can excuse it or explain it. We cannot contextualise it. At the end of the day, it was an attack on innocent people and on life as it was being lived.

All six of the victims had something in common. They were hopeful and optimistic people, raising kids, planning their wedding day or savouring young love. They were starting new careers. They were expanding their education. They were crossing the world with hope in their hearts. All six had made a considerable journey through life to be at that scene that day. Some of those journeys began down the road and others on the other side of the world, but all were looking to the future and all were focused on tomorrow. One of the things we mourn as a people and as a Parliament today, and one of the hardest things to acknowledge, is the loss of those tomorrows. Our State has been shaken by the attack. As we heard the awful news, of course we were all shocked. As we discovered the details, we were heartbroken as well. Ducking up to Westfield on a Saturday afternoon—nothing could be more innocent and nothing could be more familiar. Hearing about what happened in Bondi Junction, we were reminded of a fundamental truth: All of us are connected in this life, and at the end of the day we all depend on each other when it really comes down to it.

That is what we saw in Westfield and across the city—an army of people seen and unseen rising to protect each other, to stop an attacker and to ferry people away. By now everyone will have heard the stories of bravery and heroism on Saturday the 13th and of those who stood up—often in very grave danger—to protect their fellow citizens. A refugee from Pakistan, fresh to this country and on his first day on the job, gave his life in defence of someone else—someone he had never met before. A nurse who had found safety within a shop asked to leave that place of refuge because people outside needed a hand. A French tradie armed himself with whatever he could find and faced down the attacker so that other people could get out of the way. Police Inspector Amy Scott, on hearing news of the danger, ran towards violence without backup and, crucially, without any hesitation. What all those people have in common is that their acts of conspicuous bravery were done for the benefit of people they had never met before—strangers. They had nothing in common with them other than the fact that they were fellow citizens who needed help.

It is also important to acknowledge today that we ask a lot of our police. In volatile situations we send them in as law enforcers, as peacekeepers and, sometimes, as social workers—but always on the front line. It is important to acknowledge that they do a complex job in very difficult circumstances. Split-second decisions need to be made almost every single day. When Inspector Amy Scott was called on, she did her duty in the best traditions of the NSW Police Force. She was calm and decisive and, as a result, she saved lives. Equally important was the invisible network of support people who were activated in the hours following the attack. That began with retail workers who sheltered people in their stores. It continued with the 75 doctors and paramedics who were sent to Bondi Junction, some of whom were in their first weeks in the field. When they entered the shopping centre, unsure whether the killer was still at large, they worked incredibly fast under intense pressure to get people into ambulances and to save lives. Those ambulances were supported by the central coordination team who organised mundane and routine things—but crucial in an emergency—like ensuring that they could travel free of traffic on bus lanes and that Oxford Street was cleared.

Victims were taken to six separate hospitals across Sydney. They were met by doctors and nurses who worked diligently around the clock to save lives. Counsellors, family support officers, mental health staff—a range of workers, holding their nerve, doing their job—showed compassion through their professionalism, and, thanks to their collective efforts, all 12 patients who were admitted to New South Wales hospitals have been released, including a nine-month-old baby. It is the same spirit we have seen from Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Australia, which initiated a blood drive in memory of their friend and former member. Fittingly, it is called Faraz's Gift.

I know people want more answers. Many are angry, and that is for good reason. There might have been some discomfort around discussing the motivation here in the context of mental illness, but that does not change the fact that every Australian woman deserves to live safely in her community. Poisonous ideas about control and destructive feelings of entitlement have to be conquered for everybody's sake, so everyone feels safe in their community. We have seen in different cases across New South Wales that women and children are the ones who suffer from this violence, and they are telling us that enough is enough. I know this is something members across the Chamber agree on, and it needs to be a priority for the rest of this Parliament.

We also extend our thoughts to the entire Bondi community as they deal with the aftermath of this tragedy. Bondi is known around the world for its glamour, but for the past three weeks it has been defined by its strength. I know there is some anxiety out there; people are feeling reluctant to return to Bondi Junction. But I have no doubt that step by step, little by little, people will return to Westfield Bondi Junction. They will resume their lives;

they will rejoin this wonderful community. The reason for that is, despite its glamour, Bondi is tough, and the community will get through this.

Finally, to the family and friends still reeling from this attack, the past three weeks have been a nightmare that no-one deserves to live through. Of course, it is extremely difficult—from a period of shock to a deep sense of loss, and now, it must seem, a long and empty road of grief. But please know there are people who are here for you, who will walk that road with you, for as long as you need. Our Parliament stands with you as you approach this journey. Grief is a terrible emotion, but it does not have to be a lonely one, and the people of New South Wales are with the families of the six innocent people who lost their lives. The people of New South Wales stand with you. Always remember, you are never alone.

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (14:42):** On behalf of the Opposition, I join the Premier in offering deepest condolences and expressing heartfelt sympathy to the victims of the Bondi Junction tragedy and their families as they, and we as a city and State, grieve the loss of six bright and innocent souls. It could easily have been any one of us currently here in the Chamber who on 13 April was shopping or working in the local mall, on an ordinary Saturday afternoon, in perfect Sydney autumn weather. Among the victims were a mother and grandmother, a recent graduate embarking on her career, an established professional, and one who had migrated here in pursuit of a better life. They were individually going about their business, but collectively had their futures stolen by a senseless act of violence. The victims represented a cross-section of the Sydney community. They had their whole lives ahead of them. Looking back, they were all at Bondi Junction that Saturday afternoon for very everyday reasons—in one case covering a colleague's shift; in another, shopping for a new water bottle. But in the space of a few hours, their time among us was drawn to a close and their future successes and contributions extinguished.

The Bondi Junction tragedy has left behind fiancés, siblings, parents, children and grandchildren. Six families, two of them international, will now have to navigate the months, years and decades ahead without one of their family members present. We all see part of ourselves and our own life story in the stories of the victims, reflected by the floral tributes that amassed through the week as fellow citizens visited to pay their respects. We extend our best wishes to the 12 people initially hospitalised with injuries, and we hope that they are all on the road to a speedy and full recovery. We acknowledge the dedication of our clinicians, nurses and other health staff who have been and will continue to be by their sides throughout the recovery journey.

All of us are incredibly grateful to Inspector Amy Scott of the NSW Police Force for her extraordinary heroism and conviction. Her decisive action undoubtedly saved lives. A huge thanks too to the emergency services and first responders—the police, paramedics and ambulance personnel who headed straightaway into the relatively unknown. We owe them a great debt of gratitude. And we thank the bystanders and ordinary people who confronted the attacker, particularly Damien Guerot and Muhammad Taha, who have both been granted permanent residency in recognition of their bravery.

A city that has faced tragedy knows the power of solidarity, the resilience of the human spirit and the enduring strength of community. Ten years on from the Martin Place siege, the fabric of Sydney was again tested, and as a community we have come together not just to mourn but to denounce violence and to support each other. The candlelight vigil at Bondi Beach was a deeply moving service commemorating the lives of the victims. It accompanied other vigils and services held throughout the week and provided an opportunity for all citizens to gather, reflect, and to find and provide support.

We are now approaching one month since the tragedy. The families and friends of the murdered, as well as the injured, the first responders and the witnesses to the atrocity, will all need our ongoing support. There will be trauma in the wider community too for quite some time. I urge everyone impacted by the event, directly, indirectly or from afar, to engage with mental health support services available through organisations like the NSW Health Mental Health Line, Lifeline, Beyond Blue and Kids Helpline. The Bondi Junction tragedy is a reminder of the fragility of life and how a completely unexpected event can change lives in just an instant. All of us should count our blessings, resolve our differences and hug our loved ones.

Echoing your statement from earlier today, Mr Speaker, it has been a challenging month for New South Wales. We have seen senseless violence and deaths that cannot be comprehended. There has been great loss amongst families across our State. The Opposition joins with the Premier and the Government in extending condolences and prayers to the families, friends and colleagues of the victims who lost their lives at Bondi Junction.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (14:47):** We extend our deepest condolences to all those impacted by the tragic events at Westfield Bondi Junction on 13 April—a day that cast a shadow of grief over our entire community. The incident at Westfield Bondi Junction has left us in shock and disbelief, grappling to understand the senseless loss of life. It has had a profound impact upon all of us. Grief and loss are incredibly difficult to

articulate and even more complex when they happen with no prior warning and in the context of a simple, ordinary event—an afternoon of shopping. At the forefront of our thoughts and prayers are the families and loved ones of the six victims whose lives were tragically taken in this act of violence. No words can adequately express the depth of our sorrow or alleviate the pain of such a devastating loss. We grieve with you.

As we mourn the loss of precious life, we also reflect on the fragility of human existence and the importance of cherishing each moment we are given. May the memory of the victims serve as a reminder of the preciousness of life and the imperative to strive for a future where senseless acts of violence are but a distant memory. The events of 13 April will have a lasting impact on our community. Westfield Bondi Junction has long been a community hub. Spending a Saturday afternoon at Westfield is a very common, normal, everyday activity shared and enjoyed by most people. Going to Westfield Bondi Junction is a rite of passage for young people in our community. It is one of the first places you are allowed to go as a tween to see a movie, to enjoy a hot chocolate or to shop.

For the many families in our community that live in flats around the area, it is part of our backyard and a place where young parents hang out. It is a location of mass employment for many in our community and a place where generations of my own family have worked. Not a day has gone by since 13 April when I have not met someone who was there during the incident or would normally have been there at that time. It could have been any one of us struck down, which is why our community feels so strongly about supporting the victims of this horrific act. In this time of darkness, we stand united in offering our unwavering support, comfort and solidarity to all the victims of this dreadful event and their families, friends, neighbours and acquaintances.

On behalf of our community, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the brave individuals who intervened and assisted during the chaos, demonstrating extraordinary courage and compassion in the face of danger. These selfless actions serve as a beacon of hope amidst the grief and remind us of the inherent goodness and resilience of humanity. There is more light than darkness in our community. Our community is filled with angels—decent, brave humans who choose to run towards danger and help people they do not even know.

We acknowledge and commend the swift and coordinated response of our law enforcement agencies and emergency services, whose professionalism and dedication played a crucial role in apprehending the perpetrator and mitigating further harm. Their tireless efforts deserve not only our admiration but also our steadfast support as they continue to work tirelessly to keep our communities safe. I make particular mention of Inspector Amy Scott, who, without hesitation, ran towards danger and whose actions saved countless lives. We ask a lot of our paramedics and ambulance workers and put immense pressure on them. It takes a pretty remarkable person to put their hand up and say, "I am going to be a frontline service worker." Thank you.

Amidst the sorrow, moments of light have emerged as our community has come together to remember the lives of those lost. A candlelight vigil at Bondi Beach was a moment for us to grieve as a community and start what will be a long healing process. It was a testament to the resilience and spirit of our community. Events like this change a community forever, but we all need to remember that we are not alone. Our community has shown immense strength and compassion during this time and has demonstrated that there is so much good in our world. We are all in this together and we will get through this. Those who lost their lives, their families and friends who mourn them and those who were physically and emotionally injured are in our hearts. If they need help or want to talk to someone, they do not bear this burden alone. Experts can help them and walk with them. We are here to support them every step of the way. We will remember them.

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (14:53):** I thank the Premier, the Opposition leader and the member for Coogee for their very thoughtful and heartfelt remarks. I acknowledge the family members who are in the gallery and those who are watching online. Today I mark a deep sense of tragedy in the eastern suburbs of Sydney—the senseless loss of six innocent lives. It was an attack so shocking and so random that even weeks later all efforts to try to make sense of it feel futile. It was a breach of our trust in a place where we felt safe, with dozens bearing witness to the violence and its aftermath, hundreds caught up in the lockdowns and in the rushed evacuation. Our community, city and country are in shock.

Ripples from that day have spread right through our suburbs, touching us all. For those of us in the eastern suburbs, Bondi Junction is our town square. It is where we meet; it is where we shop. It is where 17 million customers visit every year. On any given Saturday, let alone the first day of the school holidays, it is bustling. You will find parents shopping for mouthguards for Saturday sport, teenagers going to the movies and my own teenager getting his hair cut. Tragically, we know that also on that day there was a mum taking her little girl to buy her birthday present. There was a bride-to-be preparing for her wedding, a security guard proud on his first day-shift, a young mum shopping with her baby, an international student celebrating the end of exams and a woman catching up for coffee with a friend and heading to the mall. They were beautiful, hope-filled lives with so much potential, cut so cruelly short.

Whether we knew them or not, these victims seem so familiar to us. The randomness has drawn us all together in our grief and our shared experience. It could have been any one of us, and the victims feel like people we knew. The pain of their stories for so many is so deep that it feels overwhelming. We use words like "healing" or "moving forward", and sometimes those words feel like a betrayal, because how can we move forward when we are leaving them behind? How does the world keep moving when, for them, it has stopped? Their families will never be the same. Nothing is fair. None of this makes sense, and our words today cannot make it better. But as hard as it is, our community will move forward, and we will not be defined by the actions of one man. We cannot allow the events of Saturday 13 April to scar us forever. We owe it to them. We owe it to those who lost their lives. We owe it to those who survived and suffered serious injuries. We owe it to those who were traumatised by the events on that day. As our community moves forward, we promise to carry their memories with us. We honour them by celebrating their lives and acknowledging the overwhelming good in our community.

So many stories of courage and kindness came out of that day. That Saturday we saw people run towards danger, including a man who positioned himself between the killer and a mum with her three children. We saw Damien Guerot, otherwise known as "bollard man", try to fend off the attacker. We heard about the bravery of Bondi lifeguard Andy Reid, who asked to be let out of lockdown to perform CPR on the victims. He was assisted by Scotty Wymark, Julie Flah and her husband, and many others whose names have not been in the media who played critical roles on that day. We acknowledge the Westfield staff and shop assistants who acted swiftly to protect customers, moving them into safety in back rooms. We commend the action of Inspector Amy Scott who, without police backup, ran towards the killer, stopping him and undoubtedly saving lives. Her expert training and her calm and professional actions saved the lives of so many. We know that. We owe her a great deal of gratitude. We thank the men who ran behind her with chairs ready to provide backup. We thank the paramedics, nurses and doctors who provided life-saving care and support. We thank the mental health professionals and volunteers who have helped and continue to help people process the trauma of that day.

In the days that followed the attack, we saw the speed of modern life in Bondi Junction stilled. That busy community hub fell quiet with the contemplation of countless individuals who came to leave flowers and tributes in Bondi Junction, Oxford Street mall and the centre. Thousands of condolence messages were left in person and online. That is the measure of our community and our State. Strangers who may not have known the victims felt compelled to demonstrate our unity in the aftermath. The candlelight vigil at Bondi Beach was attended by so many, not just from the eastern suburbs but from across New South Wales. There was also the surf club paddle-outs by members from Bondi, Bronte and beyond; the Catholic Church service; the St Andrew's Cathedral service and so many others; the mothers' groups; the school P&Cs providing support; and the goodness of everyday people checking in with each other just a little more often than they usually do. We need to keep doing that because the impacts of that day will take a long time for people to process. The kids who went back to school—many of them who were at Westfield at that time—they will still need our help.

We do not know what drove that man to do what he did and why he primarily targeted women. Hopefully, some of the answers will come through the inquest, but I acknowledge his family who have lost a son and who have to live with the knowledge of what he did. They tried but were unable to help, in the words of his dad, "a very sick boy". Today, in honouring those lost and in keeping our community safe, we must commit to finding answers. We must understand the dangerous gaps in our mental health system for those with significant psychiatric conditions. This is a topic for a much broader conversation at a different time. It will be hard, but it cannot be too hard to address.

The shoppers are back at Bondi Junction, but life is not back to normal. That will take time. Today's motion of condolence is a way for us to unite, to acknowledge a sense of shared grief, to remember those whose lives were taken and whose lives have been forever impacted, but also to remember there is so much good in our community. To the families and loved ones of the victims, we are so deeply sorry for your loss. Our community will always be there to support you.

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (15:00):** The hardest of losses are often those that are unexpected and the cruellest of tragedies are often those that occur in the very ordinary. That is what makes the events of 13 April 2024 so hard to bear. Many people in all the communities we represent throughout the State are still grappling with the utter senselessness of what happened on that Saturday afternoon at Bondi Junction, its randomness and the lack of clear answers as to why. For the family and friends whose loved ones were taken from them almost four weeks ago, we cannot really understand the anguish of that day; it is profound. I cannot begin to imagine or understand your grief and sorrow. Today, as a Parliament, we acknowledge your loss. We acknowledge your hurt, and we acknowledge the memory of those who you loved so dearly.

I take this opportunity to share part of a story of a young security guard who ran towards danger on 13 April to protect the women who were being attacked inside the Westfield building. In doing this, I acknowledge his

family—many of whom have come from all parts of the world to be in the gallery in Parliament today—his brothers, his sister and representatives of the beautiful Ahmadiyya Muslim community based at Marsden Park in my electorate. This young man was born in a province of Punjab in Pakistan in 1992, where, sadly, his life was destined to be one of struggle. As an Ahmadiyya Muslim in Pakistan, he would have constantly had to overcome adversity. Ahmadiyya people in Pakistan are persecuted in the most dehumanising of ways. They are Muslims who are forbidden to call themselves Muslims. They face being imprisoned for simply reciting the Koran. They are deprived of their right to vote, and they are denied an education if they make their religion known. Many are jailed. Many are killed. Indeed, two of this young man's uncles were killed in Karachi due to their religion. This was the environment in which he was raised. Tragically, he also would become an orphan by his mid-teenage years. He lost his mum at a very young age and his father not long after.

Many of the incredible people from the Ahmadiyya community will tell you that there is no positive future for them in Pakistan. There is little hope, so when there is opportunity to leave, they take it. That is what this young man did. First, he fled to Sri Lanka and then, through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], he arrived in Australia. He lived briefly in Adelaide and Brisbane, but it would be Western Sydney that would become his home, where the Ahmadiyya community of Marsden Park would wrap their arms around him. In return, he was an integral part of their community. He would contribute to the charitable work of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth organisation. He would contribute to the wider community, particularly through iconic Australian endeavours, such as Clean Up Australia Day or National Tree Day. It was in Western Sydney that he saw a future of hope, of a new life, one in which he could fulfil everything that he had hope for—where he could find love and marriage, create his own family and even have the security and stability to start supporting his family, who remain in Pakistan. It was the thought of those opportunities that made him so happy when he gained his licence to be a security guard because he then had direction in his life—reliable employment and potentially a long-term career.

He had already worked six shifts when he turned up to work at Westfield Bondi Junction on 13 April. Until then, as it has been reported now, he had only ever worked nights. This was his first ever day shift. He met his colleague Muhammad Taha that day. Muhammad recounted how the pair heard the commotion at the shopping centre that afternoon, and that is when our young man turned to him and said, "Let's find out what's going on." They heard shouting and screaming, and together they headed towards it. These young men ran towards a life-threatening situation, where women were being attacked on a Saturday afternoon by a violent offender. They encouraged people to go to a safer place and then together, as they stood side by side, they were attacked. As we know, our young man did not survive, and he gave his life on that Saturday afternoon. He will be forever known as a hero in Australia.

It is my privilege to know many people in the beautiful Ahmadiyya community. They are passionate proponents of peace. They fiercely oppose violence. On their mosque at Marsden Park—anyone who has travelled down Richmond Road would know; it is impossible to miss—there is a large slogan, "Love for All - Hatred for None". They are the people we are talking about. They reject discrimination and persecution. They advocate for universal human rights. These are their values that I know were instilled in this young man that we lost on 13 April. I want his family to know that we are so grateful for the sacrifice he made. He was brave and we acknowledge his bravery. He was a hero. We say to his family and his wider community that we mourn with them. We mourn the future that he was looking forward to in Australia. We mourn the potential for what could have been for him and his country.

Like other members, I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the incredible work of our first responders, our nurses, our doctors in the hospital and the NSW Police Force. In particular, we acknowledge Inspector Amy Scott and thank her for literally saving lives. I acknowledge the paramedics who rushed to Westfield that day to help those who had been injured, not knowing what they would confront and, finally, those who were there at Bondi Junction, who, like our young man, turned up for work. I acknowledge those who were just shopping, as the member for Vaucluse said, on the first day of school holidays, and those who were catching up with friends. They were doing things that we do normally on Saturday afternoons. Last week I was at the funeral of one of the victims when one of their neighbours came up to me and said that the victim had walked past her and said, "I'm going to Westfield to get a coffee and a pair of jeans."

It was a day of truly unimaginable horror. These events seem so foreign to what we would expect in our country. For many of you, the trauma and impact of that day will stay with you forever. It will never leave you. But I want you to know that our entire community is with you. We mourn with you and will keep the memories of your loved ones in our hearts forever.

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (15:09):** On behalf of The Nationals, I make a short contribution to the condolence motion. I endorse all of the comments already made and the memories shared by the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the members who have spoken. This debate is a sobering moment for us all to



reflect on and pay tribute to the victims of this senseless attack that has rocked our State to its core. Its impact has reverberated to every corner of the State. Whether you live in Sydney or somewhere in the bush, the shock and rawness of everything that happened is felt in just the same way.

As we have heard from many members today, one of the most difficult things to wrap your head around is the relatability of spending a normal Saturday afternoon at the shops, which is something that plenty of us do each and every weekend. Whether it is running a few errands or taking the kids out for the day on the first day of school holidays, you never would expect that day to be your last. It just so happens that Bondi Junction is my dad's local shopping centre. I know he never felt unsafe going there. Things change. It is an eerie place to visit now.

The more details we hear about what transpired, the more unsettling things become. Six lives were lost, five of which were women. They were targeted because they were women, and their lives were stolen. As we have heard, among them was an architect, a mother of two, a Chinese national studying at the University of Sydney, an artist who was also a mother of two and a grandmother, a new mother who died making the ultimate sacrifice to protect her nine-month-old baby, and a 25-year-old bride-to-be who was shopping for final bits and pieces for her wedding day. It is simply not fair. Of course, as we just heard, we cannot forget the brave security guard who died doing his job that day.

Our hearts go out to all of the victims and their families and loved ones, who now have the most unimaginably heavy loss to bear. All we can do is try to wrap every support we can around them and make sure we take every step we can so that this never happens again. I acknowledge Inspector Amy Scott, who was incredible, and the work of all of the first responders on the scene that day. They always run towards the danger to save lives. That is incredible. Unfortunately, it feels like going to Bondi Junction or any other shopping centre will not be as without thought or carefree as it once was, and this tragedy has taken that from all of us. It is a reminder to live every day to its fullest and to cherish the time we have with loved ones, because we have the privilege of being able to do just that. Our thoughts are with all of those who have been affected by this tragedy.

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (15:13):** I make a brief contribution on what is a very sad but important day for our State. Firstly, to those who are with us in the Parliament today and who have lost loved ones, we give our deepest sympathy and condolences. Those of us who have been in this place for a long time have argued over many important issues, and sometimes as human beings we think that certain things are very important to us. Sometimes we think we have problems, perhaps with our children, partners, constituents, issues or political parties. Nothing compares to the pain, loss and grief that those with us today are dealing with—nothing I have dealt with in my life, nothing many of us in this place have dealt with in our lives collectively. Their loss came about on such an ordinary day but in such a horrific manner, and I know I speak on behalf of everybody in saying that we cannot begin to imagine what it is like to walk in their shoes right now.

But, as the Minister for Health and a local community member who is lucky enough to represent a community he loves, I know that the community-minded spirit the member for Coogee and the member for Vaucluse spoke about will extend to them as well. I say that on behalf of everyone in this place. That day was horrendous in so many ways. On that Saturday afternoon I was coming home from Sydney, making a trip that, when you live in Wollongong and work in Sydney, you do a real lot. I was not paying much attention but all of a sudden witnessed a large number of paramedics moving extraordinarily quickly on the wrong side of one of the busiest roads in the city, the Grand Parade in Rockdale and Brighton-le-Sands. I knew from that moment something very significant had occurred in the city. I reached out to Commissioner Morgan to find out exactly what the large number of paramedics were going to, and he informed me they were getting information on the early minutes of an incident coming out of Bondi.

The rest is unbelievable, impossible to even contemplate. How do we as human beings wrap our heads around a nine-month-old baby being attacked? How do we wrap our heads around the ordinariness, as many of the speakers before me have said, of a Saturday afternoon at a shopping centre—something that we all do every week, particularly those of us who work distances away and must do our errands on a weekend, or we let our children do, sometimes as a rite of passage, as the member for Coogee said—leading to such an horrific event? How can we as leaders try to explain that?

I think we cannot. I think that there lies the challenge for all of us. It is not to try to explain it, not to try to make sense of it, certainly not to try to normalise it, not to say that this is a part of the society we live in, because it is not and cannot be. We as legislators and community leaders now have the big task of actually working with those victims and their families, friends and other loved ones to bring about change in whatever way and shape that is. Of course, all of us will lean into the improvements we need to make in our mental health system. Already the Government, with support from across the Chamber, is moving to try to reduce the amount of knife crime in our community, but that is only one part of the solution. We will need to walk carefully alongside the families of

those we have lost to make sure that we are checking in and reflecting on what they feel they need going forward, learning from their grief and pain.

When I got home to Wollongong that evening, I quickly changed into a set of clothes that would allow me to move through the evening in a more comfortable way than in a suit and tie, and drove back up to Sydney. My first point of call was at the Randwick ambulance station, where paramedics were undertaking a debrief, which is a formal gathering—though this one was somewhat informal—that often occurs after serious incidents, and there was none more serious than this. This was one of the largest responses to a single incident that NSW Ambulance paramedics have ever attended. Over 70 paramedics were onsite, and that was just at Bondi.

I had an opportunity to meet with Assistant Commissioner Brent Armitage, who was the forward commander, and Inspector Brett Simpson, who was the first paramedic on the scene. He and his colleagues performed miracles that day. I want members to understand what they went into—a volatile situation. They did not know whether there was a second assailant. In the early minutes of the event, we were hearing that there could have been. They delivered life-saving and emergency treatment, assisted by innocent bystanders, not knowing if there was someone else or if the assailant was still active. Those people are a credit to themselves, their families, our State and our nation. They perform miracles every day, but on that day they went above and beyond what we expect of them.

From there I went across to the Eveleigh control centre to meet with some of the staff who were responsible for taking those first horrific calls. That evening I went back to the Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, where I met with staff, including the emergency department consultant Linda Durojaiye. I tried to make sense of how a nine-month-old was fighting for their life and how a father had had his life ripped apart. That is not something that you can ever comprehend or try to make sense of.

Over the following days the Premier and I, along with the police Minister and others, spent time at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, St Vincent's Hospital Sydney, and Liverpool, Westmead and Prince of Wales hospitals, and then again with our paramedics the following weekend. All those people, including that very brave police officer Amy Scott, who my colleague and friend the police Minister will talk about in detail soon, performed miracles in the most difficult of circumstances. Whilst the grief and loss for those who have lost their loved ones is so unbearable at the moment, I know from speaking directly with those frontline paramedics that they did everything possible. I know that they are grieving and going through difficult and challenging days. I say to those frontline paramedics, as I said to them that evening, the day will always be with them but the pride of a nation is also with them and sits alongside the grief. We expect a lot and they always deliver more than we expect, but on that Saturday they went above and beyond. I pay tribute to them and all of the frontline responders—all of the police, our healthcare clinicians and our nursing staff—who did their very best and performed miracles on the day and the subsequent days to try to keep people alive.

To the family members who are experiencing unbelievable grief and loss at the moment, I say please reach out. Please do not try to move through this period on your own. We do not want that for you, and I am confident that your loved ones would not have wanted that for you. As a grateful State, we will never forget your loved ones. We stand with you as you take a very difficult journey one step at a time. Whilst we cannot begin to imagine your pain, suffering and grief as you walk that road, we can try to walk with you. As community leaders, we will do so and respect you forever.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (15:24):** I am grateful to be given the opportunity to make a short contribution on behalf of the people of the Wahroonga electorate in support of the condolence motion about the tragedy that occurred on 13 April at the Westfield Bondi Junction shopping centre. We remember especially the six innocent lives that were taken in that senseless knife attack. The victims of the tragedy included a young mother killed while protecting her young daughter in the ultimate act of love and sacrifice; a young woman preparing to get married; a young, professional architect from Double Bay; a security guard from Pakistan who sought refuge in Australia only one year ago; a student who had come to this country from China to study and to get the educational advantages that we are able to offer in New South Wales; and an immigrant from Georgia who was making a new life for herself. Many others, while not losing their lives, had their lives changed forever because of the events that transpired that day.

The people who were impacted were born all over the world, including in Australia. They were a microcosm of our incredible nation. We send our heartfelt condolences to each victim's family and friends as they mourn their loss. We wish those who are still recovering from their injuries a speedy and thorough recovery. We cannot imagine the pain and suffering that they have endured over the past few weeks. Our thoughts are also with the people who were traumatised by being present in the shopping centre on that day. Their time there should have been peaceful and safe, but it turned horribly wrong.

As we learnt more about the events that transpired over a short period that day, we were reminded, if I can paraphrase Charles Dickens, that it was not only the worst of times but also the best of human nature. Members of the public assisted the victims and exhibited great bravery. We have all come to understand the phrase "the bollard man" to describe the man who held off the perpetrator for a short but probably significant period, detaining him so he could not cause further harm to people. For the security guard from Pakistan, whose family was present earlier today, it was his first day on the job. Whilst they must be incredibly sad to lose him, they must also be proud of his bravery on the day. There was also vision of a middle-aged father who, as the man with a knife was approaching his family, scurried his children behind him and stood open to protect them, putting his life on the line.

Such incredible acts are not commonplace and exhibited some of the best qualities of the people within our community. The first responders who came in aid of those in need showed absolutely incredible bravery and courage. Those heroes include brave police officer Amy Scott, who, alone, went towards danger rather than away from it. Undoubtedly her swift actions saved many lives. We acknowledge and thank all of the first responders: the Police Force, the paramedics, the ambulance workers and all of those who attended the scene and put their lives on the line for the people of our community. We feel very privileged to have the opportunity to acknowledge their bravery, contribution and assistance in this terrible tragedy. It is so important to acknowledge these tragic events and say that this is not part of the Australia that we believe in and should not be part of our nation and State. We acknowledge we can do things and will work in a bipartisan fashion to make changes that will limit the capacity for events like this to happen in the future. I acknowledge the extreme loss, as well as the great bravery that was shown during that day.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (15:30):** I offer my profound condolences to the victims of the Bondi Junction attack, their families and friends, and everyone in New South Wales and Australia who has been affected by this horrific event. It has been an undeniably challenging few weeks for the New South Wales community. The country watched in horror as news of the Bondi Junction attack started to spread. In the images shown we saw ourselves: mums and dads out with their kids, young adults and their friends on their way to the movies, people off to work in a bustling shopping centre, and people going about their weekend, like any other weekend.

As images of the event spread around the world, the phone calls and text messages to check in on loved ones started. Tragically, we know that many of those calls and texts went unanswered. Six people lost their lives and many more were injured. So many lives have been irrevocably changed forever, with the ripples felt across the community. The blue skies and sandy beaches of Bondi are the quintessential image of Australia to those who live here and those who visit from abroad. To have the idyllic image of Bondi shattered in such a violent way felt like we all lost something.

Alongside the crippling sorrow that I know has been felt across the community, there is also a great sense of pride and gratitude being communicated to the NSW Police Force and all the first responders. Senior police have reported to me that in recent weeks police on our streets have been deluged with good wishes and thanks from members of the public to a degree that they have never experienced before. People are grateful for the work police do to keep them safe and the personal risks they take, day in and day out. People are letting the police know. I find that extremely gratifying.

It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the astonishing bravery of Inspector Amy Scott. The NSW Police Force always works as a team and all of our police deserve credit for the emergency response they provide, day in and day out, every day of the week. In this case, Inspector Scott displayed tremendous courage and breathtaking decisiveness, ending the ghastly attack within minutes of hearing the calls for help. Heroism is a word that can be overused, but Amy Scott's actions that day were the very definition of heroic in the truest sense. Our highly trained police responded to this harrowing incident with professionalism, diligence and compassion. On behalf of the New South Wales Government, I thank every police officer who responded that day, as well as their colleagues from all the other world-class emergency services.

I thank also the police family liaison officers, who continue to provide information, care and compassion to affected families in the wake of this tragedy. They are still in contact with them as we stand here today. The work they do is invaluable. In the weeks since the tragedy, I have met with police who were involved in the operational response. They have all been so humble, telling me they were just doing their jobs. Waverley Police Station has been inundated with flowers, home-cooked meals and baked goods. This outpouring of support from the community has lifted the spirits of our police at a time it is most needed.

Recently I visited the PoliceLink centre at Tuggerah on the Central Coast with the member for The Entrance. We visited the incredible 000 call takers and dispatchers. The officers at PoliceLink are answering calls around the clock, triaging 000 police calls and dispatching the appropriate responses. They are the first "first

responders". Between 3.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. during the Westfield Bondi Junction attack, PoliceLink staff triaged more than 300 calls. Many of the calls were from people witnessing the distressing incident as it unfolded.

They were extremely difficult calls from eyewitnesses and people who were concerned for loved ones who they knew were in the area. Information from these calls provided real-time information to the police and assisted them in their response to the incident. Day in and day out, our PoliceLink staff are speaking to people at their most vulnerable, when they need the help of the NSW Police Force. On behalf of the New South Wales Government, I thank everybody working at PoliceLink and all of the NSW Police Force. My heart breaks for the families and friends experiencing an unimaginable loss. My thoughts will be with them always.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I reiterate the Minister's words about the family liaison officers. Having gone through the aftermath of the Greta bus crash tragedy last year, I know of the incredible work those officers do with communities to make sense of the senseless.

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (15:37):** I support this motion and convey my heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims of the stabbings at Bondi Junction on the afternoon of 13 April 2024. The indiscriminate loss of life and harm to those wounded in the attacks were a profound shock to the community. That this event occurred in a suburban setting during the normal family-friendly activity of weekend shopping violated our sense of safety. Six people were killed in the rampage that lasted 25 minutes. Five women and one man died. This has triggered a line of inquiry into whether the assailant targeted women. Another 12 people were hospitalised, including a nine-month-old baby, who thankfully recovered. The baby's mother, unfortunately, succumbed to her wounds in hospital.

In the midst of this tragedy, we saw heroism and professionalism from bystanders and responders. There were many reports of strangers coming to the aid of the injured, shopworkers sheltering the public and people attempting to ward off the attacker. Inspector Amy Scott demonstrated the bravery and professionalism of the NSW Police Force when she chased down and shot the offender. The paramedics and all responders on that day deserve our respect and gratitude. The health professionals at St Vincent's Hospital, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and Royal North Shore Hospital saved lives and supported the families of the victims.

We know that the wounded, the families of the victims and the community will take some time to recover from this incident, if they recover at all. As shadow mental health Minister, I have listened to the community, health professionals and the mental health sector about the impact of this shocking tragedy. I am still listening. Events like this create a surge in the need for support, counselling and guidance within the mental health workforce. Nearly a month later, workers are exhausted and overwhelmed by the demands of the public for community mental care services.

As soon as the incident was over, there were suggestions that the perpetrator had mental health challenges. While the motivations are being investigated, we cannot say exactly what was behind the rampage. New South Wales and other States have to do more to manage chronic and acute mental health patients. The sector is under strain, and I hope that this State can support future recommendations that will bolster resources within the mental health arena. It is incumbent on all of us to prioritise mental health needs. Mental health care must not be an afterthought to the public and community health system. Out of this tragedy, we need to make progress on funding mental healthcare workforce development, effective community care systems, coordination and information sharing across the services, appropriate response protocols in acute mental health incidents and support for families of those dealing with mental health issues.

We grieve for the lives lost and for those wounded at Bondi Junction on 13 April. This event has been etched in my memory. Like many, I watched it unfold and it all seemed so surreal. We pray there is never to be a repeat of this tragedy and that our usually inviting, cohesive Australian society will remain safe and welcoming as we move about our everyday lives—something that the Bondi Junction victims were denied. Rest in peace. We pray for them and those who are left to grieve their heartbreaking loss.

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (15:41):** The events of Saturday 13 April rocked our State and our city. We lost six people in a senseless act of violence, with 12 others injured, including a nine-month-old baby girl. I extend my deepest condolences to the families and friends of the victims. Those innocent victims lost their lives doing the most simple of things—shopping or working on a Saturday. They should have been safe. Five of the six victims were women. The vast majority of those injured in the attacks were women. Countless bystanders were caught up in the attack and will forever hold troubling and difficult memories of that day. News of the attacks reverberated around the world and have rightly sparked discussions here in Australia about women's safety, about mental health and about access to knives. Our history will record 13 April 2024 as a day of terrible trauma and violence, and it is appropriate to remember those we have lost but also to see this as an urgent call to action to address longstanding issues around violence in our community.

I acknowledge the bravery and selflessness of Inspector Amy Scott, who, upon hearing the screams of the victims, followed and confronted the perpetrator. I commend her incredible professionalism and bravery. Police officers put themselves in danger each and every day. Despite training for events like the Bondi Junction attacks, they can never be fully prepared for what occurred on that day. Inspector Scott acted incredibly bravely, without hesitation. I commend her and extend my thanks and best wishes to her. As others have noted, including the Prime Minister, there were countless other acts of bravery on that day, with bystanders acting to stop the perpetrator from continuing his attacks and to help those who he hurt. In the face of horror and violence, ordinary Australians and frontline responders acted with extraordinary bravery and humanity, demonstrating the very best of us.

In conjunction with other terrible events in recent weeks, the Bondi Junction attack has led to a necessary discussion about gendered violence. The number of deaths has almost doubled, with a woman dying as a result of gendered violence every four days. In the first four months of this year, 28 women have lost their lives as a result of gendered violence. Our Government recognises that gendered violence is an urgent and critical issue for our State. We need to do more to prevent it and government must play a leading role. An effective policy response needs to occur, supported by targeted funding. The Government makes it clear to the community that the violence is unacceptable and must stop.

I acknowledge the women who have lost their lives as a result of gendered violence, as well as the impact that has had on their loved ones and their communities. I also acknowledge the many women who are survivors of gendered violence. Their courage lets other victims know that they are not alone. There is power in hearing from survivors—it improves our understanding of gendered violence and informs our response to it. But that comes with the toll of the potential re-traumatisation of having to share their stories again and again. We cannot leave women to address this issue alone. It should not be up to women alone to protect themselves and to educate others. Gendered violence is not just a women's issue; it is a cultural issue and it has to change. Good men get involved and stand against gendered violence, and they call out disrespectful behaviour. They step in and are part of the solution. That is how, together, we can stop the violence. The New South Wales and Federal governments recognise the urgency of this issue, and we are acting to stop the violence.

I again offer my deepest condolences to the families and friends of the victims who tragically lost their lives on 13 April at Bondi Junction. I extend my best wishes to those recovering from the physical and mental injuries that they sustained. There are no words to adequately capture the depth of the loss the families feel, and I hope that this condolence motion conveys how much the people of New South Wales stand with them and share their pain. We will forever honour the lives of the six victims. While we may never make sense of what happened on that terrible day, we understand that we all have a responsibility to do all that we can to make our communities safe for everyone.

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (15:46):** I spent much of my late teens and my twenties living, working and playing in the Bondi area. As mentioned earlier by the member for Vaucluse and the member for Coogee, Bondi Junction is the social hub of the whole eastern suburbs. It is where people come to eat, shop, get a haircut, go to the gym, socialise or watch a movie. It really is the town square of the eastern suburbs. Ordinarily, it is a place of peace and happiness.

That peace was shattered on 13 April this year. I was in Sydney that weekend and, when the sun rose the next day, it felt like a different Sydney. We have all heard the horrific details of the incident, and I will not go into too much detail, but I take the opportunity to commend the stoic bravery of Inspector Amy Scott. Her dedication to her duty stopped the attacker and prevented what could have been a much worse outcome. We lost six innocent lives that day, and it is such a tragedy that it happened in a place that ordinarily provides so much happiness. It still feels quite inexplicable to me and to many people out there. We grieve with the families and friends of the victims, and I extend our sincere condolences.

**Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (15:48):** I offer my deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of those killed in the Westfield Bondi Junction tragedy on 13 April this year. We wrap our arms around all those affected and keep them in our hearts. Our community in Strathfield—as well as communities across New South Wales, Australia and the world—were deeply shaken by that horrifying event, so cruel and frightening in its randomness. It touched and shook all of us because of its relatability and proximity to our own lives, happening in a shopping centre where we all go to do our shopping and hang out with family and friends as part of the routine of everyday life. As many others have said, it could have been any of us. In Strathfield the event would have reminded many of that terrifying day when a man armed with a gun and a knife went on a rampage in Strathfield Plaza shopping centre, on 17 August 1991. He killed seven people, most of them women, before killing himself. Local hero Greg Reid was shot in the foot by the assailant but still, through his courage, managed to save eight people. We remember that tragedy each year in a ceremony in Strathfield, which Greg attends.

One of the victims of the Westfield Bondi Junction attack was a Chinese international student. She would have come to Sydney and Australia full of hope and dreams for the future. International students and migrant

workers bring immeasurable value to New South Wales and our multicultural society, and they deserve our care and respect. Like thousands of other international students and migrant workers, she lived among us as part of our community. She was one of us. I cannot imagine the grief, distress and shattered dreams of her mother and her family, who I met at a ceremony at the University of Sydney. Her mother told us how much her daughter loved the university and loved Sydney, and so how those places will also always have a place in her heart—the place her daughter loved and where she lost her life. I will never forget the hundreds of flowers at a memorial for her in the quadrangle and the messages written for her from students, many in Chinese, that simply read "回家吧: It's time to go home."

What occurred was a shocking act of violence, but we also saw the best of Australians. We thank the brave bystanders who stopped the attacker from reaching more innocent people, and the first responders who ran towards the danger, including Inspector Amy Scott, who put her own life at risk to save others. We have deep gratitude for her bravery. I extend my gratitude to our police, paramedics, nurses and emergency services workers for their dedication and selflessness, especially in the worst of times. We know so many people have been impacted by this event. People all over our community are hurting. I say to the families of the victims that we will stand together with you always as we do our part in addressing mental health, violence against women and children, and community safety and cohesion. As the poet Rumi said, "If everything around seems dark, look again. You might be the light."

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (15:52):** The hearts, thoughts and prayers of the Albury community I represent go out to all who have been impacted by the violence that was witnessed at the Bondi Junction shopping centre on 13 April. I express my deepest condolences to the families of the six innocent victims as well as my care and concern for the 17 people wounded in the attack. I also recognise the countless others who have been impacted and left traumatised. As the member for Vacluse and the member for Coogee said, the Bondi shopping centre is a place of coming together for that community. On an afternoon of shopping for families—young mothers pushing prams and groups of teens out exploring and having fun—unimaginably, it descended into a scene of chaos, fear and trauma.

Many in my own community have shared with me their heartbreak and devastation at the pain, suffering and terror caused by such senseless bloodshed. With much of the violence directed towards women, it raises many important questions we must explore. I thank the brave and courageous emergency services personnel who responded without hesitation, along with those who provided care and support in the devastating aftermath. May there be comfort for the grieving, healing for the injured and solace for a community that continues to reel from this tragedy.

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields—Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections) (15:53):** I thank the House for this opportunity to speak. I commend the Premier for moving this important motion, and also commend all members who have spoken or will speak in debate on it. It is a motion that all members of this House would support, and that I know all in our community would also support, given the tragic events that have occurred. I join with my colleagues across Parliament in remembering the six victims in that tragic and horrific attack on innocent lives.

It was a very normal Saturday and people were doing very normal activities with their friends and families: shopping, going to the cafe, going to Woolies, going to Coles, trying on new clothes. Those are things we do every single day, everywhere. That tragic and horrific attack could have been anywhere and could have happened to any one of us. It goes to show that life is precious and, at times, precarious as well. Hold on to your loved ones. I know that the families of the victims will forever feel the grief of that immeasurable loss. They say time may heal all wounds, but this is certainly a very deep wound for the friends and families of the innocents who have lost their lives.

As the Premier said at the memorial for the victims, these were ordinary people looking forward to their tomorrows: birthday parties, engagements, weddings, education. Those are all part of life's journey and its great, wonderful moments—moments they will not be able to celebrate with their friends and family. The victims represent the Australia that we all know and love so deeply: a young woman planning her big wedding day; a new mum nursing her beautiful baby girl; a master's student coming to study in Australia and just trying on new clothes; a refugee travelling from the other side of the world for a better shot on what is undoubtedly the greatest country on the planet; an artist browsing the shops, as we all do, for a bit of window shopping; and an architect out in Bondi with her family.

Of course, the tragedy means that we have to take action to ease the burden of grief for the families of the victims. The situation that unfolded cannot be rationalised and we cannot explain it. What we can do is acknowledge the incredible loss and the incredible grief. Today I join with all of my colleagues in recognising

that grief. We recommit ourselves—not just as a Parliament but as a whole community—to try to eradicate the sickening violence that stole so many innocent lives and forever left a mark on their families and friends. I join my colleagues to say that enough is enough.

We recognise that this violence does not discriminate at all. Today we also acknowledge that overwhelmingly the victims of the violence in that tragedy and others are predominantly women. But among all of the tragedy we saw some very heroic moments and also deep compassion and understanding from everybody in our community. People who did not know the victims nevertheless came to show their support, their emotions and their empathy. That reflects our great community of great people who will always support other Australians and other people who come to our shores at a time of great need.

We must continue to recognise our frontline services, including police officer Amy Scott, who heroically ran into danger, and our frontline responders in health. We should also recognise the ongoing support for victims and for the community as a whole. This requires a cross-government and cross-community response. I add my voice as a member of Parliament to the many others that have spoken and will speak today. We share the grief and loss. This tragic incident has left so many families grieving. No doubt they will be grieving for a long time. As Minister for Corrections, I pledge to continue to work with my department to actually break the cycles of violence, as I said in question time today. We will hold perpetrators to account, but also make sure that we connect and try to change behaviour so that acts of violence, in particular against women and children, do not occur in our community. I join the House in supporting this wonderful motion.

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (15:58):** On behalf of my community of Badgerys Creek, I express my sincere condolences to the loved ones of the six individuals viciously attacked and killed in the Westfield Bondi Junction stabbing incident on 13 April. I also extend my prayers and best wishes for the continued recovery of those who were injured in the attack, as well as the emergency services personnel who had to respond to such horror and tragedy. My thoughts and prayers also go out to all who witnessed the attack and its aftermath, and the families and friends still reeling from the sudden and unjust loss of their loved ones.

It was heartening to learn of the bravery of individuals at Bondi who put their lives at risk to protect the lives of others and came running to support those who were injured. I have a heavy heart knowing that some of those brave citizens lost their lives or suffered injuries through their actions to try to stop the violent perpetrator. Tragically, a security officer lost his life bravely protecting others, while his colleague was also injured protecting others. I personally thank all of the first responders who raced to the site not knowing what they would be facing. I applaud NSW Police Force Inspector Amy Scott for her courage and bravery in immediately responding to the tragedy. I wish her a full recovery following the ordeal—a recovery in all aspects, particularly her mental and emotional wellbeing. I thank Amy for her extraordinary courage in racing towards the violent situation. All members of this House commend her for her actions. She took a course of decisions despite being uncertain of the full picture of what was unfolding.

I encourage all who are impacted or affected by the events to reach out to the dedicated support services available, and I remind them, in these troubling times, that they are never alone. We must come together as a community and support and care for each other. Kindness must be the currency of these times. I encourage everyone to be especially mindful of young children. We must do our best to protect them from hearing about the tragedies. If children or teenagers are distressed by hearing of the events, I encourage all to ensure that they are supported by accessing the available support services. I thank the House for providing the opportunity to speak to this condolence motion. I sincerely wish that everyone impacted by the tragedy ensures that they get support and asks for help as they walk this new chapter in their lives.

**Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (16:01):** We gather today, more than three weeks after the events of 13 April 2024, when the horrific attack in Bondi Junction left the people of our State in shock, in grief and with heavy hearts. Six people lost their lives and 12 people were injured in horrible and tragic circumstances. While a short time has passed, the event has left an undeniable mark. I extend my deepest sympathy to the family and friends of the victims who sadly and so suddenly lost their lives. I hope they find solace and strength in the support and love shown by the community during this trying time. Bondi Junction and our entire city have shown an enduring capacity for resilience and unity. We will continue to heal, support one another and honour the memory of those who passed.

I commend the emergency services personnel who responded swiftly, as shown in countless situations. The bravery and courage that they show in protecting the community, often in the most dangerous of circumstances, are a testament to their dedication and selflessness. Special acknowledgement goes to Inspector Amy Scott for her actions. If not for her actions, many other lives would have been lost. I also commend the brave members of the public who risked their safety to protect others. I thank heroes like Damien Guerot and Silas Despreaux for making a difference. As we move forward through the aftermath, on the path of healing, we

will not forget the victims and those injured. We hold their memories close and continue to offer our unwavering support to those who will continue to bear their loss.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:03):** I make a brief contribution to the condolence motion and acknowledge the contributions of all members who have spoken to it. Saturday 13 April was a normal day like any other day in New South Wales. The people of the Central Coast were enjoying their local shopping centres, as the member for Vaucluse articulated in her speech—whether it be Erina Fair, Tuggerah or one of the many other shopping centres across the Central Coast. What unfolded in Bondi that afternoon could have happened in a shopping centre in any electorate, in any constituency, in any suburb. We were collectively shocked. The people of the Central Coast were glued to their televisions in shock, watching what was unfolding, not realising the enormity of what was happening until later in the evening.

I pay tribute to our incredible frontline service workers, who carry out their duties with professionalism and dedication. As other members have said, they are the ones heading into danger when everyone else is heading the opposite way. I also pay tribute to Inspector Amy Scott. I had the privilege of meeting her at a Rotary club police persons of the year awards ceremony. She is an outstanding officer who is doing her duty. The NSW Police Force is the best in the nation. It does a wonderful job. The police are incredibly well trained and Inspector Scott reacted as she was trained to do—that is, to head towards danger to keep other people safe. It is a true testament to the incredible training and resilience of our frontline workers on that particular day. I listened to the other contributions earlier today that commended them for their bravery, but also acknowledged the bravery of bystanders. We see the best of the Australian spirit during a time of crisis. There were strangers protecting strangers who needed it. They had never met those people and will probably never know them, but they provided safety without question. That is what makes the Australian spirit so unique.

Sadly, the impact was felt wider than Bondi itself. Most of us have spent time at Bondi Junction. To say it is mammoth is an understatement. The fact that first responders were able to contain the incident as well as they did, given the difficulty and size of Bondi Junction, is a credit to them. Sadly, there was such tragic loss of life, including a security guard on his first day shift, doing his job and racing towards danger to protect others. It is a true testament to both him and all of the people who provided support and protection during those moments. The reach of the impact was far and wide. Many people were going about their day-to-day business and shopping at Bondi Junction. A bride-to-be who has a link to the Central Coast lost her life purchasing make-up. It was senseless and baseless.

Sadly, the target of the event was women, which is truly appalling. It is a reminder that life can be snuffed out in an instant by meaningless acts of violence like we saw perpetrated on that sad day in April. Many people in my community on the Central Coast were shocked, appalled and saddened by what unfolded that evening and by the subsequent details in the following days. It is a true testament to the spirit and will of the people of New South Wales that we stand together. I add my voice to all of those who have spoken before me that those affected do not need to suffer alone. Losing a loved one is tragic. It leaves a hole that cannot be filled. Those people are never alone, and there are supports out there. Whether it be community or professional support, it is important that those people reach out and get the support they need during a time of tragedy such as this.

I speak on behalf of all of the people of the Central Coast, especially the Terrigal electorate, in offering my deepest condolences to the families of those who tragically lost their lives in that event in April. As I said, it could have been any shopping centre. It could just as easily have been Erina Fair, Tuggerah or any other shopping centre in New South Wales. I again thank the first responders for doing the magnificent job that they do every day to keep people safe. I thank the volunteers for the actions that they took in protecting other people. I send my deepest condolences to the family, friends and loved ones of those who tragically lost their lives on that day in April.

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (16:08):** I pay my respects to those six brave souls whose lives were cut short one autumn afternoon in Bondi Junction. To their families and friends, we grieve with you. To those who were wounded, surviving but living with terrible memories, know that we are here for you for as long as it takes to heal. To the 75 doctors and paramedics sent to Bondi Junction to care for the wounded, your empathy, expertise and excellence saved lives. On behalf of my community, I say thank you. To the New South Wales police officers—especially Inspector Amy Scott—the first responders, the medical officers at six hospitals across Sydney, the retail workers, shop owners, cleaners, Westfield employees, the public servants and the bystanders who threw caution to the wind to protect others, words can never express how we feel about your actions on that day and since. Again, I thank you.

The root of the word courage is "cor"—the Latin word for heart. Last week I was honoured to attend the funeral of a young man who lived in my electorate. On his first day shift as a security guard at Westfield Bondi Junction, he was killed while trying to save shoppers from a knife-wielding attacker. At the funeral I was grateful to speak with his colleague Muhammad Taha, who had asked for permission to attend the funeral from hospital and was himself healing from wounds he received in the attack on Saturday 13 April at Bondi Junction.



If there is one word that sums up the actions of those young men, it is courage. Courage is about practising values rather than just professing them. Courage is what you do unscripted and in the moment. It is how you respond to difficulty. It is whether you run towards those in distress or you run in the opposite direction. The way that young man died is very similar to the way that he lived. He was not afraid of difficulty, of being uncomfortable or of taking risks. He lived life with all its goodness, with all its possibilities, with all its brokenness and with all his heart.

The fact that his life was not easy was what gave him his courage. He only arrived from Pakistan 18 months ago. After fleeing Pakistan for Sri Lanka, he arrived in Australia through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees—first to Adelaide and then to Brisbane before settling in Western Sydney last year. He was seeking a space where he could be himself and where he could serve. Our society is obsessed with celebrities, glitz and noise, but this young man stood in opposition to that. He was like many ordinary people in our State who actually are extraordinary. We are sorry that his life was cut short, and we are sorry that his first day shift at Bondi Junction was also his last. It should not have been like that. We are sorry that we did not get to know him better and that we got to know about his life story under such terrible circumstances. We know this brave young man had a strong faith and was a member of the Parramatta chapter of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association. His life embodied the motto of his faith—love for all, hatred for none—putting his faith into practice by putting his life on the line in service to others. It is apt that the Ahmadiyya Muslim community are helping to honour his life with a blood drive.

As the Prime Minister noted at the funeral, "This is a vital contribution that one person can make to the life of another, without expectation of recognition or reward. You don't know who you are helping. You only know that you are helping." The Koran says that he who saves one man's life saves entire humanity. When you save one person, you save all of the people who will live through that one person—their children and their children's children. This young man, the asylum seeker who had only just settled in our State, gave asylum to others in return. We know that because of his actions others did not die. We are indebted to him, and he will be remembered as a hero. We mourn him. We think of his family and the gap that has been left in their lives. I acknowledge his family's presence in the gallery today—brothers, sister, extended family and the loving family of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community. May he and all six people whose lives were cut short rest in peace.

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (16:14):** I make a brief contribution to express condolence and sympathy to the family and friends of those who lost their lives in the tragedy at Bondi Junction on 13 April 2024. I make the observation that words can never express the unimaginable suffering that those who have lost their family and friends must have felt and will continue to feel. I add my support and the support of my community to the motion before the House. What took place in 25 minutes in Bondi Junction on 13 April is unimaginable in our society. As a society, we must continue to work towards a situation where events such as occurred in Bondi Junction will never happen again. Members of our community must be free to go about their business without fear of such events. Shopping centres are places in our community where we should feel safe. There are always security officers in shopping centres. When events such as those in Bondi Junction occur, it destroys our feeling of safety in our ability to attend shopping centres.

Shopping centres are places we go to window shop, to meet, to go to coffee shops or to just hang out with friends. As the member for Terrigal said earlier, this could have occurred in any of the shopping centres within our electorates, including my electorate. The events of 13 April that indiscriminately took away six lives were senseless. We will never know what was going through the mind of the perpetrator. As far as we can tell, the act was random and can never be explained. To the family and friends of those who lost their lives, all we can do is work towards a day when such events will be a distant memory and will never occur again. We will work towards ensuring that mental health is treated in the hope that no-one in the future will act in the way this perpetrator behaved. Let us hope that, as a community, we can learn from what took place and, hopefully, the inquest will reveal some answers to assist us.

I acknowledge and thank the first responders who attended the shopping centre. I thank those who treated and comforted the victims and the community. I also acknowledge the medical staff who looked after each victim. I acknowledge the community members who so courageously tried to stop the offender. Emmanuel Macron declared the bollard man a French hero for his bravery in confronting the Westfield Bondi Junction knife man. Damien Guerot became the "bollard man" after a viral video showed him bravely facing down the knife-wielding killer on an escalator. The heroic actions of Mr Guerot and his fellow Frenchman Silas Despreaux stopped the knife man from reaching an area where many children were playing in the shopping centre.

I also acknowledge the police officer who stopped the offender, Inspector Amy Scott. Police officers are trained, but nothing could ever train a police officer for such violence. As this House knows, I have served as a member of the NSW Police Force, and I assure you that while police officers have wonderful training—we have the absolute best police force in the country, and no doubt the world—they would never feel they would have to

face that sort of violence. So I acknowledge the bravery and courageous actions of Amy Scott. We owe her a lot. She no doubt saved many lives, and I thank her. We lost six lives on that day, and, if not for the brave actions of Inspector Scott, we may have lost many more. In closing, I again express my condolences and those of my community to the family and friends of those who lost their lives. Let us never forget the lives that were taken so young and so senselessly.

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (16:18):** I extend my deepest condolences to families of the victims of the terrible attack at Bondi Junction, some of whom are here today. Our hearts go out to those whose lives were cut too short. We offer our prayers to those who are still recovering from their physical injuries, and I wish them a rapid return to good health. Help will be ongoing to all those who need mental health support, including the colleagues of the security guard who was doing his first day shift when he was attacked and killed. I extend my deepest thanks to our first responders. Your quick actions saved lives.

The gravity of what happened at Westfield Bondi Junction on 13 April continues to be processed by millions of people. It was a beautiful, sunny Saturday. I remember it vividly because it was the first day of school holidays. I was in my electorate, in Earlwood, and my daughter and I were planning to travel to Westfield Bondi Junction to go shopping. I was delayed, so we did not go. I remember it was a beautiful day. It was the first day of school holidays and thousands were out enjoying it—visiting friends, travelling, shopping or hanging out at their local cafe. People were at the beach because it was a sunny day. At Earlwood, people were cycling along the Cooks River and out chatting to people.

Many people go shopping at Westfield Bondi Junction. It is a rite of passage for teenagers to go to there to hang out with their friends. The centre has amazing shops, delis, cinemas and, as some of my colleagues have said, it is a hub where people hang out. People love to go there. It is an outing for new mums with their bubs. It is often the first place that tweens and teenagers are allowed to go without their parents. They go to the movies, get something to eat and hang out with their friends. It is a hangout; people often go to Westfield Bondi Junction and then down to Bondi Beach. It is a destination, and what happened there is devastating. We all know someone who was there on that day.

The response of the community has been overwhelming and truly beautiful in the form of floral tributes, vigils and the incredible support provided, but this tragedy will take a very long time to move on from. For the families of those who were killed, it will never be erased. It is not something that someone can learn to live with. It is devastating for those kids who have lost a parent. The community has lost some very important people in their lives, including from their local P&C. It is just devastating. There has been incredible support for the staff and customers who feared for their lives in the horrific moments of this attack. I have been honoured to meet some of the retailers who bravely protected each other and customers in and around their shops that day.

Woolworths invited me to visit its Westfield Bondi Junction supermarket to meet its staff in the week after the attack. I attended on the Friday morning when the shops opened back up to customers. I was joined by the secretary of the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association, Bernie Smith, and the CEO of the Australian Retailers Association, Paul Zahra. We were there as one. We were there to listen and to also provide comfort and support to the retail workers. We met with a number of Woolworths employees to show them support and to let them know that the industry, the union and the Government were all standing together, not only for that day but in perpetuity. We will continue to be there for those workers.

We listened to them. They told us what they would need in the days and weeks ahead. There were some really important stories about what our retail workers did on that day. We heard about what the local Woolworths store manager and other shop workers did to help people in their store—the way that he fielded his staff and customers to safety, following the directions of the police. Workers described how they moved to a loading dock out the back. This was an emergency procedure they had practised; on that day, they were doing it for real. They had to leave everything and get out. We heard stories of customers leaving their shopping behind. They had to follow the direction of the store manager. Staff left their wallets, phones and keys behind. Everyone left via the loading dock. There was no time to think; they walked out with nothing—no phone, no keys.

I acknowledge and thank the supermarkets and retailers who really stepped up to support their staff—whether by putting them up in a hotel, or organising billets, or providing them with additional funds until they were able to recover their possessions. I acknowledge the support that they provided. I also acknowledge the retail workers who helped the victims and other people. There are many heroic stories that we will probably never hear. These workers saw some things that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. Remember, these are young workers; the majority of retail workers are under the age of 25. They are young people who were confronted with something devastating. They had to think rapidly, and they did everything that they could to help people in need. Again, I acknowledge those workers.

When we attended that Friday, I spoke to Ben Fordham on 2GB to raise people's awareness about what the retail workers had gone through and to ask customers to be mindful of it when they returned. We want to see customers going back to Westfield Bondi Junction; we just ask that they be mindful that the workers have been through a traumatic time. They will be serving hundreds of customers a day and we do not want them to be asked the same questions again and again about the experience. It is fine to say, "How are you going? Are you okay?" That is what the retail workers told us about how to approach them, because people do not know how they should act. They do not know, so we listened and that is the advice that we were given by the retail workers. What they went through might not affect them now but it might affect them in a few weeks or months. I want them to know that they have support through workers compensation. Their employers have been very good; many provided income support for their employees as well. They did not want me to raise it, but I wanted to put that on record. Everyone did their bit at this very devastating time.

Again, I acknowledge the first responders, the retail workers and the community, who all banded together and worked extraordinarily hard during this time. I also acknowledge the member for Coogee, Dr Marjorie O'Neill, for her leadership, as well as the local representatives in the community. The impacts of this violent incident will be long lasting for those directly and indirectly affected, including individuals, businesses, workers and visitors to the centre. I know that people are hurting. As we have heard from members today, it is important that people go back and visit, and try to get back some normality. It is important that they join in with the community and continue doing what they were doing. It is going to be different—it is different. But we also need to support the local shops and community.

I have asked my agency, SafeWork NSW, to provide a range of assistance, including programs to help small and medium businesses support their workers' psychological health and safety. I have also asked icare to provide information to businesses and workers about workers compensation. The Government is committed to ensuring that all retailers in Westfield have access to psychological support and advice in responding to this traumatic incident in the coming weeks and months. They are not alone. The Parliament is with them. The State stands with them.

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:30):** The day of 13 April will live in infamy as the day that 2024 truly lost its innocence. Six lives were taken in what was a violent and terrible attack, one that clearly targeted women. On behalf of my community, I express my deepest condolences to the families who have lost and the victims who still suffer to this day. It was a day that changed the way people may feel about their safety. It was a day that will forever leave a tragic mark on the history of our State. But it was a day when ordinary people looked into the eye of danger. They stood up and showed that bravery never goes out of style. It does not matter whether it was a man who used a bollard to fend off the violent offender or someone who indeed used their own body to protect others, including children.

This was a day of contrasts more than any other. It was a beautiful day in Sydney. So many people were going about their business and enjoying their lives. It was a day that could have occurred anywhere in this State or this nation. It could have happened in any of our communities. It is incredible that we have seen such terrible acts of violence occur in New South Wales. This is one that we should reflect on. We should certainly express our condolences but also our thanks to those who were there to pick up the pieces, particularly Amy Scott, someone who many have rightfully referenced for her calmness, integrity and professionalism in taking the action that was absolutely necessary. We also thank the 75 doctors and other medical personnel, the emergency services and the shopkeepers who ran to the rescue and tried to protect and preserve life however they could.

Today is not the day to reflect on mental health services and why and how someone may have fallen through the cracks. There will be time for that. Today is about recognising what occurred, commemorating the loss of life and expressing, as a Parliament, our condolences. On behalf of my community, I add to the comments made. I thank the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition for their collective leadership, the local members who have been on the front line supporting their communities in the aftermath, and everyone who has joined us in this House today to express on behalf of the people we represent our deepest condolences to the families and victims.

**Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (16:33):** I add my condolences, and those of the community of Wollongong, to those extended by the Parliament today to the family, friends and work colleagues of the six victims at Bondi Junction. As many have said in contributing to this debate, going to a suburban shopping centre on a Saturday afternoon, once we have finished work, kids' sport or whatever it is, is nothing out of the ordinary. In fact, at the same time as that harrowing 25 minutes were taking place in Bondi Junction, there were thousands of people around the rest of Sydney, New South Wales and the country who were busily going about a Saturday afternoon at a suburban shopping centre, only to find out later exactly what had happened. Most people have conveyed that there was a sharp intake of breath when they heard the news and a genuine question as to why and what happened.

As the member for Kiama reflected, there will be ample time to reflect on and examine the circumstances of how we got to the situation that we did. Today is a time to remember those who lost their lives but also those who gave of themselves selflessly during those events and afterwards. In particular, when people in Wollongong have reflected on the events of that day, the selfless actions of Amy Scott have come up time and again. I do not think anyone will forget her bravery any time soon. The words that seem to come up most often are "without hesitation". To give them context, Amy Scott's actions were without hesitation. The actions of the paramedics, police and healthcare workers, doctors and nurses who treated those who were injured demonstrated professionalism without hesitation. Retail workers sheltered shoppers in their stores and took action to protect them without hesitation. Members of the public who stepped in to try to avert further harm or injury to others did so without hesitation. That is an important thing to remember as we reflect on those events.

On that day, in the most tragic of circumstances, we saw the best of many people in our community. A funny thing about those events is that when such immediate and tragic circumstances are unfolding before people, they step in—again, without hesitation—to do all they can, both in the immediate situation and aftermath, to make sure that people are protected and comforted. In the weeks, months and years ahead, the families and friends of the victims are going to need similar care and compassion from the community. We should not walk away from this event and think that it can be addressed simply with a few more programs or some more funds extended to various organisations. That will help, but the event is going to leave a deep scar on a lot of people. Some of the people involved in the periphery probably do not even realise that they may need assistance at some time in the future. When they do, they should not hesitate to seek it out.

This debate is important to make sure that we are all conscious of the hundreds of people who had a role to play in this event, without their will, without any notice and, again, without any hesitation. My deep sympathies and condolences are extended to the families of the victims, and my absolute awe is extended to those who acted above and beyond to assist people—often complete strangers—when they needed it most. I concur with, and would like the sentiments of my community to be recorded as part of, the condolence motion.

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (16:38):** Over the past number of weeks I have had cause, as I am sure many members have, to reflect deeply on 13 April. I distinctly remember as the news was breaking, I found it particularly unsettling. I could not put my finger on why. It took a number of weeks to understand what was so odd about the breaking news. It was terrible news, but we see terrible news in this world every day, unfortunately. I think it was because in the prelude to that terrible 25 minutes of destruction, it was so unbelievably ordinary. It was a normal day in a normal place with normal people doing very normal things. As many members have said, it was something that could have happened in any of our electorates; indeed, in many different parts of the world. I am distressed beyond words because of the loss of life. I think deeply about the garden of heaven, which itself is a little brighter, but we are in a world that is left a lot darker because six lives were lost on a very ordinary day.

I think also about the trauma and anguish that that must leave behind for parents, siblings, grandchildren and spouses. It is our worst nightmare. I truly cannot think of anything worse. It is fitting that this Parliament is dealing with this motion of condolence. I regret that the victims' families who were visiting Parliament today are no longer in the Chamber, but I hope that, as they reflect upon the various contributions made today, they will take from that, for whatever it is worth, some solace in the extraordinary loss they must be feeling and will continue to feel for the rest of their lives. I am truly beyond sorry. I know that all members share that sorrow.

In my electorate I talk a lot about community and how it is a bit like a tapestry. It is very diverse because it is made up of many different parts, different colours, different ideas and people going about their lives in different ways. I feel that the tapestry has been nicked away a little bit. It has lost a few threads. It has had a bit of that bright sparkle taken from it. That upsets me a lot because it takes away from what is supposed to be great about our country and our communities, particularly for the victims who were visitors to our country—the people who were not citizens and who were studying here. To cite one example, I have a university in my electorate that is home to thousands of international students. We are supposed to be this bright, beautiful, welcoming community, reaching out to people all across the world, offering opportunity, friendship, love and harmony. To think of that being taken away is the very last thing that I want our community to be thought of internationally.

I also think about it in the context of people going about their day-to-day lives—going to work, spending time with friends. As a community we have been through a lot, particularly during COVID, when some of that was taken away and I have been enjoying observing how much more normal life has become in recent times. The event on 13 April has put that back into perspective again and has changed so much of how we think about our society. I join in contributing to this motion of condolence, but I am really quite lost for words. I want to share the condolences of my electorate because, as I mentioned earlier, it could very easily have happened in a shopping centre like the Macquarie Centre or Top Ryde, where very similar people go about their normal lives every day. That really stays with me.

I extend heartfelt condolence and sympathy to the families and all extended networks, who I know will be reeling from this travesty for many years. I encourage them to seek all the support they need. But I acknowledge, of course, that among all of that there were some glimmers of extraordinary behaviour—things that were not normal being done by normal people exhibiting extraordinary bravery. People rose to the occasion. I hope that, when the dust has settled on that awful moment in history, we can move forward in the hope that small glimmer will lead to a great future. Really great people, who would not have thought of themselves as heroes before that day and who probably will not ever afterwards, very much are heroes and they should be acknowledged. I thank the House for allowing me to contribute.

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:43):** I join my colleagues in offering my deepest condolences to the families, friends and communities of the six people who were murdered in Westfield Bondi Junction on 13 April. It was an absolutely shocking tragedy that has touched all of us, including members of the community I represent, and I offer their condolences as well. A beautiful autumn afternoon, the first day of school holidays, became one of unimaginable and inexplicable terror and tragedy. Like so many Saturday afternoons everywhere in Australia, people were visiting their local or their favourite shopping centre to catch up with friends, or were going to the movies or to the gym, or were coming to browse to buy something special or something essential. So many of us know someone who was in the shopping centre that afternoon. I particularly acknowledge, in addition to the Premier and the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, the member for Coogee and the member for Vaucluse, who know so many people who were in the shopping centre that afternoon, who have been comforting the families and friends of those who were killed and who, every day, struggle to come to terms with what happened in their local major shopping centre.

But among the horror, we also saw so many acts of selfless bravery from others going about the shopping centre on that Saturday afternoon—acts that make everyone feel so incredibly inspired and so proud. This senseless attack also resulted in injuries to many more than the six who were killed. I thank the first responders—the police, the paramedics and the emergency workers—who responded so swiftly to save lives. The injured were transported to six hospitals across Sydney where, again, frontline workers worked tirelessly to treat them and to save their lives. This included the life of a nine-month-old baby, whose injuries just seemed even more senseless, even more evil and brutal, and shocked all of us. Those who were killed were mostly women and we believe they were targeted because they were women. They were a student, an architect, a new mum, a bride-to-be, an artist—women who were loved by their parents, their children, their partners and their friends. The only man to be killed—the security guard on his first day shift in the shopping centre—was an Ahmadiyya Muslim, who came to Australia as a refugee, to flee danger and persecution and find safety. He ran towards danger, along with his colleague Muhammad Taha, who also was injured, to protect those being attacked.

To Inspector Amy Scott, who also ran towards danger without backup and whose decisive actions undoubtedly saved the lives of countless others at Westfield that afternoon—thank you. Thank you for your bravery, your professionalism and your commitment. I also thank Damien Guerot and Silas Despreaux for their incredible bravery in grabbing what they could to protect others from the attacker. We will never forget the footage of Damien confronting the attacker with a bollard, which undoubtedly slowed down the attacker and allowed others to seek safety. Thank you also to all the bystanders who supported those who had been injured and who protected others—whether they were strangers or friends and family.

I mention, in particular, some of the other Westfield security guards who were on duty that afternoon. I recently met them at the Pakistan Association's annual dinner: Muhammad Fahad, Qasim Zain Shah and Usman Ahmed Khokhar. They were called for backup support by the security guards who were attacked. They also ran towards danger, arriving just after the attacker was killed. Faraz had been living in Australia since November 2022. Soon after arriving, he got his security licence and has been working at Westfield Bondi Junction since September last year. Usman had been working there also since September last year and Qasim since December. The security guard who was killed died with Fahad. Two of the women killed died while Qasim was attempting CPR. Usman brought the paramedics to those needing urgent assistance.

Like Muhammad Taha, and like the Chinese student who was killed, Fahad, Usman and Qasim are all international students studying here in Australia. They work as security guards to support themselves and their studies. While they are prepared as security guards to deal with difficult situations and confrontations, they certainly do not expect such horror. I can only imagine how awful this is for the parents of all those killed or, like Fahad, Qasim and Usman, for those who were there that afternoon, particularly for the parents who are overseas and who sent their kids to Australia to study in safety, they imagined, for what would be a better life, with great professional opportunities and great opportunities also to perhaps migrate here permanently. To lose your children on the other side of the world must be particularly confusing and horrifying. This has shocked everybody across Sydney. It has been such an awful, unimaginable and inexplicable situation.

We know that the attacker struggled with mental health problems for a long time. According to his dad, he was very frustrated about the fact that he could not find a girlfriend. We need to do a lot more to support people with mental health problems. That is not to say that everybody who has mental health problems is in any way dangerous. But we are not providing the support that some people obviously need. This has been incredibly confronting for so many people, particularly the loss of life of women who were totally unknown to their attacker but were targeted because they were women. It is one example of far too many women who have been killed this year, largely because they are women. Again I offer my condolences to the families, friends and loved ones of all who passed away at Bondi Junction that afternoon. This should never have happened, and I am so sorry that you have lost those you love.

**Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (16:50):** I am thankful for the opportunity to speak on this motion. The events of 13 April in the Bondi Junction shopping centre are absolutely heartbreaking. They have had a profound effect on communities right across Sydney, New South Wales, Australia and, indeed, the world. We can only imagine how difficult these past few weeks have been for those who have been directly impacted. Hearing today from local members, particularly the member for Coogee and the member for Vaucluse, who represent the communities of Bondi and Sydney's eastern suburbs, it is clear that the impact of this attack will be lasting. A lot of important work is ahead of us, first and foremost to heal and then to ensure that such tragic events can never happen again.

I offer my heartfelt condolences to everyone who has been directly affected by this horror: the families and friends of those who lost their lives or were injured, those who were in the Bondi Junction shopping centre when it happened, and the first responders who bravely attended. I am sure that there are many who have not been personally affected but are, like I am, still feeling vulnerable and devastated by what has happened in our beautiful city. As many others have said, this sense that it could have happened to any of us is what made this attack so shocking.

I was not there, and it is difficult to speak about the impacts of that day while so many who have attended our Parliament today know or knew someone who was. Nevertheless, it is important that I do speak, as a representative of my own community in the inner west of Sydney and as a member of The Greens, to offer my condolences, to add my voice to those across the Parliament today, to pay my respects and to affirm our commitment to work towards a response from Parliament that is compassionate, offers solidarity and is grounded in our shared grief and sorrow.

To the friends, neighbours and witnesses affected by these events, we offer our support. Trauma reverberates through communities, leaving scars that may not be immediately visible. We understand the importance of creating safe spaces for healing and collective support. I cannot imagine a place that is considered a safe community meeting place becoming a place of such horror. I spent my own teen years hanging out at the local shopping mall. For this to happen somewhere we feel safe to let the kids begin to step out into the world without us holding their hands makes it all the more difficult to take.

To the first responders and emergency personnel who bravely intervened in the face of danger, we extend our deepest gratitude. Your courage and selflessness saved many lives and prevented further harm, and we are forever grateful for your service. Let us come together as a community to listen, empathise and offer comfort to those in need. In honouring the memory of those we have lost, we also need to renew our commitment to building a more just and compassionate society. It has been wonderful to see the community come together across Sydney in the face of such a tragedy, and I do not doubt that this community will continue to support the victims and their families. May those who lost their lives rest in peace. May their families find comfort in the knowledge that they are not alone. We will stand alongside you today and always.

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:54):** Today I acknowledge the family, friends and loved ones of those killed in this attack. Your loved ones will never be forgotten. Whether it is in the everyday reminders of them or in the thoughts of the New South Wales community, they will never be forgotten. While I cannot imagine the grief their loved ones are experiencing, on behalf of the community of Gosford and the wider Central Coast, I say we stand beside you. You are not far from our thoughts, and our community stands beside you in remembering your loved ones, as you would stand beside us if the case was reversed.

I acknowledge also those injured and affected on this terrible day. On 13 April your lives were changed forever. Bondi Junction on a Saturday afternoon is a place where we come together. For us on the Central Coast this could have been Erina Fair, Westfield Tuggerah or Deepwater Plaza. We all can share memories of our local shopping centres on a busy weekend, where we spent time growing up—a place of community and safety. This safety was broken on 13 April. We need to do so much more for those with the challenge of living with complex mental illness. People with mental illness have the right to access shopping centres and buy their food and participate in their communities as well, but we must do the best we can to provide the treatment, care and wraparound support so that a tragedy such as this never happens again. In the face of this shattered sense of safety,

join me in remembering the heroes, the individuals who ran towards danger, uncertain of what they would face: the security guards, nurses, lifeguards and tradies, and later the police. On 13 April we saw tragedy but also the best in our community. Thank you.

As our Premier poignantly said, grief can be a terrible burden, but it does not have to be a lonely one. In the face of such terrible tragedy, in responding to an act of brutality, our community has refused to mourn alone. In the face of unforgettable loss, our community has come together. I will never forget how not just the eastern suburbs but all of New South Wales and, indeed, the whole world came together in the aftermath of this tragedy, wrapping our arms around each other as we grieve together. There was such a deep sense of shock for so many people across our community, broader New South Wales and Australia. We may be a community of different beliefs, experiences and cultures, yet we have one thing in common: a belief for a better future, where our community comes together in strength when we need it most. That is what we have seen. The beauty of the laying of flowers, of the vigil and of the heroes' stories shared is our community coming together in strength.

Finally, our emergency services, thank you. First responders, you are awesome. We value you and thank you. Our police and paramedics, you are awesome. We value you and thank you. Police Inspector Amy Scott—there are no words. Thank you. Alone you ran towards danger. We owe you a debt that cannot be measured. Together we will remember those we have lost. Together, in the face of tragedy, we will continue to look for the heroes. To the grandparents, grandkids, mums, dads, brothers, sisters, children, friends, loved ones, colleagues and community, we are sorry, and we send our love.

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (16:57):** I make a brief contribution to the condolence motion. Today the Parliament has resumed and, as members of this House, we have gathered with heavy hearts to acknowledge the tragic and unexpected event at Bondi Junction last month. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and loved ones of those who were taken from this world in the most brazen and horrific way. Our hearts are heavy for the lost tomorrows of six victims. Whilst we cannot begin to imagine the pain and grief that the families, friends and loved ones of these victims must be feeling, we can say that you have the support of our entire community. We are with you in solidarity, and we embrace you with love and compassion. To those injured in the attacks, your loved ones and those who witnessed the attacks and were at Bondi Junction that day, we say we are here for you as you heal. I have spoken to many in my community who felt the shock and horror of this most senseless attack. Many of us, especially women, have spent hours strolling through shopping centres, feeling safe. To have this happen is simply incomprehensible.

It was crushing to me to hear the sad story of a young bride shopping for make-up for her wedding. It really hits close to home for me, as someone planning her own wedding. It is shocking because it could have been any of us. This tragedy has had a profound effect on all of us and has raised serious and robust conversations about gendered violence, mental health and knife crime. Let us all work together in this place to ensure that our communities are safe. I thank the police, ambulance workers, doctors, nurses, mental health support workers and all other emergency and first responders for taking care of everyone during that most challenging time. I express my gratitude to the NSW Police Force and acknowledge the many officers from the Burwood Police Area Command who were deployed to Bondi on that Saturday afternoon and are maintaining a presence in local shopping centres and precincts in these following weeks to assure our community that it is safe.

I extend our deepest gratitude to Inspector Amy Scott, the brave police officer who responded swiftly and selflessly to the situation, putting herself in harm's way to protect others. Her courage and quick thinking saved lives, and we are forever grateful. To the civilians who rushed to help, your bravery and compassion are a testament to the good in our community. Your actions remind us that, even in the darkest moments, there is always hope and humanity. On behalf of the residents of the Drummoyne electorate, I extend heartfelt prayers, wishes and thoughts to the victims of this most horrifying event and offer sincerest condolences to the families and loved ones of the six victims. We are so sorry.

Let us come together to support those affected, comfort those who mourn and honour the memories of those we have lost. May we find strength in our unity and may we never forget the sacrifices made by those who risked everything to protect others. May the victims rest in peace and may their families find solace in the collective embrace of communities like mine across New South Wales. Your loved ones will not be forgotten. Rest in peace.

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (17:01):** I make a brief contribution and extend my deepest condolences, and those of the Blue Mountains community, to the families, friends and communities of the six victims of the Westfield Bondi Junction tragedy on 13 April this year. On behalf of my community, I express deep gratitude to all of the first responders: our fabulous police, particularly Inspector Amy Scott, our paramedics and our health professionals, many of whom put their lives at risk each and every day to assist people in danger when they are at their most vulnerable. I pay tribute to those members of the public—fellow shoppers, bystanders and retail workers—who stepped in to assist. They embody the very essence of caring humanity.

The impact on all of us has been monumental. Hearing and watching the emergency unfold was horrifying for those of us who tuned in. The trauma of the stories and those images will hurt us all for some time. As others have done in this place, I encourage people to reach out for support as they deal with vicarious trauma. I cannot imagine the grief, the shock and the distress that people are still dealing with, particularly the families of those killed. We ache with you and we mourn with you. Rest in peace.

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (17:03):** I extend my deepest condolences to those affected by the terrible tragedy that occurred at Bondi Junction last month. I acknowledge the family members of those whose lives were taken on that day and who are in Parliament today. I cannot imagine how difficult these past few weeks have been for them. This tragedy has touched the lives of so many people not only in the eastern suburbs and the Sydney community but also right across Australia. I know there is no consolation for the pain that you are experiencing. But I hope the outpouring of support and solidarity from the community—the knowledge that we and the people of New South Wales are mourning with you—can provide some level of comfort.

It is hard to fathom that the kind of horrific event that took place on 13 April could happen in our own backyard. For everybody who was there that Saturday afternoon, it was just like any other weekend—thousands of people going about their day shopping, doing their groceries, meeting up with friends and family or eating in the variety of food courts. Westfield Bondi Junction is very close to my electorate; so many people within my own community are frequent visitors to the centre. I have visited it many times and I am sure many members of this House have too. It is the local big shopping centre for the people of the eastern and south-eastern suburbs of Sydney—a wonderful and lively place.

As the incident was unfolding, my wife was on her way to that very shopping centre to collect kosher food for the Jewish Passover. It is sobering to reflect on how minutes and seconds of uncontrollable chance can influence our lives. On one afternoon, a terrible act of violence changed the community forever. Six innocent lives were taken from the world. Six families' lives will never be the same. Today this House has an opportunity to honour them. We have learnt how much they were loved and adored by their families, friends and community and how so much love and life lay ahead for them before their lives were cut short.

If it were not for the efforts of our incredible emergency services personnel, there is every chance that the tragedy could have been much worse. We thank the New South Wales police, in particular Inspector Amy Scott, who arrived on the scene alone and responded immediately. Inspector Scott performed her duties with professionalism, drawing on her strength of character, her training and her unwavering commitment to serve and protect. We thank the paramedics who provided life-saving treatment at what would have been a very confronting scene. We thank the NSW Health staff who treated and cared for victims in hospitals across Sydney in the hours and days after the incident. I also recognise the many organisations that have provided mental health support to the community. The event has had a deep and profound impact, and it is important that people get the help they need to process and heal.

In the wake of this tragedy, we also saw acts of immense bravery from the bystanders who intervened—ordinary citizens who risked their lives and personal safety to prevent further harm to strangers. They included bystanders such as the French national known as "the bollard man" who held off the attacker to prevent him from ascending the escalator; the security guards, including the one who lost his life on the first day of his job doing all he could do to protect people from harm, and his colleague who was severely injured in the attack whilst trying to intervene; the Westfield staff who, with their quick response, kept customers and the public safe, shielding them in stores and in back rooms away from danger; and fellow shoppers who performed first aid on the injured before paramedics arrived. The actions of those everyday heroes saved lives and we cannot thank them enough.

The strength and resilience of the eastern suburbs community has shone through so brightly in the darkness of this tragic event—from the thousands of floral tributes and the messages of condolence left at the plaza in Bondi Junction and at the shopping centre to the thousands of people who turned up to the Bondi Beach vigil to remember and honour the six lives lost. That support has extended beyond Sydney and New South Wales right around Australia and the world. It will take time for the community to heal, if that is ever truly possible. Returning to Westfield has been incredibly challenging for some, including staff, for whom it was just another day at work, and shoppers. I encourage people to return to Westfield Bondi Junction when they are ready to support the small businesses and workers, as they have done for decades.

I encourage people to check in, see how they are going and offer words of comfort. In these times, small, everyday acts of kindness can go a long way. Everybody has a right to feel safe, no matter what they are doing and no matter where they go about their daily lives. This tragedy has infringed upon that right in the most horrific way. The people of New South Wales have been left heartbroken by an event that should never, ever have happened. Today we honour and remember the victims and ensure that they will never be forgotten. Once again,



I extend my deepest condolences to the victims' families and others who lost someone dear to them. May they rest in peace.

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (17:10):** I add my thoughts to this condolence motion and thank the Government for bringing it to the attention of the House. As is the case for the member for Heffron, my electorate of Sydney neighbours Westfield Bondi Junction. Many of my constituents, staff, friends and family members regularly shop, work and visit there. This horrific attack shocked and saddened so many people across the Sydney community, especially those who witnessed it firsthand. Members of my own office were working in Westfield at the time. They have shared with me the shock and trauma they experienced as a result of what occurred and expressed their panic, concern and fright following the incident. But many of them responded the way the community has responded: with love and care for all those impacted.

I thank the Government for being so responsive and providing resources and support to local members for us to inform our constituencies. I thank the centre management of Westfield for taking the same approach and keeping all local members informed and empowered with information to support our communities. I thank all the mental health services that have stepped in and carried a large burden to support the people who have been clearly traumatised. I also thank all the frontline and essential workers who helped people move to safety and who supported those who were injured.

I pay tribute to the member for Coogee; the member for Vacluse; the Federal member for Wentworth, Allegra Spender; and all the State, Federal and local government officials, including the Mayor of Waverley Council. I acknowledge the role they played in supporting the community and providing resources. An attack of this scale in a local shopping centre is not something a local member thinks they will have to deal with in this State. But local members have done their communities proud with their response. I add my voice to this condolence motion for the families of the victims and all those who continue to be impacted. I extend my gratitude to the Government; all the local members and representatives at a local, State and Federal level; and all the essential and emergency service workers who played such a critical role in community safety.

**Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (17:14):** I contribute to the condolence motion for the victims and their families of the Bondi Junction attack on 13 April. Like most Sydneysiders and people across the nation and the world, I was shocked. I recall the sadness and shock I felt on first hearing of this dreadful tragedy. We all hope things like this will never occur again. We cannot brace ourselves for them, because they occur out of the blue. So it was on a lovely Saturday afternoon that the people who were shopping in Bondi were visited by a shocking and horrendous tragedy. It was difficult to comprehend at the time, and even now, weeks later, it is still hard to believe what took place that afternoon. We should feel blessed because instances like this event are, thankfully, inordinately rare in our peaceful society. We can think of other places in the world where that is not the case. Even though it is a terrible tragedy, we should feel fortunate that these events are inordinately rare.

It is impossible for most of us to contemplate what the families lost on that day. No-one can imagine what it is like until they have been through it. All we can say is that our hearts go out to them. It is a tragedy that leaves us Australians thinking, "It could have been me." I have shopped at that shopping centre since I was young. My family and friends shop there. The introduction of a new bus route from my electorate of Maroubra to Bondi Junction 18 months ago means a lot of people from my electorate shop there. It could have been any of us. It reminds us all just how frail we are in the face of unspeakable violence. My sympathies go out to the families and friends of the victims. We know their pain will linger forever. We know also that messages and gestures of support help in times of loss.

I acknowledge the people who were there that day, who heard and saw the incident. People were injured and traumatised physically and mentally. They went through terror as a result of that attack. It will take time for a lot of people who witnessed the incident to recover, both physically and mentally. Like many members today, I extend my gratitude to Inspector Amy Scott, who brought the rampage and suffering to an end that day. I have been the Minister for Police and I often say I wish every citizen of New South Wales had an opportunity to be the Minister for Police for a little while so they could meet and know the people who run towards danger and who literally keep us safe. I acknowledge also the first responders who attended the scene. They also keep us safe, patch us up, keep us alive and bring us back to life. I acknowledge the bystanders who bravely assisted Inspector Amy Scott and confronted the attacker on his rampage. They are the so-called "bollard heroes". They stood bravely and resisted.

I acknowledge the poor security guard, Faraz Tahir, who died trying to save shoppers. This afternoon I attended an afternoon tea with the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, several other Ministers and some of the families of the victims. The family of Mr Tahir was there. His brothers came from Pakistan and the United Kingdom to take him home. We do not forget those who died that day and we do not forget, as the Premier said earlier, those who survived and are suffering. They are not alone as they deal with their grief and loss. This

Parliament and this community stand with them during this dark time. We are here to offer our support. After the Bali bombings, which took so many people in our community away, I learnt that when we pull together, it is the community convalescing and supporting each other that makes a big difference at times like this. There are degrees of separation when events like this occur, and you hope that you do not know the families who were affected. But my individual sympathies go out particularly to John and Julie Singleton, who lost their beautiful daughter Dawn that day. I do not know how they will ever recover, but I pray that they will.

**Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (17:20):** I speak from my heart today, still in shock and still trying to come to terms with the tragic, unimaginable loss. We have heard many times today about the events and I will not retell them, but I make a brief contribution to recognise the grief we all feel. We mourn the lives that were lost and stand in solidarity with those who are grieving. The incident has reminded us of the fragility of life and the importance of cherishing every moment. Six lives were lost and a mother died in an heroic act to save her nine-month-old baby, who had been stabbed—how is that even possible?

Our thoughts are with the families and friends of the six victims, and we reflect on how it has changed our lives. We must remember that healing takes time. It is okay to grieve, to feel anger or confusion, and to reach out and seek support when needed. As has been stated today, those people were just going about their daily lives, going to Westfield to go shopping. We all take our kids to enjoy a coffee, to go for a shop and to make happy memories. We do that every day without thought of the risks that may be involved. What happened was completely unimaginable. Grief and loss can change a community forever, and with that comes the realisation that a place of leisure and daily life may no longer be a safe place.

I thank the emergency responders, paramedics and police—led by the courage of officer Amy Scott—for their enduring strength, courage and commitment, because they allow us to feel safer every day. We need to support police as they work to tackle such hideous crime. We need to introduce strong measures to reduce knife crime, including within my area, to ensure that the people of Bondi Junction and all of New South Wales feel safe both at home and at the shopping centres nearby. I offer my condolences to the families involved. As time has passed, they have shown the strength of our community. The community stood up in our time of need during the Bondi Junction tragedy. I hope those who are deceased rest in peace, and I send best wishes to their families. We hope that the community may learn from this unimaginable tragedy.

**Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (17:23):** I make a brief contribution to debate on the condolence motion for our friends and colleagues in the Bondi area. On behalf of the Blacktown electorate, I offer our profound condolences. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims and those who were injured, as they try to recover. Many speakers have talked about the sad and sickening event that took place in a shopping centre like the ones many of us pop into on a daily basis to have a coffee. My office is located in a shopping centre, and one wonders what could have been. We saw a similar incident many years ago in Strathfield. Hopefully it never happens again, but these incidents do occur.

The theme of strangers protecting strangers has constantly come through. Shop owners and retail workers helped shoppers to take refuge, closing their doors and protecting the people inside. Five out of the six victims who were senselessly murdered were women, and 17 others were injured. A mother saved her baby at the cost of her own life. I will focus on one story because it has direct relevance to my electorate. The Ahmadiyya Muslim community is based literally across the road in the Londonderry electorate, but a lot of the people who attend are from the Colebee suburb in Blacktown. Faraz Tahir had worked just six night-time shifts and was on his first day shift. He was a member of the youth community of Ahmadiyya Muslims, having recently arrived from Pakistan after fleeing the persecution that Ahmadiyya Muslim worshippers have suffered. They cannot even publicly announce their faith.

He thought he had come to a safe country and was working as a security guard. On his first day shift, he and his co-worker heard a commotion. His co-worker was also an Ahmadiyya Muslim worshipper from the Marsden Park mosque—who would have thought? They live in Parramatta and it is a long distance to get to Bondi. Faraz had met him at the mosque at different ceremonies. When Imam Kauser called for people to volunteer to clean up on Australia Day, many of us would have probably elected to stay at home on a Sunday rather than pick up rubbish. But Imam Kauser made the call to the Ahmadiyya and they responded. They are people who always give back to society. When Faraz heard the yelling and the screaming, he turned to his co-worker and basically said, "Let's go and find out." He faced the circumstances and unfortunately gave his life.

As members have said, police officer Amy Scott brought it all to an end. I hope that there is enough support because it is always difficult to take a life. No-one wants to take a person's life, regardless of whether it is done legitimately. I know the police will be wrapping their arms around her and looking after her. I also reach out to the health workers, the police, the emergency workers, the ambulance officers and even members of the general public who tried to disarm the attacker. All of those people and the shoppers who were present are traumatised in some way. The Government will try to support everyone, but they also need to reach out for help. On behalf of

the people of Blacktown, I offer our sincere condolences to the families of the victims. We are united in supporting each other at this difficult time.

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

**Motion agreed to.**

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

*Public Interest Debate*

## **ESSENTIAL WORKERS**

**Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (17:29):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Commends and thanks the State's essential workers for their bravery and professionalism in response to recent tragedies and emergencies.
- (2) Recognises that our essential workers are critical to keeping our community safe.

I see our State, our nation, as one of the shining lights of this world. Many families from across the Middle East and every other continent look to our State as a place where they can settle, be protected and be enabled to thrive and achieve their dreams. To deliver that, the Government relies on essential workers. They are the fabric of our society in that regard. They are the very best of us. They sacrifice so much to ensure that we are safe, healthy, educated and get every opportunity to thrive.

My own upbringing in Cabramatta was indicative of that. I grew up at a time in the '90s when drug and gang crime was rampant. I grew up in a public housing commission unit. Every day on my way to school I would open the door, walk along the corridors and see people using heroin. I would see knife crime. I would see robberies. All of that was normalised for me as a kid, and that was not fair. That is not right. I also saw the work that the police did with the Government in cleaning up Cabramatta. They worked with the community to do great things and give a boy like me every chance to be here today.

When thinking of ambulance workers, a memory comes to mind. As a kid in Cabramatta, I saw people overdosing. I vividly remember going to a payphone, dialling 000 and speaking to an emergency worker and advising them of the circumstances. I remember saying at the end, "This is not a prank call." They replied, "We believe you." Shortly after I saw the police and the ambulance go to treat that person. Needless to say, the police do an absolutely amazing job. Our essential workers and our healthcare workers do an amazing job as well. That, along with other factors, inspired me to go to university and to eventually join the Australian Federal Police. I wanted to be there and contribute to the community just as much as I saw the police contribute to my family and me.

I had the opportunity to work with many NSW Police Force officers in various joint operations, and I can attest to their professionalism, their dedication and their sacrifice. They do that not for their own individual glory, but to contribute to the community and to our State, and to look after their colleagues when times are tough. They are truly inspirational. They are our modern-day heroes. That was reflected in the tragedies that recently occurred, namely, firstly, the stabbings at Bondi Junction on 13 April. I offer my sincerest and deepest condolences to the family and friends of those who tragically lost their lives. It is truly heartbreaking. I know that emergency services and essential workers were also traumatised by it.

I commend the police for their response, especially Inspector Amy Scott. It is not easy to run towards danger. It is not easy to run towards a person with a knife. Her actions—her dedication and her sacrifice in putting herself forward to deal with that incident—truly saved lives. I know that the police do not usually like to pat themselves on the back, but Amy is a true hero. Obviously the work of the ambulance services to treat people saved lives that day as well. Members of the public like Damien, Silas and others treated the injured and accompanied Amy Scott on her pursuit of the offender. I saw that on video and I thought to myself, "That's bravery in essence." I thank the hospital staff and the mental health workers. I know that there will be work to do in terms of healing as we move forward, but the hospital staff truly saved lives and the mental health staff made a difference as well.

Just days later, the Wakeley incident happened. Bondi, I watched on TV; Wakeley, I saw. I went there shortly after the bishop was stabbed and I saw some truly confronting behaviour. No-one deserves to be attacked and the police should be able to do their jobs without interference. Violence has no place in our society. Despite the bad, I also saw the very best of us there. I saw the police risk their safety to protect the public. They were not wearing protective equipment because they were reacting to a very volatile and fast-moving situation, but they risked their safety in order to protect people. I also saw young police officers who would have recently graduated

from the academy. They probably would have learnt about riots in textbooks, but they reacted. I saw police officers from different stations. Officers were injured and police vehicles were damaged. It is a testament to the police that they handled that with exemplary conduct, and for that I commend them.

I also commend the ambulance workers who were there. There were at least six of them and I chatted to them briefly on the night. They were there to respond to the incident, to treat people and to risk their own safety. Our healthcare workers at the hospitals and the members of the public also did their thing. I have a brief point to make—I know that time will escape me. I doorknocked in the days after the event, and people were very appreciative of the police. I must mention the domestic violence support workers and volunteers as well, and the SES and RFS members for their work on floods and fires. The work of our essential services is tough, and mental health support is important, particularly for PTSD. This boy from Fairfield City thanks all of our essential workers for keeping us safe.

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (17:36):** I thank the member for Fairfield for moving this motion. Our communities have seen quite a number of tragedies and disasters across the State, but the frontline workers continue to be out there to deal with the situations that we see from time to time. There is no doubt that New South Wales has experienced a tumultuous few months. Because of the recent tragedies and emergency situations, we have seen all the news items, bulletins, social media feeds and front pages of newspapers telling us of the bad news that occurs in so many communities. From Bondi to Forbes, our communities have been shocked by the actions of others.

A sentiment that has been resonating in conversations I have had with community members is, "How could this happen? How could people do that to another human being? It just doesn't make sense." In the aftermath of an event, it is easy to feel overwhelmed by grief and sorrow, but it is often the courage and dedication of everyday heroes that shines the brightest. Those everyday heroes are our essential workers in fields like policing, paramedicine and firefighting. In situations like Bondi, retail assistants and security guards also became everyday heroes who stepped up. In the face of recent tragedies and emergencies, those remarkable individuals have stood tall, confronting adversity head-on with resilience and determination. Their sacrifices have not gone unnoticed, and their contributions have been nothing short of heroic.

It takes a certain type of person to enter into a selfless career of looking after others. Police officers, for example, run towards danger when the natural instinct for anyone is to run in the opposite direction. Our police officers continue to display bravery and courage in the face of danger to protect the communities they serve. Their integrity and empathy are unmatched. They make quick and sound decisions in complex and rapidly changing situations. I take my hat off to Inspector Amy Scott. She embodied her years of training and experience and acted with dutiful calmness when confronting the armed attacker at Bondi. If not for her professionalism, adaptability and courage, that event could have been worse.

I thank every single officer and first responder who attended that critical incident. Whilst it might be part of their job, no-one wakes up in the morning and goes to work anticipating that they will see horrific scenes like those of Saturday 13 April. The courage and professionalism displayed by each person during that challenging and chaotic situation is commendable. The attack signified a new scar on the State that will forever be remembered. Those who attended, whether they were essential workers or bystanders, will never see that shopping centre in the same way.

As we navigate through these challenging times, let us never forget the invaluable contributions of our essential workers. Let us honour their bravery, support their efforts and stand in solidarity with them as they continue to serve and protect us all. All members would agree that our State is suffering from tragedy fatigue. It has been a constant jump from fires to floods to pandemic, back to floods to protests to riots to road crashes. Escalating crime rates, road deaths and incidents speak for themselves. Some nights I catch myself second-guessing whether or not to turn the news on, wondering how much more tragedy we can take. There is not a resident of this State who has not been affected.

I thank our essential workers. Their unwavering commitment to protecting and serving the community was evident as they bravely confronted danger head on, risking their own safety to ensure the safety of others. Amidst the darkness that has hung over New South Wales over the past few months, their selfless dedication and unwavering resolve has served as a beacon of hope and strength for us all. Their quick response and decisive actions undoubtedly helped to mitigate the impact of those tragedies. Words cannot adequately express the depth of our gratitude for their service and sacrifice. They are true heroes, and their bravery will be remembered and appreciated by the community for generations to come. Their efforts have not gone unnoticed, and their commitment to protecting and serving others is deeply admired and respected.

As we mourn the loss of those senselessly taken from us, I take a moment to honour and pay tribute to the courageous men and women who work in law enforcement, in health and in Fire and Rescue who put their lives

on the line every day to keep us safe. We thank them, from the bottom of our hearts, for their service, sacrifice and unwavering dedication to protecting and serving the community.

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (17:41):** I thank the member for Fairfield for moving this public interest debate motion. As the Speaker mentioned this morning, the State has experienced significant and recurring trauma since we last sat in this place. From the tragic killing of six innocent shoppers at Bondi Junction to the shocking stabbing of a bishop in Wakeley to the tragic death of Molly Ticehurst at the hands of the man she thought loved her in Forbes, none have been through more in the past few weeks than our frontline and essential workers. That is why it is my pleasure and my duty to acknowledge their service and convey in this place the gratitude of my community.

Much has been said about the incredible bravery of the first responders in Bondi Junction. I, too, pay tribute to Inspector Amy Scott, whose bravery and professionalism likely saved many lives, as well as the many other brave first responders in that incident. In Wakeley, several frontline responders attended Christ The Good Shepherd Church in the wake of the violent assault of a prominent bishop and priest in the south-west Sydney community. The ensuing riot at the scene injured dozens of police and paramedics. What happened on the night of 15 April was unacceptable. Police and paramedics, just like any other worker, deserve to feel safe when they are on duty. I thank all of the first responders who were there that night for their continuing professionalism and for doing their duty in the face of such scenes.

Too often, tragedies like those in Bondi Junction and Wakeley have been co-opted by those who seek to prod at our multicultural fabric and weaken our social cohesion. It is done without any regard for those affected by the tragedies, who are only just beginning to deal with their trauma and grief. The intervening hours between the awful tragedy in Bondi Junction and the identification of the offender saw harmful misinformation spread across the world as to the identity and motive of the perpetrator. In the immediate aftermath, several prominent verified online accounts speculated, without evidence, that the offender was motivated by the Islamic faith or by the tragedies in Gaza. At least two people were falsely named as the attacker on social media, one of which was picked up by a mainstream news outlet.

British radio presenter Julia Hartley-Brewer wasted no time in claiming that the attacker must have been an Islamic terrorist. British television presenter Rachel Riley tried to connect the horrible tragedy with those who have been calling for a ceasefire in Gaza for over six months. Hartley-Brewer and Riley have followings of almost 500,000 and 700,000 people, respectively, to which they broadcast their kneejerk reactions while our city was processing the shocking tragedy that had unfolded hours previously. A video of the stabbing in Wakeley quickly went viral. Misinformation was being filtered through WhatsApp groups and other social media platforms. Those messages included allegations that churchgoers were holding the alleged offender, that he was himself assaulted or that the clergy had severed his finger. None of those allegations were true. Other messages claimed that threats had been made against mosques in the area, including the mosque at Green Valley in the Liverpool electorate. In the days after, I spoke with the president of the mosque, who was shaken but grateful for the consideration and support of the broader community, regardless of faith or cultural background.

In the face of that, I thank the police for providing timely and up-to-date information about those two emergencies. I acknowledge that it is often not easy to fight the misinformation that proliferated in the immediate aftermath in both instances. Our essential workers are doing everything they can to ensure community calm and cohesion at a time when many try to destabilise it. I also thank those working in the mental health sector. I know from my time at headspace that this work is often confronting and difficult. In the aftermath of the past few weeks, they would be under considerable pressure. Many people across our State have been considerably affected by what they have witnessed. Many workers may experience vicarious or second-hand trauma from providing much-needed support. That will direct more people to mental health resources for psychological support and advice. I put on record my thanks to those working in that space.

We will never know how many lives were saved by our treasured essential workforce in the immediate aftermath, in the weeks since and in the months to come. Essential workers do it because they love and believe in our community. They are the silver lining of hope that we have been proud to acknowledge and celebrate within the broader community since. I thank them on behalf of my community in Liverpool and everyone across the State and the country who is proud that they are the face of New South Wales.

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (17:47):** I make a brief contribution to this important public interest debate motion and thank the member for Fairfield for bringing it to the House. It commends and thanks the State's essential workers for their bravery and professionalism in response to recent tragedies and emergencies, and recognises the ongoing work that essential workers do to keep the community safe. In the days that followed the attack at Westfield Bondi Junction, I spoke with a number of police officers and people who work at St Vincent's Hospital who responded to the attack at the front line. A number of essential workers in the Sydney electorate travel long distances to work and keep our global city safe and running. It has been a challenging year for many

people in the community, but those at the front line keeping us safe, both physically and emotionally, are the essential workers. Whether it is police, health staff, teachers and education staff or council workers, a range of essential workers have been at the front line of community safety and wellbeing. Many people have been challenged this year—essential workers the most.

Motions like this are so important because they allow us to come together and recognise the way in which essential workers play a critical role in the safety of our communities and in keeping them running. Even more important was the decision of the Minns Labor Government to lift the wages cap to ensure that they can continue to receive fairer pay and conditions in their workplaces. For too long, essential workers have gone underpaid and under-recognised for their contribution in this State, and we need to keep that going. Recently all of the Legislative Assembly Independent members joined with Unions NSW to write to the Premier to request a select committee into housing for essential workers in New South Wales. Conversations with the Government towards establishing that committee are ongoing, and I appreciate the engagement.

Many of the police who were at Westfield live on the Central Coast because that is the closest place they can afford to live. Many of the nurses and cleaners at St Vincent's Hospital live hours away from the hospital. If we are so grateful for the safety that essential workers provide us, we have to provide them the basic safety of being able to live closer to where they work. Just as the Government showed leadership in lifting the wages cap, we need also to work together in this State to ensure that essential workers have access to housing close to their work. Too many police who keep the City of Sydney safe are sleeping in their cars overnight because it is too far for them to get home and back. Too many nurses are leaving work tired because they have not had a proper night's sleep because they have had to travel so far to work—let alone allowing them to enjoy having a life. I thank the member for Fairfield for moving the motion, and I thank the Government for its ongoing commitment to essential workers. The Legislative Assembly Independents look forward to working with the Government to ensure that essential workers have housing close to the essential roles that they perform to keep our community safe.

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (17:51):** Whether it is for an accident, an injury called in to 000, a murder, public emergency, domestic violence incident or some unfolding horror that we are yet to understand, this House commends and thanks our State's essential workers for their bravery and professionalism not only in response to recent tragedies and emergencies but also every day. We recognise that our essential workers are critical to keeping our community safe. I echo the words of the member for Fairfield, the mover of this motion, that the essential workers are the very best of us. I thank our law enforcement personnel, our first responders, paramedics, police, mental health workers, emergency department staff, doctors, nurses, specialist clinicians, mental health services, firefighters and SES personnel.

Whereas the natural human tendency is to run away from danger, emergency service workers run towards danger every day. Our essential emergency services workers are constantly faced with unpredictable and volatile situations. They must approach those situations quickly and decisively, but also with caution. That takes a significant emotional and psychological toll. Making decisions around life or death, at speed, can be extremely taxing. It is especially true when those they are meant to protect and serve are themselves a potential source of danger and aggression. First responders are constantly dealing with people hurt and in a heightened emotional state. In an emergency, many are at their most vulnerable and distressed. Others are at their most hostile and unreasonable. It is easy to become burnt out if constantly exposed to tragedy and stress. Emergency service workers front up to deal with unacceptable behaviour—and that needs to be called out as well.

The Health Services Union Ambulance Division has said paramedics and health workers have enough to worry about and they deserve to feel safe as they tend to patients. As Minister for Health Ryan Park has said, we are thankful for the work of our New South Wales paramedics and ambulance staff every day, and we acknowledge those who go above and beyond for their patients. We have heard so many stories of unwavering commitment to duty—from performing life-saving medical interventions to acts of bravery, often at risk to their own safety. I acknowledge in particular the fear our paramedics would have felt at the Wakeley incident. For me, it is not just a professional or political statement; it is deeply personal, as my son is a paramedic. It does not matter that he is 24 years old; he is still my little boy. Every time he goes off to work, I worry whether he is going to come home, especially with the escalating level of violence in our community and the sorts of situations that our essential workers—our police and paramedics in particular—are faced with.

To all essential workers, I give our deepest thanks and gratitude. It is unacceptable that their lives are put in danger when they attend incidents and are confronted with senseless acts of violence as they utilise their skills, training and professionalism to help save others. Today we acknowledge that, as our essential workers turn up to work, it is no less confronting or horrific when they are faced with unimaginable tragedies. Therefore, in expressing our thanks as a Parliament to those essential workers, acknowledging that they keep us safe, I also express the fear and unimaginable horror that they face from the very people that they seek to assist. I commend the motion of the member for Fairfield.

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (17:56):** Today I stand before the House not just as a representative of Pittwater but trying to be a voice for the unsung heroes who form the backbone and shield of our community and our State. I speak of our essential workers whose tireless dedication and bravery not only support day-to-day life but are also critical in times of crises and emergencies. Let us reflect on recent events that have tested the mettle of our communities: floods, storms, the Bondi tragedy, the stabbing of a bishop in a place of worship and the ongoing epidemic of family and domestic violence. In each instance, our essential workers, whether they be police, SES, volunteer firefighters, professional firefighters, paramedics or nurses, have stood fast as a bulwark against chaos. Those workers' and volunteers' roles are crucial and yet, often taken for granted. In light of recent tragedies and events, it is evident that we expect far too much of and pay far too little to our professional emergency services workers.

This House extends its deepest gratitude to and commends those brave people. They work in conditions that most would often flee from, driven by a sense of duty that transcends the mere call of occupation. Their stories of bravery and professionalism are not just tales of personal fortitude but are testament to the robust spirit that characterises the people of New South Wales. Just last month, during the severe storms that hit our region, it was our essential workers who navigated through dangerous conditions to restore power, provide medical aid and ensure public safety. Their actions saved lives and hastened our recovery—a clear demonstration of their indispensable role in our society. It is undeniable that our essential workers are fundamental to maintaining not just the functionality but the safety of our communities. The attack in Wakeley could have seen our State become a tinderbox. Some thought we might lose control of public safety. Our paramedics worked under incredible conditions, and our police ultimately calmed the situation. Our emergency services threaded the needle and community cohesion withstood a significant challenge.

The Bondi tragedy saw the very worst: the senseless murder of six people, with 12 physically injured and many more psychologically impacted. Our hearts go out to every single person affected. In that most difficult time we saw the very best of humanity and the very best of our essential workers. Police Inspector Amy Scott is a hero and testament to the very best of our essential workers. We must also recognise the service of our volunteers in Pittwater—whether it is Mark Colwell, unit commander of Warringah Pittwater SES; the 13 Rural Fire Service brigades in Pittwater; Jimmy Arteaga, unit commander of Marine Rescue Broken Bay; or Stuart Manley, unit commander of Marine Rescue Cottage Point. I thank all of those services and their volunteers. It would be remiss of me to not mention my fellow volunteer firefighter at the Davidson RFS, Wayne Stanley, who was awarded the Commissioner's Unit Citation for Bravery on St Florian's Day following his bravery during an eight-week deployment in Canada. I congratulate and thank Wayne.

Every day our essential workers make sure that our children can go to school safely, that our sick receive care and that our streets are secure. They help us in times of emergency and great need. The seamlessness of the services often belies the complexity and risks involved in providing them. In recognising their critical role, we must also acknowledge the challenges essential workers face: long hours, mental and physical strain, and, all too often, insufficient resources. As representatives it is our duty to ensure that those challenges are met not with silence but with proactive support. We should recognise our essential workers in not only words but also actions that safeguard their wellbeing and enable them to perform their duties to the best of their abilities.

While we commend and recognise our essential workers, we must also ask ourselves whether we are doing enough. They require real and tangible support. That includes adequate funding for resources, mental health support and policies that actively improve their working conditions. It also includes better pay. Our essential workers are not just employees; they are our neighbours, our friends and our family. They are the ones who step forward when many step back. I assure our essential workers that their bravery, commitment and professionalism do not go unnoticed. We thank them, commend them and stand by them. Their strength inspires ours, and together we will continue to build a safer, stronger and more resilient New South Wales.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (18:01):** I join my colleagues in recognising and thanking all of our emergency and frontline personnel, and I thank the member for Fairfield for bringing this important public interest debate to the House. In times of crisis, when chaos threatens to overwhelm us, a special few step forward with unwavering commitment, boundless bravery and unparalleled professionalism to ensure our safety and wellbeing. Tragedies and emergencies test the resilience of our communities. Throughout them all, the selfless dedication and tireless efforts of our emergency services and essential workers make them beacons of hope. We are fortunate that so many people in our communities, whether volunteers or professionals, are always there for us, ready to answer the call whenever and wherever they are needed. Now more than ever, it is important for us to pause and give thanks to those on the front line. They confront danger head on, often encountering situations that test their physical and emotional limits. Through natural disasters, global pandemics, acts of brutal crime and horror, they are always there for us when we need them.

To the police officers who protect our streets and communities from harm and to the firefighters who rush towards the flames to extinguish the infernos that threaten our homes and our livelihoods, we say thank you. To the paramedics, the nurses and the doctors who race against time to provide life-saving care to those in need, and to the SES volunteers who are on call 24/7 during extreme weather events—through floods, storms and fire—we say thank you. We thank our marine rescue volunteers who keep us safe and respond to emergencies on the water, and our surf lifesaving volunteers and lifeguards who look after us when we are at the beach. Their work does not end when the sirens fade and the headlines change. Day in, day out, our emergency services continue to stand watch, ready to respond at a moment's notice.

In the face of tragedy, our emergency services have shown us the true meaning of heroism. They are the ones who run towards danger when others run away from it. In particular I thank all of the local emergency services, volunteers and essential workers who have been involved in the recent tragedies that we have faced across our State and in our communities. I acknowledge two people from very different walks of life: Inspector Amy Scott, a career professional within our police service and a true hero of the Westfield Bondi Junction massacre; and the security guard who sadly lost his life that day. Working at the Westfield Bondi Junction shopping centre after only a few shifts there, he took the brunt of what was a terrible incident of violence in our community. He lost his life but showed significant bravery in trying to defend others.

In thanking all emergency services workers and volunteers across our State who put themselves in harm's way to keep the rest of us safe, I also recognise the local emergency services and volunteer organisations in my community: the North Shore Police Area Command; the crews from our Fire and Rescue stations at Mosman, Neutral Bay and Crows Nest; Marine Rescue Middle Harbour; the paramedic and health services at Royal North Shore Hospital; and the SES volunteers from both the Mosman and North Sydney units. I join my colleagues in this place in thanking our essential workers, from the bottoms of our hearts, for all that they do. Let us recognise them for their courage, their sacrifice and their unwavering dedication to keeping us safe. They are the true heroes of our communities.

**Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (18:05):** In reply: We all agree on the importance of essential workers, and we are all aligned in thanking them for their work. I thank all members who contributed to the debate or, rather, the collective appreciation for our police, healthcare workers, ambulance officers, mental health workers, firefighters, SES, RFS, teachers and so many more essential workers. I reflect upon some members' comments. I agree with the member for Bathurst that in times of crisis, essential workers are our everyday heroes and that they are a platform for the safety of our society. The member for Liverpool commented that essential workers have not wavered in risking their safety to protect us. The member for Sydney recognised the ongoing work our essential workers do to keep our communities safe, noting that their work never pauses and that they do it honourably. The member for Blue Mountains spoke of essential workers' exposure to tragedy and stress. As the parent of a paramedic, the member knows it is tough and stressful. I thank her for raising such a good boy and acknowledge his contributions in protecting others.

The member for Pittwater spoke about an essential worker's sense of duty and about their work being a testament to their robust spirit. I recall from the member's inaugural speech that he was—and he may still be—an RFS volunteer. I thank him for that. I concur with the member for North Shore, who noted the bravery of essential workers across a range of incidents and emergencies. I thank all of our essential workers from the bottom of my heart. They represent the very best of us and are deeply respected by the members of this House. They are a credit to their families, their friends and this State.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua):** The question is that the motion be agreed to.

**Motion agreed to.**

#### *Bills*

### **ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (VIBRANCY REFORMS) BILL 2024**

#### **First Reading**

**Bill introduced on motion by Mr Paul Scully, read a first time and printed.**

#### **Second Reading Speech**

**Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (18:08):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2024 to this House. This is a simple bill with a clear purpose. It will make sure that councils and



other consent authorities consider the Government's vibrancy agenda as an integral part of the merit assessment process for applications to extend trading hours. We have recently witnessed barriers in the planning system that have prevented some venues outside of entertainment precincts from extending their trading hours. This was highlighted by the decision of Northern Beaches Council in relation to The Joey restaurant's application to extend its hours of operation.

The Joey is located more than 500 metres away from the nearest home, on the other side of a golf course. However, the council refused the application on the basis of amenity impacts. We have listened to the community, and we understand that decisions like this are not acceptable or in keeping with the Government's vibrancy reforms. Encouraging venues to consider later operating hours is an important element of that agenda. The bill makes the Government's position clear and will assist in preventing similar decisions from being made in the future. Councils will have the benefit of clear guidance about the Government's vibrancy reforms, agenda and what needs to be considered when determining a development application or modification to extend trading hours.

The bill will introduce special provisions to schedule 8 to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The provisions will require a consent authority, when determining an application for extended hours of operation, to have regard to new vibrancy guidelines, to enable venues to achieve their full social, business and cultural potential, particularly as part of the night-time economy. The guidelines will be issued by the planning secretary after consultation with the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner. They will provide for various matters to be considered in determining particular applications for extended trading hours. It is important to note that the vibrancy guidelines will not override all other planning considerations, and they will not lead to applications being automatically approved or refused. The Government does not intend to undermine councils' planning controls and local decision-making; it provides greater clarity.

Councils will still be required to consider environmental and other impacts, as is appropriate. The bill specifies that the requirement to have regard to the guidelines is in addition to any other applicable requirement under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 or another Act. However, the bill makes sure that a vibrant night life is a key part of the merit assessment process. Failure to have regard to the guidelines in considering a relevant development application would be unlawful. We want to remove barriers in the planning system that prevent venues from achieving their potential. However, it is critical that we do so in a way that does not override other important considerations, including, for example, the impact of noise and light on the surrounding environment. For that reason, applications will continue to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

I turn now to the vibrancy guidelines. The vibrancy guidelines, which will be developed following the passage of the bill, will address various factors such as the consideration of the potential impacts of later trading, such as sound, light spill, safety and amenity. As I mentioned, the vibrancy guidelines will be issued by the planning secretary following consultation with the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner. It is also important to highlight that the development of the vibrancy guidelines is intended to be subject to detailed public consultation. The Government intends to consult with councils, stakeholders within the hospitality industry and the wider community. Consultation will make sure that there are no unintended consequences in how the vibrancy guidelines are framed and that positive outcomes are maximised. There will also be further consultation with the Office of Local Government NSW, Liquor and Gaming NSW, NSW Health and the NSW Police Force. Once finalised, the vibrancy guidelines will be issued by the planning secretary and published on a New South Wales Government website.

I now turn to the detail and scope of the bill. The bill will insert a new part into schedule 8 to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. It will require consent authorities to have regard to the vibrancy guidelines in limited circumstances. Specifically, consent authorities will only need to consider the guidelines when assessing certain "extended hours of operation applications". The bill defines an "extended hours of operation application" as a development application that includes a proposal for extended hours of operation or an application to modify a development consent to allow extended hours of operation. The provisions will only apply to particular premises that are located in areas with low residential populations and where the premises that are the subject of the application are not located within a special entertainment precinct as defined in section 202 of the Local Government Act 1993, or within residential zones R1, R2, R3, R4 or R5, and are situated on land that is 500 metres or more away from the nearest residential accommodation. The bill does not extend to premises in residential zones to ensure that there are limited impacts on local residents. The bill will commence on proclamation, after the vibrancy guidelines have been developed, consulted on and issued by the planning secretary.

The New South Wales Government is committed to resolving issues across the planning, liquor licensing and sounds complaint management systems to improve the vibrancy of our State and boost our night-time economy. The bill is a small part of the Government's broader vibrancy reform agenda. The 24-Hour Economy Commissioner Act 2023 and 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Act 2023 passed

Parliament on 30 November 2023 and received assent on 12 December 2023. The Acts have already resulted in a number of important reforms, including the establishment of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner role; new incentives for live music and performance venues; standardisation of licensed premises hours of operation; broadening the eligibility for licensing special events; strengthening harm minimisation measures in the Liquor Act 2007; making permanent several measures introduced during COVID to boost flexibility for venues and patrons, including enabling restaurants and bars to sell small quantities of packaged liquor with takeaway meals; and making permanent the ability of councils to temporarily approve outdoor dining and performance on unclassified roads and footpaths without seeking approval.

In addition, we have made the exempt development pathway for outdoor dining permanent on private land for cafes, clubs and restaurants. Those permanent exemptions made it easier for businesses to thrive over the busy summer trading period and to continue to grow. Other legislated reforms and policy initiatives will commence midyear. That includes the publication of guidance for special event road closures and global pre-approvals of public space, publication of special entertainment precinct guidelines, streamlined liquor licence consultation processes and new entertainment sound complaint rules. Those reforms, which were introduced by the Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, were sensible and balanced. They will allow our State to achieve a vibrant, safe and diverse night-time environment. However, the recent decision in relation to The Joey restaurant has highlighted the need for further reform for food and drink premises that are located outside late-night trading zones and cannot access extended trading through exempt pathways.

Sensible hours of operation for venues are critical to supporting the Government's vibrancy agenda, particularly for venues located outside crowded residential areas. The bill and the vibrancy guidelines, which will be subsequently developed, are intended to encourage councils to make decisions that are consistent with the Government's vibrancy reforms and agenda, and to provide more certainty to venues and communities about trading hour decisions. The bill is expected to benefit regional areas and rural zones by providing later dining options for the local community and tourists, as well as additional hours of employment for those employed in the hospitality industry. The bill will further encourage a vibrant economy for the people of New South Wales, particularly at night.

It is the Government's intention to encourage venues to consider later trading hours and, to this end, the bill deals specifically with amendments that enable this outcome. As such, the Government will not consider amendments that seek to go beyond the intent of the bill. We want to give councils clear guidance about the Government's vibrancy reforms and agenda, and to provide more certainty to venues and communities. The bill will achieve that. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **HEALTH PRACTITIONER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024**

### **Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from 19 March 2024.**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (18:18):** I support the Health Practitioner Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The bill amends the Health Care Complaints Act 1993 and the Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009, the two Acts that together provide the regulatory framework for complaint resolution in the New South Wales health system. The bill makes small but important changes to the existing framework. I am confident that the changes will address some issues relating to the efficiency of the complaints process and help to streamline it. I turn to the parts of the bill. Schedule 1 amends the Health Care Complaints Act 1993. Currently section 14 of the Act prevents a health professional council from acting while a complaint is being investigated or dealt with by the Health Care Complaints Commission.

As currently written, this would in some circumstances contradict the nationally adopted legislation, which states that a health professional council can do anything to protect the life or physical or mental health of any person. That wording mirrors that of the repealed Medical Practice Act 1992, which allowed a council to take immediate action to suspend or impose conditions on a practitioner's registration if it was deemed to fit within the definition. The amendment clarifies that councils can take immediate action under section 150 of the national law. This is an important change because action must be taken in circumstances where life, or physical or mental health are in jeopardy.

Another minor amendment allows the commission to accept an oral withdrawal of a complaint. This withdrawal must be noted in writing to maintain a paper trail. This will be accepted only if the commission sees it appropriate to do so. This is a positive change that improves accessibility for the complainant. The bill replaces section 30 of the Act with new section 91A, which is substantially the same. As currently written, section 30 allows for the commission to obtain an expert report only as a part of an investigation of a complaint, whereas the

new section would allow expert reports to be obtained at other stages, including during the prosecution of a complaint. New section 91A will also streamline how complaints against registered and non-registered health practitioners are handled. It allows for expert reports to be requested for complaints against non-registered medical practitioners. This is an important change that ensures that complaints against both registered and non-registered medical practitioners are treated with equal standing.

Schedule 2 amends schedule 1 to the Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009. The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal can exercise disciplinary powers when a complaint has been made against a practitioner, including a suspension or a cancellation of licence. If a practitioner's registration lapses before the tribunal makes a determination, the tribunal can ensure that if their licence would have been cancelled, the same penalty and timeline applies. However, if it was determined that their licence would have been suspended, there is no mechanism to ensure that they cannot receive a licence during the period they would have been suspended. The bill clarifies that if the person would have been suspended as a practitioner, they cannot apply for registration in the health profession during that period. This amendment closes an unfortunate loophole that should never have existed.

The bill requires written reasons to be provided when a health professional council suspends or imposes conditions on a health practitioner's registration under section 150 or reviews a decision under section 150A. This is to ensure greater transparency in how councils make decisions. These reasons will be inadmissible in civil or criminal proceedings, other than proceedings under national law, or in coronial inquests or inquiries, which should encourage practitioner participation in council proceedings. Schedule 2 addresses concerns about the operation of the impaired registrants panel. Under the existing arrangements, if a council wants recommendations from the panel to be reconsidered—for example, when the conditions placed on the registration of a practitioner seem to be impractical or unmanageable—the only mechanism for reconsideration is for the matter to be referred to a new impaired registrants panel. The bill will allow for a health professional council to request the same impaired registrants panel to further consider its recommendations and vary its recommendations, if deemed appropriate. I welcome this positive change, which should provide more timely resolutions and a more effective allocation of resources.

The bill grants power to assessors conducting performance audits of practitioners to obtain answers to questions and records relating to the professional practice of a practitioner by written notice to a person who might hold the information. The current process allows such records to be seen only in person at the premises where the practitioner practises. This current requirement creates an unnecessary barrier, which the amendment removes. Schedule 2 allows the Minister for Health to remove a member of a health professional council from office if their principal place of practice is no longer within New South Wales. This allows enforcement of rules that already exist. This power will be at the discretion of the Minister, and in cases where the principal place of practice is out of New South Wales but near the border, it may not be deemed necessary to remove them from the council.

The bill amends schedule 5D to allow disciplinary bodies to use evidence of certain judgements—verdicts, findings, certificates, decisions and determinations—about a practitioner to help substantiate their own findings. The more evidence that can be utilised in these processes, the better. The Coalition supports this bill because it makes minor, commonsense changes to streamline the healthcare complaints process, along with assisting thorough investigation and ensuring that enforcement mechanisms are in place and working as intended. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (18:23):** It is a pleasure to speak on the Health Practitioner Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. This bill would make minor amendments to both the Health Care Complaints Act 1993 and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law ~~(NSW) in New South Wales~~. These amendments would improve and streamline the complaints process for registered and non-registered health practitioners. As Deputy Chair of the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission, it is clear to me that the proposed amendments are necessary and commonsense. Over the past 12 months during my term on the committee, the committee considered the awareness of vulnerable and under-represented populations of the Health Care Complaints Commission, engagement with the commission as a venue by which to raise complaints, and other pathways that may be used by such people.

The bill makes amendments to the Health Care Complaints Act to allow the Health Professional Councils Authority to take immediate action in relation to a registered health practitioner or student while the Health Care Complaints Commission deals with a complaint relating to them. This allows for the councils to take swift action for the protection of the public in line with policy intent. Additionally, the bill would permit the commission to accept withdrawal of a complaint by oral notice, when appropriate. Every so often, the commission receives contact from complainants by phone, and is advised that it is the complainant's wish to have the complaint withdrawn. Under the legislation currently, this is not sufficient. That is why this piece of legislation provides the commission the discretion to accept such requests and it streamlines the process.

The bill would allow oral notice to be accepted if two conditions are met: firstly, that the commission considers it appropriate to do so; and, secondly, if the commission makes a written record of the complaint having been withdrawn. The provision for a written record of these withdrawals ensures a paper trail and accountability, thereby reducing the risk of withdrawal of the complaint by someone other than the complainant. Furthermore, the bill also amends section 90B of the Act, which currently sets out the functions of the director of proceedings of the Health Care Complaints Commission, including prosecuting a complaint. But currently it does not expressly provide the director the ability to either withdraw or discontinue the prosecution. While the legislation currently implies that the director of proceedings could perform such functions, it is far more useful to provide those powers without ambiguity. Thus, the functions will be expressly included in the Act, should this bill be passed.

One further amendment to the Health Care Complaints Act is to correct an inconsistency in terminology to allow the Health Professional Councils Authority to take immediate action in relation to a registered health practitioner or student, and provides that the commission may obtain expert reports at any stage of dealing with a complaint, although those reports must not be used in proceedings under the Health Care Complaints Act or the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) except with the consent of the expert, the complainant and the practitioner.

The bill also will amend the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW), firstly, to clarify that, if the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal decides it would have suspended a practitioner whose registration has lapsed had they been registered, that person may not apply for registration during the period the tribunal would have suspended them. Secondly, the bill will require councils to provide written reasons if they decide, or review a decision, to suspend or impose conditions on a practitioner's registration for the protection of the health or safety of the public, or if it is in the public interest to do so. Health practitioners have a duty of care and have a great degree of sensitivity in their work, which is why legislation must ensure integrity and trust with the broader population. This amending bill will ensure that our community may continue to have trust in the system, should they wish to make complaints about the care they received or the process in providing that care. I commend the bill to the House.

**Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (18:28):** I support the Health Practitioner Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I commend the Minister for Health for his work in this space. The bill aims to improve and streamline the complaints process for registered and non-registered health practitioners through minor amendments to two pieces of legislation: the Health Care Complaints Act 1993 and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). The New South Wales Health Care Complaints Commission is an independent body established under the Health Care Complaints Act 1993. The Health Care Complaints Commission plays a vital role in maintaining the integrity of the New South Wales health system. This is achieved through resolving, investigating and prosecuting complaints about health care, with the primary aim being the protection of the health and safety of the public. In keeping with this, the bill will make several amendments to the Health Care Complaints Act 1993.

Section 14 of the Act provides that a professional council must not take any action under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) concerning a complaint while it is subject to investigation by the commission or is being dealt with under division 8 or division 9. However, the professional council's power under the national law is not limited under this section where the action is to "protect the life or the physical or mental health of any person". The bill will amend section 14 to clarify that under national law, part 8, division 3, subdivision 7, "a professional council must, in certain circumstances, take action for the protection of the public".

Schedule 1 [4] to the bill will amend section 18 of the Act to allow for the commission, if it considers it appropriate, to accept the withdrawal of a complaint by oral notice to the commission. This assists in streamlining the withdrawal process. The bill will also clarify that the director of proceedings has the power to vary, withdraw or discontinue the prosecution of a complaint, including after the decision to prosecute has been made by the director, which improves consistency within the Act. Another amendment includes the provision of the commission to disclose information obtained under the Health Care Complaints Act to overseas bodies that regulate health service providers, where this is in the public interest.

The bill will also make amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). The national law regulates registered health practitioners such as medical practitioners, nurses and paramedics. The bill will make several key changes to this legislation. Firstly, the bill will amend the national law to clarify that, if the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal decides that a person would have been suspended by the tribunal had they still been registered, the person may not apply for registration in the health profession during the period for which the person would have been suspended.

This change ensures consistency with how suspensions for registered health practitioners operate, being that a person is taken to not be registered during the period of suspension. Furthermore, the national law, under section 150, currently allows the health professional council to suspend or impose conditions on a registered health practitioner or student registration if it is satisfied it is appropriate to do so. The bill will amend sections 150 and

150A to require councils for health professionals to provide a registered health practitioner or student the written notice of reasons for the decision. This will improve transparency in how councils make decisions under sections 150 and 150A of the national law.

The bill will also make an amendment so that the written notices provided by councils are not admissible in evidence in civil or criminal proceedings in a court of law, except proceedings under the national law, or in an inquest or inquiry under the Coroners Act 2009. By ensuring that these written reasons are protected, health practitioners and students may be more likely to fully participate in processes under sections 150 and 150A, as there is no risk of their evidence being used in civil, criminal or coronial proceedings.

Another provision of the bill is to provide that the Minister may remove a member of a council from office but only if the member's nomination for appointment to the council was on the basis of their principal place of practice being in the State and their principal place of practice ceases to be in the State. This discretion is needed, as there may be circumstances where a member's principal place of practice ceases to be in New South Wales for a legitimate reason.

The bill also provides that the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal or a professional standards committee may receive and admit as evidence in proceedings a finding or decision of a council about a complaint dealt with by inquiry at a meeting of the council or a finding or decision of a performance review panel. This amendment will allow the evidence obtained by the professional standards committee or the tribunal to be used to substantiate any finding relating to a practitioner, not just a finding that a practitioner has engaged in unsatisfactory professional conduct or professional misconduct. Overall, while the changes brought by this bill involve minor amendments, they will help to ensure that complaints processes under the Health Care Complaints Act and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) are fit for purpose. I commend the bill to the House.

**Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (18:34):** I am pleased to contribute to the debate on the Health Practitioner Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The bill will make several amendments to the complaints processes under the Health Care Complaints Act 1993 and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). The bill consists of minor amendments to address inconsistencies within the legislation and some more substantive amendments directed to improving and streamlining the complaints process for both registered and non-registered health practitioners under New South Wales law. I understand that, importantly, several key health stakeholders including the Health Services Union, the Australian Medical Association, the New South Wales Nurses and Midwives' Association, the Medical Services Advisory Committee and the Health Professional Councils Authority were consulted during the drafting of the bill. The amendments introduced by the bill are generally supported by these stakeholders.

Firstly, schedule 1 to the bill will make various minor amendments to the Health Care Complaints Act to address inconsistencies and tidy up the legislation. However, I will discuss a few substantial amendments in more detail. The bill will amend the Act to allow the Health Care Complaints Commission to accept the oral withdrawal of a complaint where it is appropriate to do so. As the Act currently allows complainants to withdraw complaints by notice only in writing, this change will make it easier for complainants to withdraw a complaint by, for example, a phone call to the commission. Importantly, the commission can accept the withdrawal of a complaint by oral notice only if the commission considers it appropriate to do so. The bill also introduces amendments to the expert report provisions of the Health Care Complaints Act. The changes clarify that the commission can obtain expert reports at any stage of dealing with a complaint in respect of a registered health practitioner.

This is unclear under the current Act, as section 30 of that Act provides only that the commission may obtain a report from an expert in investigating a complaint. The bill will also ensure that expert reports obtained by the commission can, by default, be used in proceedings under the Health Care Complaints Act. This will ensure that the commission is able to rely on expert reports in proceedings relating to complaints about non-registered health practitioners, which can take place only under the Health Care Complaints Act. Further, the bill will make an amendment to allow the commission to disclose information it obtains in exercising a function under the Act to a person or body regulating health service providers in an overseas jurisdiction. This important change will allow the commission to share information with overseas regulators for the protection of the health and safety of the public.

I now turn to schedule 2 to the bill, which makes various amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). Some of these amendments are necessary to ensure that the legislation operates as intended. For example, the bill amends the national law to specify what happens when the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal decides that, if a person was still registered in a health profession, it would have suspended their registration. Currently, when the tribunal makes this decision, there is nothing under New South Wales law that specifies the effect of that decision. For consistency with how suspended practitioners are treated, the bill will

amend the national law to state that a person who would have been suspended is not permitted to apply for registration during the period they would have been suspended for.

Another important amendment is to require health professional councils to provide written reasons of immediate action decisions under section 150 of the national law. Though councils tend to provide written reasons for these decisions already, embedding this requirement into the legislation ensures the immediate action process is procedurally fair. The bill will also ensure that these written reasons remain privileged, acknowledging that immediate action decisions may be based on limited evidence and in the context of wider proceedings, including civil, criminal and coronial proceedings.

This privilege ensures that the written reasons for immediate action decisions, which may be based on limited evidence, do not prejudice other ongoing investigations or proceedings. The bill also introduces a new provision that ensures that impaired registrants panels can continue to operate after they have completed an inquiry relating to a health practitioner or student and delivered their recommendations to a health professional council. New section 152IA allows an impaired registrants panel to further consider its recommendations if it is appropriate to do so, having regard to matters referred to it by the council and any submissions provided by the registered health practitioner or student, the subject of the inquiry.

The bill also introduces a new power for Ministers to remove a health professional council member from their office if the practitioner's principal place of practice ceases to be in New South Wales. This power may be exercised at the Minister's discretion, as there may be cases where it would nevertheless be appropriate for a practitioner to remain a professional council member. The bill makes a few other substantive amendments that are likely to be uncontroversial but are nevertheless important. This includes an amendment to allow performance assessors to obtain information and records about a practitioner's professional practice remotely, without needing to visit the physical premises where the records are held.

Overall, these amendments are aimed at improving and streamlining the operations of the Health Care Complaints Act and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). Targeted consultation with key stakeholders has taken place to ensure that these amendments meet the needs of the various participants involved in the complaints process under these pieces of legislation. I thank the member for Bega for introducing the bill and commend it to the House.

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (18:40):** On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the Health Practitioner Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I note that our spokesperson in the other place, Dr Amanda Cohn, is responsible for the bill, which we support. The handling of complaints against both registered and non-registered health practitioners in New South Wales, as we have heard, is regulated by two laws: the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW), which deals with registered health professionals; and the Health Care Complaints Act 1993, which establishes the Health Care Complaints Commission [HCCC]. Both laws work together to govern the management of complaints against registered and non-registered health practitioners. I am sure that many in this Chamber, in their very important work with their constituents, would have talked to members of the community about that process.

The complaints process under part 8 of the national law is currently being reviewed. The New South Wales Government is seeking to make "minor changes via the proposed bill to help streamline the complaints process and address some urgent issues" before that review is finalised. The bill seeks to refine the management of complaints against health practitioners in New South Wales by amending the legislation that deals with both registered and non-registered practitioners. Of most consequence are amendments that prevent a practitioner applying for registration during the period for which they would have been suspended had they been registered at the time of a tribunal finding against them. That allows for the sharing of interjurisdictional complaint information when this is in the public interest. Many smaller changes make explicit in the legislation things that are currently in the regulations or are occurring through precedent, such as the Interpretation Act and so on.

The Greens and our spokesperson have engaged with stakeholders in order to arrive at this position. We have heard also from the Ministry of Health. Stakeholders and the ministry have said that consultation was undertaken with national mutual acceptance, which is the MOU that supports ethical research across all State and Territory health departments, along with the Australian Medical Association, the New South Wales Medical Students' Council, the Health Care Complaints Commission, the Health Services Union and the Health Professional Councils Authority. The pieces of legislation that will be impacted are the Health Practitioner Regulation (Adoption of National Law) Act 2009, which regulates registered health practitioners, and the Health Care Complaints Act.

Proposed schedule 2 [1] to the bill, which we support, sets out that if the tribunal would have suspended a person's registration under the national law section at 149C (4) (a) but the person voluntarily deregisters, the person may not apply for re-registration in the health profession during the period the person would have been

suspended if they were still a registered health practitioner. We think that is common sense. It also allows the HCCC to share information with health service regulators outside Australia when it is in the public interest, and we think that is very important. It introduces the ability for the HCCC to accept oral withdrawals of complaints, but not to accept oral complaints. Inaccessibility is a considerable barrier for many would-be complainants. If the Act is to be amended to reduce the operational burden for the commissioner, likewise work should be done to make oral complaints an option for complainants in addition to the existing power of the HCCC to make their own motion complaints as well as that of a third party, including an MP on behalf of complainants. We think there is more work to be done there.

The bill allows the HCCC to obtain and use expert reports at various stages of handling a complaint, including during a prosecution and not just during an investigation. We support that. It allows health professional councils to take immediate action, even while a complaint is live and being investigated by the HCCC, under section 150 of the national law. This is provided with a different threshold in the Health Care Complaints Act and in the repealed Medical Practice Act at section 66. Again, that tidies up the intersection between the Federal and State laws. We support that. The bill clarifies also that the director of proceedings at the HCCC has the power to vary, withdraw or discontinue the prosecution of a complaint after determining that a complaint should be prosecuted. This makes explicit the current practice through the Interpretation Act. They have the power to vary, withdraw or discontinue the prosecution after determining that it should be prosecuted. In other words, the director takes over the matter. We support that.

The bill also allows a council to refer recommendations in a report by the impaired registrants panel back to the panel for further consideration and potential changes, rather than having to reconstitute the panel in those circumstances. Finally, it allows the Minister at their discretion to remove a member from office if their nomination was made on the basis that included the member's principal place of practice being in the State and it ceases to be in the State. This discretion is very relevant in cross-border communities such as mine, or where someone relocates only temporarily. The Greens support this reform.

**Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (18:46):** I contribute to debate in support of the Health Practitioner Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. As highlighted in the Minister's second reading speech, the NSW Ministry of Health is currently in the early stages of a large-scale review of the complaints process under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). This review will ensure that the complaints process under that legislation remains fit for purpose and meets the needs of the New South Wales community. However, key health stakeholders within New South Wales have identified options for non-contentious amendments, which should be addressed now rather than after the review is finalised. The purpose of the Health Practitioner Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 is to make these non-contentious amendments to improve the complaints process under the Health Care Complaints Act 1993 and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) whilst the broader review is ongoing.

Schedule 1 to the bill introduces amendments to the Health Care Complaints Act to improve processes for health practitioners, the Health Care Complaints Commission and others involved in the healthcare complaints process. One way in which it does so is by introducing clarifying and consequential amendments. For example, the bill corrects an inconsistency in terminology under section 14 of the Health Care Complaints Act to ensure that health professional councils, such as the Medical Council of New South Wales, can take immediate action in relation to a health practitioner under section 150 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW), irrespective of whether the investigation by the Health Care Complaints Commission is ongoing.

The bill also makes important substantive amendments to the Health Care Complaints Act. These include allowing the Health Care Complaints Commission to accept the oral withdrawal of complaints where appropriate, allowing expert reports obtained by the commission to be used in proceedings under the Health Care Complaints Act, and allowing the commission to disclose information to overseas regulators where it is in the public interest to do so. Each of the amendments is directed to streamlining and improving how the Health Care Complaints Commission deals with complaints under the Health Care Complaints Act with a view to protecting the safety of the public.

The bill also makes some important amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) to ensure that the complaints process under the Act operates fairly, effectively and efficiently. For example, the bill makes necessary amendments to clarify the effect of a decision by the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal that, if the person were still registered in a health profession, the tribunal would have suspended them. The bill provides that a person may not apply for registration during the period that they would have been suspended, to ensure consistency with how suspensions for registered health practitioners operate.

The bill makes amendments to require health professional councils to provide written reasons when exercising their immediate action powers. Under the national law, health professional councils have the power to suspend or impose conditions on a registered health practitioner or student's registration if it is appropriate to do

so for the protection of the health and safety of a person or persons, or if satisfied that the action is otherwise in the public interest. Those decisions can have serious repercussions for health practitioners and students. As such, the bill introduces a requirement for health professional councils to provide written reasons for those types of decisions, and for subsequent reviews of those decisions. Importantly, the reasons for decision are privileged and may not be admitted as evidence in civil or criminal proceedings, other than proceedings under the national law or in a coronial inquest or inquiry.

The bill also makes changes to allow impaired registrants panels to reconsider their recommendations in certain circumstances. An impaired registrants panel is an independent panel tasked with inquiring into matters that may indicate a registered health practitioner or student has an impairment. Following conclusion of the inquiry, the panel may make recommendations that the practitioner engage in counselling, agree to conditions being placed on their registration, or that the practitioner be suspended from practising for a specified period.

As mentioned in the second reading speech, once those recommendations are delivered in a report to the health professional council, the impaired registrants panel becomes *functus officio* and ceases to exist. That means that neither the council nor the practitioner can ask the same panel to reconsider any of its recommendations. Instead, for that to happen, a fresh impaired registrants panel must be constituted, which can be a very time-consuming process. The bill inserts a new provision that allows an impaired registrants panel to continue exercising its functions after it has delivered its recommendations to a health professional council and provides a process for the panel to reconsider its recommendations, if appropriate to do so.

The bill also introduces amendments to the circumstances in which performance assessors can obtain information. Currently the national law only allows performance assessors to require answers to questions and records by physically attending premises where records are held or where persons are located. To avoid the need for performance assessors to attend physical premises when completing remote performance assessments, the bill will allow performance assessors to require information and answers to questions from individuals remotely. The bill also makes some updates to ensure that proceedings before the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal and professional standards committees operate as intended and include allowing those disciplinary bodies to accept into evidence judgements and findings of New South Wales performance review panels and council inquiries when determining a complaint in relation to a registered health practitioner.

Each of the amendments introduced by the bill is meaningful, appropriate and necessary to ensure that the Health Care Complaints Act and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) are fit for purpose and operate as intended. The bill improves the complaints process for key stakeholders impacted by those pieces of legislation whilst ensuring the protection of the health and safety of members of the public. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (18:55):** I speak in favour of the Health Practitioner Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. I thank the Parliamentary Secretary for bringing the bill forward. It is an important, commonsense series of amendments to both the Health Care Complaints Act 1993 and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW), designed to improve and streamline the complaints process for registered and non-registered health practitioners. As a proactive government, we regularly review and update legislation to ensure that laws remain fit for purpose, and in this case to ensure continued public safety whilst maintaining the wellbeing of health practitioners throughout the complaints process.

The amendments were identified in the initial stages of the review into the complaints process under the national law, which is still ongoing, as minor, non-contentious changes that would immediately streamline the complaints process until the full review is complete. I understand that the Ministry of Health has consulted extensively with key stakeholders, including the Health Care Complaints Commission, the Health Professional Councils Authority, the Medical Services Committee, the Australian Medical Association (NSW), the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association, the Australian Dental Association, the Health Services Union, the Department of Communities and Justice, NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, and the Information and Privacy Commission New South Wales, before advancing the amendments today. I thank all stakeholders that participated in the discussions so that a well-thought-out series of amendments could be presented to this Parliament.

No-one wants to submit a complaint and go through a long and complicated process. People just want their medical procedure to go well. Indeed, unfortunately, my electorate office often receives complaints regarding medical issues. The New South Wales legislation and the national law currently differentiate between registered health practitioners such as GPs, nurses and psychologists, and non-registered health practitioners such as those providing mental health services, dietitians and social workers.

Complaints can be made to the Health Care Complaints Commission about registered and non-registered practitioners if they breach their respective codes of conduct. However, there is a discrepancy in existing



legislation resulting in limited actions being available to a health professional council when the commission is investigating or dealing with a complaint. Under the Health Care Complaints Act, they may only exercise their powers under the national law to protect the life or physical or mental condition of any person. However, the immediate action power in the national law allows a council to take immediate action, if appropriate, for the protection of the health and safety of any person or persons, or if satisfied that the action is otherwise in the public interest. This inconsistency means that, when the commission is dealing with a complaint, the council cannot take immediate action for the protection of the public.

Another small but rational and important change will be to allow the Health Care Complaints Commission to accept the withdrawal of a complaint orally rather than requiring it in writing in all circumstances. To ensure a paper trail, withdrawals made orally—over the phone, for example—are required to be noted in writing at the commission. However, the commission would accept the withdrawal only if satisfied that the person requesting the withdrawal was the original complainant.

The Minns Labor Government was elected on a platform to deliver better health outcomes for the people of New South Wales—and we are delivering, not just with the complaints process, but across the entire health system. We have slashed the overdue planned surgery waitlist by 85 per cent since this time last year, including reaching zero at Blacktown Hospital. We have committed \$120 million for extra beds at Blacktown and Mount Druitt Hospitals and recently appointed a design team. We have committed \$18.6 million for the new McGrath Breast Care Nurses, whose services are free, including at Blacktown Hospital and across the Western Sydney Local Health District. We have introduced safe staffing levels to ensure quality care for patients and better conditions for staff. We are working with nurses and the Health Services Union to develop wages and conditions that will attract and retain health workers.

For any other issues, my office and I have a good working relationship with the chief executive of the Western Sydney Local Health District, Graeme Loy, and the general manager of Blacktown and Mount Druitt Hospitals, Brad Ceely. A notable recent achievement was working together to get a bowel cancer surgery rebooked within the week after it was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. It is important that we deal with issues before they blow out. When major problems result from medical procedures, these new reforms will make a difference to how patients can effectively follow the process so that their complaint can be followed through and they can receive justice. I commend the Minister for Health and the Parliamentary Secretary for their work on this bill and the series of amendments, and for their strong continued commitment to the health system of New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

**Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (19:01):** The Health Practitioner Legislation Amendment Bill 2024 is important for New South Wales as it addresses deficiencies in the current operation of the Health Care Complaints Act 1993 and Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). I thank the Minister for Health and the Parliamentary Secretary for their work on the bill, which I am sure will be welcomed by health practitioners, health professional councils and other key stakeholders within the New South Wales health system. The bill makes several miscellaneous amendments to the Health Care Complaints Act 1993 and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). Some of those amendments are minor, clarifying amendments, whilst other amendments make substantive changes to the legislation. In all cases the changes are necessary to ensure that the Health Care Complaints Act and national law operate as intended and are fit for purpose.

I will speak first to the amendments to the Health Care Complaints Act under schedule 1 to the bill. Some of these amendments introduce only minor changes for the purposes of clarifying rather than making substantive changes to the current Act. For example, the amendment at item [8] setting out the functions of the director of proceedings is intended to clarify that the director may vary a decision to prosecute a complaint, or withdraw or discontinue the prosecution of a complaint. These would already be implied powers of the director of proceedings. However, the bill places this wording in the legislation to put this beyond doubt. Other amendments are more substantial. For instance, the bill grants the commission the power to accept the withdrawal of a complaint about a health practitioner by oral notice, when currently this can only be done by written notice to the commission.

The bill also clarifies that the commission can only accept the withdrawal of a complaint by oral notice if it is appropriate to do so. This discretion provides a safeguard to ensure that complaints cannot be withdrawn orally if the commission holds concerns, for example, about the identity of the complainant who has requested the withdrawal. The bill also makes changes to clarify that the Health Care Complaints Commission may obtain expert reports when dealing with a complaint and that these complaints may be used in proceedings under the Health Care Complaints Act. Further, the bill makes an amendment that allows the Health Care Complaints Commission to disclose information it obtains in exercising a function under the Act to a person or body regulating health service providers in a jurisdiction outside Australia. This is a significant change, as the commission is currently permitted to share this type of information with regulators only within Australia.

Importantly, the amendment does not give the commission a broad power to disclose information to overseas regulators whenever it likes. There is a high public interest threshold that must be met before the commission can exercise the discretion to disclose this information, as set out under section 99B (2) of the Health Care Complaints Act. I now move to the amendments to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) under schedule 2 to the bill. I note that the bill makes several changes to clarify the operation of the national law and ensure that it operates as intended. For example, the bill makes amendments to prohibit a person from applying for registration in a health profession when the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal has decided that they would have been suspended had they been registered at the time of decision. The bill also requires written reasons to be provided when a council takes action under section 150 of the national law or reviews a decision to take action under section 150A of the national law.

The bill also specifies that those written reasons, as well as transcripts of section 150 and 150A hearings, must not be admitted into evidence in civil, criminal or coronial proceedings, other than proceedings under the national law. The bill introduces a new section 152IA, allowing matters to be referred to an impaired registrants panel for reconsideration. This provision effectively prevents an impaired registrants panel from ceasing to exist after it has delivered its recommendations to a health professional council in respect of a registered health practitioner or student with an impairment. It also introduces a system under which a council can request a panel to further consider its recommendations, and the panel can make variations to its recommendations where appropriate and after having considered the submissions of the registered health practitioner or student who was the subject of the original inquiry. In practice, this provision will provide an avenue for an impaired registrants panel to reconsider recommendations that may be unworkable or impractical. Under the current Act, this can be done only by way of constituting an entirely new impaired registrants panel, which can be a time-consuming process for all parties involved.

The bill also introduces a new power for the Minister to remove a health professional council member from office if the practitioner's principal place of practice ceases to be in New South Wales. Importantly, this power will be available only if it is a condition of a member's appointment that their principal place of practice be in New South Wales. As the member for Bega noted in the second reading speech on the bill, practitioners who reside in border towns might have a principal place of practice outside New South Wales but nonetheless maintain strong connections to New South Wales.

Another example might be where a member leaves the State on a temporary basis for emergency reasons, resulting in their principal place of practice ceasing to be in New South Wales for that period. As such, the Minister's discretion to exercise this power is an important element of the new provision, as it might not be appropriate to remove a member from office in every event despite their principal place of practice ceasing to be in New South Wales. The amendments introduced by the bill are appropriate and necessary to ensure the smooth operation of the complaints processes under both the Health Care Complaints Act and Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW). I commend the bill to the House.

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (19:08):** On behalf of Mr Ryan Park: In reply: I thank members representing the electorates of Liverpool, Fairfield, East Hills, Penrith, Blacktown, Cabramatta, Ballina and Hornsby for their contributions to debate on the Health Practitioner Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The bill will make miscellaneous amendments to the Health Care Complaints Act 1993. These include amendments to require councils to provide written reasons if they decide to take immediate action relating to a practitioner's registration to protect the public, to allow an impaired registrants panel to reconsider its recommendations at the request of a council and in consultation with the practitioner, to allow the Minister to remove a member of a council from office if their principal place of practice ceases to be in New South Wales, as well as other matters.

I will address a matter referred to Parliament for consideration by the Legislation Review Committee. The committee noted that the bill modifies the application of the national law in New South Wales by empowering an assessor to request, by written notice, relevant information and relevant records from a person if that would assist the conduct of a performance assessor. The bill also makes it an offence for a person to fail to comply with the request for information without reasonable excuse. This offence carries a maximum penalty of \$2,200. The maximum penalty of \$2,200 is aligned with similar offences under schedule 5B of the national law. For example, clause 5 of schedule 5B makes it an offence for a person to furnish an assessor with information knowing it to be false or misleading in a material particular. This offence, which is also concerned with ensuring performance assessors obtain the relevant information required to carry out a performance assessment, carries a maximum penalty of \$2,200.

The offence provision in the bill is also aligned with similar offences under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) more broadly. For example, health professional councils have the power to require information from a health practitioner or student in relation to a complaint under sections 150J and 164G of the national law. Similarly, it is an offence for a person to fail to comply with a request for information under

those provisions without reasonable excuse. Those offences are absolute liability offences as well, carrying a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units or \$2,200. Further, the bill also provides that a person need not comply with a request for information if they have a reasonable excuse. That is, if a person does not or is unable to provide a response to a request for information for a legitimate and reasonable reason, they would not be subject to the offence provision.

I thank the member for Ballina for the comments regarding the accessibility of the complaints process under health legislation. I appreciate her raising that important issue. The bill makes an amendment to allow the commission to accept the oral withdrawal of a complaint in some circumstances. However, other stages of dealing with a complaint still need to be actioned by written notice. In particular, the Health Care Complaints Act requires complaints to be lodged in writing. Although complaints must be lodged in writing before the commission can assess the complaint, that does not prevent a person from making an oral complaint. In fact, under the Health Care Complaints Act, staff of the Health Care Complaints Commission must assist a person to make a complaint if requested. This ensures that people who may find it difficult to lodge a complaint in writing—for example, due to a non-English speaking background or disability—are supported to do so.

The Health Care Complaints Act also allows any person to make a complaint, not just the person affected by the conduct the subject of the complaint. That means a parent or guardian, health service provider or other person chosen by a person to represent them can make a complaint about the practice of a health practitioner or health service if the person affected requires assistance. The bill makes various minor, non-controversial amendments to the Health Care Complaints Act 1993 and the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) in advance of a broader review of part 8 of the national law. The amendments are intended to improve and streamline the complaints process, clarify how the legislation is intended to operate and update outdated terminology. I commend the bill to the House.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua):** The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

**Motion agreed to.**

### **Third Reading**

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND:** On behalf of Mr Ryan Park: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

**Motion agreed to.**

### *Community Recognition Statements*

#### **PARRAMATTA UNITING CHURCH**

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (19:14):** The induction of new senior ministers and their deployment within a thriving multicultural community is an enormous event for the Uniting Church in Parramatta. The welcome of Reverend Dr Helen Richmond and Reverend Waqaibaravi as part of the church community was an important appointment for the worshippers and a significant benchmark for the broader Pacifica community throughout Western Sydney. Our faith community is a staple and the emotional glue for families who face daily struggles with connection, mental health challenges or economic hardship. Hundreds of parishioners and friends attended the Northmead Uniting Church and Parramatta Centenary Uniting Church to create a memorable event and share goodwill. The joyous sound of a Fijian choir and the joint commissioning of Sunhee Song as a family community worker provided a wonderful backdrop against which the Uniting Church seeks to meet the goals of its ministry. I particularly acknowledge Dr Richmond for her kind, gracious invitation and the commitment of the church to build stronger connected community partnerships across Western Sydney.

**ALTAN ERDOGAN**

**JACKSON O'MARA**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (19:15):** I wish to highlight two wonderful Glenmore Park residents for their recent personal achievements. Altan Erdogan is preparing to run over 300 kilometres from Sydney to Canberra, beginning on Friday 12 May. He wants to inspire the younger generation to prioritise their fitness and what better way than to set this inspiring goal but lead by example. He has been practising his long-distance running, including a run from Central Station to Glenmore Park. He encourages others to run alongside him, even for just part of the journey. I commend Mr Erdogan on inspiring others and wish him a safe run. Glenmore Park local Jackson O'Mara has won the Col Branch memorial woodchopping contest at the 2024 Luddenham Show. The woodchopping contest is a highlight of the show. He was the second youngest of eight competitors and won with a time of 43 seconds. It was a personal best for Jackson. In honour of his victory,

Jackson was awarded an engraved Tuatahi Kingi racing axe, donated by Luddenham local Max, who was very close to the late Col Branch. I congratulate those two outstanding young men.

#### **TRIBUTE TO MARTIN GAFFEY**

**Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (19:16):** I inform the House of the passing of Martin Gaffey from Erowal Bay on the South Coast. Martin was a man whose life and legacy have left an indelible mark on our community. Martin, affectionately known as Gaff, was a distinguished deputy captain of the Vincentia Brigade and a former deputy group captain for the Group 3 area. His passing is a profound loss for us all. Martin was not only a dedicated firefighter but also a revered teacher, mentor, leader and friend. He embodied the spirit of selflessness and community service, always ready with a supportive laugh or a comforting shoulder for those in need. His unwavering commitment and exemplary character made him the quintessential good guy, one whose presence enriched the lives of everyone around him. I extend my heartfelt condolences to his family, friends and colleagues within the Rural Fire Service. His legacy of kindness, leadership and courage will continue to inspire us all.

#### **BRAITH NOCK**

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (19:17):** I pay tribute to one of the rising stars of country racing, Braith Nock. Braith is a young jockey with racing in his blood. His mother is a Bendemeer-based trainer and his father was once a popular jockey. That did not stop Braith from pursuing his first love of bull riding and the dream of riding at the Professional Bull Riders came true. Braith's true calling, though, was on the back of a horse and it has immediately proven a success. Just 18 months since his first race on New Year's Day 2023, which he won, Braith has now racked up 99 wins at an incredible 26 per cent win rate. It is an incredible run. Braith has a bright future ahead of him and I wish him safe trips as he continues his racing journey.

#### **IRAQI AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES FORUM**

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (19:18):** Celebrating the achievements of community members is a special part of my job. One of the highlights of the year is to see the pride and joy on the faces of parents and community members alike when celebrating all the high achievers who were honoured by the Iraqi Australian University Graduates Forum at the annual Australia Day function. Those young people not only completed their schooling in some of the most challenging few years our community has experienced but also excelled. Some of them come from migrant and refugee backgrounds and have seen their parents struggle and overcome many barriers in establishing a new life for themselves and their families. They will now play a part by being the role models and supporters for many other young people. I hope that their skills and resilience take them far so they can make their special mark on our broader community. I congratulate the Iraqi Australian University Graduates Forum on putting together such an inspiring and exciting event. I acknowledge Dr Bushra Al-obaidi, Dr Ahmad Alrubaie and many others for celebrating and encouraging young people.

#### **WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST SHELTER**

**Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (19:19):** Today I congratulate Dr Gabrielle Morrissey, Michelle Povah and the entire team at Women and Children First. It is an amazing women's refuge on the northern beaches that services all of Sydney. I commend the team for their powerful advocacy ahead of this week's announcement that the Staying Home Leaving Violence program will be rolled out across the State. It is truly game changing. This Friday, Women and Children First will host a Mother's Day fundraising lunch. I have the privilege of attending and supporting the event. I wish them the best of luck. Funds raised will help support many families across the Wakehurst area, the northern beaches and North Sydney. Currently, the service receives approximately only 5 per cent of its revenue through government funding. I acknowledge that it is more than other areas in the State—some do not even have a shelter.

The Women and Children First shelter services close to 1,000 women and children every year. Sadly, on average they turn away 10 women with children every week. That is why I am so vocal in my calls for funding to deliver the proposed upgrade of the shelter, which will double its capacity. I continue to ask the community to support the Women and Children First shelter. I thank Gabrielle and her team. Their impactful work has resulted in deeply meaningful change.

#### **GOSFORD STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE WORKERS**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:20):** I congratulate the NSW State Emergency Service Gosford unit on winning the Northern Zone Rescue Challenge. It was a well-deserved victory after months of training to perfect skills such as rescue from heights, mass casualty management, confined space rescue and so much more. Our region has experienced severe ongoing damage from extreme weather, and the heroes from the SES Gosford unit, alongside their Central Coast SES colleagues, showcase their amazing skills and courage every day to help our

community through the most difficult times. New South Wales SES plays such an important role in our society. It is undeniable that its proactive and educational programs are highly commendable. While we shelter from disasters, our local SES crews are out protecting our communities when they need it most. It is astonishing to see how the New South Wales SES has created a culture that represents unity, courage and kindness during difficult times. On behalf of our community, I thank the NSW SES Gosford, Wyong and all other units for their tremendous bravery and commitment to keeping our Central Coast community safe.

#### **AUTISM COMMUNITY NETWORK**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (19:21):** I congratulate the team from the Autism Community Network, who recently completed their annual Mount Kosciuszko climb in support of Autism Month. Led by St George local Vanessa Gauci, the Chief Executive Officer of the Autism Community Network, the team of 12 ascended Kosciuszko late last month. They set a goal to raise \$30,000, which they absolutely smashed. I have been incredibly proud to support the Autism Community Network for many years. The work it does in our great State is nothing short of incredible. With one in 70 individuals diagnosed with autism in Australia, the support the Autism Community Network has provided over the years has changed lives. It helps to promote inclusion and social interaction by hosting free support groups and activities, all run by volunteers. Once again, I congratulate Vanessa Gauci and the entire team who took on this endeavour. I also thank all the volunteers at the Autism Community Network for the fantastic work they do. I look forward to working alongside them in the future.

#### **NEWCASTLE MAY DAY RALLY**

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (19:22):** On Sunday hundreds of workers and union members braved the downpour and showed up in Newcastle for the May Day rally, a testament to their resilience and dedication. Despite the relentless rain, the spirit of all attendees was unwavering, and their voices echoed with unity and strength as we marched from the Newcastle Museum to the tram sheds. On May Day we celebrate the achievements and strength of our unions locally, nationally and worldwide. This year one of the rally's primary issues was a call for reforms to New South Wales workers compensation laws. Earlier that week I met with union leaders and the Minister for Industrial Relations to discuss the issue. I thank Hunter Workers president Leanne Holmes and secretary Leigh Shears for putting on such a fantastic rally despite the weather, and for their outstanding leadership and passion for this cause. The New South Wales Labor Government will continue to advocate for the rights and wellbeing of workers everywhere in this State.

#### **TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT MATTHEW RAYMOND LOCKE**

**Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (19:23):** I acknowledge the memory of a local Australian hero, Sergeant Matthew Locke, MG. Born in Bellingen, Matthew was the youngest of six siblings. He enlisted in the Australian Army at the age of 17 and served with the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and the Special Air Service Regiment. Sergeant Locke's operational service included East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan. In December 2006 Sergeant Locke was awarded the Medal for Gallantry whilst deployed on Operation Slipper. With little regard to his own safety, Sergeant Locke initiated attacks against anti-coalition militia, protecting his patrol from being overrun. Matthew was fatally wounded by small arms fire from Taliban extremists on 25 October 2007. Each year in commemoration of his service, the Australian Army rugby league team faces off against Matthew's former local side, the Bellingen Magpies. Through this event the committed volunteers—including Matthew's sister, Debbie—raise funds for veteran support services and other related charities. Matthew Raymond Locke, lest we forget.

#### **FATHER ZVONIMIR GAVRANOVIC**

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (19:25):** Today I thank Father Zvonimir Gavranovic of the Saint John XXIII Catholic Parish in Stanhope Gardens for his service over the past five years, and wish him all the best in his next parish. Father Zvon, as he is affectionately known amongst parishioners and students, has been a pillar of the Catholic community in our area. He arrived at the Saint John XXIII Catholic Parish at the end of 2019 and, like the rest of us, was confronted by the COVID era. He offered support to teachers and students during that time, always taking a proactive role within the church and school community. Father Zvon is heavily involved in teaching Catholic scripture in our local public schools—another example of his service to the community. Father Zvon is a strong proponent of community harmony and interfaith dialogue, a crucial tenet of the cohesion that allows our vibrant society to exist in harmony. Originally from Croatia, Father Zvon has an avid interest in history and has authored two books. Earlier this year, I was honoured to help him launch his second book, *Bleiburg: Massacre of the Croatian People 1945*, in Parliament. Once again, I thank Father Zvon and wish him the best in his future endeavours.

#### **TOP TOURISM TOWN AWARDS**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (19:26):** Today I recognise that Kiama has been selected as a finalist in the New South Wales Top Tourism Town Awards. I pay tribute to the finalists, including Ballina, Bathurst,

Grafton, Newcastle and Murwillumbah. But all those towns are going to lose, because they have nothing on Kiama. Kiama previously won the mantle of Australia's best town. The national awards highlighted Kiama's liveability, environment and spirit of community—and all members know it. The South Coast region dominated multiple categories in the 2023 New South Wales Top Tourism Town Awards. Berry and Huskisson both won gold in the tiny and small town categories of the awards. Kangaroo Valley won bronze in the tiny town category and Ulladulla won silver in the top town category. No-one ever voted for Prospect—absolutely no-one. Destination Kiama has asked local residents and visitors to Kiama to lodge their votes and share their stories. All those who have experienced the magic of Kiama—including our beautiful beaches, the Kiama Blowhole, our historic streets and incredible businesses—should share their love by casting a vote. Everyone should jump on board and vote now for the gorgeous Kiama township that so many are fortunate to call home.

#### **ASSYRIAN NEW YEAR FESTIVAL**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (19:27):** On Sunday 24 March 2024 I was honoured to represent Premier Chris Minns and address our Assyrian Australian community at the Assyrian New Year festival at Fairfield Showground in the electorate of Prospect. The Assyrian community plays an important role in our diverse Western Sydney community. Assyrian New Year, also known as Akitu, is one of the most important events in their cultural calendar. Organised by the Assyrian National Council, this year's festival celebrated Assyrian New Year 6774—a remarkable and ancient tradition dating back millennia. It was great to be joined by my parliamentary colleagues the member for Liverpool, the member for Fairfield and the member for Cabramatta for the official ceremony. I thank Assyrian National Council president Hermiz Shahen, vice president David David and all community organisers for a great event. May the year 6774 bring good health and prosperity to our proud Assyrian Australians.

#### **RADIO STATION ALIVE 90.5**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (19:28):** I extend my heartfelt congratulations to community radio station Alive 90.5 on its work to showcase the importance of cultural diversity in the north-western region of Sydney. On 23 March 2024 Alive 90.5 celebrated the importance of cultural diversity with displays and some wonderful cultural food, music and shows for everyone. Alive 90.5, formerly known as Cumberland Community Radio, was formed in the 1980s. After a refurbishment in 2011 the station took on the new name Alive 90.5. The Hills is fortunate to have so many talented volunteers offering their services at our local station. Alive 90.5 has more than a dozen multicultural shows and is a leader in showcasing cultural diversity. I recognise and thank Alive 90.5 chairman Andsley Dennis for guiding the station forward for the benefit of our community.

#### **DONINGTON GARDENS**

**Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (19:29):** I recognise the residents of Donington Gardens over-55 village in Georges Hall for their remarkable contribution to the Children's Cancer Institute Australian research centre. The residents rallied together and raised over \$4,000 at their annual Australia's Biggest Morning Tea event, supporting vital research in the fight against childhood cancer. With the participation of more than 100 guests, the event was a testament to their unwavering commitment to making a difference in the lives of children battling cancer. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the residents for their generosity and dedication to that important cause. Additionally, I recognise the support of local businesses that contributed raffle and lucky door prizes, including IGA Georges Hall, Twin Willows Hotel in Bass Hill, the ATT Group, Cinemedia and the Little Tree Pharmacy. The collective efforts of Donington Gardens residents demonstrate the spirit of community and compassion, and I applaud them for their ongoing support for such a worthy cause.

#### **TOP TOURISM TOWN AWARDS**

**Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (19:30):** The NSW Top Tourism Town Awards have been announced, and I am very pleased to let the House know that the Upper Hunter towns of Broke and Gloucester are finalists. Historic Broke, which is celebrating its bicentennial this year, is up for the Tiny Tourism Town award. For a community that was very recently smashed by floods, it is really uplifting for everyone to be recognised. The beautiful town of Gloucester and its beautiful people are up for the Small Tourism Town award, and go them! It is now up to everyone to cast their votes for those great towns before next Monday 13 May. Go to the Top Tourism Town Awards website and cast your vote today. Well done to Broke and Gloucester for having their tourism events and attractions recognised and for all the hard work they do.

#### **AZALEA NEEDHAM**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (19:31):** I acknowledge the incredible act of generosity demonstrated by eight-year-old Bankstown resident Azalea Needham, who cut her hair to donate to children who suffer from hair loss due to alopecia, cancer and other illnesses. The Hair with Heart program made it possible for

Azalea to donate her hair to create wigs to offer hope and comfort to those who need it. Azalea showed great determination to grow her hair long enough to support the Hair with Heart program, which has received over 40,000 hair donations and continues to support thousands of sick children to improve their quality of life. She is supported by her mother, Jenny, who encourages her daughter and son, Jude, to donate a third of their pocket money to charity each week. It is really inspiring to see the generosity shown by our local families, and we appreciate their wonderful efforts in raising awareness and charity for important causes. Azalea has collected almost \$2,000 from sponsors to donate to the cause. As a community, we celebrate Azalea's efforts and hope that she can inspire other children to give to charity. We wish those who are sick all the very best, and hopefully a full recovery.

#### **RANKIN'S SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (19:32):** I recognise the exceptional contributions of Rankin's Springs Public School P&C through its annual golf day fundraising event. For 44 years the golf day has been a major fundraiser for the school. With an immense amount of hard work by the P&C, families, parents and the community at large, this year's golf day was the most successful yet. Rankin's Springs, with a tiny population of 200 people, has the enormous community spirit typical of my electorate's very small remote rural towns. Generous sponsors contributed, from the local pub and garage to rural businesses from Griffith and West Wyalong. A record number of players attended and raised an impressive \$33,000—money that will go to the public school, helping support classroom resources, excursions, swimming lessons and the exciting new multipurpose court. The event is more than just a fundraiser; it gives the community a chance to come together and check in on one another. I wish the P&C well in continuing the event for many years to come.

#### **FIRST STEPS PREGNANCY SUPPORT**

**Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education) (19:33):** I congratulate Sarah, Ingrid and Laura, the directors of First Steps Pregnancy Support [FSPS], on the realisation of their amazing efforts to establish a new not-for-profit organisation aimed at providing women in need with comprehensive and complete care during their pregnancy. The organisation will be a single point of contact for women to access a range of medical services and connect with other supports and provisions. The organisation caters to teenagers, First Nations people and women facing financial hardship, particularly those with no access to private health insurance. The First Steps directors came to see me last year with their fabulous idea, and they have managed to put it in place with volunteers, donations and support from businesses and the community. They have now opened their centre in Queanbeyan, which is a fantastic achievement for them. Supporting women, especially those going through pregnancy in difficult circumstances, is extremely important in creating healthy children and a healthy society. I congratulate FSPS and wish them all the best for the future.

#### **KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (19:34):** I recognise the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society. As I am an enthusiast of history, it was wonderful to attend its April 2024 meeting. Since its formation in 1963, it continues to bring our community together to record local historical facts, both written and photographic. As we all know, Ku-ring-gai is a very special and historic community, full of natural and built heritage that we must respect, embrace and protect. Our local history starts with the Dharug people for thousands of years. In 1788, 11 weeks after the First Fleet arrived, an expedition camped at Middle Harbour Creek, becoming the first non-Indigenous people to set foot in what is now known as Ku-ring-gai. Over a century later, in 1890, the North Shore rail line was built between St Leonards and Hornsby. That infrastructure further opened up what is now known as Sydney's North Shore and, as they say, the rest is history. I recognise president Lorna Watt, who leads a committee of Annet Latham, Marilyn van Eerde, Judith Godden, Ralph Davis, Morrison Hammond, Geoff Little and Alison Nowland. I thank them for all they do for our past and present local history.

#### **SUTHERLAND SHIRE CHORAL SOCIETY**

**Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (19:35):** The Sutherland Shire Choral Society has been a beacon of musical excellence in our community for five decades, from the humble beginnings of a small church choir in 1974, invited to join with similar groups in the area to perform Handel's *Messiah* at the Kirrawee High School hall, to 50 years later celebrating its golden jubilee performance in March 2024—once again with a remarkable rendition of the *Messiah*—at the Pavilion Performing Arts Centre in Sutherland, this time accompanied by a 20-piece orchestra drawn from local musicians in the Sutherland shire and surrounding areas. With unwavering dedication, its 70 local members convene weekly, embodying a commitment to fostering an enduring love for quality choral music. Spanning generations and diverse backgrounds, the society's membership ranges from early twenties to mid-nineties and reflects the inclusivity and richness of our community. As custodians of Sutherland shire's cultural heritage, the Sutherland Shire Choral Society continues to resonate profoundly, enriching our lives through the universal language of music.

### CHISHOLM CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (19:36):** On 31 May Chisholm Catholic Primary School in Bligh Park will celebrate 30 years of Catholic education. I congratulate principal Michael Mifsud and his dedicated team of teachers, assistants, general staff and volunteers. The school's motto is "Faith, family and future". Chisholm Catholic Primary has been delivering on its mission since 1994. The school has an impressive academic record, with year 5 students exceeding the NAPLAN national minimum standards in literacy, reading, writing, spelling and numeracy in 2022. I look forward to joining the anniversary celebrations later this month and wish Chisholm Catholic Primary School, Bligh Park, continued excellence as one of Western Sydney's premier public schools.

### CAMDEN MEN'S BOWLING CLUB

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (19:37):** As part of Bowls NSW's annual competition, Camden Men's Bowling Club entered the Zone 5 fours team qualification. Camden Men's Bowling Club was successful in winning the Zone 5 open fours and open reserve. Following that success, the teams travelled to Dubbo to compete in the New South Wales Bowls titles. Unfortunately, the open fours team of Bob Hodge, Ash Beadel, Kevin Harris and Matt Hooker faced fierce competition and did not progress to the finals. However, the open reserve team of Mick Pinkerton, Karl Szynal, Rick Staats and Gary Trick triumphed over Uralla, St Johns Park and Huskisson to qualify for the finals. In the final the open reserve team took an early 9-7 lead. However, three quarters in, bad luck would turn the match when an unfortunate shot moved the jack to Lane Cove's advantage. While it was Lane Cove's day, winning 18-13, both teams did themselves, their club and our town proud and will be back next year for another title charge.

### DRUMMOYNE ELECTORATE JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (19:38):** I express my sincerest congratulations to the justices of the peace living in our community who were recognised last month for over 50 years of service as JPs in New South Wales. The time, dedication and commitment that is shown by JPs in our community brings me great pride. It is because of the example of those volunteers, who are willing to give up their time to provide an important service, that we live in the best and most supportive community in the State. Being a JP is an important responsibility, and I congratulate the following members of our community: Grahame Sadler, Kerrie Ninni, Robert Browne, Thomas Peninton, Domenico Polistina, Roslyn Bonanno, Cheryl Heslop, Rocky Massaria and Rita Zammit. The commitment of those individuals over five decades of service is to be commended. I thank and congratulate them.

### COMMUNITY FIRST STEP

**Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (19:39):** Community First Step's 50-year journey in south-western Sydney is truly inspiring. From humble beginnings as the Fairfield Community Council for Social Development, it has evolved to address diverse community needs through children, youth and family services, community development, settlement services and disability services. With a focus on inclusivity and innovation, Community First Step has been crucial in supporting Fairfield during times of significant migrant influx. Over the past 12 months the organisation has supported 22,000 families, 3,800 young people through youth programs, 627 children in care services and 216 parents through parenting programs. There are countless staff and volunteers who have shaped Community First Step into the organisation it is today. I thank them for all their work to support the community of Fairfield.

### ORTHODOX EASTER

**Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (19:40):** Sunday 5 May 2024 marked Orthodox Easter, a time of celebrations and spiritual and festive activities of renewal. As many in New South Wales celebrate this uplifting time, the holy season began with the solemnity of Holy Week, a time for reflection and prayer. The week culminates on Easter Sunday, a joyous celebration of the resurrection and a moment of profound spiritual renewal and communal joy. The midnight service, central to the Easter celebration, sees churches bathed in candlelight, symbolising the resurrection's light spreading across the world, dispelling darkness and bringing hope to all corners of the earth. I had the honour and pleasure of joining the St George and Prince Theodore Coptic Orthodox Church in Liverpool for the Easter Saturday liturgy. The service was led by Father Anthony Morgan and Father Salib Salib, who are both great religious and community leaders in Liverpool. I wish all the Orthodox community my best as renewal is bestowed upon them.

### APPIN MASSACRE ANNIVERSARY

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (19:41):** On Sunday 14 April I attended the 208th anniversary of the Appin massacre on the banks of the Cataract Dam. The events of 1816 were solemnly observed at a memorial ceremony where community members and descendants gathered to honour the lives lost. That tragic



event, where local Dharawal people were killed by colonial forces under Governor Macquarie's orders, marks a sombre chapter in local history. The ceremony featured traditional Indigenous rituals, speeches from community leaders and laying of floral tributes at the memorial site. Such commemorations play a crucial role in acknowledging and reflecting on the painful past, while also strengthening a future commitment towards reconciliation and healing. The event serves not only to remember those who perished but also to educate and foster a deeper understanding and respect for Indigenous history and culture. I thank all the organisers and organisations involved, including the hosts, Winda Myamly Reconciliation Group, the Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council, the Aboriginal communities of the Macarthur region, and the Wollondilly, Campbelltown and Camden councils.

### TRIBUTE TO UNCLE CHOO

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (19:42):** I ask the House to join me in farewelling a beloved member of our community, Uncle Choo, who passed away on 13 April 2024. Uncle Choo touched the lives of many in Ryde and beyond. He was passionate about education, evident through his long tenure as a mathematics professor at the University of Sydney. He was unwavering in his commitment to the local community through his involvement in the Eastwood Lunar New Year festival, the Eastwood Chamber of Commerce and the Macquarie Park Ryde Business Chamber. As an avid table tennis enthusiast, Uncle Choo rarely missed a morning playing against his wife near the Eastwood Library. He was a regular fixture, and I have fond memories of joining him on occasion. As we mourn his passing, let us remember Uncle Choo's legacy of generosity, compassion and dedication to others. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his wife, daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren during this difficult time. I know his memory will continue to be a source of comfort and inspiration to us all. I thank his family for having me at his funeral, which was a fitting farewell. Vale, Uncle Choo.

### STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE AWARDS

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (19:43):** A presentation ceremony was held at the Rydges hotel on 23 March to recognise the efforts and work of our outstanding SES volunteers across the metropolitan zone. The medals and awards recognise a lifetime of commitment and selflessness, including those who serve 24/7 in times of extreme danger and stress for residents, the aged, the disabled, children and workers. The SES complements the work of our police, health and paid emergency services workforce, which can often be overstretched in times of local and extreme weather events. The awards recognise tenure with the service and pay homage to exceptional performance in the line of duty. Having a local presence was particularly important, as we had the privilege of hosting the event within the region. As a complex region, including a major CBD and transport infrastructure network, I recognise the diversity and challenges of situations within the area, including floods, storm events, fires, building evacuations and other situations that can pose significant threats to life and property. I thank all our SES volunteers.

### *Bills*

### HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2024

#### First Reading

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

**The SPEAKER:** I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for tomorrow.

### *Private Members' Statements*

### EMERITUS PROFESSOR BARNEY GLOVER, AO

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (19:45):** There are few people more integral to the trajectory of Western Sydney over the past decade than Emeritus Professor Barney Glover, AO. From the moment of his arrival in 2014 as vice-chancellor, he was a fierce and tireless advocate for the region and its people. Western Sydney University experienced a period of significant growth, evolution and success under his stewardship. In my electorate, the university was a first mover in Parramatta Square with the development of the Parramatta City Campus in the heart of the city. Emeritus Professor Glover's leadership during its establishment set the benchmark for how universities can successfully be a catalyst for urban renewal, contributing to employment generation, industry attraction and economic uplift in a clear and tangible way.

In his leadership role as president of the board of trustees of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, he was integral to the establishment of the Powerhouse Parramatta, which will further drive economic and cultural outcomes within my electorate and right across Western Sydney. A champion of collaboration and scale, he urged other universities to take Western Sydney seriously. He argued they should not just set up outposts, but partner and establish themselves in a way which provided meaningful opportunities for the people within the region. As

a former City of Parramatta councillor and lord mayor, and now as the member for Parramatta, I have seen firsthand the impact that this has had, with more universities than ever before establishing themselves in my electorate, and partnerships emerging between institutions, including the successful Parramatta Engineering Innovation Hub just down the street from my office.

Emeritus Professor Glover has established the university as a key voice in the region, challenging the institution to look outwards and set its sights on how it could showcase the entrepreneurship, knowledge and vibrancy of Western Sydney in a meaningful way. His public support of transformational projects such as the Western Sydney Airport has been significant in propelling the region forward. So too is his articulation of its potential, including the *Parramatta 2035: Vibrant, Sustainable, Global* report written under his leadership by the Centre for Western Sydney.

His leadership also unlocked possibilities for the region on the global stage. With campuses in Vietnam and Indonesia, Western Sydney University has established an international presence, opening up new possibilities for global collaborations around critical issues. In addition, the university has been recognised as leading the world in impact, not once, but twice. That incredible feat has put Western Sydney on the map around the world and is a testament to the vision and culture he fostered within the institution. Above all, Barney, as he is fondly known, believed in the potential of Western Sydney's biggest asset: its people. It was under his leadership that Western Sydney University embraced its new name and launched the Unlimited campaign, which not only captured hearts and minds but also set the region apart from its peers. He said at the time that the change was all about putting Western Sydney first, and that commitment defined his tenure as vice-chancellor.

He understood the opportunities that higher education creates, and championed access to university for all members of the community, particularly those who faced significant barriers to educational and economic participation. As the only vice-chancellor on the Australian Universities Accord Panel, he advocated for practical, evidence-based policy responses that would achieve a real and lasting impact for both students and communities across the nation. His pursuit of access and equity for those within Western Sydney is embodied in the pride he took in the university's status as a leader in producing graduates who are the first in their family to complete a university degree. On behalf of the community of Parramatta and the whole of Western Sydney, I thank Emeritus Professor Glover for the significant impact he has had on the region. I wish him well in his new role as Commissioner of Jobs and Skills Australia.

## BOWEL CANCER

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (19:50):** Tonight I make a speech that I never thought I would deliver. I do so because it is easier to deliver a speech than to have hundreds of personal conversations about what I am about to share. I recently became one of over 150,000 Australians diagnosed with cancer in a typical year, or one of 300 Australians diagnosed with bowel cancer in an average week. Nothing about it has felt typical or average to me. I have felt shock, fear and denial but also gratitude that I have been diagnosed early. I hold on to that. When I wake up every morning, my first thought is this: Did I just have a bad dream? My next thought is one of comfort that action is being taken. I am always surrounded by people, but recent times have been very lonely.

Cancer affects everyone in society. Whether you are diagnosed or a colleague, friend or loved one is diagnosed, cancer affects every one of us. It does not discriminate. One could be from royalty, live a healthy lifestyle and have no family history. There is no absolute explanation. But some things can be explained. My maternal grandfather, Athol, survived bowel cancer, but my aunt Sheila, my aunt Enid and my uncle Norm died from bowel cancer. They are always in my heart. Although I knew there was a risk that I could one day get bowel cancer, I never believed it would happen to me at the age of 39. My early diagnosis was, in so many ways, unlikely.

My cancer journey and diagnosis began when I was donating blood at Australian Red Cross Lifeblood. I have donated since my late teens. In May 2023 I successfully made a blood donation, but my haemoglobin levels were lower than normal. I told myself to eat more iron-rich foods. In February 2024, after a donation cooling-off period due to overseas travel, I attempted to donate again. This time my haemoglobin levels were far too low and I could not donate. Lifeblood told me to visit a doctor. I also experienced fatigue but, as members of this place know, we can work long hours, so I simply put my fatigue down to my work.

Upon visiting my doctor, I asked for a prescription for iron tablets. I give full credit to my doctor, who referred me to have a colonoscopy. I will be completely honest: My doctor did not just casually tell me to have a colonoscopy; they stoically convinced me to do it. Still stubborn, I thank my wife, Gessika, for encouraging me to make sure that I had a colonoscopy in a timely manner. It was there that I discovered my cancer diagnosis. Ironically, given the diagnosis, I feel physically healthy, although it has been an emotional rollercoaster. Last week I attended community events, participated in committee work and celebrated Gess's birthday with a lovely dinner date. I even completed my weekly 10-kilometre run over the Sydney Harbour Bridge with my friend from the other place the Hon. Chris Rath.

Bowel cancer can be a silent killer. Donating blood gave my blood a voice; it alerted me to danger. I recognise Australian Red Cross Lifeblood. I donate so that I can help save lives. On this occasion, it will help to save my life. I ask everyone to consider becoming a blood donor. Each donation can help save up to three lives, but it might just help you too. I recognise Bowel Cancer Australia and proudly wear its ribbon and apple logo. The apple symbolises the bowel, and the small hole caused by a worm symbolises that if the worm is removed, it is unable to affect the health of the apple or the tree. I hope that will be the case for me too.

I ask everyone to consider seeing their doctor for regular health check-ups and to know the symptoms. As I discovered, it matters that your doctor asks, and that you know, your family history. In the coming days, I will undergo surgery and recovery will require my full focus. From today I will be taking leave for some time. I will miss the community activities. I will miss interjecting in this place, especially to those who sit opposite me in the bear pit. I hope they will miss interjecting at me too. My office will continue to provide the highest standards of constituent service to the people of the Davidson electorate. I thank Annie, Richard and Abby. In my absence, I have asked the member for Wahroonga and the member for Pittwater to step in for me at community events and to support my office. I thank them for that. I also thank the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Cronulla; and the Opposition Whip, the member for Terrigal.

In recent times some of my goals have changed literally overnight, but some goals have not changed. To start a family with my wife, Gessika, remains my goal. I thank her for being with me on my journey every step of the way—I love you. To serve the New South Wales community and the Davidson electorate remains my goal. To live a long and fulfilled life, work hard and stay true to my values remains my goal. But I have one new goal beyond survival: to run another marathon, this time as a cancer survivor. Once I have completely recovered, the Hon. Chris Rath and I will run another marathon, this time to raise funds for cancer research, prevention and awareness. I thank the Speaker for his support and thank the House for its indulgence this evening. I conclude with both a spiritual reflection and a profane reflection. For the spiritual reflection, the following hymn, *Be Not Afraid*, has been close to my heart since I was a child and comforts me during this time. It reads:

You shall cross the barren desert  
But you shall not die of thirst  
You shall wander far in safety  
Though you do not know the way  
  
You shall speak your words in foreign lands  
And all will understand.  
You shall see the face of God and live  
  
Be not afraid  
I go before you always  
Come, follow me, and I will give you rest

For the profane reflection, I keep thinking of the timeless words of philosopher, bodybuilder, actor and former Governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger. I finish with those words: I'll be back.

**The SPEAKER:** I thank the member for Davidson and take the opportunity to say how lovely it was to meet his wife, Gessika. I have watched their journey together on social media for quite some time and understand how much in love they are. I wish the member for Davidson all the best on his journey. I know he has the spirit to do it, and I look forward to seeing him back here soon. I thank all members for the generous indulgence given to the member for Davidson. It was very kind.

#### PASSFIELD PARK SCHOOL

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields—Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections) (20:00):** I was impressed with the member for Davidson's speech, and all of us in the House, including Government members, wish him a speedy recovery on the very important journey for him and his family. His speech was very touching and is one that will inspire all of us and those who have to undergo a similar journey. All children deserve access to quality education, to feel safe in inclusive learning environments, and a fair go. That is why I have long advocated for the students at Passfield Park School in Minto. It is a special school which caters for special kids who have a range of disabilities and very complex needs. The school's principal, Wendy Low, spearheaded a community campaign over many years to improve the educational outcomes for her students. She has done a sterling job. During the 1990s Wendy was a librarian, a teacher and, later, an assistant principal at Passfield Park School. Wendy went on to work at various other schools before returning to Passfield Park School as principal in term 2 of April 2017.

Due to her strong leadership skills and collaborative approach, Wendy quickly earned the respect of staff, parents and the wider community. It was during those years when she first returned to Passfield Park School that she realised there was a strong need for change. The school, which was then located on Guernsey Avenue, was

not fit for purpose. Mould was rife throughout the buildings, making the students and staff quite unwell. The school's appalling conditions made the headlines, but still the former Government failed to act. Wendy, also president of the Passfield Park Kids Inc. charity, could not let her kids suffer any more. Drawing on her strong community connections, Wendy brought people together to fight for the students' equity and dignity. Families, supporters, community organisations and local MPs, including me, and local Federal member, Dr Mike Freeland, called for urgent change. Wendy fought vigorously to draw attention to the school's unsafe conditions and the urgent need for a completely new school to give the students a better future. It took years of hard work, continued advocacy, steely determination and a can-do attitude. Wendy made it her mission to improve the students' outcomes.

The redevelopment of Passfield Park School was a long time in the making, but the journey was certainly worth it. In 2022 Passfield Park School opened at its new location on Durham Street in Minto—a win for our local community and for the young people of Passfield Park School. The new, purpose-built school has brought so much joy. We can see it in the smiles of the staff and students and we can hear it in the voices of their families when they speak highly of the school, its dedicated staff and the state-of-the-art learning environment. The transformation of Passfield Park School is truly remarkable. It is one of the most rewarding community campaigns I have ever been involved with since being elected as the local member. Every time I visit Passfield Park School I am reminded that the power of community campaigns can change lives forever.

It is thanks to Wendy's leadership, vision and commitment to improving the lives of her students that Passfield Park School is today an exemplary model of special education. Wendy has single-mindedly devoted her career to enhancing the lives of kids with disabilities and their families. Her passion for students with complex learning needs is to be highly commended. Since Wendy's stewardship of the school it has undergone tremendous, positive change that has put the educational needs of the students, their welfare and their happiness first and foremost. The former school had only 50 students. The newly redeveloped school has around 100 students, 16 classrooms and more than 40 staff. I had the pleasure of opening the school's brand-new library in August last year, and I very much look forward to visiting the school again next month for the new Liberty Swing, funded through a Community Building Partnership grant.

Wendy is due to retire at the end of this term and is keen to spend time exploring the rest of the country and enjoying more time with her family and friends. She will certainly be missed by the teachers, administration staff, students, families and the broader community. We extend our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Wendy for her valuable contributions to the Passfield Park School community. Demonstrating exemplary leadership, Wendy shone her light brightly. She lit a path for others so they might follow in her footsteps. The time has come for Wendy to pass the torch. I am certain that the new leadership team will continue Wendy's legacy and that Passfield Park School and its students will continue to shine bright for the future.

#### **MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICES**

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes) (20:04):** This evening I address family and domestic violence within the Myall Lakes electorate. On the Mid North Coast, domestic violence rates have increased by 9.6 per cent in the past five years, surpassing the State average by 1.5 per cent. Those statistics are proof of the urgent need for resources and support. Within my electorate, we are fortunate to have institutions like the Taree Women's Refuge and the Great Lakes Womens Shelter. However, 2014 saw the introduction of the Going Home Staying Home program, where domestic violence and homelessness services were merged. The management of the Taree Women's Refuge, among others across the State, was allocated to the larger faith-based organisations. The new allocation led to the removal of vital resources, including 15 caseworkers, a culturally and linguistically diverse worker, four qualified childcare workers, a counsellor with a psychology degree and an Indigenous trainee counsellor as well as women's educational and leisure activities, transportation services and the joint Taree police and Taree Women's Refuge project.

As a result of ongoing under-resourcing, women in the Manning region are now deprived of the support they once received. Local activists are pushing for the restoration of the Taree Women's Refuge to its former level of effectiveness and care. The Great Lakes Womens Shelter is a safe haven for women and children experiencing homelessness and/or domestic or family violence. Experienced staff work alongside families, supporting them to obtain safe housing and providing access to necessary services to help them to get back on their feet. This includes legal, financial and family support, counselling and identifying any other needs during their stay. Despite the shelter's best efforts, they are faced with challenges that are heightened by insufficient funding. They rely on the support of community partners to bridge the gap left by inadequate government funding covering only 40 per cent of its operations. The shelter is left with the burden of raising \$300,000 every year just to keep its doors open.

Great Lakes Womens Shelter is part of the Women's Community Shelters, a network of 11 shelters across New South Wales that provide safety and shelter to women and children. The staff and volunteers witness daily the reality faced by too many in my electorate. The service data shows the need for support in our region. The

Great Lakes had the highest number of presentations by women requiring support across the Women's Community Shelters network and it had the highest number of clients identified as "at serious threat" of domestic homicide. Great Lakes Womens Shelter delivered the most "safe bed nights" of the entire network within the shelter at its current location. Over 60 per cent of clients who stay in shelter are exited into secure housing such as private, social or transitional housing. With the support of our local community and government grants, Great Lakes Womens Shelter was able to recently build a brand-new, specifically designed shelter that accommodates up to 10 families at any given time.

I acknowledge the great work and advocacy of my predecessor, Stephen Bromhead, and the CEO of the women's shelter, Julie Brady, to get this project completed. However, we know that bricks and mortar alone cannot stop the violence that plagues our communities. We must invest in sustainable solutions that address the root causes of domestic and family violence: education, prevention, outreach programs and dedicated services to support the vulnerable children that are affected. Secure and ongoing government funding for service delivery is a necessity to protect the vulnerable and break the cycle of violence. During 2023 Great Lakes Womens Shelter received over 250 requests for assistance and had capacity to respond to only half of those. Specialist frontline domestic and family violence workers need adequate resources to meet the overwhelming demand for assistance.

We need to address and prevent domestic and family violence. We must reduce reoffending and ensure the safety of victims. While it is challenging to prevent violence behind closed doors, we possess the ability to curb reoffending. As we observe Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month in May and reflect on National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day, we cannot be content just with remembrance. We need to act now to protect women like Molly Ticehurst, who lost her life last month from an abusive ex-boyfriend who was on bail. To the women whose lives have been tragically cut short, we are sorry our system has failed you. To those who are suffering in silence, know that help is within reach. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic or family violence, you can call or text 1800 RESPECT. That helpline is available 24/7.

#### **HEATHCOTE ELECTORATE FLOODS**

**Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (20:09):** I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all individuals and organisations involved in the extensive flood recovery efforts across the Heathcote electorate. The recent floods in April have presented unprecedented challenges, but it is through our collective resilience and dedication that we will overcome them. I extend my sincerest appreciation to the Minister for Transport, the Minister for Emergency Services, Wollongong City Council, State Emergency Service personnel, local police and government agencies for their unwavering commitment to supporting our community during this challenging time. The tireless efforts, dedication and collaboration of all those services have been instrumental in providing essential assistance and resources to those affected by the floods. I extend my gratitude to Wollongong City Council for its proactive response and comprehensive approach to flood recovery. The council's commitment to hosting community information sessions in various suburbs, including Thirroul, demonstrates its dedication to ensuring that residents and businesses receive the support and information they need during this challenging time.

The collaborative efforts of Wollongong City Council, State Emergency Service and local agencies exemplify the strength and resilience of our community. Through coordinated initiatives such as customer service pop-ups, community updates and liaison with State agencies, they effectively addressed the needs and concerns of over 6,000 individuals impacted by the floods. Additionally, their coordination with State agencies and provision of customer service staff exemplifies their commitment to addressing the needs and concerns of our residents. I also commend the focus on community safety, particularly the clearing of creeks and culverts to mitigate future risks. Their collaboration with the Reconstruction Authority and Infrastructure NSW to discuss short-term recovery actions, adaptation strategies and enhancement efforts is crucial for safeguarding the wellbeing of our residents.

I also express my gratitude to State Emergency Service personnel and local police for their swift response and ongoing support in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our community members. Their dedication and professionalism in the face of adversity have been commendable and I thank them for their continued efforts. I thank the Minister for Transport for repair of the railways throughout the recovery process, keeping the community on the move. As we navigate through the recovery process, I urge all levels of government and community organisations to continue working collaboratively to provide the necessary support and resources to those in need. Together, we can ensure that no-one is left behind as we rebuild and recover from the devastation of the floods. I extend my deepest gratitude to all individuals and organisations involved in the flood recovery efforts across the Heathcote electorate. Their collective efforts embody the spirit of resilience and solidarity, and I am proud to stand alongside them as we work towards rebuilding our community stronger than ever before. I thank them all for their hard work, commitment and resilience throughout this time.

### SYDNEY CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS FOUNDATION

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (20:13):** I speak today about the generosity of the Pittwater community. I am so fortunate to represent such a beautiful corner of the world, which is home to the most caring people. Pittwater is full of individuals who are willing to engage with causes close to their hearts. Recently, Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation [SCHF] reached out to me. They shared with me that in Pittwater they have over 550 donors and 44 companies who are strong believers and participants in the foundation's Movement of Many—a single force of 70,000 people coming together to help sick kids, no matter where, no matter what. Over the past five years, incredible people in my electorate have raised over \$416,000 for the foundation, with almost \$200,000 coming from individual donors. Corporations like Austral Air Conditioning Services and Ross Equipment Australia have both made donations to SCHF, which have gone on to have an extraordinary impact in the areas of children's cancer research and treatment.

Pittwater is God's country. It is not just our golden beaches and pristine bushland that make it so; it is the generosity of spirit of our community. We look out for one another. We do not just talk big; Pittwater's community digs deep. In March I was given a tour of Bear Cottage, the only children's hospice in New South Wales and a cause close to the heart of the local Maria SS Mamma Nostra Committee. I give special thanks to the foundation and its CEO, Kristina Keneally, a former member of this place and a constituent of Pittwater, for organising the tour. While I was there, I witnessed firsthand the incredible work that the foundation supports—the care of children with life-limiting conditions. I thank Narelle Martin, the nursing unit manager, who has been at Bear Cottage since day one. All of her team are inspirational.

One of the largest and most trusted kids' health charities in the country, the foundation provides all children with access to the best possible health care, whenever and wherever they need it. SCHF is the exclusive philanthropic partner of the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network. Last year more than 158,000 patients were treated across the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network. Whether receiving care at Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick or the Children's Hospital at Westmead, staying at Bear Cottage for respite or end-of-life care, being involved in Kids Research or being transported via the Newborn and Paediatric Emergency Transport Service, which takes intensive care to a child anywhere in New South Wales or the Australian Capital Territory, all 158,000 children were provided with exceptional care supported and elevated through contributions from the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation.

Recently I was told of the incredible impact donors had through the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation—initiatives like bringing in world-renowned talent to train doctors across Sydney Children's Hospitals Network and giving children with rare genetic diseases access to new and novel treatments through research and clinical trials. These are initiatives that will benefit kids now and into the future. But today I draw attention to the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation's Sydney Sick Kids Appeal. I encourage the entire community across Sydney and New South Wales to follow the lead of the generous donors of Pittwater and support the upcoming Sydney Sick Kids Appeal. The Sydney Sick Kids Appeal began yesterday, Monday 6 May. The appeal is the foundation's biggest annual appeal. The foundation is asking for members across the State to come together to beat last year's fundraising record—an incredible \$15.8 million.

Today and tomorrow, people near the Customs House forecourt in Circular Quay will notice Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation's Paused Playground, which represents children waiting to return home from hospital. On Thursday 6 June, Sydney Sick Kids Day, people in the Sydney CBD will see volunteers collecting donations in Martin Place and Pitt Street Mall. During the next seven weeks, let us be willing to share our resources and enhance the work of the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation to support the children of our communities who are most in need. I ask every member of the House to join me in going all in for kids' health by making a donation and helping to spread the donation message amongst their electorate. For some kids, childhood is far from what it should be. No child should have to go through the challenges that children in hospital face, but those who do deserve our all, and I am proud to represent an electorate that has a deep interest and willingness to go all in for kids' health.

### GOSFORD ELECTORATE WALK AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (20:18):** I celebrate the amazing community on the Central Coast who joined together on Sunday 5 May to walk in the Central Coast March for Women to unite against domestic violence and support women's safety in our community. It was a last-minute event. When the dates came out for the Walk Against Domestic Violence there was no walk for the Central Coast. I believed that the Central Coast deserved a space in this conversation, so we put out a little flyer on social media and we put out a media release, and everybody came. It was a wonderful result. It was so exciting. The weather was gloomy to the south, it was gloomy to the west, and I think it put some people off. We were not quite sure how many people would come, but it was really important to put out the message—rain, hail or shine—that domestic violence needs to stop.

We marched from Brian McGowan Bridge to an area near Eat Street Cafe where we had a bunch of speeches from amazing women and men saying enough is enough, and that we need change in our community to make sure that women's safety is a top priority. I thank Sue McCarthy, a strong Wiradjuri woman who has worked in the sector for so long and who shared her experience and challenges. Sharon Walsh, the chairperson of the Central Coast Domestic Violence Committee, spoke of how it has been a long, hard struggle in our community but how we have a great domestic violence committee of people who work together. We have amazing domestic violence frontline workers across our community who do such important work, and Sharon commended the work of everybody in the sector. I thank Sharon.

We also had Bec Owen, a feisty survivor of domestic violence. Bec stood up and told it how it was. When I rang Bec to organise it, I asked, "How did you make your escape?" She said, "I rang 1800RESPECT." I said "Bec, you are the perfect example." She was amazing and got a cheer from our community. Renee Simpson runs the Survivor Hub on the Central Coast, which provides an opportunity for women from the Central Coast to get together, have a chat, share their experiences, support each other and lift each other up. Renee is an absolute champion for our community and we appreciate her.

We also had Anannya Bandaru, who is the Central Coast Young Citizen of the Year and who spoke as a year 11 woman about the importance of women's safety in our community and how things need to change. That was followed up by our Federal member, Dr Gordon Reid, who is also an advocate for the safety of women in our community. I thank everybody who spoke, and I also thank our office team who backed in the Cabinet meeting we had on Friday. It is really exciting to be part of a team that is 50 per cent women, many of whom have spoken in Parliament about their own experience of domestic, sexual and family violence.

Having that 50 per cent of women sitting at the table makes for a different future as far as supplying budget and support for family violence is concerned. Our Cabinet sat in the room with and has been guided by experts. Thanks to Hannah Tonkin, the New South Wales Women's Safety Commissioner; Christine Robinson, the CEO of Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre, who is also a member of the NSW Domestic Violence Death Review Team; the Hon. Marcia Neave, AO, Commissioner of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence; and Rosie Batty, who was the 2015 Australian of the Year. Those experts advised the New South Wales Cabinet to create the \$230 million investment to improve domestic violence prevention and support in New South Wales.

I thank the Minister for Women, Jodie Harrison, for her leadership in this space. It is exciting to be part of the delivery. For the first time in the history of New South Wales, there is an additional \$48 million to roll out for the Staying Home Leaving Violence program. I thank Michael Regan, the member for Wakehurst, who has been advocating for the program in his community. There are a whole bunch of communities in New South Wales who are now part of this very important space which says, "Women and their kids do not need to leave their home. Let us get rid of the perpetrator who is causing destruction in the home."

We also have significant investment into the justice system for victims, with \$45 million to improve bail laws and justice system response to domestic violence, \$24 million for domestic violence support workers within the justice system, \$2 million for the Domestic Violence Death Review Team and \$2.1 million to improve and continue to review the Corrective Services EQUIPS domestic and family violence program. We also have \$48 million for early intervention to secure and increase funding for workers who support children accompanying their mothers to refugees, and \$700,000 for the Domestic Violence Line in New South Wales, as well as \$38 million for primary prevention and the implementation of the first dedicated Primary Prevention Strategy. We have \$8.1 million for the "All in" early childhood pilot, workforce training and more money for Domestic Violence NSW. It is important to see the change that we need in New South Wales to protect women.

#### **PORT MACQUARIE ELECTORATE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (20:23):** I update the House on a range of transport issues in the Port Macquarie electorate. Last week I met with the Regional Director of Transport, Anna Zycki, to discuss various projects that urgently need attention to better serve the motoring public of my electorate. One such issue that has been the focus of community frustration is the much-needed upgrade of Oxley Highway stage two. Community consultation was conducted in April 2021 with a range of options on the proposed upgrade, which would significantly improve traffic movements at the Wrights Road roundabout as well as the Lake Road roundabout, which included additional lanes to cater for increased traffic.

It now seems that the upgrade has stalled whilst an integrated transport plan is developed in conjunction with Port Macquarie Hastings Council. To make matters worse, late last year the Albanese Labor Government axed funding for the planning of this major road project, which every day sees vehicles backed up for hundreds of metres during peak periods. Now knowing that the Federal Labor Government has reneged on its promise to

fund a share of the investment into ongoing planning, I called on the Minns Labor Government to step up and fully fund planning for the project so it can be shovel ready as soon as possible.

The New South Wales Government should show some leadership and either persuade the Federal Government to overturn its decision to cut \$3.6 billion in infrastructure projects across the State or commit to proceeding with projects like the Oxley Highway stage two upgrade as planned. I appreciated the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, the Hon. Jenny Aitchison, seeing firsthand the traffic congestion on the Oxley Highway when she visited Port Macquarie last June, but we need to get on with the job now so that a solution to ease traffic congestion can be finalised.

I often receive complaints from residents, and rightly so, in relation to the amount of rubbish on the verges of the Oxley Highway, particularly to the east of the Lake Road intersection, as well as the overgrown grass on roundabouts and on the median strips on the highway. Again, this issue is most prevalent at the Wrights Road roundabout and often impairs visibility. I understand that there are funding pressures, but the Oxley Highway is the gateway to Port Macquarie, and local residents and visitors expect it to be well maintained and presentable.

Finally, still on the Oxley Highway, I highlight my growing concern about the congestion on the northbound off-ramp approaching the Oxley Highway-Pacific Highway intersection. As a regular user of the ramp, it is very alarming to be in the line of cars waiting to enter the roundabout. In fact, only this week at least 15 vehicles were stretched along the verge on the Pacific Highway waiting to enter the slip lane. With vehicles including semitrailers and trucks passing at over 100 kilometres per hour in the adjacent lane, it is not only disconcerting but also a serious safety issue. The Liberals and Nationals in government committed \$20 million in 2022-23 to get the slip lane extended. Now that it is a serious safety issue, the project must be expedited.

I was pleased to join with my former colleague and former member for Oxley Melinda Pavey and local North Shore residents in March 2019 to announce that the Maria River Road would be sealed—a commitment made by the previous Liberal-Nationals Government through the \$500 million Fixing Local Roads program. Maria River Road is long overdue for an upgrade and locals, after calling for improvements to be made for years, were delighted with the announcement. The state of the road continues to deteriorate, with many local residents having to get their vehicles repaired regularly as a result of damage caused by the poor condition of the road. Now, four years later, disappointingly roadworks on the Maria River Road upgrade are yet to commence. I have made inquiries as to the commencement date for the planned works and share the frustration of the regular road users who have contacted me.

On a positive note, in August 2022 the previous New South Wales Government provided more than \$3.1 million to Port Macquarie Hastings Council specifically for active transport projects in Port Macquarie and the Camden Haven. The Beach to Beach project received \$2.9 million, which would deliver another vital link in the long-awaited 11-kilometre continuous shared path between the North Haven breakwall and Pilot Beach. The Beach to Beach Shared Path is a wonderful addition to the beautiful Camden Haven and, once completed, will be a major drawcard to the area, boosting visitor spending in our cafes and shops. It is already a popular walk or ride for locals and tourists alike, and numbers are only set to increase as the project progresses. Work on that section of the project, known as stage D3, is expected to come in under budget, and I am pleased to share that Transport for NSW has now approved a variation of the grant to allow the unspent funds to be reallocated to the D5 stage. That is a sensible decision, and I thank Transport for NSW for accommodating the request from council and the Beach to Beach committee.

Finally, the CEO of Port Macquarie Hastings Council, Dr Clare Allen, has written to me requesting that I encourage the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads to reconsider her decision not to take over the operation of the two vehicular ferries operated by council. I met recently with North Shore residents who are understandably miffed that a group of councillors are insistent on a rate freeze but at the same time are increasing ferry prices for both residents and visitors. I will raise some further concerns with this proposal, which I consider financially irresponsible, at a later time in this place.

### SOLOMON ISLANDS ELECTIONS

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (20:28):** On 17 April 2024 Solomon Islands held simultaneous elections for its national Parliament, seven provincial assemblies and Honiara City Council. It is the first time Solomon Islands has conducted simultaneous national and sub-national elections, and it was the second occasion of a national election since the period of the Tensions, as they are referred to, which occurred around 2003 and saw the deployment of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, or RAMSI. The Australian Government received an invitation from the Solomon Islands Electoral Commission to observe the elections.

The member for Blacktown and I were selected to be part of the Australian parliamentary observer mission, together with four Commonwealth parliamentarians, organised by the Australian High Commission. There were



22 observer missions present for the election period from several other nations, as well as international non-government organisations and Indigenous observer groups. Participation in the observer mission builds on the successful twinning relationship that this Parliament has developed over a period with the National Parliament of Solomon Islands and the Bougainville House of Representatives. It was made possible by the support given by the Clerks, for which I thank them, that resulted in election observer training delivered to members of this Parliament in 2022. Election observation helps to build credibility and legitimacy of elections and supports Article 21 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states:

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

The observation mission was part of a very big Australian effort supporting the elections, which included printing ballot papers and the distribution by Australian and New Zealand defence forces personnel of those ballot papers and equipment to nine main islands and hundreds of small islands that comprise the Solomon Islands, as well as delivering the voter ID registration kits and funding of an election observation study by the Solomon Islands National University and the Australian National University.

Australia has a large diplomatic mission based in the Solomon Islands. I thank the following members: in particular, His Excellency Mr Rod Hilton, the Australian High Commissioner to the Solomon Islands; Andrew Schloeffel, the Deputy Head of Mission; Ms Lindsay Buckingham, the Minister Counsellor and a graduate of Gosford High School on the Central Coast; Sara Lailey; and, in particular, Nicole Smith and Kate Chapman, who guided the two parts of the delegation. Mr Bali and two Commonwealth parliamentarians were in a delegation that was sent to the western district, whereas I stayed in Honiara's central district where we observed booths and voting from the opening of booths at 7.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m. On the day before, we observed preparation for the election that included visiting the Australian military delegation that supported distribution of ballot papers. On Thursday, my delegation travelled to Tulagi Island to observe vote counting. It was a very full program.

I appreciate the efforts made by commission staff to ensure we were able to visit the United States Guadalcanal American War Memorial and walk the battlefields of Honiara. Members will be aware that the Guadalcanal holds a very important place in the history of the Second World War, especially for the United States. United States forces halted and began the rollback of Japanese fascism at the same time as our country was resisting Japan on the Kokoda Track. Of course, we remember the sacrifice of the crew of HMAS *Canberra*, whose graves lie off the coast of Guadalcanal in Iron Button Sound.

Above all, I thank the people of the Solomon Islands, who patiently and cheerfully accommodated our presence on this important day. I saw people eager to fulfil in full the aspirations of Article 21 of the universal declaration. Whilst election observers are disinterested in the outcome of elections, I feel it is appropriate that I congratulate the new Prime Minister of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands, Jeremiah Manele, who was elected by his peers on 2 May. I am honoured to have participated in the undertaking. At a time when we talk at a national level about security in our region, what we can do to make ourselves more secure and how we should relate to our Pacific neighbours, supporting the aspirations of our Pacific neighbours at a human level, which are no different to ours, will do more to make our own country and our region secure than will more defence spending. In that regard, we are well served by our public servants in the Pacific. Finally, I thank this Parliament for allowing me to represent the State and Australia on that particularly important occasion.

### REGIONAL YOUTH CRIME

**Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (20:33):** Madam Temporary Speaker, imagine it is the dead of night and you are fast asleep in the comfort and security of your own home. At least, that is what you thought until the next morning arrives and you find your home has been turned upside down, the drawers have been ransacked and your valuable items are missing, including your hard-earned car. For Aldavilla's Gail Cheers, staying asleep that night very well could have been the difference between life and death. At least four masked figures trespassed on and invaded Mrs Cheers' property with CCTV capturing the skulking and the boundary testing just before they slipped out of sight and into her family home. Despite upgrading the security cameras and investing in alarm systems since then, Gail says that, to this day, her family is still in fear and struggle to fall asleep at night. Thieves have targeted her home twice more since then. That means that she has gone through this three times.

How far is far enough before this Government starts taking a proactive and meaningful approach to addressing crime—particularly youth crime—in regional New South Wales? Is it far enough when Michael Reig wakes up to find three youths breaking into his South West Rocks home? Is it far enough when Mr Reig observes three offenders rummage around his property while he is watching inside on the in-home security system? Is it far enough when one of those three juveniles is armed with a large knife or a machete? Mr Reig says it is a serious situation that is escalating in South West Rocks and, like Mrs Cheers, it is not his first encounter. He fears it is the elderly demographic being put at knifepoint. Crime in Oxley—knife crime, robbery, assault and car theft—is

rising. To date the most notable action taken by the Minns Labor Government is a \$13 million pilot program for Moree. That 12-month program is aimed at enhancing the safety of regional communities, providing bail and support accommodation and better delivery of youth services. While that is a great outcome for Moree, it continues to beg a hard and embarrassing question: What about the rest of regional New South Wales?

While the New South Wales Labor Government wears blinkers, blocking out places like Oxley, the South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club is left to clean up the mess of another targeted attack. Last month the clubhouse was defaced with graffiti and the club bus was smashed. Its windows were shattered and glass shards covered the inside. This is a non-profit organisation that puts its heart and soul into saving our lives. The South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club is far better off investing its money in training our water heroes or purchasing equipment that could be the very difference between a life saved or lost. But now those hard-earned dollars will be spent on fixing this disgraceful damage.

The National Party fought tooth and nail to bring a youth crime inquiry to the forefront of the Government's mind, even after the Government openly boasted it was unnecessary. But what clarity is there now? Will that inquiry become another 12 months of sitting on hands while regional communities continue to suffer? In the past month alone, I have received more than a dozen emails and phone calls outlining the fears of our community. That pales in comparison to the staggering number of social media posts and messages to my page telling me how unsafe they feel or how many times they have been broken into. One correspondent detailed three vehicle thefts in South West Rocks over three consecutive nights. Another detailed at length the weapons that young offenders are carrying, which include machetes and knives. There have been multiple emails calling for better police resources. Perhaps, the worst was reading this from a concerned resident: "It is only a matter of time before someone gets seriously injured."

Our regional communities are feeling the heat and they are feeling defeated. They feel as if the New South Wales Government is turning its back on them, and they are fed up. It is time for action. It is time the New South Wales Labor Government proved it is a friend to the regions rather than make us second-rate citizens. On 20 May at 6.00 p.m. a community forum will be held at the South West Rocks Country Club to discuss regional crime and what the Government, policing and judicial bodies, and the community can do to fix it.

I invite Premier Minns, the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, the Minister for Families and Communities and, importantly, the Attorney General to attend the meeting. I invite them to make their way to South West Rocks and listen firsthand to the people who are hurting and who are giving up their time to contribute to solutions to rectify a problem that continues to be pushed aside. Importantly, I also invite the Committee on Law and Safety, which is inquiring into regional crime, to attend the meeting. If members of the New South Wales Government care about regional New South Wales and about the safety and wellbeing of the people in Oxley, they will attend the meeting, look our citizens in the eye and join in the fight to solve this growing crisis. We are fed up, and it is time for action.

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion) (20:38):** I acknowledge the private member's statement of the member for Oxley and say that the Government has heard about the cases he referred to. As the Minister for Families and Communities, I am personally saddened to hear what is happening in the member for Oxley's community. I will correct the record and say that the Government's package for preventing youth crime is a \$26.2 million package of reforms and initiatives to support community safety and wellbeing, particularly in regional New South Wales, with a focus on strengthening early intervention and prevention. While a lot of work is going on in Moree, there is work also across other regions in the State. As a regional member and Minister, I am well aware of the issues many of our communities are facing. Today we have also announced the move on knife crime laws. We look forward to having further discussions with the member and his community about how we keep them safe.

#### NEWCASTLE ELECTORATE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (20:40):** It is undeniable that one of the biggest issues facing the people of New South Wales is the cost of living. At the heart of that struggle is housing affordability. According to the ANZ CoreLogic Housing Affordability Report, after Sydney, Newcastle is more unaffordable than any other city in Australia, with the median house price almost tipping \$1 million. New borrowers can expect to be saving for a deposit for up to 12 years and then have their mortgage take up almost 60 per cent of their household income. While future first home buyers are saving, they are also forking out obscene amounts to cover their weekly rent. Currently the median weekly rent in Newcastle sits at around \$650, and it just keeps rising, with a 5 per cent increase in the past 12 months. A recent *Newcastle Herald* article reported that in the past month over 1,500 homes were listed for rent in the Hunter region but there were fewer than 10 affordable options for a couple on JobSeeker payments with children, a single parent on minimum wage and a single aged pensioner.

With sky-high rents, many Novocastrians are facing homelessness and turning to social housing, adding more names to what is already a lengthy waitlist, which, as we know, is quickly approaching 2,000 applicants. The cost of housing in Newcastle, compounded by the rising cost of utilities, groceries and everyday essentials, has left many in my community having to choose between a roof over their heads and food on the table. Newcastle has a recorded homeless population of over 1,000 people—a number I believe to be an underestimation, unfortunately. That data often does not take into consideration vulnerable groups, such as women escaping domestic violence who frequently bounce between shelters and refuges, friends' couches, their cars and short-term accommodation options.

That is why initiatives such as the Staying Home Leaving Violence program are so important. This program works with New South Wales police to remove perpetrators from the family home so that victim-survivors and their children can remain safely in the home, near all their support systems of family, friends, school and community. It was great to see the \$48 million increase in funding for the program in the Government's emergency package to enhance support for preventing domestic, family and sexual violence.

After over a decade of inaction from the Coalition Government, it is no wonder we are so deeply entrenched in this housing crisis. In fact, the now Opposition was working hard to worsen the crisis by selling off over \$3 billion worth of social housing. That is over 4,000 dwellings across the State. Those homes that were so carelessly sold off could have housed everyone on the social housing waitlist in the City of Newcastle twice over and even have hundreds of houses left over. This Government inherited a housing supply shortfall as the result of outdated zoning and planning restrictions and excruciatingly slow processing of development applications.

Since being elected, we have wasted no time in implementing reforms to resolve this crisis quickly and efficiently. We took immediate action by freezing the sell-off of social housing, identifying public land that can be rezoned for housing and appointing the first NSW Rental Commissioner. We have waived or deducted stamp duty for over 18,000 first home buyers, saving Novocastrians around \$30,000 on a median-priced home. We have introduced significant planning reforms. Additionally, the Government has introduced the Transport Oriented Development Program, which will allow more houses to be built around existing infrastructure and transport hubs. By allowing more low- to mid-rise housing, the Government estimates that the program will deliver more than 170,000 homes in New South Wales over the next 15 years. Newcastle interchange and the Hamilton railway station in my electorate are included in the program, but it will impact Newcastle residents who live within 400 metres of the Adamstown station as well.

The planning controls will raise building height maximums, allow for shop-top housing and ensure that homes are more comfortable, with an increased floor-space ratio requirement. Also, as part of this program, all new developments with a gross floor area of over 2,000 square metres will be required to include 2 per cent as affordable housing, on top of our election commitment of 30 per cent as social and affordable housing on surplus public land. Unlike our predecessors, the Labor Government is committed to resolving our State's housing crisis. Just over a year in, we have a clear priority for New South Wales residents. We are working hard to increase housing availability.

### DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (20:45):** Today I stand with a heavy heart to mourn the tragic loss of Molly Ticehurst, a cherished member of the Forbes community. Again I convey my deep and sincere condolences to her loved ones. Molly's short life was one of dedication and love, as a devoted mother and a compassionate childcare worker. Her untimely death has left an unfillable void in our hearts and serves as a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of domestic violence. Molly's story is one not just of personal tragedy; it is a reflection of the broader epidemic of domestic violence that continues to plague our society. It is a reminder that behind the statistics are real people, real families and real lives shattered by violence and abuse. Enough is enough. We cannot and must not turn a blind eye to this issue any longer. We owe it to Molly, her child, her family and all victims of domestic violence to stand up and demand change. We must work tirelessly to ensure that no-one else suffers the same fate as Molly.

Crucial aspects of addressing this issue include reforming our bail system and maintaining consistent judicial responses. Too often perpetrators of domestic violence are released on bail, only to commit further acts of violence. We cannot allow the cycle to continue. We need procedural reforms that prioritise the safety of victims above all else. I take this opportunity to thank Premier Minns for his genuine concern and swift response to this tragic event. I have spoken to the Premier several times following Molly's passing. He has listened keenly to the issues I have raised concerning inadequacies in bail procedures and my suggestions for his Government to consider implementing.

First and foremost, bail determinations must be made only by magistrates, who are trained and equipped to assess the risks involved. There should be no room for arbitrary decisions or leniency when it comes to cases

of domestic violence. Every decision must be guided by a thorough understanding of the potential dangers and risks posed by releasing an accused back into the community. Furthermore, we must make use of available technology, such as audiovisual links, to enable remote bail determinations where necessary. That will ensure that, even in remote areas, access to justice is not compromised due to geographical constraints.

In addition to procedural reforms, we must also consider implementing stricter bail conditions for those accused of domestic violence. This has been described in the media as Molly's law and includes electronic monitoring of accused persons while on bail, as well as considerations for home detention. Those measures can help to prevent perpetrators from coming into contact with their victims and provide an added layer of protection for those at risk. We must be willing to amend the bail laws to allow police and judicial officers determining bail to also include the balance of probabilities threshold test in their approach so that there is no impediment to refusing bail where necessary, ensuring that the safety of victims is given the utmost priority in every case. When a tragedy such as this occurs, we often reflect on and clearly see the obvious red flags that were missed. It is incumbent on us as legislators to fix the problem so that the likelihood of this occurring again is lessened significantly. We are talking about people's lives. They are irreplaceable and priceless.

Last week the Premier, the police Minister, the police commissioner and I attended Molly's funeral in Forbes. I have seen with my own eyes the visible impact of this domestic homicide on Molly's family, friends, colleagues and the wider community. It is a sobering reality for society as a whole. It should not be thought of as happening just to someone else's daughter. The grief will not fade for them, so we must ensure that our determination for change does not fade either. But let us be clear: Procedural reforms alone will not solve the problem of domestic violence. We must also address the root causes of this epidemic, including toxic misogyny, systemic inequality and a culture that too often excuses or trivialises violence against women.

We must teach our children from a young age about consent, respect and healthy relationships. We must provide better support and resources for victims of domestic violence, including safe housing and access to legal assistance. We must strenuously hold perpetrators accountable for their actions, ensuring that they face tough consequences for their crimes. Shamefully, in Orange the incidence of reported domestic violence is twice the State average. Much more needs to be done and I acknowledge the Prime Minister's announcement last week of almost \$1 billion commitment to supporting women and children to flee domestic violence, along with the Government's \$230 million commitment to tackling that scourge. In memory of Molly Ticehurst, and of all those who have lost their lives to domestic violence, let us recommit ourselves to building a society where everyone feels safe. Let us work together to create a future where tragedies like this are no longer a reality but a distant memory.

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion) (20:50):** I acknowledge the heartfelt words of the member for Orange and his commitment and dedication to working with the Government to rid our State of the scourge of domestic and family violence. This Parliament, our State and the nation mourn Molly Ticehurst, the 27 other women who have lost their lives to domestic and family violence since January this year and the tragically long line of women before them. It is a significant and confronting issue facing our State and one that the Government takes absolutely seriously. As the member has mentioned, the package of \$230 million will go towards addressing the issue from early intervention and prevention right through to the crisis end. The Government acknowledges there is more to be done and wants to work with the member for Orange and all members of this Parliament to make women safe in our State.

#### MAVIS SIDMAN

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (20:51):** Mavis Sidman, a local resident of Camden, celebrated her incredible 100th birthday on 10 March this year. I speak about her life and accomplishments today. Mavis Martha Sharpe, daughter of Cecil Havelock Sharpe and Ivy "Millie" Mildred Sharpe, nee Kelloway, was born on 10 March 1924 at Nurse Taplin's residence on Oxley Street, Camden. Out of the three children, Mavis was the oldest, with a younger brother named Frederick and a younger sister named Doreen. Mavis was raised on a dairy farm on the outskirts of Camden, a property originally built by the Macarthur family. Cecil chose that house with a view of Camden, which also happened to be close to Millie's parents, Stephen and Prudence Kelloway.

When Mavis was five years old, she started attending Mount Hunter Public School. Following her graduation from Mount Hunter, Mavis went to Camden Public School, which, at the time, was the only school in the region providing a high school education. Mavis started working at Whiteman's store on Argyle Street after graduating. She would assist in loading the horse and cart, and later the truck, with the designated goods that would be delivered to the nearby residents. Prior to her marriage, Mavis was employed at the Whiteman's business.

Mavis learned about Ralph Leonard Sidman for the first time from her uncle Arthur. Ralph had familial ties to Camden and lived close to Uncle Arthur. Ralph's grandfather, William Sidman, had purchased *The Camden*

*Times* around 1894. Ralph and Mavis would form a close bond before Ralph was enlisted to serve in World War II. Ralph was sent to Papua New Guinea to work with the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, a corps of technical personnel whose job it was to maintain the army's cutting-edge gear. When Ralph was overseas, they corresponded via letters. Ralph was discharged in December 1945, and Ralph and Mavis were wed on 24 January 1946 in the Camden Methodist Church following his return from Papua New Guinea.

Later they would build their first house at 29 Chellaston Street in Camden, where they welcomed three children: Daryl, born in 1948; Kevin, in 1951; and Narelle, in 1954. Ralph maintained interests in vehicles and machinery while working at several businesses in Camden. That included roles as a truck motor mechanic at Souter's and a general car and light truck mechanic at Babbage Motors before starting his own taxi business. Ralph was also well known as a car salesman, selling vehicles at Clintons Motors in Camden. After her kids moved out, Mavis used more of her free time to knit. Mavis became a member of the Camden Hospital Auxiliary and began knitting cardigans, hats and baby booties to sell at the hospital and give as presents to expectant mothers in the maternity unit. Additionally Mavis knitted trauma teddies that the Red Cross gave to ill children. It is noteworthy that Mavis created and donated over 1,200 trauma teddies between February 2002 and February 2022—an incredible quantity that would have required many hours of work—all in support of our beautiful town.

Since March 2006 Mavis has been a resident of a Camden nursing home. Sadly, Ralph passed away in September 2008 at the age of 89. Mavis is still in good health despite the occasional illness, and she is doing remarkably well for her age. On Sunday 10 March 2024 Mavis's 100th birthday was honoured with a small family get-together at the home. With the passing of time, Mavis's family has expanded to include six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Mavis has received letters and cards from King Charles III and Queen Camilla, the Prime Minister, the Premier, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Australian Red Cross and the Department of Veterans' Affairs in honour of her 100th birthday, but I have been told it was my letter that made her the most happy. Mavis Sidman has lived an extraordinary life. A Camden local, she has seen great change—from a very small country estate to a town located on the outskirts of Sydney. Mavis's service to the community is a reminder of how we can all make a positive difference in the lives of others. Once again I congratulate Mavis on reaching 100 years of age.

#### **TG MILLNER FIELD**

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (20:56):** I speak about the sanctity of election commitments. I have been thinking and reflecting a lot in the past few weeks about the business of politics. It is my strong view that we deal in the currency of trust. We seek trust from an electorate for our election and then we endeavour to deliver upon the things that we have promised to those communities. Three to four weeks ago news broke that the Minister for Local Government had essentially broken trust with the Ryde community regarding one of the very few election commitments made in the Ryde electorate before the 2023 State election. That commitment was to save TG Millner.

TG Millner, for members who are not aware, is a premier rugby field in Marsfield. It is an extraordinary facility with an enormous legacy and history that dates back many generations. In fact, the Millner family bequeathed the site to the community for the continuity of sporting and outdoor activities. It has been a long and arduous process to see that particular site come under pressure from threats of sale and development—essentially a winding back of its intended purpose and cause.

For close to a decade, TG Millner has enjoyed bipartisan support. Liberal, Labor, and even The Greens and Independent members, have been united in the community's position to save the fields from development or sale. It has been an extraordinary unifier and something that I am proud to have been associated with since the beginning of my time in public office, first as a City of Ryde councillor, then as the mayor and now as the member for Ryde. It has brought together local, State and Federal governments, with the Federal member for Bennelong previously being on the record in support. My predecessor, Victor Dominello, is on the record in support, as are, as I have mentioned, numerous mayors across the political divide, including me. United behind that is a well-established local community of residents who have enjoyed and supported the club and that site for many years.

TG Millner is beloved. It brings people together of a weekend but, most importantly, it represents the future. It is no secret that Ryde is ground zero for a lot of the growth that is happening in Sydney at present. That is a good thing; we have a strong track record of new housing supply—on track for 300 per cent over our targets, year on year. We have been proud to deliver that for well over a decade. However, those levels of growth cannot be sustained without investment in new infrastructure and, of course, the retention of the existing infrastructure. When it comes to TG Millner, we are talking about the retention of three premier sporting fields that will make a significant dent in the ongoing open space and sporting needs for our community.

Today we are 15 fields short of what our population requires. In 2026 that deficit will increase to 20 fields. The problem is getting significantly worse, but we are not seeing the investment—in particular, the promised investment—to make inroads. The Government won an election on a platform of commitments that included a solemn promise to save the TG Millner field from the threat of sale or development. On that basis, the City of Ryde council proceeded with a request to compulsorily acquire the site. I remind the House this was a bipartisan position. The council went into it with eyes wide open. It believed that regardless of who won the election there would be a degree of surety around the future of the site. There was an expectation that the Government would not only grant the approval for compulsory acquisition but also step up with the cash.

What is a promise if it does not come with a dollar value? In the past few weeks, we have seen an extraordinary about-face from the Minister. He has taken a proactive step to deny the request of the council to proceed with that acquisition and make that land public. That is an extraordinary breach of faith. I have been inundated with correspondence from disgruntled, frustrated and bemused residents who cannot understand how a Minister and a government who were elected to office only 12 months ago could, in such a short time, make an about-turn on one of the very few community commitments they made. I am calling that out. I call on the Minister to allocate funds for this issue in the forthcoming budget.

### SNOWY MOUNTAINS SPECIAL ACTIVATION PRECINCT

**Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education) (21:01):** Recently I had the pleasure of joining the fabulous Minister for Regional New South Wales and fellow Queanbeyan resident, Tara Moriarty, in Jindabyne to announce the first projects of the Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct. The Government is proceeding with projects that provide a really important base for the future of Jindabyne. The special activation precinct plan provides a 40-year vision for the development of a community that is at the heart of some of the tourism potential in New South Wales. It also ensures it will be a good place for the people of the Snowy Mountains to live. I am very pleased one of the first projects is a new water treatment plant to ensure that current and future Jindabyne community members and visitors enjoy safe drinking water. Far too often Jindabyne has boiled water alerts, which are not appropriate in this day and age, particularly when there is such a fantastic source of water in Lake Jindabyne.

Another announced project is an upgrade of the Jindabyne sewage treatment plant to protect public health and the environment for future generations. We will also enhance electrical, water and sewer networks to futureproof services. We want to foster a great Jindabyne community and support environmental sustainability. We will also enable land acquisition for future housing development, including affordable housing projects, and preserve the corridor for the Southern Connector Road. We are going to invest in a Jindabyne mountain bike and adventure park to attract year-round tourism and enhance visitors' experience of the region. As people who have visited the Snowy Mountains in the summertime know, an area that used to focus on only winter tourism is now a year-round destination. Mountain bikers, in particular, love going to the area. I now see mountain bikes on the back of most cars heading up there. As an active mountain biker, I declare a personal interest in mountain bike parks.

We are also progressing plans for the enhancements to Lake Jindabyne's foreshore to shovel-ready status, but at this stage we need further funding. Those projects are important for the future of Jindabyne. This is a 40-year plan. The recent announcement covered the first stage of projects, with approximately \$196 million in State Government funding allocated over the this period of government. I expect there will be additional funding provided as we go forward with the projects, which form the basis of some really important development and activity in the Jindabyne area. Planning for the special activation project started under the previous Government. This Government has turned five years of discussion into delivery of projects. I remain somewhat bemused that a program planning the 40-year future of Jindabyne did not bother to do any planning for health. I will seek to remedy that over the next few years.

I acknowledge the to-and-fro I have in the local paper with local resident Phil Daley. He has pointed out that we are spending money to buy back land we owned a few years ago with Snowy Hydro. I acknowledge his point. Yes, we are buying back land that the taxpayers of New South Wales previously owned. It is not the first time that has happened. It is a bit of a shame that there was a lack of forward planning by the previous Government. But unfortunately we cannot avoid that spending at this stage because we need to buy the land for future housing development in Jindabyne. We can then apply Labor's policy of ensuring a percentage of affordable housing.

One of Jindabyne's major challenges is that we do not have affordable worker accommodation in the community. Often teachers who are posted to Jindabyne cannot find anywhere affordable to live. The same thing happens to people who work on the ski fields. Labor is addressing that issue in Jindabyne and in Cooma with a similar development as we move forward. There are some great opportunities for the Jindabyne community coming out of this work. I look forward to working with the community and our terrific Federal member, Kristy McBain, to determine what Federal funding can assist some of these projects as well.

## AGRICULTURAL SHOWS

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (21:06):** It gives me great pleasure to talk about agricultural shows. Agricultural shows and fairs are the lifeblood of regional New South Wales, showcasing our finest livestock, produce and craft. In some cases, the shows draw the largest community gatherings in those areas. The Royal Bathurst Show was the grand finale of the shows held across the Bathurst electorate. Rydal, Oberon, Rylstone, Sofala, Blayney and Lithgow have all held their 2024 gatherings, with great success. The dedicated show societies behind each of the events do an incredible job every year. Their blood, sweat and tears ensure the shows run as smoothly as possible. During set-up the day before the Oberon Show, a volunteer had an accident that ended in a trip to the hospital. The next morning he was back, ensuring everything was in place before the gates opened to the public. That is dedication. It is exactly why these annual events are so special to the local community.

The Rydal Show celebrated its 101-year anniversary and commemorated the life of Ian Litchfield, who served on the show committee as a chief steward since the 1960s. The fantastic Rylstone-Kandos Show always falls on the same weekend as another fantastic little show at Sofala. Together, the two events provide a weekend of entertainment and fun in the mid-west. The Lithgow Show focuses more on the world of crafts and entertainment. Many different artists and creators come together to share their creations and talent. It is a great family day out. The Royal Bathurst Show was graced with perfect weather after a few years of wet and cold forecasts. The Bathurst show excels at showcasing where our food and produce come from. The displays of locally grown, crafted and produced products fill three pavilions. There is a strong horse, cattle and sheep competition that continues throughout the three days. It is easy to see how the Bathurst show earned its nickname as the best show west of Sydney.

More than 800,000 people attend the Sydney Royal Easter Show each year. Imagine if even half of those people came to the bush shows. The economic impact and awareness of the regions would be off the charts. Agricultural shows play a vital role in promoting agriculture, stimulating local economies, building community bonds, preserving cultural traditions and encouraging healthy lifestyles in regional areas. They serve as a valuable platform for education, commerce and social interaction, contributing to the overall community. I implore those living in the bustling cities to take a drive across the mountains and enjoy the fresh air and beautiful landscapes. They can experience country hospitality this show season. They can meet the farmer who made their mince, chat to the cook who won best chutney, share a cuppa with a sheep shearer and join the crowd watching some of the best showjumpers in the State. Whether it is the best teacake in the country, the largest pumpkin grown or the meatiest cow on show, Bathurst is the only place in the State where the best of the bush is on show for all to see. It is the only way to experience why we are so passionate and proud of where we live.

## TRACY PHILLIPS

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (21:10):** This evening, on the eve of her retirement, I recognise and celebrate the contributions of Tracy Phillips to the provision of domestic and family violence support services in south-west Sydney. Liverpool and Fairfield are grateful for her work. For the past 7½ years she has been the executive officer of Bonnie Support Services, a specialist homelessness service that supports women and children who are experiencing domestic violence and/or homelessness. Prior to that, Tracy spent over 30 years working in the community and not-for-profit sectors, as well as in government departments, including Social Security, Family and Community Services, and Health. Her work in the community sector has primarily been in child protection, mental health and domestic violence.

I first met Tracy at the launch of *Home Free*, a remarkable collection of stories retelling the journeys of real women to safety from domestic violence. Stories resonate across age, culture and circumstance in a publication that uses both words and images to show that domestic violence does not affect just one type of person. It is effectively about each person finding their freedom and sharing their strength and resilience to give hope to others and to make a difference in our broader community. Tracy, a fierce feminist and advocate for the work of her wonderful team, made a huge impression on me that day. Her passion for the women of south-west Sydney and her commitment to creating a world without violence against women was inspiring. I still keep my copy of *Home Free* with me today, over six years later.

Bonnie's is an all-female, not-for-profit support service supporting women and children to lead the best lives they can. Established in 1974, it is committed to bringing almost 50 years of experience, understanding and best practice to make a real impact. As the debate rages about effective resourcing for domestic violence services within our broader community, I highlight Tracy's stewardship of Bonnie's. She ensured that its doors were kept open for women and children across south-west Sydney in the wake of the Staying Home Leaving Violence reforms of the previous Government. It was one of only a handful of women's refuges that was left open in the wake of those reforms. That meant the women whose stories were featured in *Home Free* were protected and supported by Tracy and her team.

At her retirement party just a couple of weeks ago, staff members shared stories of Tracy at Bonnie's and her work with many clients and many women across our broader community. Tracy made an incredibly important impact in holding a candlelight vigil in Macquarie mall every December to highlight the loss of women due to domestic and family violence every year—to remember their names, where possible, and to make sure that those uncomfortable experiences were front and centre of our community's attention. Tracy has, without doubt, made a huge impact on the consciousness of the broader Liverpool community. She has made a huge impact on the lives of many women and children across many years, and she will be greatly missed by her team at Bonnie's. She will also be greatly missed by people like me, who will miss her experience and her knowledge as a source of wisdom as we navigate what needs to be done to ensure that the community provides better support for women who are experiencing domestic and family violence and strives to realise the vision of a world without violence against women.

### **COMMUNITY OLDER PERSONS INTERVENTION AND LIAISON OUTREACH TEAM**

**Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (21:14):** By 2031, around 1.2 million people are expected to call the South Western Sydney Local Health District home. By that time, the 70-plus age group is predicted to increase to more than 155,000 people. As the community and the elderly population grow, it is essential that we have the right services in place to meet their needs. That is why I am proud to inform the House of the expansion of urgent care services for older people in south-western Sydney, including in my electorate of Fairfield—in particular, the Community Older Persons Intervention and Liaison Outreach Team, otherwise known as COPILOT. That community-based, integrated geriatric urgent care service eases pressure on emergency departments by responding urgently to the medical and physical health needs of older people for non-life-threatening conditions.

Care is provided in the patient's own home by a multidisciplinary team of geriatricians, nurses, social workers, physiotherapists, pharmacists, dietitians and occupational therapists. Patients are referred to the geriatric urgent care service through a number of channels, including local GPs, NSW Ambulance and emergency department aged-care teams. COPILOT operates from 8.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. seven days a week, with phone consultations between 4.30 p.m. and 8.00 p.m. COPILOT is one of the many services available in the local health district to support older residents. Other services in my district include Aunty Roma's falls prevention program, which offers a multidisciplinary and culturally specific approach to address the risk of frailty and falls in older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; the Residential Transitional Care Program, which supports older people discharged from hospital; a wide range of outpatient services, including geriatric medicine, memory clinics and specialist rehabilitation clinics; respite services, including in-home respite; and assessment and referral services, including aged-care assessment teams. I commend the Government and the Minister for Health for their work in that space.

### **GENDERED VIOLENCE**

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (21:17):** It has been a tough few weeks for our State and for our country. As many of us have been reeling from cases of domestic violence [DV] and from new tragedies, women have marched through the streets demanding action. I speak as a woman concerned about the rising levels of domestic violence, but I also deliver this speech through the lens of the local member in a community that has been suffering from other tragedies recently. In the days following the Bondi Junction tragedy, our whole community—indeed, the whole State—felt a great and deep sense of shock and grief. But for many local women in my community, there was a deeper and more visceral response—one of being afraid and of being fiercely angry.

The perpetrator of those deadly attacks appeared to be targeting women and, while significant mental health issues were at play, the attacks on mothers, young women and a poor baby triggered a deeper sense of vulnerability. It reminded us that we are not safe. After the attacks, parents' WhatsApp groups ignited, sharing stories of escapes from Bondi Junction and venting their anger about male violence. One woman said:

We aren't safe at the shops. We aren't safe on a road outside a hospital at lunchtime ... where are we supposed to exist? When does it become a crisis anyone does something about?

We are all very focused on that question right now. How do we address that crisis? In the shadow of the Bondi Junction tragedy, the alleged murder of 28-year-old Molly Ticehurst at the hands of her former partner triggered nationwide rallies—women asking for women's voices to be heard and understood, and for more action to be taken. Fifteen adult women were victims of DV-related murder in the 12 months to December 2023—up six from the previous 12-month period. DV assaults and murders had been declining over 20 years, but we are in the middle of a reversal of that trend. Every life lost and every woman living in fear is one too many.

In my community, uniquely, political and community leadership is skewed female. Our State, Federal and local government leaders are women, as is our local police chief, and soon a woman will be the chief of our naval base. But even in a community that at face value has no problem with women in power, we have a hidden epidemic of domestic violence that grows deeper and more disturbing. In the past two years, the rate of domestic violence



has increased by 16.2 per cent in the eastern suburbs—one of the highest rates of increase in the State, according to the latest data from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.

Many other communities suffer worse numbers of domestic violence assault and have far greater underlying figures, like parts of Greater Western Sydney. Regional and rural areas are profoundly impacted and the women there are often isolated. Speaking as the member for Vaucluse, our communities cannot ignore this dark local trend: a significant and unexplained uplift in numbers. Given the increase, it was jarring that Bondi Junction's only domestic violence service, the Lokahi Foundation, was defunded by the Federal Government a couple of months ago. When Lokahi approached the State Government for \$100,000 to keep its doors open so it could continue to support the 35 families in its care, it was told there was no money. I hope that the new Federal and State funding packages for domestic violence will mean that our local funding is restored, if not improved, because it is unacceptable that our community has faced a net loss in funding at a time of increasing violence and domestic abuse.

At the local, State and Federal levels we must act decisively to implement short-, medium- and long-term strategies to address the deepening tragedy in homes and communities across the country. As a starting point, the Liberals and Nationals put forward legislation today to make some commonsense changes to bail reforms, including expanding the use of electronic monitoring devices to those bailed on serious domestic violence charges. Those changes were rejected, which is a shame, because the public is calling for decisive action and that could have been the beginnings of a broader, more holistic approach. A contest of ideas in this space is healthy, so the Opposition will keep making strong contributions. We will continue to work constructively across Parliament to progress not just bail reforms but also other measures to ensure that our communities are kept safe.

### **SOUTH-WESTERN SYDNEY MULTICULTURALISM**

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (21:22):** On a seemingly typical Monday evening, I was shocked, like everyone else, to see the horrific images of a bishop being stabbed while starting his Monday mass. After verifying the authenticity of the images, I went down to Wakeley's Christ the Good Shepherd Church with my colleague the member for Fairfield in an attempt to de-escalate tensions on the night and support the community. After hours of rumours, misinformation and near riot, the situation thankfully stabilised. In the early hours of Tuesday morning, NSW Police Force Commissioner Karen Webb declared the event a terrorist incident. I commend the police, paramedics, hospital staff and other frontline workers for their work on the night and in the days that followed.

Wakeley and south-western Sydney quickly dominated the news cycle. Sadly, a region often depicted negatively would once again be written about and reported on by outsiders. Despite the media narratives, it is the community's response in the days that followed that defines south-western Sydney, not the stabbing. Contrary to fears of retaliations and attacks on local churches and mosques, the reality has been starkly different. A quiet normality has returned, testament to the deliberate, ongoing efforts of a well-connected and united community. Those connections are the result of enduring relationships forged over decades by political, community, religious, and governmental leaders. As the situation on Monday night unfolded, those leaders used their networks to quickly quell tensions, quash rumours and ensure a measured response. We worked to separate fact from fiction and ensure that cool heads prevailed. The message was clear: Prioritise peace and disregard the inflammatory rumours spreading through social media platforms. Those discussions have continued throughout the weeks since and, thankfully, calm has been restored.

Disturbingly, the events at Wakeley are clear evidence of the ease with which misinformation spreads through platforms like Twitter, WhatsApp and Telegram. Weak accountability mechanisms pose a significant problem and authorities must be vigilant about this threat. Those threats are further fuelled by an increasing lack of trust in traditional institutions, for which the media and we in the political class have much to answer for. Selective and detrimental media attention on south-western Sydney has only intensified since the decline of the local newspaper. Traditional outlets have vacated the region, leaving behind a near vacuum filled by under-resourced online platforms, ethnic media and the wild west that is Facebook. The lack of robust local media infrastructure means scant coverage unless it fits a sensational and predefined narrative. As a result, mainstream media often overlooks the real south-western Sydney.

The region is home to generations that have risen above adversity, including my colleagues—the aforementioned member for Fairfield, the member for Cabramatta and the member for Liverpool. All of us were elected last year and we are genuine products of south-western Sydney. We come from working class and migrant backgrounds. We have overcome significant odds to be the first generation to attend university and get where we are. We left successful careers and now have the privilege of serving the communities that supported and raised us. We do so to ensure that future generations from this region can do the same.

The events at Wakeley have only strengthened that resolve. While MPs are afforded an office, staff and a salary, many community and religious leaders continue their essential work as volunteers while balancing work commitments and ever-forgiving families. Their tireless work is often unacknowledged but should never be forgotten. Just 24 hours before the attack at Wakeley, I attended a Chaldean event with members from across the community: Christian, Muslim, Mandaean, atheist and agnostic. Fellow MPs, councillors and the local police commander were also in attendance. We came together to celebrate a cohort of young HSC and university graduates, showcasing our region's best and brightest.

Hundreds of such events take place each year in south-western Sydney. Their regularity makes them seemingly unremarkable. However, the fact that people of diverse cultures, religions and beliefs come together every week to celebrate each other's success is a remarkable trademark of our multiculturalism. Despite the headlines, this is the true story of south-western Sydney. It is not one of intermittent chaos and crisis, but of continuous, quiet resilience and unity. That narrative is rarely celebrated but it remains the bedrock of our community's identity. It deserves as much attention and respect as any sensational headline. The stabbing of Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel is an aberration, and we hope to never see anything like it again.

#### **WILLOUGHBY DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY**

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (21:27):** I speak on a milestone anniversary for a significant cultural institution in my local area: the fiftieth anniversary of the Willoughby District Historical Society. For half a century the society has played a critical role in educating and informing the local community about its rich, special and long heritage and the need to preserve it for the community going forward. The society was founded in February 1974 after the then Mayor of Willoughby, David Warner, convened a meeting of interested citizens in Chatswood to form a historical society. I pay tribute to the vision and enterprise of John Vaughan, who helped establish the society. John became its inaugural president for its first 10 years, together with a team of dedicated locals.

Since its foundation, the society's purpose has been to encourage the study and appreciation of the local history of Willoughby and Australia at large. The society has done that through periodic meetings featuring guest speakers talking on a variety of historical topics. In addition, it has coordinated lectures and excursions to historical locations. One of the defining achievements of the society was establishing a museum to showcase the history of Willoughby from the early years of settlement. That was accomplished in 1993 when the society opened the Museum of Willoughby in the beautiful Federation-style cottage Boronia at 58 Johnson Street, Chatswood. My predecessor and friend Peter Collins proudly opened the new community asset.

With its impressive visual display of artefacts and exhibits, including replica rooms, the museum brings the history of Willoughby to life for every visitor. For interested visitors and residents, the Willoughby museum is open to the public most Sundays from 1.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. between February and November, and for group tours by arrangement. Reflecting the enterprise of its members, the society and museum are completely run by volunteers and rely on grants, donations and fundraising for their day-to-day operation, as well as memberships. I am very proud to be a member.

The society has as its symbol the iconic Innisfallen Castle. Perched proudly above Middle Harbour, Innisfallen inspired the name of the suburb Castle Cove. Innisfallen Castle was chosen as the emblem of the society because it was threatened with being sold off for residential development or subdivided into units. However, the champions for preserving the castle prevailed and so it has come to represent a proud symbol of survival and historical preservation for the society. I acknowledge the president of the society, Judy Peters, and her committee for doing a terrific job. I read onto the record the magnificent tribute poem that was written and read by the great Don Swonnell at the society's celebration event. It is entitled *History is Alive – How the Willoughby District Historical Society and Museum was Born*. It goes:

Our story starts in '65,  
When all of Willoughby came alive,  
To celebrate one hundred years,  
The Municipality said "Cheers"

Way back in 1974,  
Reflecting on the time before,  
A dedicated young man John Vaughan,  
Decided a History Society should be born.

Mayor David Warner called for all  
To gather in the Bailey Hall,  
Two hundred turned up on the night  
One hundred signed up and things looked bright.

They elected our Committee then and there,  
Willoughby history to collect and share,  
They held meetings with interesting speakers  
And tours of interest for history seekers

1981 began the search for a home of our own  
Where local objects could be shown  
To educate the Willoughby masses  
And demonstrate that local history matters

The call went out to far and wide  
And advertised in the North Shore Times,  
The council dedicated time and effort  
But sadly, each venue suggested came up short

Until a remarkable happenstance  
A young woman Sonya Kirkham, by chance  
In knowing the History Society's plight  
Saw fit to try to set things right

She included in legal papers her desire  
To bequeath 'Boronia' cottage for all to admire.  
Work then began to transform her home,  
As a showcase for stories to be told,

A man named Eric Wilksch meanwhile,  
Collected tipped items with a smile,  
Displaying them where 'ere he could  
Bottles, papers, clocks and tools for wood.

The Museum opened with great Hurrah,  
For thirty years the Society's star  
For telling all the folks around  
where local history could be found.

Eric became the first Curator  
And Bob McKillop some years later.  
Successive Presidents and committees have tried  
To work for history to be relevant and admired

To encourage Heritage conservation  
And preserve the history of our Nation  
To create new exhibitions and strive,  
To make local history come alive.

Some fifty years have passed us by,  
The committee and members still do try  
To research and educate on history matters  
And distribute articles through our Willoughby Chatters

And now with website and Facebook education,  
To cater for the next generation  
We look towards a future bright and bold  
In which more history can be told.

So lift your glasses and give a cheer  
That our Historical Society is still there.

On this auspicious fiftieth anniversary of the Willoughby District Historical Society and Museum, I congratulate and thank all involved. May the society continue to prosper for another half a century.

#### KIAMA ELECTORATE STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (21:31):** I acknowledge the hardworking and dedicated local emergency services personnel across the Kiama electorate who answered the call in our community's hour of need in the early hours of Saturday 6 April through to Sunday 7 April 2024. Almost 200 millimetres of rain fell on our community in a short period, which caused flash flooding and enormous damage. Many local people needed to leave their homes due to the flood, which saw sewage and stormwater flowing into homes and rendering them uninhabitable. Following the storm events, I dropped in to personally thank the Kiama SES unit volunteers and acknowledge their enormous commitment and dedication to duty. I acknowledge Kiama unit commander Chris Warren, Shellharbour unit commander Ray Merz and local commander John Wall. I also acknowledge Nowra unit commander Jo Allen and local commander Adam Carney. I acknowledge Shoalhaven SES headquarters in Nowra, the Jamberoo RFS and other emergency responders that played a critical role in assisting with the latest natural disaster to beset my community.

In Jamberoo, there was an extraordinary act of heroism and bravery by a local tradie, Mitch Rosser, who will be formally recognised for his life-saving actions and quick thinking. In the early hours of Saturday 6 April,

Mitch was at his property clearing tools off the floor of his shed when he heard a man scream for help. Mitch rang 000, but there was no way they could arrive in time. Mitch's house backs onto Turpentine Creek. He could hear the man but could not see him in the pitch darkness and torrential rain. Mitch was yelling, "Where are you?" The man shouted back, "I am over here. Help me. The water is rising." The only reason that Mitch was able to spot him was due to the reflective strip on the man's work shirt.

Eventually, he found him and used a pool scoop pole to pull him out of the water and through the scrub. The man was extremely shaken. He hugged Mitch and told him, "You just saved my life." All of the electronics in the man's car had died; however, by some miracle, the power window wound down and he managed to exit the vehicle as the water was sweeping into his cabin from the creek. The vehicle was later found badly damaged another kilometre down Turpentine Creek, ending near the twelfth hole of the Jamberoo golf course. The man is extremely fortunate to be alive today. It was due to the courage and bravery of Mitch Rosser that the man survived the horrible ordeal.

I have nominated Mitch Rosser for a Premier's Award because he chose to run into danger and put himself in harm's way to save a life. I remember when a one-in-100-year flood was a rare event. Climate change is causing those flooding events to become more common and harder to predict. It is more important than ever that we invest in both preparedness prior to flooding and betterment after flooding. While I commend the New South Wales Government for responding swiftly to my calls for disaster declarations in our community, I was less than impressed with the subsequent funding package announced. In the days after the floods, I met with primary producers that were disappointed that only loans were on offer. That was in stark contrast to direct grants that were provided in 2022 so that farmers could get on with engaging contractors to do essential tasks like re-establishing boundary fences.

A frequent refrain that we hear from leaders in emergency services during floods is "If it's flooded, forget it. Do not drive through floodwater." Words have not worked; it is time for action. I inform the House that I will soon introduce a bill to provide for a fine for those who have deliberately and recklessly driven through floodwater. It will propose that any revenue from those fines goes directly back to the hardworking men and women of the SES. When a flood rescue occurs because someone has decided to drive into floodwater, volunteer rescuers are putting their lives on the line. People would not drive into a bushfire, so why do they feel the need to drive into floodwater when they do not know the depth or velocity of the water? If it is flooded, forget it.

Many countries have a surcharge in place when people require rescuing. If there is a penalty involved with a degree of risk-taking behaviour, it will hopefully make people think twice and save lives. I hope that the bill will receive bipartisan support across the Chamber from Government, Opposition and crossbench members. I take the opportunity to thank the remarkable member for Lismore, the Parliamentary Secretary for Disaster Recovery, for reaching out and providing enormous assistance to me and my community to help it get back on its feet. The Government can be proud of the work that she did during the floods. I know that she has her own story of survival to tell from her experience in Lismore.

I also acknowledge the support I received from the NSW Reconstruction Authority, particularly Heidi Stratford, who assisted with a range of inquiries. There is no doubt that my community will take a long time to repair following the flood. It was already suffering from bushfires and floods in 2022. Roads that were closed and about to be reopened have subsequently suffered more damage. I am grateful for those from the Government that have reached out to give support. I look forward to my community being back bigger and better.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 21:37 until  
Wednesday 8 May 2024 at 10:00.**

*Written Community Recognition Statements*

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

#### **PORT HACKING OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB 30TH ANNIVERSARY**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)**—I was delighted to join the Port Hacking Outrigger Canoe Club in March to open its regatta at Gunnamatta Park Cronulla celebrating its 30th anniversary. It's a passionate club that is serious about outrigger canoe racing and since its inception it has won state and national titles in various categories and age groups and competed in international events. The club has more than 60 active members from teens to people aged 70 plus, both elite paddlers and people getting out on the water to exercise and to enjoy our beautiful waterways in a family friendly environment. I congratulate the club members on 30 years of being part of our community. I acknowledge the work of its leadership team, President Stuart Woodger, Vice President Denise Bennett, Secretary Caryn Scott, Men's Coach Pete Williams, and Women's Coach Jenny Madden.

### **EBONY SPRINGALL**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)**—I congratulate Ebony Springall of North Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club who is the Junior Lifesaver of the Year from across all Sydney surf lifesaving clubs. This award was open to junior members who gained their Surf Rescue Certificate in the recent season and are graduating from Nippers. Ebony won the award following a demanding series of interviews by a panel including representatives of Surf Life Saving Sydney, plus previous winners. She underwent an assessment of her knowledge of surf lifesaving, active club involvement and extended community, her leadership, communication, and presentation skills, and what she plans to do in surf lifesaving in the future. Ebony went on to represent the Sydney clubs as a finalist for the state award and Surf Life Saving Sydney says she did herself, her club, and the Sydney branch very proud. I recognise Ebony for this fantastic achievement and wish her every success as she graduates to become part of the frontline team patrolling North Cronulla beach next summer.

### **POWERFUL EMPOWERED WOMEN INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)**—I would like to recognise the work of a very important community organisation in my electorate. On March 8 2024 the Powerful Empowered Women held an International Women's Day Event at Croyley House in Baulkham Hills. There was a dinner served, and entertainment with performances from the Pink Lotus Dance Group, a multicultural Fashion Walk, and an awards presentation for Success Story Awards. Congratulations to the recipients of the Success Story Awards. Powerful Empowered Women also generously presented cheques to Police Legacy NSW, Love for Australia, and Sri Om Care. The work of Powerful Empowered Women is a wonderful example of women supporting women, both in business, within the community, and personally. The mission of Powerful Empowered Women is "To promote and bring together Women in Business and Community and support each other." Thank you and congratulations to Founder and President, Pratibha Bhanushali, and to all the committee for your International Women's Day Event. Thank you to all members of the Powerful Empowered Women organisation for all you do in the community and for uplifting and promoting women in business and among the Hills and wider community.

### **IN HONOUR OF MR RONALD PARNELL**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)**—On the 24th of April, Ron Parnell died peacefully at the age of 89. A great loss to his family and the Hills community. At the age of 63 years Ron completed a degree in Social Ecology and Lifelong Learning. He completed a master's degree in applied sciences majoring in Cultural Action. Ron was the founder and author of MISTER Newsletter, which stands for Men's Information Sheet To Every Region. The Newsletter provided helpful information for men. The subjects covered in the newsletter ranged from health to mindfulness. The inspiration for the newsletter arose from Ron's observation that most of the pre-existing newsletters dealing with similar subject matter tended to be long with far too much content. Considering these criticisms combined with his passion for men's wellbeing, Ron commenced the MISTER newsletter 1998. Ron was also a member of numerous other community groups and programs including the Castle Hill Players at the Pavilion Theatre. Ron was also awarded the Hills Shire Council Australia day Award in 2021. Ron was a man of the community, and his absence will be deeply felt. I extend my condolences to his family in their time of grief.

### **CASTLE HILL SENIORS' AWARDS**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)**—I recognise the contribution of members of the Castle Hill Community. Recently seven Seniors Local Achievement Awards were presented. Michael Blair OAM he been a member of the Castle Hill Rotary Club for over thirty years and is a former Councillor. Phillip Dunn joined Castle Hill Rotary in 1972 and has been active Rotarian, humanitarian, and community leader. Philip Davis joined the Castle Hill Rotary Club in 2002 and during this time he was integral in running important club initiatives which have benefited the community. Terry O'Mara first joined the Rotary Club of Dubbo in 1986 and he has been an active Rotarian ever since. As a member of the Rotary Club of Castle Hill he was integral to the development of the Castle Hill Excellence in Policing Awards. Malcolm Botfield joined the Castle Hill & District RSL Sub-Branch in 1986 and has served on numerous positions. Bjinder Dugal is the co-founder of AASHA Foundation which aims to enrich the lives of older Australian Indians. Jeanette Farrell has served the Hills District since the late 1970's working on numerous groups but more recently as a Director of the Positive Vibes Foundation. I congratulate all award recipients.

### **SCHOOL LEADERS 2024 - OAK FLATS HIGH SCHOOL**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I would like to congratulate Cheyenne Brown (Captain), Beau Gillis (Captain), Amber Crehan (Vice Captain), Ryan Robinson (Vice Captain), Serenah Turner (Secretary) and Darren Nguyen (Treasurer) for being elected as school leaders for 2024 at Oak Flats High School. Being appointed a leader at your school is an honour for any student and worthy of recognition. You all have a very important job within the school and will act as mentors for younger students, advocate for student issues and represent your

school at functions and events. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate you all on this achievement and wish you all the best in this leadership role.

#### **SCHOOL LEADERS 2024 - SHELL COVE PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I would like to congratulate Lily (Captain), Flynn (Captain), Annabelle (Vice Captain), Xaiver (Vice Captain), Austin (Vice Captain) and Alexander (Vice Captain) for being elected as school leaders for 2024 at Shell Cove Public School. Being appointed a leader at your school is an honour for any student and worthy of recognition. You all have a very important job within the school and will act as mentors for younger students, advocate for student issues and represent your school at functions and events. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate you all on this achievement and wish you all the best in this leadership role.

#### **SCHOOL LEADERS 2024 - MOUNT BROWN PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I would like to congratulate Diesel Lloyd, Henry Nabalarua, Kaylee Donald-Hardes, Tahlia Tuema, Connor Catron, Kallani Donald-Hardes, Matilda Atkin and Harper Apolloni for being elected as school leaders for 2024 at Mount Brown Public School. Being appointed a leader at your school is an honour for any student and worthy of recognition. You all have a very important job within the school and will act as mentors for younger students, advocate for student issues and represent your school at functions and events. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate you all on this achievement and wish you all the best in this leadership role.

#### **ANZAC DAY**

**Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)**—ANZAC Day commemorates that immortal day when the young men of Australia by their deeds and sacrifice demonstrated to the world at Gallipoli that Australia was truly a nation. We remember the sacrifice of men and women for an ideal, for a way of life, in places far from home during conflicts in WWI and WWII, Korea, Malaya, Borneo, Vietnam, in the Gulf, Rwanda, Somalia, Iraq, Timor and Afghanistan, as well as the many other peacekeeping operations. Let us take strength in the knowledge and hope that our sons and daughters will never forget the example set by their forebears. I was honoured and moved to attend many of the ANZAC Day services in my electorate along with my team, including Dawn Services Hill Top War Memorial Hall and Picton-Thirlmere Bargo Sub Branch RSL, and services hosted by Colo Vale Community Association, Taara Gardens Retirement Village & Agris Hutrof House, Bargo Sports Club, Warragamba ANZAC Committee, Mittagong RSL Club Sub Branch, Picton ANZAC Day Committee, Oakdale Workers Club and Bowral RSL Club Sub Branch. I am proud of the youth of Wollondilly for the moving ceremonies held at St Anthony's School, Picton High School and Thirlmere Public School.

#### **JACQUELINE LOCKYER'S AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD**

**Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)**—Yandelora School Principal Jacqueline Lockyer was the deserving recipient of the 2024 Wollondilly Shire Council Australia Day Award for Disability Inclusion. Yandelora, established in 2019, excels in providing quality education for students with moderate to severe intellectual and physical disabilities. Jacqueline's leadership has been instrumental in creating a supportive environment where students thrive and gain independence. Jacqueline's commitment to special education spans her entire career, marked by her genuine rapport with students, staff, and families. She played a pivotal role in the planning and development of Yandelora School, transforming it into a state-of-the-art facility with a strong community focus. Under Jacqueline's guidance, the school fosters connections among students, the land, and the wider community. Jacqueline's motto, "We Connect, We Create, We Celebrate, We are a Community," encapsulates her passion and the inclusive ethos of Yandelora School. Her dedication to fostering positive relationships ensures that all stakeholders have a voice and are valued in the school community. Yandelora School empowers learners with additional needs to achieve their personal best in a dignified environment. Jacqueline's contributions make her an asset to Wollondilly and to the education system.

#### **WOLLONDILLY FELLOWSHIP OF AUSTRALIAN WRITERS**

**Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)**—The Wollondilly Fellowship of Australian Writers is a community of writers who regularly join together to share their passion for writing, and I was pleased to host them in my electorate office for their monthly meeting for a poetry reading. The writers shared their favourite pieces, and engaged in insightful discussion of poetry, politics and what matters to the people of Wollondilly. Though writing is often a solo activity, the Wollondilly Fellowship of Australian Writers allows like minded creatives to form connections and create a community. They are a chapter of the Fellowship of Australian Writers New South Wales, which brings together experienced writers with emerging talents, providing opportunities for mentorship across the state. One of nearly thirty branches located throughout metropolitan and regional areas, the organisation welcomes all to join, and hosts writing workshops, events and competitions. For anyone with a passion for writing,

the Wollondilly Fellowship of Australian Writers offers an inviting platform to share ideas, explore diverse perspectives, and enrich their craft.

#### **CONGRATULATIONS INDIE ROBINSON-FARGO**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise Indie Robinson-Fargo of MacIntyre High School for being selected to attend the National Schools Constitutional Convention (NSCC), held at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, Canberra recently. I congratulate Indie on this impressive opportunity to meet like-minded students and political figures, to observe and participate in the workings of the political machine on a grassroots level, and to gain valuable insight through stimulus speakers and contested debates. I commend Indie for his passion and commitment to aspiring to work in government. I thank his teacher Mr Ian Champion and the Board of MacIntyre High School for actively encouraging his interest in Australian politics and its relevance in today's society and for his family in playing an important role in Indie's development and providing support through every step with great pride.

#### **ARMIDALE FOLK MUSEUM CELEBRATES 90 YEARS**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise the Armidale Folk Museum on celebrating its 90th anniversary since opening in 1933. The museum's exhibits show everyday life and work, including past citizens' sacrifice in times of war, and a glimpse into how the region was settled in the 1840s, through to the development into the thriving agricultural area that it is today. It remains a valuable education provider, with a changing program of diverse exhibitions and events, telling stories significant to the wider community. I congratulate the Armidale Regional Council, staff and volunteers for their support and contribution to the many years of operation. Thank you to the current staff: Ivan Thornton and Liam O'Neill (Museum Assistants), Sarah Reddington (Arts, Culture and Heritage Officer) and special thanks to volunteers Michelle Arens and Marina Makepeace. Community institutions such as this in regional towns, cannot function without the wonderful support and commitment these volunteers give. I commend all involved in the success and longevity of the Museum, who have given their time and effort to ensure this historically significant icon remains for future generations.

#### **MELIBEE HONEY**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise the achievements of Melibee Honey on being awarded Champion Creamed Honey at this year's Sydney Royal National Honey Competition. This is indeed a prestigious honour, with the competition recognizing produce that has achieved the highest level of quality. I congratulate owners of Melibee Honey Geoff and Jody McNally, on this wonderful accolade and for the hard work that has gone into producing a top-shelf product. The duo manages numerous hives across the New England region, allowing the bees to forage on a diverse array of trees and shrubs to produce high-quality and nutrient-dense honey. Whilst Geoff primarily looks after the bees, Jody draws on her science background to create the Melibee blend of honey, with their daughter Jannala, being responsible for creating their unique branding and marketing. I commend Geoff and Jody on their winning creamed honey, along with the various infused creamed and raw honey they produce. Although Geoff and Jody have been in business just one year, this venture draws on years of experience and expertise, a commitment to environmental values and a willingness to share their passion.

#### **DASH WITH A SPLASH**

**Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)**—I rise today to highlight the talents and achievement of the people and businesses in Kempsey who come together for Youth week. The Macleay Valley celebrates Youth Week with Dash with A Splash. This is a colourful 2-kilometer community fun run. 'Dash with a Splash' was attended by over 260 youth together with their relatives and friends, where lifetime memories were created with joy, smiles, laughter, and excitement of colour. "Dash-with-a-splash" would not be possible without the organisation from our neighbourhood service providers and nonprofits, including Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation and Learning the Macleay. The day is a well-received community event. This event serves as an opportunity for people to come together, regardless of their backgrounds or differences. It is a chance to celebrate youth week and what make Kempsey unique and build connections with one another. I applaud the local community, and everyone involved for their dedication to organising an enjoyable and stimulating youth week programme that aims to foster relationships and promote the Kempsey area, this event is a testament to the pride in our hometown and all the amazing things it has to offer.

#### **BELLINGEN, HOME TO AUSTRALIA'S FIRST NOT-FOR-PROFIT TAXI SERVICE**

**Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)**—North Coast non-profit organisation with the acquisition of Bellingen Shire Taxis, the Community Transport Company established Australia's first not for profit taxi service. The organisation strives to make the most beneficial difference possible in the world we live in and is a registered charity and social enterprise. The proprietors' main objective is to guarantee that people's access to opportunities

and necessities is not impeded by transportation restrictions. For more than 35 years, The Community Transport Company has assisted with transportation, especially in areas with little public transport options. With a current total of 80 vehicles, 250 volunteers, and staff members, the company can now serve a wider range of travel needs by expanding its reach and adding Bellingren Shire Taxis to its network. The dependable, courteous, and professional group of drivers guarantees every passenger ride is efficient, safe, and enjoyable. As a social enterprise, all profits we make from the taxi service will go back into the business charity's community transportation programmes, giving those who are disadvantaged by transportation, access, and inclusion. This is the start of an amazing advantage for our community. Congratulations.

#### **A FIRST FOR SCOTT'S HEAD**

**Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)**—Bathed in gentle autumnal sunshine, locals, beachgoers, and school holiday visitors were in for a surprise on Sunday morning, April 14, with the opening of the Scott's Head Farmers Market. Aiming to encourage locally based goods, Driftwood Shelter (Café) organised a local community initiative that highlights products from home-grown farmers, bakers, and makers, with an emphasis on supporting local. The products on offer along with tempting local organic honey products were mostly in-season fruit, vegetables, and herbs, like elderberry, lavender, rosemary, thyme, and coffee honey infusions, as well as practical beeswax wraps. The market gave a platform for small businesses to display the thriving viability of their patches, while the Scott's Head Community Garden provided containers of freshly cut bunches of herbs as well as recently picked fruit and vegetables for everyone to enjoy. With many advantages for the community, the decision to open a new farmers market in Scott's Head was an excellent decision. I acknowledge Driftwood Shelter (Café) for a job well done and commend the community on a well-run market. I hope this market possesses a remarkably successful future.

#### **ORANGE RUNNING FESTIVAL**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I wish to recognise the Orange Running Festival and its continued growth, which culminated in almost two and a half thousand runners taking part in the 2024 event in March. That is an increase of 300 runners, which typifies the event's growth since its inception in 2007. Mr Speaker, the city of Orange is at its best in the autumn months and the Runners Festival is a showcase event with visitors catered for at all levels. The festival itself continues to evolve, offering distances from the beginners 2km dash to a marathon, making it attractive for families. All these events take advantage of the picturesque Gosling Creek reserve and surrounds. The Orange Running Festival and its sister event the Great Volcanic Challenge, which is also listed for March, have become flagship events on Orange's sporting calendar and provide financial benefits for the business and hospitality industries in the district. Like all well-attended events, the Orange Runners Festival is backed by the business community and service clubs and I thank them for that support. I also thank the Orange Runners Club and its committee, which continues to provide a quality event that benefits its community enormously.

#### **STOCKMAN'S RIDGE VINEYARD**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—Mr Speaker, Orange has cemented its reputation as a quality grape and wine district and with next generation producers like Jonathan and Lisa Hambrook, the future looks assured. The Hambrooks, owners of Stockman's Ridge Vineyard on Orange's Cargo Road since 2012, have been named as finalists in wine publicists Young Gun of Wine's vineyard of the year. It's a pat on the back for the Hambrooks – the vineyard of the year category has more than 6000 entries from which 40 finalists were selected. Stockman's Ridge is the only vineyard from Orange to feature on this year's finalist list, and one of just six from NSW. The Young Gun of Wine awards, which kicked off in 2020 and are judged by award winning wine writer Max Allen, recognise innovation, sustainability, vine health and wine quality from grape to glass. Following the debilitating impact of drought, covid and bushfires, these awards are invaluable in aiding the industry's recovery by shining a light on resilience and versatility through innovation. I wish Stockman's Ridge all the best for final judging in this award, but believe they are already winners.

#### **BELINDA GRIEVE - PICKLEBALL**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I would like to commend my constituent Belinda Grieve on promoting an active lifestyle to a more mature age group, through a sport relatively new to Australia. Pickleball, a paddle sport played on a court similar in size to badminton, was introduced to Orange's sporting scene by Mss Grieve in February with a come-and-try day at the Orange PCYC. Aimed at her own generation, women over 55, and initially hoping for around 20 participants, Miss Grieve and the PCYC were overwhelmed when more than 80 turned up to give it a go. Some arrived half an hour early and were still enjoying the activity well after the scheduled midday finish! The motivation for Miss Grieve, who used pickleball as part of her National Rural Women's Coalition Leadership Muster project, was to get women 'of a certain age' moving after a nurse friend gave her some blunt advice: 'If you stop moving, you die'. Providing a safe, welcoming space for women to try



something new, a sport that caters for most levels of fitness and mobility also motivated Miss Grieve who has certainly discovered a solution to filling a sporting and social void for older people. Well done.

#### **CAPTAIN RICHARD BRICKACEK, CSC, DSM, RAN**

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)**—On Saturday 20 April 2024, I attended the Anzac Day service at the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway in Concord. The memorial is surrounded by tropical vegetation and a memorial rose garden. It helps commemorate Australians who fought on the Kokoda Trail in Papua New Guinea 1942 alongside the bravery of the local Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels. At the 2024 service, Captain Richard Brickacek CSC, DSM, RAN gave an address. Captain Brickacek served with distinction in Iraq and Afghanistan, where he was awarded the Defence Force Service Medal (DSM) for gallantry when leading an explosive ordnance team with "exemplary courage and composure" following the detonation of an improvised explosive device which resulted in the deaths of two of his team. Lest We Forget. Captain Brickacek now serves as Commander of the Mine Warfare and Clearance Diving Squadron. He is also a local resident of Lindfield. It is with great pride that I represent him and his family in the NSW Parliament. Thank you for your ongoing service, Captain Brickacek.

#### **WENDY CARVER - 2023 NSW COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD**

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)**—On Friday 3 May 2024, it was my honour to present a 2023 NSW Community Service Award to Wendy Carver OAM. Wendy retired as CEO of Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury (H2H) in 2022 after 12 years and over 30 years of service. She commenced as a telephone crisis line volunteer and has given enormous service to the community. Wendy is a very worthy recipient of the recognition this award brings. Through Lifeline H2H, Wendy worked tirelessly offering a positive future to the most vulnerable in our community. We must do everything we can to end the stigma towards of mental health. Despair and isolation drive suicide. Hope and connection prevent suicide. I recognise the significant contribution Wendy has made. I am very proud to represent Wendy and to have Lifeline H2H, that is headquartered locally in Gordon, in the Parliament of NSW. Thank you, Wendy!

#### **LADY GAME COMMUNITY KINDERGATEN MOTHER'S DAY CAKE STALL**

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)**—On Saturday 11 May 2024, a tradition continues with Lady Game Community Kindergarten hosting their annual Mother's Day Cake Store at West Lindfield Shops. Volunteers have organised this fundraising event that will assist the kindergarten to raise resources for teaching since the kindergarten was opened in 1961. Founder of the kindergarten, Pat Gardner said it best, "We made a kindergarten, and we also made a community". As you can imagine, there are many delicious treats to choose. I encourage our community to come along, donate, and purchase a treat, or even two. Although I cannot be there in 2024, I very much enjoyed visiting in 2023. This year, my wife Gessika will attend and present this Community Recognition Statement to the amazing volunteers. The kindergarten encapsulates the community spirit of the Davidson electorate by bringing together community members, families and friends. I would like to thank everyone involved in this initiative for their efforts and for making it a special place to purchase a Mother's Day gift. I look forward to Gessika telling me what they have on the menu in 2024.

#### **ABI THOMPSON'S POSITIVE IMPACT TO - ALBURY HOSPITAL'S NEW EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—I would like to acknowledge Abi Thompson for her exceptional artwork "Murray Meander" which has been chosen to grace the new Albury Hospital Emergency Department waiting room. The stunning piece, which captures the beauty of the Murray River and its inhabitants using watercolours and displayed on canvas, is a testament to Ms Thompson's talent and creativity. Ms Thompson has been creating and teaching art for more than 30 years and her artworks range from large oil and acrylics on canvas, paper and board, to recycled and revamped clothes, watercolours, prints lino cuts, textiles, landscapes in felt and lampshades. The new waiting room artwork 'Murray Meander' commissioned by Albury Wodonga Health, was selected for the new Albury Emergency Department waiting room to bring a sense of calming and healing to the hospital environment for patients and visitors alike. Congratulation Ms Thompson on this well-deserved recognition. Your artwork will serve as a source of comfort and inspiration for those in this most important healthcare setting for our community.

#### **ALBURY WODONGA REGIONAL FOODSHARE - ROTARY CLUB OF ALBURY NSW**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—I would like to extend my gratitude to the Rotary Club of Albury NSW for their incredible support and generous donation of \$13,600 towards fuel for the Albury Wodonga Regional Foodshare Vans. This valuable contribution was presented by Rotary members Peter Elias and Bob Walker and will ensure the Foodshare vans have the necessary resources for the next year. The support will enable the organisation to provide more food to those in need, making a significant impact on our community's wellbeing. The Foodshare vans play a crucial role daily, delivering food to our community. Last year Foodshare vans made

over 3,200 collections alone and covered over 70,000kms in distance. Foodshare's driving mission is to alleviate hunger and support those facing food insecurity in our community. I would also like to make a special mention to green thumbs Meredith and Karen at Albury Wodonga Food Share Community Pantry for their dedication in providing fresh herbs. Their efforts like all the volunteers are truly commendable and are a driving force behind their shared mission to create a healthier and more nourished community for all.

#### **ALBURY CITY - GARDENESQUE EVENT**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—I would like to acknowledge Albury City Council for organising the Gardenesque annual festival which was held on Saturday 2nd March at the Albury Botanical Gardens. The event drew a remarkable turnout of more than 5000 people who celebrated the beauty of everything garden. The festival showcased a number of inspiring workshops, including the awe inspiring sand sculpturing of Den the Sandman and his majestic dragon. The crowds were treated to vibrant flower and sunflower displays, a variety of food vans, live musical performances, and an abundance of garden vendors. Adding to the festival's allure was special host Jamie Durie OAM, internationally acclaimed landscaper designer and television presenter. The event was a splendour of flora and a kaleidoscope of colours and scents. Furthermore, I extend my deepest appreciation to all the volunteers, partners and sponsors who contributed to the success of Gardenesque, enriching our love of gardens and nature. They include, Barlens, Radio 2AY, Harris Farms, Peards Albury, Begleys Backyard, Meetpat, Arrow Landscape & Gardens, AgBoss, and Stuart Gordon Landscaping & Paving Specialist.

#### **RICHARD HOWES**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)**—Richard Howes is a true Central Coast local resident who currently resides in Wyong and has impacted the Community in many positive ways. From 1993, Richard Howes started making and presenting Travelling Gavels which eventually built up to 12 by 2021 and received 9 back home in Wyong, publishing 13 eBooks. These Gavels were originally presented into 7 countries and were eventually presented into 38 countries worldwide. The 9 Travelling Gavels reside in the United Grand Lodge of NSW Museum in Sydney, as for the other 3, Richard presented them at the Masonic Lodge in Czech-Republic, Oregon USA, and Ireland. Richard handcrafted approximately 500 wooden Wall Clocks, from materials such as glass, timber, Wax from Gilly Stephenson in Western Australia, and lacquer from Pylon Lacquer in Windsor NSW were all donated by the various businesses in Sydney, purchasing the motors and hands from Portland, USA. The clocks had been presented to 53 Charitable Organizations throughout NSW raising \$190-\$2500 for each clock, Wyong Public Hospital to raise money for an Amputees Wheelchair, Gosford Public Hospital and Sydney Public Hospitals, Cancer Clinics and Athletic Clubs such as Wyong Cricket Club and Wyong Tennis Club to name a couple.

#### **SAVANAH MAYNIER**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)**—Congratulations to Gorokan female swimmer Savanah Maynier for being selected in the 2024 Paralympic Swimming Trials in Brisbane. Previously the female swimmer was selected in the 2023/24 NSWIS Para Development Squad and is working towards her training to be selected again this year. The last 12 months Savanah has travelled to the Gold Coast in Queensland four times in Age and Open Championships, Melbourne for the World Swimming Trials, countless trips to Homebush Sydney and training sessions for the development squad at Cranbrook school in Eastern Sydney four times and local carnivals. Coach Aaron Stone from Mingara Aquatic is training Savanah in preparation for her upcoming competition and has previously broken records at the Sydney North Swimming Championships. The 17-year-old is currently attending Northlakes High School completing year 12, affiliated with Central Coast Academy of Sports Swimming Squad, finalist in the Central Coast Sports Awards, Central Coast Academy of Sports person of the year Awards, and the runner up/finalist for the 2024 Central Coast Youth Week Sportsperson of the year Awards. Savanah is recognised for her efforts and dedication in swimming and I wish her all the best in upcoming competitions.

#### **NAOMI PEX**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)**—Congratulations to teacher Naomi Pex from Chittaway Bay Public School for being recognised in achieving a significant milestone of 20-year service. Naomi has been teaching for 29 years working predominantly in Special Education and has also taught mainstream classes as well. Being a casual teacher for the first 5 years of her teaching career, working mainly as an Itinerant Support Teacher Behaviour and in ED Emotional Disturbance units. In 2000, Naomi was appointed to Woy Woy Public School as a moderate to severe intellectual disabilities teacher and continued her teaching at Woy Woy for 7 years. In 2007, Naomi made the move to Chittaway Bay

Public School and by 2011 she successfully applied for the Assistant Principal Support Unit from Kindergarten to year 6. Naomi is still currently at Chittaway Bay Public School supporting school students to learn and grow.

### **MISSION AUSTRALIA COOTAMUNDRA**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—Mission Australia is a vital community service provider located in the heart of Cootamundra, New South Wales. Established with a mission to empower individuals and families facing hardships, the organisation offers a diverse range of programs and support services tailored to the needs of the local community. From addressing homelessness and unemployment to providing counselling and youth services, Mission Australia Cootamundra plays a crucial role in fostering social inclusion and improving the quality of life for many. One of the cornerstone initiatives of Mission Australia Cootamundra is its housing assistance program, which aims to provide safe and affordable accommodation for those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. Through partnerships with local government agencies and community organisations, the program helps individuals and families secure reliable housing and access essential support services to rebuild their lives. Mission Australia Cootamundra offers a variety of youth-focused programs designed to empower young people. From mentoring and education support to recreational activities and skill-building workshops, these programs provide valuable opportunities for personal growth and development. I wish to thank Mission Australia Cootamundra for all they do to improve the lives of the members of our community.

### **BEYOND BITUMEN - PROUDLY SUPPORTING BEYOND BLUE**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—The Beyond Bitumen is a car rally with a difference, raising funds for Beyond Blue since 2018. With organisers Peter and Trish Fehon establishing the rally after the tragic loss of their daughter to suicide in 2005. With one hundred percent of all funds raised being directly donated to Beyond Blue the couple describe the rally as a fun inclusive fundraising activity, all in a safe and controlled environment, whilst enjoying some of the most spectacular scenery Country NSW Regions have to offer. Beyond Blue is an Australian mental health and wellbeing support organisation. Its mission revolves around promoting good mental health, tackling stigma, and providing support and information to everyone in Australia affected by depression, anxiety, and other related mental health disorders. They offer a range of services including online resources, helplines, community engagement, and advocacy efforts. This year the rally ran from April 11 through April 15 and traversed the Riverina region, commencing in Gundagai, then stopping in Cowowa, Eucha, Tocumwal, Griffith, Young, Boorowa before finishing in Goulburn. To date the Rally has fundraised over \$3 millions dollars, and with dedicated volunteers assisting shows no signs of slowing down.

### **MURRUMBIDGEE MAVERICKS**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—For the first time in history, a partnership between the Narrandera, Leeton, and West Wyalong Basketball Associations has been formed to give women in this area the opportunity to play and aspire to state-level senior competition. The Murrumbidgee Mavericks formed at the end of 2023, and since January this year, the team members have been traveling and training weekly. Three recent trial matches played in Wagga and West Wyalong have prepared the team to take on the Waratah League challenge. Murrumbidgee Mavericks 2024 squad comprises of Clancy Ryan, Maddy Routley, Emily Clyne, Maddy Kennedy, Natasha Wellington, Sophie Cross, Amelia Irvin, Lesa Matthews, Georgia McCormack, Emmerson Waide, Harley Graham and Emma Palmer. Leading the way is experienced Waratah women's coach Josh Clyne. As the Murrumbidgee Mavericks gear up for their 16-round NSW Waratah Women competition, I extend my heartfelt support and best wishes to them. From March to August, the Mavericks will be pitted against teams from Canberra, Coffs Harbour, Central Coast, Lismore, Maitland, Newcastle, Port Macquarie and Tamworth. All the best to the Murrumbidgee Mavericks for a successful 2024 season.

### **SES VOLUNTEERS ELYSE RIORDAN AND FIONA BUTLIN**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)**—I congratulate Elyse Riordan and Fiona Butlin who have been recognised for their bravery as State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers. Elyse and Fiona entered dangerous floodwaters caused by torrential rain in February 2023 when it was feared a car swept off the Audley Weir may have people inside. Bystanders reported seeing people in the water near the car and Elyse and Fiona launched their rescue craft into what a park ranger described as extremely violent and fast flowing flood waters. It was only after searching for the following hour that everyone who had been in the vehicle were safely accounted for. Elyse and Fiona received the Commissioner's Commendation for Courage for their part in the rescue effort. I commend them on their selfless act, putting their own safety at risk and entering the floodwaters to potentially save the lives of others. Elyse and Fiona typify the commitment and unselfish attitude demonstrated by SES volunteers across the Sutherland Shire and our state as they put the needs of the community first in times of emergency.

**KYE COSTA**

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)**—Kye Costa, a talented young athlete from St Anthony of Padua Catholic College in Austral, has devoted himself to trampoline gymnastics with unwavering passion and dedication since the age of 5. With a deep love for the sport, his commitment is evident in his accolades. He has already achieved success by winning the National Youth Under 13 championships in trampoline and double mini trampoline. In November 2023, Kye had the honour of representing Australia at the Trampoline Gymnastics World Championships in Birmingham, UK, where he performed exceptionally well despite his young age. Kye's hard work was recognised as highly commended in the 2023 Liverpool Council Young Achievers awards. With his eyes set on even greater feats, including the goal of competing in the Olympics, Kye Costa embodies the spirit of determination, perseverance, and passion that propels him towards a future filled with boundless opportunities and achievements in the world of gymnastics.

**WILLIAM CAREY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)**— I rise to congratulate William Carey Christian School on celebrating 40 years since it first opened its doors to students on the 9th of February 1984. The work of opening William Carey precedes this into the early 1970s, when a group of local parents began planning for a Christian school to serve the Liverpool and Campbelltown areas. What started as a school of four students at the Reformed Church on Kennedy Street in Liverpool has evolved into an integral community school for over 1300 students from Prep to Year 12 in the heart of Prestons in my electorate. I congratulate all the staff, students and parents - past and present - who have contributed to the William Carey community. I especially congratulate Principal Keith McMullen and the current school community as they look to celebrate this milestone throughout the year. I look forward to seeing William Carey Christian School's continued success for many years to come.

**COMMISSIONING CEREMONY THOMAS HASSALL PRINCIPAL**

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)**—On 1 March 2024, I had the pleasure of attending the commissioning ceremony of Karen Easton as the new principal of Thomas Hassall Anglican College. The ceremony celebrated Karen's dedication to education, her vision for the school, and her commitment to the students. The atmosphere was one of respect and support, as staff, students, parents, and guests came together to welcome and show their appreciation for the new principal. As Karen stepped into her new role, there was an evident sense of positivity and unity among the attendees, marking the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Thomas Hassall Anglican College, while also continuing the mission of the school where every student is valued and nurtured. Karen's appointment brings a sense of renewal and promise to the college, with high hopes for a bright future under her leadership. I congratulate Karen on her appointment and wish her every success as she embarks on her new journey at Thomas Hassall.

**BIRTHDAY MESSAGE - ARTURO PUNO**

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)**—I draw the attention of the House to Arturo Puno, who, on the 8th of March, celebrated his 59th birthday. With great pleasure, I extend warm birthday wishes to Arturo, a cherished member of the Ryde community. Having had the privilege of meeting Arturo, I can attest to his outstanding character and remarkable contributions to our community. His dedication and compassion have undoubtedly left a positive impact on the lives of those around him. Arturo's commitment to serving others and his unwavering support for local initiatives make him a beacon of inspiration in Ryde. His kindness and generosity resonate deeply with all who have had the pleasure of knowing him. On this special day, I wish Arturo abundant joy, good health, and continued success in all his endeavours. May his birthday be filled with love, laughter, and cherished moments with family and friends. Happy birthday, Arturo! Your presence enriches our community, and we are truly grateful for all that you do.

**BIRTHDAY MESSAGE - NAUROZ THARIANI**

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)**—I ask the House to join me in wishing Nauroz Thariani a joyous 68th birthday! Their friend Asif asked me to deliver the following message in the Parliament: "Happy birthday and many happy returns." It truly is a wonderful thing to celebrate a birthday with the love and support of those closest to you, and I am humbled to be able to play a small role in making Nauroz's day a little extra special. May this birthday be filled with love, laughter, and cherished moments that can be taken forward on life's journey. Wishing you continued happiness and prosperity in the years ahead. Happy birthday Nauroz!

**BIRTHDAY - DAVID BISLEY**

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)**—I ask the House to join me in wishing David Bisley a happy 43rd birthday and note the following message for Hansard: "It's important to recognise the wins in life." It truly is a wonderful thing to celebrate a birthday in a community like Ryde, and I am humbled to be able to play a small role in making

David's day that little bit extra special. As he reflects on his birthday, I hope the memories are filled with love, laughter, and cherished moments that he will take on his journey in the future. The Parliament wishes him continued happiness and prosperity in the years ahead. Happy birthday David!

#### **FAR NORTH COAST HOCKEY'S CLINT MALLET WINS STATE AWARD**

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)**—CONGRATULATIONS to Far North Coast Hockey Incorporated's Clint Mallet on recently winning Hockey NSW's Distinguished Long Service Award. Clint has been a member of Far North Coast Hockey for a remarkable 61 years. He started playing hockey at the tender age of 10 and has held sub-committee positions and executive roles. He currently is the Association Secretary and is a former Association President and Complex Manager. Clint Mallet has been a driving force behind all of the Goonellabah complex's upgrades from planning, seeking government grants and delivering improvement projects. I have always found him well organised, professional and respectful of all. The prestigious State award recognises Clint's calm manner and personality, always willing to mentor young players or administrators, giving them the benefit of his experience and knowledge. He is a doer; volunteering each and every year wherever there is a shortfall to ensure that each competitive season gets happening. Umpiring if there is a gap in control duties, helping out in the canteen or carrying around a bucket to collect rubbish. In essence, he is every sporting club's dream team player and FNC Hockey is extremely fortunate to have him.

#### **CELEBRATING OUR STANDOUT LOCAL SENIORS IN 2024**

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)**—I WISH to pay tribute to a special group of local volunteers in our Electorate of Lismore who were recognised with 2024 NSW Seniors Festival Local Achievement Awards in March. I hosted a lovely morning tea to celebrate the many and varied contributions and achievements of the award recipients, who were chuffed to have been nominated by their peer groups or grateful local communities. There were five categories for this year's awards – community service, lifelong learning, health and wellbeing, environment/science/agriculture, and business. Lismore was well represented with awards going to Dr Ros Irwin OAM (environment-community service), Shirley Beaver (lifelong learning), Janine Wilson (community service), Miriam Torzillo (community service), Audrey Mallaby (health and wellbeing-community service), Jeff Thompson (agriculture), the Lions Club of Lismore Incorporated represented by Elaine Baldwin and Margaret Condon (community service) and the Lismore Croquet Club represented by Linda Perry-Pollard and Fay Ross (health and wellbeing). Murwillumbah was represented as well with awards going to Marlene Salkeld (community service), Colin Smith (community service) and Rob Learmouth (lifelong learning-community service). Can you imagine collectively the number of years of service of this outstanding group – well over 1,000 years – and I again thank them.

#### **LISMORE'S FITNESS KIDZ WINS SIX NATIONAL AWARDS**

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)**—CONGRATULATIONS TO Lismore's Fitness Kidz on recently becoming a six-time winner of the national What's On 4 Kids Awards. Owner Brad Hicks and his team were delighted and honoured to walk away with six national awards. These included: Best National Independent Activity/Class for 3-5 years (People's Choice); Best National Independent Activity/Class for 5-12 years (People's Choice); Best National School Holiday Activity (People's Choice); Best National Kids Party Entertainer (five years in a row, Judged Winner); Best National Kids Party/Live Entertainer Industry Leader of the Year (Judged Winner); National Hall of Fame (People's Choice). What's On 4 Kids owner Amy Sales said: "These awards are about recognising excellence, passion and commitment by the kids activity industry in Australia and each year I am blown away by the standard of applications. "Entrants in this year's National final have exceeded our expectations by showing just how valued and sought after these award winning titles are for the industry," Ms Sales said. Brad Hicks has been running Fitness Kidz in Lismore and the Northern Rivers since 2008. Prior to this, he had a pro career in the former National Soccer League before the A-League came to be.

#### **QUEENSLIFF SLSC CENTENARY**

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)**—Mr Speaker, I wish to acknowledge the 100 years of valuable service to the community provided by the Queenscliff Surf Life Saving Club. Over recent months this active club has celebrated its centenary in style with a High Tea, an all-age Fiesta Party, and a 100 year book launch. The publication features stories of lifesaving, competitions, building and renovating three buildings and the people that made it happen, accompanied by more than 500 historic photos. A range of Centenary merchandise has also been released including tea shirts, a golf ball pack and hats. More recently, the Club celebrated its centenary with a black-tie Dinner and Gala Ball which included special presentations covering each section of the club's history. The Club is well placed to embrace the next centenary of community service to beach goers and others, and as a community hub for people of all ages.

### HAPPY EARTH DAY

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)**—Mr Speaker, Happy Earth Day – a spin-off from Happy Birthday – marks another year in the life of our planet. Celebrated on 22 April, it is estimated more than a billion people celebrate Earth Day this year by helping to protect the planet from pollution and deforestation through picking up litter and planting trees. In my electorate of Manly, Airbnb Community Host Leader, Felicity Stevens organised a group of local hosts to clean up Manly Cove Beach. They collected just under three kilograms of waste and discussed how Airbnb can host more sustainably and encourage their guests to travel and stay in a more sustainable way. Felicity is passionate about minimising waste and reducing travel emissions. I thank Felicity for her enthusiasm to make the world a cleaner, greener and more sustainable place for us all to live and enjoy. May many more people support Happy Earth Day.

### MANLY MARLINS' MERMAIDS XV

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)**—Mr Speaker, the recent formation of a 'Mermaids XV' team completes the picture for the Manly Marlins Rugby Club. When Club President, Matt Curll took office he thought it was important that a 15-a-side team which had existed some two decades ago, be reformed. He said, "Women's rugby is increasingly flourishing globally, and our Wallaroos and Waratahs are so great to watch. "I want Manly to have a premier rugby program and to provide a pathway for our players, and most importantly, replicate all the benefits that the men obtain in playing high-level rugby at Manly." He also highlighted that to be connected with, and truly represent the community, it was important for the club to have a full women's program. So, the Manly Marlins' Mermaids XV is up and running – literally. We wish them well as they take to the field, and take on the competition.

### MITCHELL BOULTON

**Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith)**—Congratulations to Mitchell Boulton on attaining the Queens Scout Award (The highest for a Venturer Scout). The presentation held by 1st South Penrith Venturer Unit at a Group Founders Day activity at Tench Reserve in Penrith. This prestigious Award widens the interests and knowledge of Venturer Scouts (14-18) and encourages them to 'look wide'. The challenges are major milestones. Mitchell progressed through the scheme 12 times to gain the necessary badge levels qualifying in areas such as bushwalking, first aid, basic water rescue and canoeing, learnt to surf, and abseiled. He also planned and led a group on a 4-day hike across the Blue Mountains Six-foot track. Mitchell started his Scouting journey at age 7 with 1st Erskine Park Scout Group. Then attending 1st South Penrith Venturer Unit. He has completed leadership courses at all levels. Also participating in Group activities, camps, Scout Jamboree, State Cub camp 'Cuboree' and the 'Venture24' in Queenstown NZ and Victoria. Venturer Scouts receive their prestigious Queen's Scout Award at Government House. I congratulate Mitchell for his hard work, leadership and dedication in attaining this award. I acknowledge Mitchell's parents David and Cynthia for their support and invitation to share this special occasion.

### PENRITH CITIZENSHIP

**Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith)**—It is with great pleasure that I congratulate all those new Australians who became citizens in Penrith recently. The Penrith community are richer for the diversity of culture you all bring to our city: Sharad Akhouri; Danielle Shannon Barrett; Aaliyah Tia Moana Barrett-Pokia; Evelinda Badua; Kannika Chaichoom; Ray Allen Deacon; Douglas George Andrew Dickie; Aaliyah Duron Vargas; Antonia Gonzalez Novella; Jodie Karolynne Gatfield; Alireza Ghaedsharafi; Luzviminda Holdsworth; Anna Koteneva; Aljohn Rhey Trongco Lamela; Thomas Kuruvilla Mankottil; Suman Thomas Mankottil; Mohammed Farhan Fasi; Nathan Jai Naidu; Srikar Potula; Tushar Pawar; Ebony Penny; Lahvynia Gardenia Rose Leah Josephine Schuster; Rakshababen Vrajesh Soni; Shelton Stanley; Lauren Emma Stapleton; Naina Subedi; Xiaohui Sun; Fiapai Tutaia; Anusha Indrajith Withanage Don; Kosto Kulimushi Zahinda; Sean Devin Salazar Peters; Misha Fiona Salazar Peters; Julianne Ritz Bravo Salazar; Asma Maqsood; Fareena Maqsood; Timmy Koippuram Tom; Aibel Koippuram Timmy; Lintu Valiaveetle Mani; Aimie Koippuram Timmy; James Samuel Ranjit Devadoss; Febby James; Swapna Thomas; Namritha Kasturi; Anaika Moozhayil Binu; Binu Moozhayil Sukumaran; Sepideh Farahani; Nima Rasi Faghihi. Congratulations to you all.

### ANZAC DAY CELEBRATIONS

**Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith)**—I thank the Penrith community for all their commemorative Anzac Day events. Starting a week early with the Schools commemorative service at Penrith Paceyway followed by the Women's Veterans Network Australia service at Memory Park. This service stood as a powerful reminder of the significant contributions made by women in the defence force. On Anzac Day I saw so many of my community come together to reflect and remember. The RSL Dawn Service attended by thousands of community members sharing their stories from local Veterans. The community's display of gratitude did not end with the dawn service.

Onto the service at the Penrith Bowling and recreation club. For the first time in many years Emu Plains hosted a service and the community really turned out in support. It was amazing to see such a display of solidarity amongst the crowd. We were then treated to a community BBQ by Lions Club of Emu Plains. A club run solely for the benefit of Penrith community by volunteers. To all those Volunteers, schools, Students, teachers, to the serving soldiers, veterans and to the families who attended these events. Thank you, it made a truly memorable ANZAC Day.

#### **HEAVEN CAN WAIT - CHARITY SAILING REGATTA**

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)**—Today I wish to acknowledge the volunteers behind the Heaven Can Wait – Charity Sailing Regatta, who for nearly two decades have filled their sails with the winds of generosity and raised desperately needed funds for their beneficiaries, Cancer Council NSW and Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie. This past year they have exceeded all previous efforts to raise a record breaking \$85,000 for the organisations. The 2024 regatta, based at the Toronto Royal Motor Yacht club was a huge success, and saw 63 boats battled it out in the high profile one-lap dash around the lake, 13 continue for the 12 Hour Race and 11 completing the ultimate endurance race in the 24-Hour Challenge. The funds raised through this regatta will provide crucial support to organisations tirelessly working to improve the lives of individuals facing illness, adversity, and hardship. The Heaven Can Wait – Charity Sailing Regatta was conceived by Lake Macquarie yachtsman and cancer survivor Shaun Lewicki to promote sailing and raise funds for men's cancer research. I thank everyone involved in the event, which gets bigger and better every year.

#### **HUNTER MOUNTAINS BIKE ASSOCIATION**

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)**—Lake Macquarie is home to one of Australia's best mountain bike parks, namely the Awaba Mountain Bike Park, which is run and maintained by the Hunter Mountain Bike Association. Recently the Association hosted the 2024 GWM Mountain Bike National Championships, an event which attracted more than 1000 of Australia's best riders with junior, masters and expert categories. This event is a gateway to the 2024 Paris Olympics and UCI World Championships and included a variety of mountain bike disciplines. The six-day spectacle was attended by thousands of spectators, including myself, and was truly a sight to behold. I would like to acknowledge the huge effort by the HMBA Volunteers who spent months getting different tracks ready for the championships and creating new competition sections at the park. Over the past decade, these volunteers have worked tirelessly to more than double the number of mountain bike trails freely available to the public, turning it into a world class facility. I congratulate the Hunter Mountain Bike Association on the success of the 2024 GWM Mountain Bike National Championships and thank them for all their work at the Awaba Mountain Bike Park.

#### **TRISH O'HEARN**

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)**—I would like to acknowledge the remarkable achievements and dedication to music education of Trish O'Hearn, musical director of Catalina Brass and Principal cornet of Toronto Brass. Trish is an extremely accomplished musician and has had a star-studded career working alongside music legends such as James Morrison who just last year, she enlisted to help her celebrate the 60th anniversary of Toronto Brass. Trish has been a part of community bands since she was young. She is also a member of Central Coast Brass and was invited to be a member of National Australia Brass, where she performed in various concerts including the International Brass Festival in Melbourne. With a talent for nurturing and guiding young musicians, Trish is currently the Head of Program in Brass at the Central Coast Conservatorium of Music and also travels throughout the country to adjudicate and mentor at band events and for HSC exams. Recently her achievements saw her nominated as the 2024 Lake Mac Creative and Performing Arts Leader and while she missed out on the top gong, she did receive a Highly Commended accolade. Congratulations on your accomplishments Trish.

#### **ALFINA JACKSON - EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—Today I recognise Alfina Jackson from St Joseph's Primary School Laurieton on receiving the prestigious award - the 2023 ICT Educators of New South Wales (ICTENSW) Educator of the Year. The ICTENSW Awards acknowledge the inspirational work of educational leaders and innovators across the State in advocacy, support and promotion of the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education. Alfina Jackson has been working extensively in the digital literacy and technology space to build and enhance the skills of her primary school students preparing them for future career paths and challenges in ICT. Described as a leader and innovator of ICT and STEM education, Alfina continues to inspire and enrich educational experiences and share her knowledge among her colleagues to ensure each student has every opportunity to succeed. Alfina's commitment to education has seen her present at conferences and professional development sessions supporting colleagues in ICT and STEM learning. An outstanding accomplishment from a leader of education, I congratulate Alfina for taking out the ICTENSW Educator of the Year for 2023.

### **CWA MID NORTH COAST ANNUAL CRAFT COMPETITION**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—Today, I proudly acknowledge the talented and creative members from the Harrington Country Women's Association (CWA) who were recently successful at the annual CWA Mid North Coast Annual Craft Competition. A beautiful array of handcrafted designs was showcased at the annual CWA MNC Competition, held in Kempsey, with the Harrington CWA Branch successful in five major categories. President of Harrington CWA Gwen Hudson was awarded First Prize for a stunning quilt and was pictured proudly holding the winners shield. Taking home not just one, but two First Placings and a Second Prize was Harrington local Anne Fowler awarded for her beautifully crafted crochet quilt, crochet table runner and a crocheted children's poncho. Securing First Prize now enables Gwen and Anne to qualify for the State competition this month and I wish them every success in representing the Harrington CWA Branch and the mid north coast. Claiming Second Prize in the Family Connection Section was Julious Krzyworenka for his outstanding driftwood sculpture of a dachshund not surprisingly caught the judge's eye. Harrington CWA Branch placed third in the Group competition - a commendable achievement! Congratulations to everyone involved!

### **VALE MAX HESLEHURST**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—Today, I pay tribute to a true community champion, Mr Maxwell (Max) John Heslehurst of Port Macquarie who passed away at Highfields Manor on 16 March 2024. An inspirational man, who led the way in improving health outcomes for cardiac patients, Max spent more than 14 years as a volunteer of Heart Support Australia and Heart Health NSW. His advocacy on behalf of the Coronary Care Unit saw the inception of the "Buddy Program" in 2010, offering vital information to patients from accommodation, treatment and transport to rehabilitation for those with heart disease. In 2023, Max was presented with the Mid North Coast Local Health District Volunteer of the Year Award and was Runner-Up in the 2023 NSW Health Awards. As the Foundation Member of the Port Macquarie-Hastings Branch of Heart Health Australia, Max pursued funding opportunities relentlessly, often knocking on my door with an idea to improve or purchase new equipment for the Port Macquarie Base Hospital. I pass on my sincere condolences to Marilyn Heslehurst and their family. I hope they can find some comfort in knowing that Max's legacy in heart health will remain enduring for years to come. Vale Max Heslehurst.

### **STEVE NORTH**

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)**—I am absolutely delighted to recognise and congratulate local playwright, Clarence Village resident, Steve North who won a national competition for a short play he wrote titled 'The Last Rehearsal' as part of the 'Scenes from the Sage Age' inaugural playwriting competition for over 60s playwrights. Steve's winning entry was one of eight works selected from a field of 164 entries from across the nation to be showcased at the Walsh Bay Arts Precinct in Sydney on 24 March. Steve was encouraged by the Clarence Village team to enter the competition and while he is overwhelmed by the winning entry, he was very excited to be invited to travel to Sydney to see his creative work come to life. Being the busy actor he is, he needed to juggle some scheduling to attend as he was getting ready to perform in a play at Coffs Harbour a couple of nights after the Sydney performance. I know the whole team and residents at Clarence Village are enormously proud and excited for Steve on this accomplishment and I offer him my warmest congratulations.

### **SHANE AND DIANA WELCH - 30 YEARS OF DEDICATION**

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)**—I would like to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of Shane and Diana Welch, who have devoted a remarkable 30 years to the Grafton Eisteddfod Society. At the recent 70th Anniversary celebration of the Grafton Eisteddfod Society, Eisteddfod Secretary, Nicole Secomb surprised Mr and Mrs Welch with a Certificate of Recognition for their years of dedicated service they have each shown the Society. In addition to the certificate, they were also honoured as Patrons and presented with special Patron badges. Their involvement began when their daughter, Rebecca, developed a passion for dance and started participating in local Eisteddfods, including the one in Grafton. In the late 1990's, Mr Welch took on the role of Eisteddfod President, while Mrs Welch assumed the position of Dance Coordinator. Mr and Mrs Welch's dedication and hard work have left a lasting impact on the Eisteddfod community, and they truly deserve recognition for their remarkable service and commitment. Congratulations to Shane and Diana on an outstanding achievement.

### **ST ANDREW'S CHRISTIAN SCHOOL 25TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)**—I recently had the opportunity to attend St Andrew's Christian School's 25th Anniversary Celebrations. The family fun day started with a special assembly where I was honoured to help plant a tree with Principal Janelle Rowe to commemorate the school's 25 years of Christian education. Special memories were shared, and an amazing photo collage made up of over 3500 pictures from the school's history was presented by retiring staff members Mick Schilling and Phil Browning. There was a range of fun



activities on the day for students, staff, family and special guests with school tours, a petting zoo, jumping castles, a food truck, and an afternoon of games for the kids. Since the school opened in Clarenza in 1998, they have grown from 21 students on campus to a pre-kindergarten to Year 12 facility which now has over 236 students and wonderful updated facilities. I congratulate St Andrew's on this significant achievement and wish them all the best for their future.

#### **ABDUL FEAZ - GRIFFITH**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Madam/Mister Speaker, Today I would like to recognise Abdul Feaz, affectionately known as Fay, for his exemplary efforts in spearheading the Leeton Ramadan Bazaar. Fay's dedication and passion have been instrumental in organizing this event, which promises to be a vibrant celebration of cultural diversity and unity within our community. As a resident of Leeton for several years, Fay has immersed himself in the fabric of our town, recognizing and cherishing its multicultural spirit. His commitment to inclusivity and collaborative growth shines through in his endeavour to bring the Leeton Ramadan Bazaar to life. Driven by a desire to bridge cultural divides and foster communal harmony, Fay has meticulously planned an experience that invites residents of all backgrounds to come together and celebrate the traditions of Ramadan. Through his leadership, the Bazaar will serve as a platform for meaningful dialogue and cultural exchange. I commend Fay for his tireless efforts in promoting diversity and unity through the Leeton Ramadan Bazaar.

#### **ANGUS BARTTER - GRIFFITH**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Madam/Mister Speaker, Today I would like to recognise Hanwood Butchery's Angus Bartter for his outstanding winnings at a meat judging contest in the United States. Angus was one of five Australian university students selected to compete in the US as part of the ICMJ team. Angus and his team clinched first place at the prestigious competition. Bartter himself secured an impressive third position out of 80 contestants at the National Western Stock Show in Denver, Colorado. The competition rigorously tested skills in yield and quality grading, beef and pork carcass assessment, and value-based pricing. Bartter's journey also included farm tours across Kansas, Texas, and Oklahoma, providing firsthand exposure to American meat production. Bartter returned home with a wealth of knowledge and great exposure, learning the significant differences in industry practices between the US and Australia, particularly in meat grading and domestic market focus. The experience has left Bartter feeling inspired about the future of his career in the meat industry. Angus, congratulations on these amazing achievements.

#### **STATUE OF THE VIRGIN MARY AT ST MARY'S ASSUMPTION CHALDEAN PARISH FAIRFIELD**

**Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)**—On 23 December 2023, I had the honour of participating in the Unveiling Ceremony of the Statue of the Virgin Mary at St. Mary's Assumption Chaldean Parish in Fairfield. The ceremony was led by His Grace Mar Amel Nona, the Archbishop of the Chaldean Catholic Church of Australia and New Zealand. It was a profoundly moving experience to witness this significant event, a testament to the deep spiritual and cultural significance of the Virgin Mary in the Chaldean community. His Grace Mar Amel Nona's leadership added a sacred touch to the ceremony, underscoring the reverence and devotion felt by the community. I thank Mr Samir Youssef for the kind invitation. I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of such a meaningful occasion that fosters unity and spiritual connection within our local community.

#### **PATRICIAN BROTHERS' COLLEGE FAIRFIELD 2023 ANNUAL PRIZE GIVING NIGHT**

**Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)**—On 8 December 2023 I had the privilege of attending the Patrician Brother's College Fairfield 2023 Annual Prizegiving Night. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the teachers, staff members, and volunteers who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make this event a resounding success. Their unwavering support and dedication to the school, teachers and students have definitely played a crucial role in nurturing the growth and development of their students, both academically and personally. The event provided a platform to recognize the dedication, effort, commitment, and passion for both academic and extracurricular pursuits demonstrated by the students. The certificates bestowed represent the collective aspirations of each student, reflecting their achievements and ambitions. It was a pleasure to present the Youth Command Award to a deserving recipient, further highlighting the exceptional accomplishments of our students. I thank Mr Peter Wade, the College Principal for the kind invitation and the opportunity for me to see some great examples of the work of our local Catholic Schools. I look forward to future presentations and meaningful events of the school.

#### **2024 RNSH HEALTH AWARDS FINALISTS**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)**—Speaker today I am delighted to acknowledge and commend the inspirational work and achievements of some of our allied health professionals from the Northern Sydney Local Health District. Health workers form an integral and irreplaceable part of our community, and their passion and unwavering dedication to their work is beyond admirable. Although all health professionals deserve applause,

on the February 29 this year, three health professionals from our local health district were recognised as finalists at the 2024 NSW Health Excellence in Allied Health Awards, acknowledging their commendable contributions across different categories. I am excited to congratulate health assistant Meryl Abao, speech pathologist Mia Whitehall, and child life therapist Kery Crannis from Royal North Shore Hospital for their outstanding achievements in their respective professions. I am so proud of the ongoing commitment to excellence displayed by the dedicated allied health team across the Northern Sydney Local Health District. Thank you to all our dedicated health professionals for everything you do for us every day, and congratulations Meryl, Mia and Kery for your outstanding achievements.

#### **WELCOME TO THE NEW BEAUTY POINT PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPAL**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)**—Speaker I want to congratulate Trent Gardiner who has recently started as the new principal at Beauty Point Public School. Charged with the challenging yet rewarding task of shaping the future generation, our teachers and principals form the hardworking backbone of our community. Trent has a genuine passion for student wellbeing, as well as a deep respect for Beauty Point's rich and vibrant history. Beauty Point Public is known for its welcoming sense of community and its dedication to equipping students with the education and life skills to pursue their dreams. With 24 years of hard-earned experience under his belt, Trent has been warmly welcomed into the school community with open arms. He says he's excited about the school's outstanding reputation for fostering a positive learning environment for its students and always striving for excellence across all domains. I wish Trent and the Beauty Point staff and students the best of luck with this new transition, and I am sure Trent will further the school's fantastic culture of excellence, kindness and growth. Congratulations Trent on your new and exciting role.

#### **CHATTY CAFE SCHEME TO COMBAT LONELINESS**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)**—Speaker today I want to acknowledge the wonderful efforts of the Chatty Cafe Scheme, whose mission is to combat loneliness. As loneliness is a growing concern across Australia, certain individuals and organisations have risen to the challenge of minimising loneliness and its effects in our community. I would like to thank the fantastic collaborators of this initiative; Chatty Cafe Australia, OneAnother, Mosman Council, and the Mosman Chamber of Commerce, who have partnered with local cafes, restaurants and community venues, for their sincere interest in bettering our community here in the north shore. Mosman consists of 30 percent lone-person households. One conversation can make someone's day, and the Chatty Cafe Tables are a fantastic step towards minimising loneliness. The initiative is dedicated to enhancing social connections through the power of a simple conversation. This is achieved through fostering spaces conducive to meaningful interactions, where individuals feel comfortable to converse and connect with others. Thank you to all involved. With your help, we as a community can work towards minimising loneliness, one conversation at a time.

#### **ISABEL SMITH**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)**—Twenty-two-year-old Isabel Smith has been named as the 2024 Royal Bathurst Show's Young Woman Ambassador. Formerly known as the Royal Bathurst Showgirl, the competition provides young women in the region with an opportunity to showcase their knowledge and contributions to the community, learn important life skills and meet new people. Isabel Smith is a Bathurst local and a MacKillop College alumnus. She has already had significant involvement with forestry and the environment. With a range of accreditation under her belt, Isabel is heavily involved in the community. She is involved in Rotary's Young Leadership Awards and has been invited to attend RYLA as a mentor. She is a firefighter with Forestry Corporation to protect state and private land and has previously been involved with the SES and Girls on Fire. With a desire to develop a program for young women to encourage them into the forestry and fire fields, Isabel impressed the judges, won the competition, and plans to use her newfound platform to help other young women develop new skills. Isabel is a worthy winner and will represent the Bathurst region proudly at the zone competition in the near future. Congratulations!

#### **KATRINA ABBOTT**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)**—Twenty-three-year-old Katrina Abbott has been named runner up of the 2024 Royal Bathurst Show's Young Woman Ambassador. Formerly known as the Royal Bathurst Showgirl, the competition provides young women in the region with an opportunity to showcase their knowledge and contributions to the community, learn important life skills and meet new people. Katrina Abbott is a Bathurst local who attended Lithgow High School and is currently studying a Bachelor of Education. She has already completed various certificates in agriculture, horticulture and training and assessment. She has a long list of community involvement including being the youth vice president of the NSW Corriedale Association, volunteering her photography skills for the Defence Community Dogs charity, and having experience as both a stud sheep and cattle exhibitor at various shows across NSW. Ms Abbott said her goal is to be the best version of herself she can

be, and help other young women achieve their own personal aspirations - especially around agriculture. It takes courage and passion to put your hand up for any competition or ambassador role. I congratulate Katrina for representing herself and her community proudly and her second place achievement.

#### **IAN POLLET**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)**—If ever there was a high achiever in his field it has to be Bathurst martial arts instructor Ian Pollet. Ian, the head of Pollets Martial Arts, recently earned an honour that has been decades in the making. He passed his 10th dan assessment earlier this year at the home of his Goju-ryu school of karate, in Okinawa and justifiably celebrated the achievement with a big bash at this Bathurst dojo. To put this into perspective, the 10th dan ranking is the highest possible achievement in Goju-ryu and marks Ian as one of the greatest practitioners of this style. It's an honour to know Ian personally and I know the hard work and dedication he has put in to reach this stage in his life which has evolved around karate and the ongoing learning process. Indeed, acquiring the 10th dan belt was the last major goal on Ian do-do list. Congratulations Ian Pollet on a wonderful achievement. There's no doubt the word "legend" should sit next to your name for what you have achieved.

#### **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - FAIRY MEADOW DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL**

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)**—I acknowledge Molly Napper, Emma Grech, Lachlan Tolhurst, Suliasi Tongotongo, who have been named as the 2024 Fairy Meadow Demonstration School leadership team. Being named as a school leader after being elected by their peers is a testament to their dedication, hard work and demonstrated ability to lead by example. Each of these students works exceptionally hard and have been highly involved within their school community throughout their time at the school. I am confident that they always strive to do their best with their studies and extracurricular activities. Each of them will spend 2024 acting as role models for their peers and I have confidence that they will carry out their new leadership roles exceptionally. I congratulate Molly, Emma, Lachlan and Suliasi on their achievement and wish them all the best for their final year at primary school.

#### **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - FARMBOROUGH ROAD PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)**—I acknowledge Alexis Kelley, Ollie Mulrooney, Kayde Rankin and Annalise Pearson who have been named as the 2024 Farmborough Road Public School leadership team. Being named as a school leader after being elected by their peers is a testament to their dedication, hard work and demonstrated ability to lead by example. Each of these students works exceptionally hard and have been highly involved within their school community throughout their time at the school. I am confident that they always strive to do their best with their studies and extracurricular activities. Each of them will spend 2024 acting as role models for their peers and I have confidence that they will carry out their new leadership roles exceptionally. I congratulate Alexis, Ollie, Kayde and Annalise on their achievement and wish them all the best for their final year at primary school.

#### **ANDREW CRUICKSHANK**

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)**—I would like to recognise Andrew Cruickshank, from Old Bar Car & Truck Repairs. Old Bar Car & Truck Repairs is a family-owned business that began in 1999 and have been providing quality mechanical repairs and services since. Andrew's commitment to customers goes beyond his workshop – he generously offers his expertise to assist seniors in need, providing complimentary mechanical work for those facing financial hardship. By doing so, Andrew not only keeps these seniors' vehicles running but allows them to keep their independence. Thank you, Andrew, for your contributions to the Old Bar community and for making such a positive difference in the lives of others.

#### **COCO WOOLEY**

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)**—I would like to congratulate Coco Wooley from Boomerang Beach Boardriders Club, who won the under 12 girl's section at the Reflections Cadet Cup held at Rainbow Beach, Bonny Hills. The Cup, organised by Surfest, attracted 76 competitors for two days of competition, with boys and girls competing in under 12s, 14s and 16s categories. Teen surfers came together from around the east coast of NSW to compete, with Coco taking out her division. The event offered points that determined the Surfing Australia ranking system, and its format ensured no competitors were eliminated in the first round. Congratulations on your well-deserved win Coco, you should be so proud of yourself!

### DIAMOND SURF CHIX

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)**—I would like to recognise the Diamond Surf Chix, Michele Brown, Tanya Phillips, Kara Baldwin and Rachel Pavitt-Rumery for participating in SurFebruary – a paddle out to raise money for cancer research, through Chris O'Brien Lifehouse. The Diamond Surf Chix, as a group, committed to a surf or swim every day in February with the main event Paddle Out taking place at Black Head Beach on the 17th of February. The sighting of a Hammerhead Shark, 15 minutes before they were to enter the water didn't deter the 65 paddlers. With more than 200 spectators, they raised just over \$1750 on the day to add to their fundraising page, which has a total of almost \$4,500. Congratulations Diamond Surf Chix and thank you to our local sponsors for supporting this cause – Lions Club of Hallidays Point, Hallidays Sports Club, LJ Hooker Hallidays Point / Diamond Beach & Blackhead Beach SLSC.

### SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - FIGTREE HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)**—I acknowledge Dylan Walsh, Millie Harnish Dunn, Olivia Morgan and Orlando Oyedeji who have been named as the 2024 Figtree Heights Public School leadership team. Being named as a school leader after being elected by their peers is a testament to their dedication, hard work and demonstrated ability to lead by example. Each of these students works exceptionally hard and have been highly involved within their school community throughout their time at the school. I am confident that they always strive to do their best with their studies and extracurricular activities. Each of them will spend 2024 acting as role models for their peers and I have confidence that they will carry out their new leadership roles exceptionally. I congratulate Dylan, Millie, Olivia and Orlando on their achievement and wish them all the best for their final year at primary school.

### CARLINGFORD MORNING TEA CLUB

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping)**—The Carlingford Morning Tea Club has met weekly since 1981 with the goal of providing light entertainment or insightful guest speakers among a range of other activities to upwards of 80 local seniors. Dianna Hammond and Rob Reiner took over the roles of organisers 15 years ago and have taken the club to new heights. I was honoured to receive an invitation to speak at one of their recent meetings. From attending, I got a real sense of how important groups such as these are to our community. For seniors to have the opportunity to get together, make new friends and learn more about important topics and visit interesting places is a great asset. Thank you to Di for the invitation, I am glad the members enjoyed the morning. Keep up the good work and I look forward to coming back.

### DI COATES - ST MARKS GARDENS

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)**—I would like to recognise Mrs Di Coates of Darling Point. Di has been a long-time member of St Mark's Darling Point Church. She has been working in the gardens around the church and in the memorial garden for 36 years, with 31 of those as the Head Gardener. Anyone that has visited can attest to the fact that the gardens are a wonderful adornment to the beauty of the Blackett-designed St Mark's Church. They have featured in many weddings and funerals and are enjoyed by the congregation and by the whole community of Darling Point. The memorial garden is a place of peace and respite shared by many visitors and locals. Di has an encyclopaedic knowledge of plants and trees. She has tirelessly and humbly expressed her Christian faith in the work of the garden and in leading her team of volunteer gardeners on a weekly basis. Thank you Di, for your tireless work and service to our community.

### VALE NEIL ROGERS

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)**—I would like to pay my respects to the late Neil Rogers. Neil was an Olympian and stalwart of the Australian swimming community. Neil participated in the 1972 Munich Olympics and 1976 Montreal Olympics winning an individual gold at the 1974 Christchurch Commonwealth Games in the 100m butterfly. After stepping back from competing, Neil remained active in the swimming community over the years. Neil became the Manager and Coach at the Bondi Icebergs swimming pool. He was also revered by Bondi and North Bondi Surf Life Saving Clubs. He continued to coach for the remainder of his life and played a pivotal role in helping countless people improve their swimming abilities. Our community extends our condolences to Neil's family and friends.

### YEO PARK - ABORIGINAL SURVIVAL MEMORIAL

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)**—On 23 March the new Aboriginal Survival Memorial in Yeo Park entitled 'Breathe' was officially opened. 'Breathe' is a stunning artwork by artists Nicole Monks and Maddison Gibbs that commemorates the survival and resilience of the Gadigal and Wangal people. 'Breathe' is crafted from 246 engraved sandstone boulders, placed carefully to form two pathways that meet in the centre, the boulders acting as portals in time, immersing the viewer in ancient stories. The Aboriginal Survival

Memorial is a place for non-Indigenous people to listen, contemplate and try to understand Aboriginal people's long history of survival and the multi-generational impacts of colonisation. This is the first of three site-specific Survival Memorials to be created across the Inner West. I extend my deepest thanks to Mayor Dary Byrne, all the Inner West Councillors and General Manager Peter Gainsford for ensuring this important project was delivered. Congratulations and a special thanks to Nicole and Maddison for creating such a beautiful, moving memorial. I encourage everyone to head to Yeo Park to experience this work.

#### **UPGRADES TO H J MAHONEY MEMORIAL RESERVE**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)**—I was honoured to attend the recent re-opening of HJ Mahoney Reserve on Saturday 13 April, along with many members of local sporting teams and representatives from Inner West Council. Inner West Council, NSW Office of Sport, and AFL invested \$2.3 million to upgrade HJ Mahoney Memorial Reserve's amenities and improve the valuable green space. This project has delivered on its goal of modernising the existing amenities to a fit for purpose community sports facility that is inclusive for all playing groups. Improvements included upgrading the grounds and lighting, as well as improvements to the changeroom facilities to make them accessible and all-gender friendly. An upgraded officials' room and kiosk, external lighting and new external shade canopies were also completed for added protection and security. A special thanks to Mayor Darcy Byrne, Newtown Breakaways FC president, Tiffany Chen and Sydney Women's Baseball League president, Holly Creenaune, whose collaboration made this upgrade possible. Congratulations to all involved!

#### **ROSANNA BARBERO - WINNER OF THE 2024 HUMAN RIGHTS MEDAL**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)**—I extend my sincere congratulations to Rosanna Barbero, Chief Executive Office of Addison Road Community Organisation, on being the recipient of this year's Multicultural NSW Human Rights Medal, recognising her lasting and meaningful contribution to human rights in NSW. For the past 30 years Rosanna has been the CEO of the invaluable and much-loved Addi Road, where she has helped countless people and been instrumental in delivering programs such as the "Racism Not Welcome" campaign, and the well-known and utilised Addi Road Food Pantry. Away from her important grass roots work in our community, Rosanna has worked across the globe leading and supporting many noteworthy advancements in civil rights, including with the Womyn's Agenda for Change and Women's Network for Unity. Rosanna is beyond deserving of this honour and I commend her for her many achievements and congratulate her for being the 2024 NSW Human Rights medallist. Our Inner West community and beyond are lucky to have you!

#### **EAST HILLS DISTRICT MEN'S SHED**

**Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills)**—Thank you to the East Hills District Men's Shed for their recent project at Picnic Point Public School, creating and installing a Lilliput Library at the school premises. Volunteers from the men's shed built the library from scratch and installed it at the school, as they have done at several local schools. The Lilliput Library provides an alternative to the main library as students can easily take a book from the small timber structure. Led by President Brian Barrett, the East Hills Men's Shed meet twice a week providing an important opportunity for men to share and learn new skills, have a chat and make new friends. The shed has a long history of helping schools in my electorate including repairing tricycles for the Broderick Gillawarna special needs school and donating their time and skills to assist with emergency repairs and ongoing maintenance at the Biyani House Women's Refuge in Revesby. I thank the East Hills District Men's Shed for their invaluable contributions to improving the lives of people in our community.

#### **CROSSMAN FAMILY**

**Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills)**—I would like to acknowledge the inspiring efforts of the Crossman family from Picnic Point, who, alongside over 650 individuals, embarked on a remarkable journey to conquer Australia's highest peak, Mount Kosciuszko. Their participation in the charity challenge, known as the Kosi Challenge, aimed to raise awareness and crucial funds for rare and less common cancers. Under the team-name 'Dani's Dynamos,' Rob, Lily, and Ella Crossman courageously undertook this endeavour in loving memory of their beloved wife and mother, Danielle. Danielle passed away in 2021 after battling Stage 4 Medullary Thyroid cancer. The Crossman's resilience and determination to honour her legacy shone brightly throughout the challenge. Through their participation in the Kosi Challenge, the Crossman's not only paid tribute to Danielle's memory but also raised awareness about rare cancers and highlighted the importance of supporting those affected by these diseases. I extend my deepest condolences to the Crossman family for their loss whilst celebrating their extraordinary efforts and unwavering commitment to making a difference in the lives of others. Their resilience, strength, and compassion serve as an inspiration to us all.

### ARTS NIGHTS CULTURE ALIVE

**Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills)**—I was proud to attend and show my support for a wonderful initiative organised by Canterbury Bankstown Council and supported by Create NSW's Culture Up Late Western Sydney Program, to recognise Western Sydney artists. I attended the final night of the Art Nights: Culture Alive program and was impressed by the exhibitions, workshops and screenings by Western-Sydney based designers at the event. The program for the night introduced audiences to the concept of design permeating all areas of life, from art to architecture, fashion and landscape. The three-night program showcased the area's local thriving arts and cultural scene and highlighted a wealth of talent and artistic expression including an installation art walk, Hyperreal Amble, Bankstown Art Centre's outdoor augmented reality, a silent disco DJ battle and live music. The initiative reflected the Council's support of arts in the area and the immense artistic talent we have in our communities.

### MADDIE HARPER

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—I wish to congratulate Maddie Harper who has qualified to represent her country after lifting three times her body weight. Maddie will represent Australia at the Sub-junior and Junior Powerlifting World Championships to be held in Malta this August. Maddie is 15 years old and attends St. Bede's College at Chisholm. At just 52kgs herself, Maddie qualified at the Australian Championships late last month. She successfully completing a 105kg squat, a 75kg bench press and a 140kg deadlift, a awe inspiring achievement. Maddie becomes only the second Australian in International Power Lifting history to attend the World Championships in an U52kg sub junior class. It has been an amazing 12 months for Maddie who only took up power lifting as a sport last year. Maddie had previously trained in gymnastics and diving before the switch. Maddie currently trains 4 days a week at the Hunter Performance Centre with her coach Aiden Potts and will be working to increase her deadlift weight for the World Championships. I wish Maddie all the best in Malta and congratulate her on her Australian U52kg Sub-junior women's champion wins in all three lift categories.

### SISTER KAY CARMODY

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—I congratulate Sister Kay Carmody who recently retired from TerryWhite Chemmart in Rutherford after over 30 years of nurturing thousands of mothers and babies. Sister Kay has been at her role so long that some of the babies she supported early in her career, also received her support as mothers with their own babies later in her career! During this time Sister Kay, a Trescillion nurse, also served for 22 years at GP Access at Maitland Hospital. Her roles saw her regularly consulting with families, especially those whose babies range in age from 0-6 years old, checking weight gain, immunisations, help with feeding and sleep issues. Sister Kay started her nursing training in Sydney in 1973, then went on to work in the labour ward at Newcastle Western Suburbs Hospital as a midwife. Over the years Sister Kay maintained the same passion for helping mums and bubs that she had when she first started. Sister Kay says she just loved the feeling of being able to help people and that babies are just wonderful. Her retirement will be felt by many families in the Rutherford area. Thank you for your service, Sister Kay Carmody.

### MAITLAND PHYSIO TEAMS WIN NATIONAL TITLES

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—Tracey Tighe started teaching Physical culture to a group of Maitland girls in 2018. In just five short years two of her teams have recently topped the national titles. The BJP annual competition was held at Sydney Olympic Park last November and was a chance for teams to compete against others from across the country. The Maitland 7-8 year olds team and the 11-12 year olds team both took out the top prize for their respective divisions at the event. Ms Tighe said that teams work for a year before the competition to perfect the routine transitions and timings. Ms Tighe says the team's commitment and hard work really paid off at the competition. Physical Culture or "Physie" is a team based sport where participants perform synchronised low impact dance and aerobic routines. The sport is designed to increase strength, fitness and flexibility. Congratulations to all the team members for their dedication, commitment, and hard work in achieving their physie goals.

### ANZAC DAY

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)**—I thank and commend all involved in organising the ANZAC services this year across my electorate of Badgerys Creek. They did a remarkable job in arranging services that were fitting for the occasion. It was touching to see so many in our community come out and pay tribute to all of our previous and current servicemen and women who have fought for our nation and freedoms that we enjoy. This year's ANZAC service at St Marys Diggers Club was an extra special ANZAC event for my family as it was our son's first dawn service. Harry helped me lay the wreath in commemoration of all fallen servicemen and women

and those who have returned from serving our country yet who carry the lifelong wounds of war. I also had the honour of recently attending and laying a wreath at the ANZAC School Service conducted by the City of Penrith RSL sub-Branch, as well as Macarthur Anglican School's ANZAC School Service. We are forever grateful for the service of all who have served our nation. We owe our freedom to them and we will never forget them. Lest We Forget.

#### **CAROLINE CHISHOLM COLLEGE, GLENMORE PARK**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)**—I congratulate Caroline Chisholm College, Glenmore Park, on the 50th anniversary of their school, having been founded in 1974. The college started with only 34 students and has since grown to approximately 1,150 students. Caroline Chisholm College is an all-girls school and is centered on the Catholic faith. Its namesake, Caroline Chisholm, was a humanitarian who was well-known for her strong support of immigrant female and family welfare in Australia. The college is an important part of the fabric of our community as countless students have been and continue to be provided with high quality education from the years 7 to 12 and the staff are well known for consistently doing an incredible job. I congratulate all present and former students, staff and parents on this wonderful 50th anniversary milestone and I wish the college community many more successful years ahead.

#### **ERSKINE PARK HIGH SCHOOL**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)**—I congratulate and commend Erskine Park High School on conducting a successful school Heritage Day event. It is wonderful that the school community celebrates and preserves the heritage of the students who have a diversity of backgrounds. Multiculturalism forms the fabric of our society, and our community is enriched by the diverse cultures that make up my electorate of Badgerys Creek and our state. Central to this multiculturalism are the values of inclusiveness, respect, and a sense of belonging for everyone and I am proud that these values are held so highly by the Erskine Park High School community. I commend the students who participated with cultural performances for their time and effort in preparing for the event and for their bravery in getting up in front of the school community to perform. I commend Principal Jennifer Boyall and all staff, students and parents for their initiative in celebrating the diverse cultures of the school community.

#### **KIDS LEARNING LEADERSHIP THROUGH SPORT - BUILD ALPHA KIDS GREENACRE**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)**—I would like to give special recognition to the incredible efforts of 25-year-old Jayden Kowaidar, the founder of Build Alpha Kids in Greenacre. The purpose of the initiative is to deliver community and school programs focused on connecting children through sports and physical activity to cultivate leadership skills embodied by values like resilience, teamwork, and integrity. In just 18 months, Jayden and his team have built a strong reputation, partnering with local schools and childcare centres to offer engaging sports programs for children. It is inspiring to see passionate individuals, like Jayden, empowering the youth in our community through sport and teamwork. Jayden's dedication to creating a lasting impact in the community by nurturing the next generation of leaders is to be commended and supported. It is initiatives like these that ensure that young people continue to thrive. Through Build Alpha Kids, Jayden aspires to be a catalyst for positive change within the community, collaborating with business leaders and organisations to forge a brighter future for young people. I am immensely proud of youth leaders, like Jayden who work tirelessly to give back to our wonderful community.

#### **ST JEROME'S PUNCHBOWL CONNECTS YOUTH THROUGH FAITH**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)**—I would like to acknowledge the wonderful work being done by St Jerome's Catholic Church in Punchbowl to bring together youth and families in the community through faith-based activities. It is heartwarming to see the efforts made by the church to organise events that not only entertain but also educate the younger members of our community. The recent visit of Anthony Salame, a talented comedian and children's book author, to St Jerome's was a delightful experience for 150 enthusiastic children and their families. Anthony's storytelling not only captivated the young audience but also helped them connect with their Catholic faith simply and engagingly. Events like these, facilitated by St Jerome's Church, play a crucial role in fostering a sense of community and belonging among our diverse population. I commend the church for providing a safe and creative space for youth and families to come together, have fun, and learn important life lessons through their faith. A special thank you to Rev. Fr. Joseph Gedeon and the entire St Jerome's community for their dedication to serving and enriching our community. Your efforts are truly appreciated and valued.

### FRAPP AND CAPP SHACK CAFE BANKSTOWN

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)**—I would like to acknowledge Frapp & Capp Shack Cafe located in Bankstown who in partnership with Tender Loving Care Disability Services Australia, has participated in an initiative to provide meaningful employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The initiative not only offers training and employment pathways in hospitality but also helps individuals with disabilities to connect with the community. By providing meaningful employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, the team behind Frapp & Capp Cafe has achieved commendable results in fostering inclusivity and equity, whilst also creating a positive impact in the community. It's heartening to see small businesses like Frapp & Capp Cafe taking such proactive steps towards social responsibility. In a society where individuals with disabilities often face discrimination and bias in the job market, Frapp & Capp Cafe directly helps people with disabilities achieve a sense of purpose, self-reliance, and confidence within themselves and the wider community. This initiative deserves our encouragement and support. I commend Frapp & Capp Coffee Shack's involvement in this initiative which serves as an inspiring example of how businesses can make a meaningful difference in society by promoting inclusivity and equity.

### ANZAC DAY 2024

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)**—In Flanders fields the poppies blow; Between the crosses, row on row; That mark our place; and in the sky; The larks, still bravely singing, fly. This poem always speaks to me of the poignancy of Anzac Day. This year I attended a number of events and each reminded me of the unifying force of the day. It was a privilege to represent the Premier at the Kokoda track walkway on 20 April where I was fortunate to meet three of our World War Two veterans David Trist, Bruce Robertson and Reg Chard. On the day itself I attended the Dawn Service at Prince Alfred Square Cenotaph, a very poignant and well curated event. Thanks to President Simon Lovell and chaplain Monsignor John Boyle of the City of Parramatta RSL sub branch for their part in this, as well as Lieutenant Colonial Shadbolt's very relatable speech. I paid my respects at another moving service hosted by the NSW Consortium of Tamil Associations at Ringrose Park, Wentworthville Leagues Club. Along with representatives from all levels of Government I laid a wreath. I thank members of the Tamil community for their hospitality.

### SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)**—There is one annual event on the Sydney Royal Easter Show calendar that many people wouldn't be aware of. Every year a citizenship ceremony is conducted to confer Australian citizenship on residents from across Greater Sydney. The Sydney Royal Easter Show celebrates our uniquely Australian culture. That's why it is very appropriate that the Show hosts its own citizenship ceremony where cultures unite. It's an opportunity to bring two hundred of our newest citizens together to repeat their pledge in front of friends and family. These new citizens raise their families and access opportunities as new Australians that were difficult to achieve in their countries of birth. Others seek to find a new life after fleeing persecution or discrimination in their former homelands. The ceremony was presided over by her excellency the State Governor, Margaret Beazley AK KC, to recognise our newest Australian Citizens. The regional director of the Department of Home Affairs, Ms Sneha Chatterjee stood in the role as Master of Ceremonies, whilst Royal Agricultural Society President Mr John Bennett OAM and Mr Brock Gilmour (CEO), provided a brief welcome to attendees.

### RIOT DAY

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)**—Riot Day commemorates 26th October 1827, whereby a group of 100 convict women stood up for their own welfare and rioted in response to reduced rations at the Parramatta Female Factory. The riot symbolised a growing movement among female convicts within the colony to fight against a system of starvation and oppression. Their meals were reduced to three quarters of a pound of bread and a twelfth of a pound of fresh meat for a full working day. As women left their confines from within the Factory, they made their way to the township of Parramatta to make their suffering heard within the community. The next day rations were restored to the regular meal intake. This first riot sparked a chain reaction, with other convict women staging riots in 1831, 1833, 1836 and 1843. Riot Day marked the first female workers' demonstration recorded in Australian history and speaks to the importance of preserving heritage sites as they are revolutionary and socially transformative symbols of our cultural history. Thanks to Parramatta Female Factory Friends who fight for the site and tell herstories - Gaye Hendricksen, Kevin Dodds, Ronda Gaffey and Judith Dunn to name a few.

### MRS TRACY LUFF

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)**—I rise today to recognise Tracy Luff. Tracy has attained an Advanced Diploma in Fine Arts, Bachelor of Visual Arts with Honours, and a Graduate Diploma in Vocational



Education. Well, known for her two- and three-dimensional artworks, which she creates from fluted cardboard, utilising the cut edges to create texture and form. Tracy, who resides in Goulburn, had her works of art displayed at the "Artisans in the Gardens" exhibition at the Royal Botanical Garden of Sydney. All monies raised through the sale of the artwork on display were donated to Foundation and Friends of the Botanic Gardens, which support the maintenance of the botanic gardens. Tracy has been recognised for her artworks, which capture her individuality and creative style, winning the National Art Award, Windmill Trust Scholarship, Goulburn Art Award and seeing regular selection as a finalist in other events. Tracy graciously shares her skills and talents through solo exhibitions, community festivals and events and holds workshops, inspiring the creativity in both adults and children. I take this time to recognise and congratulate Tracy on her all her achievements.

#### **RIVERSDALE SPRING GARDEN PARTY AND FAIR**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)**—I rise today to recognise Riversdale Spring Garden Party and Fair. The beautiful Colonial Georgian Riversdale homestead of the 1830's was originally a coaching inn, then becoming home to NSW Surveyor-General Edward Twynam and his family in 1875. Riversdale stayed within the Twynam family for close on to a hundred years, when it was then purchased by the National Trust as a heritage site. Riversdale is well known for its collection of Australian Colonial furniture, arts, crafts, and the superb heritage gardens, which many delight in visiting. Riversdale held its Garden Party and Spring Fair on the 29th October 2023, in the spectacular and award-winning heritage garden, which has an impressive display of plants and trees, that date back to the 1830's and 1840's. The event, which pays tribute to the Twynam family, was filled with a range of activities including art exhibitions and tours of the garden throughout the day. I take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers who work tirelessly and passionately to maintain Riversdale. Particularly, Marie Kennedy the volunteer event organiser for the Spring Party and Fair.

#### **R J SIDNEY CRAIG FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)**—I rise today to recognise RJ Sidney Craig Funeral Directors. RJ Sidney Craig Funeral Directors have been providing support for individuals and families across Goulburn and surrounding areas for the past one hundred and eighty-seven years. The staff are trained at RJ Sidney Craig, who are certified members of the Australian Funeral Directors Association, and the Funeral Directors Association (NSW). The sensitive work undertaken by RJ Sidney Craig was recognised at the Goulburn Business Awards held last year, where they were awarded Excellence in Business Award. RJ Sidney Craig have also been awarded the Excellence in Small Business Award at the 2023 Far Coast Business Awards. This award is for a business that has driven growth and is able to show specific strategies implemented to achieve success and/or resilience. I take this time to recognise the nature and sensitivity of the work undertaken by the team at RJ Sidney Craig. I congratulate them on the longevity of their business and the compassion and support demonstrated towards the community in their time of bereavement. Congratulations on your awards.

#### **HALIEGH MCCARNEY**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—Speaker..... I would like acknowledge Narromine's Haliegh McCarney on her selection in the South Sydney Rabbitohs Under 19s Tarsha Gale side. After graduating from Trangie Central School in 2022, where she was School Captain, she has been on a trajectory to success! In addition to her selection by the Rabbitoh's, Haliegh is in her first year of a Bachelor of Sports Science at the University of New England (UNE). In the lead up to her selection, Haliegh has notched up an impressive list of representative achievements. A Narromine Local, she honed her skills by playing locally for the Narromine Jets both in junior and senior league clubs. Her talent and dedication caught the attention of selectors, leading to opportunities to represent the Far West Academy of Sport, the Western Rams, and the Dubbo Wiradjuri Goannas. Since commencing at UNE Haliegh has represented the university at the National University Indigenous Games, National University Games for Rugby Sevens and played in the Armidale Rams League Tag side. With each achievement Haliegh continues to prove herself as a formidable athlete, she is one to watch as she continues to make her family and community proud!

#### **WELLINGTON STONE WALL FESTIVAL**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—Speaker..... I would like to acknowledge Emma Knowles and the volunteers who recently staged the Wellington Stone Wall Festival. The festival spanned over twelve days, attracting visitors from far and wide who journeyed to Wellington to take part in the festivities. Wellington has welcomed three new stone features to its landscape because of the festival, including a pint of Guinness outside the Lion of Waterloo Tavern! These new stone features complement the already existing stone features in Wellington. Throughout the duration of festival, attendees enjoyed stone carving, masonry workshops and demonstrations, a moonlit alfresco "stone feast" dining event and a dance night. These activities provided festival goers with a diverse range of experiences, making the festival a truly memorable and enjoyable experience. As a result, Australia now has six additional dry-stone Wallers accredited by the Dry-Stone Walling Association (UK)

Craftsman Accreditation Scheme. These six talented people were assessed by Master Wallers from the UK. I congratulate Emma and the team for continuing to elevate the profile of this craft and inspire future generations, as well as fostering international collaboration and recognition in the field.

#### **BILL O'SHEA**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—Speaker..... I would like to wish acclaimed local artist William (Bill) O'Shea a very happy 90th birthday! Born in 1934, the youngest of six children, Bill was raised by a widowed mother who lost her husband when she was five months pregnant with Bill. Prior to picking up paint brushes for the first time Bill worked as a ticket writer where he picked up many tips from experienced artists and continued working in the profession after returning from war. Bill entered the competitive world of painting in 1974. However, it was in 1980 when he ventured out of Sydney to exhibit in Stuart Town, the Central West immediately embraced Bill's work, and in turn Bill found himself enamoured with the region. He made the decision to permanently move to the area in 1981, establishing the highly renowned Bakers Swamp Gallery. It was here that that Bill achieved worldwide acclaim for his artistic talents. Despite reaching the remarkable age of 90, Bill's passion for painting remains undiminished, as he continues to pick up the brushes with the same enthusiasm and creativity that has defined his illustrious career. Happy Birthday Bill!

#### **AWESOME DRIVING SCHOOL**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)**—I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Awesome Driving School on their 20th Birthday. Reaching this incredible milestone of twenty years in business, serving Newcastle, Sydney, and the Central Coast, the dedication to providing high-quality driver education and professional customer service is truly commendable. In today's world, selecting the right driving school is crucial for every learner's journey. Awesome Driving School's commitment to offering qualified and patient instructors, along with a deep understanding of NSW road rules, sets a standard of excellence in the industry. With a reputation built on success rates and glowing student reviews, Awesome Driving School stands out as a trusted choice on the Central Coast for aspiring drivers. Jerry and the entire team deserve recognition for their tireless efforts in instilling safe driving techniques and knowledge, ensuring that young drivers develop lifelong habits of responsibility behind the wheel. With almost two decades of experience and over 350 5-star reviews, Awesome Driving School continues to positively impact countless lives on the road across the Central Coast. Here's to 20 years of excellence and many more to come! Congratulations on this remarkable achievement.

#### **DAFFODIL DIP**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)**—Mister Speaker, it was an incredible Easter Saturday as Terrigal Beach was adorned with a sea of yellow, symbolizing hope and solidarity in the fight against cancer. The annual Daffodil Dip brought together over 450 dippers, all united in raising funds for Cancer Council NSW and raising awareness for local cancer patients. It was a great sight of daffodil caps under the sunny sky as participants swam around the 'goldie' buoy or paddled in the shallows, all in the spirit of supporting such an important cause. I would like to acknowledge and thank Cancer Council Central Coast, the hosts Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club and the sponsors, Crowne Plaza Terrigal, Breakers Country Club, and Bendigo Bank whose generous support made this event possible. A special acknowledgment also goes out to the dedicated volunteers who worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the Daffodil Dip. I am immensely proud to be part of such a generous and giving community. This event raised over \$37,000 for Cancer Council NSW and these funds will make a meaningful difference in the lives of those facing cancer, ensuring that no one on the Central Coast faces their journey alone.

#### **INDIGO EARLY LEARNING CENTRE**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)**—I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Indigo Early Learning Centre at Forresters Beach for their remarkable achievement at the Australian Small Business Champion Awards 2024. Winning the Early Childhood Services award is a testament to their unwavering commitment to excellence and dedication to nurturing the minds of our youngest generation. The hard work and passion exhibited by the entire team at Indigo and their commitment to making a difference in the lives of children every day has not gone unnoticed. I commend the Forresters Beach team for their excitement and honor in receiving this award. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the educators, families and children whose support and enthusiasm have been instrumental in Indigo's success. Congratulations once again to Indigo Early Learning Centre at Forresters Beach for this well-deserved recognition.

#### **CHATSWOOD ANZAC DAY DAWN SERVICE**

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—Commemorating ANZAC Day 2024 in my community of Willoughby, I was honoured to take part in the Dawn Service at the Garden of Remembrance in Chatswood. The deeply moving ceremony included the Ode to the Fallen, the Last Post, the National Anthem and two beautiful hymns accompanied by the Willoughby City Band. Anthony Parissis, a student of St Pius X College Chatswood,

delivered a very impressive ANZAC Commemoration Address. His delivery of this speech was a credit to his school community. I had the privilege of joining other local dignitaries to lay a wreath in honour of our fallen servicemen and women. I would like to thank everyone involved for organising and conducting such a memorable dawn service. I particularly give credit to the Chatswood RSL Sub-Branch and its President, Barney Flanagan OAM, who served as Master of Ceremonies. I thank the Chatswood RSL Club for their hospitality in offering refreshments to all the attendees. It was a very special morning to remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our peace and freedom. Lest We Forget.

#### **WILLOUGHBY ANZAC DAY SERVICE**

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—After attending the Dawn Service in Chatswood, I had the honour to take part in the morning Families and Community Commemorative Service at Willoughby Park. Led by Colonel David Ross CSC, the service featured the two classic Anzac hymns, Abide with Me and Lest We Forget, followed by the Australian National Anthem. The first verse of the national anthem was sung in the Eora language by the Willoughby Public School choir, followed by a rendition in English sung by all. The Willoughby Band and representatives of the Northern Suburbs Pipe Band performed the musical pieces beautifully. Lieutenant-Colonel Adrian Harding of the Australian Army delivered an inspiring Anzac Day Address to remind us of the Anzac legend that continues to inspire our national spirit. Once again, I was privileged to join other dignitaries and members of the public in laying a wreath for our fallen heroes. I would like to congratulate the Willoughby Legion Ex-Services Club, the Chatswood RSL Club and Sub-Branch, Willoughby City Council, the 1st Willoughby Scouts and all who participated in the Willoughby Park commemorations to honour our Anzacs.

#### **VALE ROSEMARY BROOKER**

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—I would like to pay tribute to Rosemary Brooker, the much loved and celebrated women's Captain of Northbridge Golf Club. Rosemary had been a member of NGC since 2011 and served as women's Captain during 2017-2019 & 2021-2024. She was a fantastic promoter of women's golf for the Club and served on the club's Match and Greens committees. In the words of the current Women's President of Northbridge Golf Club, Rosemary 'was known for her wit, infectious humour and brought laughter and joy to all who had the privilege of knowing her'. She was known to be 'never afraid to speak her mind' in a humorous way, entertaining those around her with her 'clever quips and sharp humour'. I know how much Rosemary was loved by her Club and they will remember her with fondness and gratitude for the joy she brought to their lives. I thank the late Rosemary Brooker for her dedicated service to Northbridge Golf Club and I offer my heartfelt condolences to her loved ones who are mourning her loss yet cherishing her legacy.

#### **MACHTELD HALI**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises local artist, activist and original Freedom Runner, Machteld Hali from Kiama continues her tireless efforts in supporting her community and advocating for the rights and empowerment of First Nations people. With the launch of her latest art fundraiser at The Tempest Gallery on 17th May 2024, Machteld hopes to raise the remaining funds for her phenomenal \$20,000 contribution to education for First Nations people at the University of New England. Machteld is guided by a strong desire to help, grown from some of her own experiences of hatred and discrimination as an immigrant which began in 1965 when Machteld participated in the Charles Perkins Freedom Ride run by Sydney University. The Freedom Ride was a 15-day bus journey through regional NSW and has since become a defining moment in Australian activism. The Freedom Ride was intended to spread awareness of the poor living conditions. The event will feature a diverse selection of framed artworks donated by Hali herself, her students and local artists. Notable contributions include pieces from acclaimed artists such as Pro Hart, Auguste Blackman, Robyn Sharp, Becky Guggisverg, and Kerrina Swords.

#### **MINNAMURRA LIONS**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises the Minnamurra Lions Club. The club received an impressive turnout at their prospective new members evening at Kiama Golf Club on Tuesday 9th April 2024. Lions are well known for their sausage sizzles. But the club contributes so much more to the lives of members and the community, which long-term members Denis Beynon and former President Ken Horspool expressed with obvious wholehearted gratitude during the evening. Approaching its 25th anniversary, the Minnamurra Lions was established in November 1999 with 38 members, including my father Malcom who was a foundation member. Whilst their biggest revenue comes from the traditional snags and bacon and egg rolls at Black Beach's Seaside Markets, Minnamurra Lions actively raise funds for various charities and support the community via several other means. Other contributions over the past year have included construction and maintenance of the whale watching platform and helipad at Minnamurra, offering \$10,000 to bushfire relief along the south coast and allocating funding to Triple Care Farm, Kiama SES, and Illawarra Suicide Prevention

& Awareness Network. Head along to an upcoming meeting held every second and fourth Tuesday of every month at the Kiama Golf Club.

#### **MIREILLE SMITH**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises rising beach volleyball star Mireille Smith has received a boost ahead of representing Australia in the Under 19 Asian Beach Volleyball Championships in Thailand. On the eve of departing for the championships the 16-year-old Nowra High School student was named among 40 recipients of the Commonwealth Games NSW Athlete Grant Program. Each recipient will receive \$1,000 and these 40 young athletes including Mireille have demonstrated tremendous ability in their respective sport pathways. The Shoalhaven's own Mireille Smith was one of two volleyballers to receive grants. The Callala Beach teenager is Australia's highest-ranked under 18 beach volleyballer after winning two of the three Australian Junior Beach Volleyball Tour events. Her wins in the junior events at Caloundra and Mollymook were followed up with a bronze medal in the open women's tournament at Mollymook with partner Remy Song. A huge congratulations and well done to rising volleyball and sports star Mireille Smith.

#### **DETECTIVE SERGEANT PETER CRAMPTON**

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)**—On the 3rd of May, a significant milestone was reached as Detective Sergeant Peter Crampton bid farewell to his 34-year-long journey in the NSW Police Force. At Riverstone Police Station, amidst the presence of cherished family, dear friends and colleagues, he was honoured with a heartfelt march out ceremony, marking the conclusion of an incredible career dedicated to upholding justice and serving the community. Throughout his tenure, Detective Sergeant Peter Crampton embodied unwavering dedication and professionalism, earning him respect and admiration from all who had the privilege of working alongside him. As he embarks on this new chapter of his life in retirement, we extend our sincerest well-wishes for a future filled with joy, relaxation and fulfillment. Sarge- thank you for your years of selfless service and unwavering commitment to the principles of law enforcement. Your legacy will undoubtedly continue to inspire and resonate within the NSW Police Force for years to come. May your retirement be as rewarding as your career has been impactful.

#### **OATLEY RUGBY CLUB VICTORIOUS AT RUGBY SEVENS CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)**—Speaker, I'd like to recognise a fantastic local sporting organisation, who recently hosted the Sydney Junior Rugby Union Sevens Championships at Riverwood Park. Oatley Rugby Club came out victorious, winning the top team prize out of over 600 boys and girls from all across Sydney. There were around 2000 spectators there on the day and I must say, it was an incredible atmosphere. Grassroots sports is truly such an important pillar in my community, and I am so proud of the way our local families and children get involved. Local sports has numerous benefits beyond fitness. I know firsthand that the Oatley Rugby Club promotes teamwork, discipline, and perseverance amongst both their players and executive committee. What an incredible effort from the entire Oatley Rugby Club, both on and off the field. I'd like to thank President Ana Moala, as well as the entire executive committee, who I know firsthand have worked incredibly hard for the Oatley Rugby Club over the years. I look forward to supporting and working alongside them well into the future.

#### **ROBBIE KMETON**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)**—Speaker, I rise to congratulate an incredibly talented local performer, Robbie Kmeton. Robbie has recently been announced as one of the performers in the live dance show, Burn the Floor. As a part of the 25th anniversary Tour of the show, he will be joined by Human Nature's Phil Burton, as part of the 'Dare To Dream' 2024 Australian tour. The show will include some incredible Aussie rock classics by artists such as AC/DC, INXS, John Farnham and Keith Urban. Robbie was first picked up after he won the hit TV show, 'So You Think You Can Dance Australia' and ever since, has been fulfilling his dream of performing on some of the biggest stages around the country. The performing arts sector is truly such an important part of our community. Not only is it entertaining, but it also serves as a platform for talented locals like Robbie to showcase their skills. Congratulations to Robbie for this incredible achievement and I wish him all the best for a successful and memorable tour. I'm sure Robbie will go incredibly far over the next few years.

#### **ST GEORGE MEN'S SHED**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)**—Speaker, I would like to recognise the volunteers from the St George Men's Shed, who continue to do a wonderful job in my community. I recently had the opportunity to visit the St George Men's Shed again and I must say, the work they do is second to none. They have worked on several recent projects for the local community. I'd like to recognise Barry Boyce, Bernie Dolan, Phil Fague and Paul Cox, Wil Ong, Paul Roy Brennan, John Hodgkinson, Barry Boyce, Paul Vernon, David Lawless, Dennis Hulks, William Panagopoulos, Aaron French, Ian McIntosh, John Busuttill, John Cowin, Kevin O'Hanlon, Geoff Broadbent, Robert Baillie, Allen Brooker, Brian Turner and Terry Martin for their continued efforts. I'd also like to take a

moment to pay my respects to Athol Day, who recently passed at the age of 90. Athol was instrumental in the establishment of the St George Men's Shed in 2011. As a patron member, I look forward to working alongside and being a part of the St George Men's Shed for many years to come.

#### **JILL BROADLEY**

**Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)**—Jill Broadley of Condobolin NSW has been presented with her 50 year service bar at the monthly meeting of the Condobolin Branch of United Hospital Auxiliary. The meeting was held on Tuesday 16 April, where Jill was praised for her loyal service to the branch. During Jill's 50 years of service, she also held the office of Secretary for 17 years. I would like to congratulate Jill on reaching this magnificent milestone and for her dedication to the branch. I wish her all the best with her future endeavours.

#### **NARRABRI PHARMACY**

**Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)**—Narrabri Pharmacy was recently announced as the winner of the Professional Innovation Award and was also in the top three for the coveted Guild Pharmacy of the Year Award. The award being presented at the Pharmacy Guild of Australia conference and awards at the Gold Coast. Mrs Karen Carter has operated the Pharmacy for the last 15 years and offers a range of services. The pharmacy uses technologies such as a robotic dispensing system to enable staff to focus on the customer's needs. I would like to congratulate Karen Carter and her team for winning this national award. For a business in a small rural town to be recognised at a national level is outstanding for not only the business but for the community.

#### **PETA ISAAC**

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)**—I acknowledge Peta Isaac, a positive and active member of the Narrabeen community. Together with her father, former motorcycle racing legend, Tony Hatton, Peta will be participating in the Winter 2024 'Shitbox Rally', in support of Cancer Council Australia. Peta and Tony will drive 4,500kms from Sydney to Melbourne, then across the outback to Alice Springs in Peta's sticker-adorned car named 'Goldie Horn'. Team 'Hattos' have already raised over \$40,000 for the Cancer Council. Peta has taken our community along with her for this momentous journey, sharing updates in our 2101 Community Facebook page and shouting out locals and businesses that are supporting this wonderful cause. On behalf of the Pittwater community, I wish Peta and Tony all the best for their journey across Australia in Goldie Horn. We will be cheering you on all the way.

#### **BENJAMIN AND OLIVER LENEHAN**

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)**—I acknowledge Benjamin and Oliver Lenehan, winners of the local youth entrepreneurial business competition, Spark Tank. Their business, Watergate Labs, won \$5000 in seed funding and six months of business coaching, thanks to their NitroNet product. The product came to fruition after 16-year-old Ben began experimenting with generating electricity from nitrogen. This led Ben to realise that energy was still being created once the nitrogen flow had stopped. Further tests led Ben to discover that moisture in the air could be used to create renewable energy. After hours and months of experiments, funded by his own money from his after-school job, Ben created the NitroNet prototype, which has an output of 190 volts. With the support of his older brother, Oliver, Ben entered Spark Tank, and pitched Watergate Labs business plan and his invention. The judges and audience were extremely impressed with Benjamin's prototype which powered two lights. I commend Oliver and Benjamin on their impressive work and passion for problem solving. Our community looks forward to seeing how they continue to make the world a better place.

#### **KEORIDE - ONE MILLION TRIPS**

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)**—I congratulate Keoride on completing over one million passenger trips! The on demand transport service, launched by the former Liberal Government in 2017, connects residents to B-Line bus stops and key locations. The service provides residents of Pittwater with flexibility, with passengers able to easily book rides and track their journey in real time via the Keoride app. The service helps kids get to and from home safely, when traditional buses aren't available, and without the higher costs associated with using a rideshare service. It is fitting that Keoride's one millionth passenger was a local Year 11 student, Seren Thomas. With over 500 trips each day and 98% customer satisfaction, it is clear that Pittwater loves Keoride. Thank you to all the friendly and hardworking Keoride drivers, Mark Dunlop, and the whole team at Keolis Downer. We are so lucky to have the most successful on demand transport service in Australia available in Pittwater.

#### **VOICELESS**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)**—On behalf of the Sydney electorate, I wish to acknowledge the 20 years of strategic work of Voiceless, the animal protection institute. Voiceless plays a vital role in examining and improving animal law and policy, has developed animal education programs, especially targeting schools and carries out independent research and reports on animal cruelty. The small organisation produces an animal law

toolkit and an animal cruelty index that compares Australia with other countries. Voiceless work covers a wide range of issues and animals: from ducks to dairy cows, live export, broiler chickens, kangaroos, battery hens, pigs, puppy farming and animal sentience. They provide an encyclopaedic amount of information and evidence about animals and how we treat them. On top of that Voiceless provides grants to support animal protection projects and ground-breaking research and innovations. Voiceless exists because of the philanthropy of the late and wonderful Brian Sherman and his daughter Ondine, who established the organisation. The Sherman family continues to fund this impressive range of work and also founded the Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation. I commend Voiceless for this unique contribution to our understanding and treatment of animals and their ongoing efforts to protect animals.

#### **NOLAN SOBEL-READ**

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)**—Nolan Sobel-Read is a bright young student from Hunter School of Performing Arts who is reaching for the stars. Nolan has always had a keen interest in space and took on the challenge of building a home-made weather balloon to see to test the limits of the sky. His project was sponsored by DIYODE magazine and developed in collaboration with local engineer Cameron Owen. After two years of research, planning, and hard work, Nolan's balloon was ready for take-off! The balloon was launched from Nyngan High School on 12 April. It reached 28,000 metres high in the sky, more than double the altitude of a commercial airline. Nolan has got a bright future ahead of him, well done on this awesome achievement.

#### **SAMANTHA MARTIN-WILLIAMS**

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)**—Well done to Samantha Martin-Williams on her appointment as Chair of NGM Group, marking a historic moment as the first woman to hold this position. Ms Martin-Williams' is an established and renowned local business leader, who, in 2012, became the first female director of Newcastle Permanent. Her board experience extends further in her roles at Newcastle Airport, the Supply Chain and Logistics Association of Australia, and as a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Governance Institute of Australia. Ms Martin-Williams has also been recognised as a former Telstra Business Woman of the Year for her commitment to advancing governance and business. This is such a well-deserved appointment, congratulations Samantha.

#### **BATLOW SHOW**

**Dr JOE MCGIRR (Wagga Wagga)**—Many country shows are struggling in the modern world but, at Batlow community spirit has ensured the show continues to shine. In fact, the event this year was held for the 100th time, with visitor numbers exceeding the town's entire population. The show has gone on at Batlow since 1909 with brief hiatuses during the war years in the 1940s and another short break during Covid. This year, 1400 people came through the gates to enjoy a celebration of the town's agricultural riches and community activities, with more than 1800 exhibitors showing their wares. Show Society Secretary Lisa Bowden says the turnout was testament to community members and sponsors who have shown that old traditions still have lots of relevance in the digital age. Congratulations to the show's executive committee, Steve Ross, Kristin Mouat, Lisa Bowden, Sarah Kynaston, Peter Green, Lesley Miller, Phil Withers, Patricia Denholm, Michael and Edmund Blenkins and Colin Agate. And special mention must go to current president and veteran poultry exhibitor Steve Ross, who was named a life member of the Show Society for more than 30 years of service to the event. A great achievement by a great community. Well done to all!

#### **LAVINA MAY STOBART**

**Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)**—Elernmore Vale resident Lavina May Stobart, 79, grew up in poverty in Hill Street, Wallsend, in a now historically listed residence - a kind, positive and selfless woman, always putting community first. From a young age, Lavina collected her alcoholic father's payslips at the pub, would take them to the post office and pay the family's bills, though mostly there wouldn't be enough money. So, she learned to budget and make payment plans, almost became dux of her school and taught herself to drive. Lavina raised her own family with a supportive husband and donated her time to Lifeline suicide prevention, palliative pastoral care in the hospital and aged care groups. She cared for her mother "Lil" into her 90s and shortly after her passing, Lavina lost her husband Sidney, but continued to work with disadvantaged youth mentor programs and "Mum's Cottage" - a domestic violence and mother support program. She has documented her efforts in cherished letters and books, has world-wide pen-pals and has been asked to speak at the University of Newcastle for "Living Healthy", having no health issues or medication. Thank you, Lavina – for everything.

#### **CATHERINE CUSSAN**

**Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)**—Cath Cussan was a popular, hands-on person who dedicated herself to the west of NSW. She died in December 2023 after a short period of illness. Cath grew up in Newcastle and attended Booragul High and Newcastle Girls High, studied at Newcastle University, and joined the Teachers

Federation in 1972. She taught at Swansea High in 1973 and later at Newcastle Boys High. As a student, Cath was a member of the Miscellaneous Workers Union, and a member of the Nurses Association during her time as a psychiatric nurse, keen to see women achieve equal wages and conditions. She became Federation Representative at Dubbo High School, later the Association Secretary and the first female President of Dubbo Association. In 1981, Cath was the first Country Organiser based in Dubbo and encouraged the establishment of a women's network at Broken Hill, forging a relationship with the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. After five years as Country Organiser, Cath became Assistant General Secretary (Administration). She returned to teaching in 1988 and in 1992 was elected President of Gunnedah Teachers Association, being awarded Federation Life Membership in 1994. Vale Cath Cussan.

#### **LIONS CLUB OF JESMOND**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—The Lions Australia slogan is "Where there's a need, there's a Lion". For 75 years, the Lions have made a difference, now with 1200 clubs and 25,000 members. One of these, our own Lions Club of Jesmond, sponsored Waratah West Public School's effort to get a NSW Government Community Building Partnership Grant of \$41,727 for outdoor classroom/community furniture project. The Club helped assemble many furniture flat packs for the Waratah West Public School outdoor learning area – and it looks great. Particular kudos to Brian Bow, Bob Forsyth and George Webb for their efforts. The Club also run a Breakfast Club at the school each Wednesday, with two members on the roster and, with help from food bank donations, kids are now able to make their own breakfasts. The Club continues to cater for the yearly Father's Day Sausage Sizzle and has taught the school how to run a Bunnings BBQ. In addition, they recently donated \$5,000 to assist in running a bus service that gets kids to school who are having issues with transport. Thanks, everyone, for maintaining fellowship and community in our area.

#### **CANADA BAY SES UNIT**

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)**—I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the electorate of Drummoyne's SES unit located in Canada Bay. I stand here today with gratitude and in celebration of National Volunteer Week, which is being held this month. The unwavering commitment, dedication and courage of SES volunteers are the pillars that keep our community safe. Next week, we are reminded of the selfless individuals not only in my community but of over 10,000 other volunteers across the state of New South Wales that step forward to serve people in times of need. To our SES volunteers, I say that you are the unsung heroes who brave the storms, floods and the fires to lend a helping hand to those who need it. On behalf of my community, I sincerely thank you for your service, your bravery and your dedication.

#### **MASSIMO COSTA-PUNTILLO**

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)**—I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate Massimo Costa- Puntillo, from Five Dock, who was recently selected to represent Australia in the upcoming London 2024 World Cup for Karate. Massimo is 15 years old and his selection for such a prestigious event is a remarkable achievement and a testament to his dedication, hard work, and exceptional skills in the field of Karate. This achievement demonstrates what can be achieved with the support and guidance of friends, family, and the community. As the local Member, I am so proud to see talented, young athletes like Massimo representing our community on a national and international level. On behalf of our local community, I want to wish Massimo all the very best in the upcoming World Cup, and always. Keep up the great work! Good luck!

#### **MASSEY PARK GOLF CLUB**

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)**—I would like to recognise an impressive sporting achievement that occurred in late March at the NSW Metropolitan Men's Major Pennants Division Finals golf event that put our Massey Park Golf Club, Concord, into the books. The event was hotly contested and Massey Park captured the hearts of the Sydney golfing community with their remarkable victory in Division 2. After a fiercely competitive game, Massey Park stepped up against opponent Muirfield Golf Club, taking a shot that sent the ball high into the air, arching perfectly over the flag and landing into the hole launching a walk-off Eagle to seal the deal to a roaring crowd. Congratulations and well done to the following players from Massey Park Golf Club for their achievement. Players: Stephen Carroll (C); Dominic Falk; Shane Fitzpatrick; Riley Flack; Sandesh Sidhu; Ben Smith; Craig Smith; Fintan Tierney; Tim Wand; Simon Watson. Caddies and support staff: Myles Hunter (manager); Liam Flack; Larry Keenan; Mitch Harry; Julie Fitzpatrick; James Rogers; Lyndell Prendergast; Anthony Rath; Judy Keenan; Allister Watkins; Ian Prendergast; Steve Newman.

#### **JOEYS NETBALL CLUB**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)**—I acknowledge the Joeys Netball Club ("Joeys") for receiving a funding boost of \$6,099.30 from the 2023/24 Local Sport Grant Program. Joeys is a family-friendly club that encourages play that fits within the spirit of the game – being fair and competitive, whilst having fun in a safe

environment. By way of background, Joeys was established in 1963 and caters for players from the under 5s to the senior opens, with specially developed programs to introduce children to the netball. This funding will enable Joeys to purchase new equipment as well as provide training to members from professional coaches to improve their skills. Of course, none of this is possible without the hard work and dedication of the Joeys Netball Club Executive Committee. I recognise Amanda Brady, Greg Kozma, Julia Lock, Sarah McDonald, Bree Well, Linda Allen, Aaron French, Roisin Bryce-Stark, Kasey Marsh, Kelly Carter, Blair MacCowan, Cath Thorsby, Britt Orp, Keith Middleton, Kathryn McGill and Melissa James for their efforts. I thank the members of the Joeys Netball Club for bringing the importance of this project to my attention and look forward to seeing the positive impact it makes in our community.

#### **SUTHERLAND DISTRICT HOCKEY CLUB**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)**—I acknowledge the Sutherland District Hockey Club for receiving a funding boost of \$16,689.40 from the 2023/24 Local Sport Grant Program. Established in 1965, the Sutherland District Hockey Club is one of the largest hockey Clubs in Sydney and successfully fields male, female and junior teams at all levels. The entirely volunteer-managed Club prides itself on growing and fostering a love of hockey in our local area. Through this grant, the club will purchase a field sweeper to make ground upkeep easier for volunteers and prolong the life of the playing surface. Of course, none of this is possible without the hard work and dedication of the Sutherland District Hockey Club Executive Committee. I recognise David Krepp, Dean Groundwater, Sarah Dredge, John Cowan, Kat Pittello, Gethin Perry, Eythan Eowling, Jason Stevens, Kristen Agius, Theresa Wilde, Kevin Margeston, Kathleen Pittello, Hannah McClug, Aaron Krepp, Phil Rowling, Steve Harvey, Garry Thomas, Neil Wray, Lachlan Groundwater and Peter Krepp for their efforts. I thank the members of the Sutherland District Hockey Club for bringing the importance of this project to my attention and look forward to seeing the positive impact it makes in our community.

#### **SHINE AWARDS**

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)**—Congratulations to the Rotary Club of Wagga Wagga for its Shine Awards – an amazing program that recognises the remarkable contribution of people with disability and their employers. Started in 2012 by Rotarian Alan Lean, the awards celebrate the many ways in which people with disability add to the economic and social fabric of Wagga Wagga. Mr Lean was inspired to launch the program after realising that there were many awards to recognise the success of industry in Wagga Wagga, but none to specifically acknowledge the valuable work done by people with disability. The awards also honour employers who hire workers with disability, providing a showcase of success stories that improve personal wellbeing, staff morale and inclusiveness across our city. At this year's awards, 30 employers and employees were recognised for their contribution. I was honoured to present some of the awards and feel privileged to be appointed as patron of the program. Congratulations to all the recipients and thank you to Mr Lean, club president Peter Olson and the volunteers who make the awards possible. As patron, I'm looking forward to further celebrating the successes of people with disability and their employers when the awards return in 2025.

#### **INTERNATIONAL TOURISM AWARD**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)**—For many reasons, I am lucky to call the Central Coast home and I am thrilled that the Central Coast recently took first place in the Global Green Destinations Story Awards at the prestigious travel trade show known as ITB Berlin. This victory highlights the significant achievement that our local Central Coast Council is working extremely hard for. Although ecotourism is not a new concept, to lead it with perfection and integrity is not something easily achieved. As a Coastie, I understand what our beautiful region has to offer, and I would like to acknowledge the Central Coast Council team for your dedication and ambition to put our region's name on the international path of victory. Tourism does not only help improve our local economy and infrastructure, but it also amplifies the beauty of our Coasties' culture. Thank you, Central Coast Council team, for sustainably leading by example in this space.

#### **SENIORS WEEK CELEBRATION WITH COASTLINK**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)**—Congratulations, and thank you ever so much to the fantastic staff at Coastlink for your beautiful Seniors Week – Meet and Greet Morning Tea at the newly upgraded Woy Woy Activity Hub last week. It was wonderful to get to know so many beautiful seniors from the Peninsula and across the Central Coast who had travelled in Coastlink's community transport to join in the fabulous morning tea. The sun was shining brightly, and delicious smells of participant Mary's hand-made sausage and spinach rolls wafted out of the hall. Community members arrived through the beautiful, freshly planted gardens and it was just a perfect moment to experience. The Activity Hub now looks spectacular with freshly polished floors, cleaned to perfection with a small board of scrumptious treats on offer. I thank all the staff members, transport drivers, carers and organisers, all with a heart of gold, who genuinely want to work to improve the lives of our Seniors on the Central Coast.



### **TROY DOVE AND MITCHELL GORDON**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)**—One of the best things in the Gosford Electorate is our people, and today, I have the utmost pleasure to acknowledge Mitchell Gordon and Troy Dove for their selfless contributions to our community. For years, the pair of Troy Dove and Mitchell Gordon have teamed up to organise Trivia Nights and raised thousands of dollars for various charities and not-for-profit organisations such as Coast Shelter, RSPCA Central Coast, Fairhaven and many others. I also want to give a special recognition to Troy Dove, a wonderful member of the Rotary Brisbane Water for his kindness, and the commitment he has continuously proven to our community. Besides raising money for countless cancer support organisations, Mr Dove has coordinated Clean Up Australia Day teams, and volunteered his time at different local charities among Fairhaven Shopping Village, Central Coast Antiques and Collectables, and Woy Woy Rotary Club. Troy Dove and Mitchell Gordon are the two perfect examples of our beautiful Central Coast. I praise you both for your dedication to better our community and I sincerely thank you for being remarkable role models for the younger generations.

### **LIVERPOOL CITY BRASS BAND**

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)**—There are not many organisations that can claim the longevity of Liverpool City Brass Band, which has served the Liverpool community for over 140 years. The band was founded in 1883 as the Liverpool Brass Band, after a small donation was given to a group of young men seeking to entertain the people of Liverpool. Since then, the band has gone through various iterations, until it was officially named the Liverpool City Brass Band in 1961. The Band is frequently visible across Liverpool, playing and ANZAC and Remembrance Day Commemorations, Christmas events, Bunnings Barbecues and local events. I recently attended one of the Band's rehearsal days, where I had the opportunity to meet members of the band and listen to them perform. I note that the Band is always looking for new members and is willing to support musicians of all abilities. Until 1962, the band did not have a permanent home when the current band hall was opened in Woodward Park, off Memorial Avenue. The hall has been the home of the City Band ever since. I extend my thanks to band president Amanda Crnkovic and all band members for their warm hospitality.

### **ARMENIAN GENOCIDE 109TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—On Wednesday 24th April 2024, I was honoured to represent the Minister for Multiculturalism and address the Armenian-Australian community at the 109th Anniversary Armenian Genocide Commemoration evening, at The Concourse in Chatswood. Organised by the Armenian National Committee of Australia, more than 500 members of the Armenian community and more than 40 dignitaries attended the event. This year, the keynote address was delivered by Dr Khatchig Mouradian, lecturer in Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies at Columbia University, New York. This year, the Genocide Commemoration was overshadowed by the recent war in Artsakh. At the Commemoration, I spoke about my recent visit as Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Delegation to Armenia, where I witnessed this devastation firsthand. I continue to stand with the people of Armenia, and with the descendants of the genocide of Armenians, Assyrians and Greeks by Ottoman Turkey, and demand that the Republic of Turkey recognise the events of 1915 as such. I commend Michael Kolokossian, Executive Director, Armenian National Committee, and all Armenian-Australian community leaders on organising this important event.

### **AMIR SALEM, OAM - AUSTRALIAN EGYPTIAN FORUM COUNCIL**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—I would like to congratulate Amir Salem OAM on the conclusion of his term as President of the Australian Egyptian Forum Council, serving our Egyptian-Australian community in this role for more than 4 years. The Australian Egyptian Forum Council is the peak advocacy body for our Egyptian-Australian community, dedicated to supporting the 60,000 members of the Egyptian community who call Australia home. Their initiatives welcome people from all walks of life to engage with Egypt's rich cultural inheritance. Amir's most recent term as President of the Council has overseen a number of initiatives, including the expanded annual HSC High Achievers event and the Alexandria Cosmopolitan City Project, paying homage to the historic Egyptian city and celebrating our own local diversity across NSW. Amir's many decades of community service have gladly not gone unnoticed, being awarded the Multicultural NSW Stepan Kerkyasharian AO Community Medal in 2023, and the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the Egyptian community in 2021. As Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Egypt, it has been a pleasure to work alongside Amir Salem as President of the Council. I wish him continued success in community life.

### **CHALDEAN BABYLONIAN NEW YEAR AND STUDENT CELEBRATION**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—On Sunday 14th April 2024, I was pleased to address our Chaldean-Australian community at the annual Chaldean Babylonian New Year and Student Celebration event, at the St Thomas the Apostle Chaldean Catholic Church in Bossley Park. The Chaldean community plays an important role in our diverse Western Sydney community. Chaldean New Year, also known as Akitu, is one of

the most important events in their cultural calendar. Organised by the Chaldean League of NSW, this year's Festival celebrated Chaldean Babylonian New Year 7324. The event was an opportunity to acknowledge the accomplishments of high achieving Higher School Certificate and university graduates of Chaldean background. It was great to be joined by Parliamentary colleagues Edmond Atalla MP, Member for Mount Druitt, Nathan Hagarty MP, Member for Leppington, Charishma Kaliyanda MP, Member for Liverpool, and Tri Vo MP, Member for Cabramatta, for the official ceremony and presentation. Thank you to Sam Yousif, President and Laith Alchinno, Chaldean League of NSW and all community organisers for a great event. May Year 7324 bring good health and prosperity to our proud Chaldean-Australians.

#### **JUDY AND DAVID GILLAN HORNSBY-BEROWRA MEN'S SHED**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby)**—David and Judy Gillan are long-term residents of Mt Kuring-gai who have contributed so much to their community. In 2012, the Hornsby/Berowra Men's Shed was formed by a group of retired men led by David Gillan as President. Initially they gathered in the Gillans' garage, but as their membership grew a need for their own shed became apparent. Hornsby Council agreed that some of their land could be used to establish a shed. David Gillan, with stoic determination, successfully worked through the many approvals required to establish their building and was successful with a State Government grant application to help fund the new shed. In 2021, a magnificent facility was opened at Council's Wellum Bulla depot in Mt Kuring-gai. The Hornsby/Berowra Men's Shed is open to men and women and is an important creative and social outlet for older residents. It also does a lot of charitable work for the wider Hornsby community. I recognize the significant work of Dave Gillan and the incredible patience of Judy, as the men's shed group operated out of their garage for a decade. I wish them all the best with their relocation up north.

#### **HORNSBY RSL SUSTAINABILITY AWARD**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby)**—Last Year, at the Clubs NSW Clubs and Community awards, my local RSL Club at Hornsby was awarded the "sustainability award". I am proud to say Hornsby RSL Club have invested significantly, in various ways, to support their strong commitment to reducing its carbon footprint. This commitment has spanned over 15 years as they continually strive to be part of the solution. Some of their initiatives include: investing in 250 solar panels on its roof; recycling 2,000 glass bottles weekly; utilizing a food waste recycling system to convert 38,000L of garden fertilizer annually; upgrading car park lighting to LED; successfully phased out plastic straws, plastic stirrers and single use cups; implementing waterless urinals to reduce its water consumption by 30%; installing 3 large water tanks to harvest up to 25,000L of rainwater; introducing paperless technologies reducing paper usage by 70%. I am proud to congratulate my local club, Hornsby RSL, for the impressive work they have done over many years to improve their sustainability and for their recent Clubs NSW award in recognition of this work.

#### **JOHN THOMSON**

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)**—There are few callings more important than training young minds for the future, and among the greats of this nation-building art stands Tumut's John Thomson who recently retired after 43 years of teaching. John worked at Tumut High School for 37 years, imparting artistic, academic and sporting education to at least two generations of students. A visual arts teacher, his contribution went beyond creative pursuits. With a proud history on sporting fields as player and coach, he led many young athletes to be their best in sports of all sorts. He was first male president of the Tumut Netball Association, president of the Tumut Swimming Club, captain of the Mt Selwyn Ski Patrol, and president of the McAuley Catholic Central School P&F, just to name a few. Among his great personal achievements was his marriage to local girl Trina Cruise (now Snowy Valleys Deputy Mayor Trina Thomson) and the raising of their three daughters, Alexandra, Amelia and Gabrielle. Sydney-born John says one of his best decisions was to move to Tumut – and I'm sure two generations of his students and their families would heartily agree. Congratulations, John, and enjoy your well-earned retirement. Your community thanks you.

#### **SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)**—Today I recognise the extraordinary hard work and advocacy of the Seniors Rights Service. Senior Rights Service has been an incredible resource to those within my community, as well as greater New South Wales. Seniors Rights Service was created as a community organisation, whose dedication and perseverance are aimed at protecting the rights of older people, advocating for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in all areas. This agency works tirelessly to be an invaluable resource, and one which my staff and I have relied on to help senior members of our community. The resources offered include legal services, ranging from strata to fair trade, aged care advocacy relating to all aged care services, and information services covering a myriad of different rights-based information regardless of individual backgrounds. This service aims to minimise the complexity of dealing with different agencies, and to work on behalf our senior community. As we find ourselves amid a cost of living and housing crisis, Seniors Rights Service has been an unwavering

advocate for the rights and protection of our senior communities. I give my heartfelt thanks to Senior Rights Service, and the staff who continue to support seniors across New South Wales.

#### **RICHMOND MEMORIAL BOWLING CLUB 75TH ANNIVERSARY**

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury)**—Mr Speaker, I warmly congratulate the Richmond Memorial Bowling Club on their 75th Anniversary which will be celebrated on 16th May 2024. The Club was formed by Ex-Servicemen in 1949. A Ladies Club followed in 1957 and the two clubs were merged in 2020. I am pleased to know the Club is growing its membership. It has an enviable record in sending representatives to regional and state competitions. It is called "The Friendly Club" and provides important social connections in the Richmond area. The Club is establishing links with local High Schools. It gives young people the opportunity to try one of the most popular sports in the country. I would like to commend the Richmond Memorial Bowling Club on their 75th Anniversary and wish them a long and successful future. Thank you Mr Speaker.

#### **WOTSO OPENING**

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)**—It is with great fanfare that WOTSO expanded its presence in Southwest Sydney and opened its 26th location in Liverpool. This expansion aims to offer affordable and adaptable workspace solutions tailored to small businesses' needs. WOTSO is an ASX-listed flexible workspace operator and WOTSO Liverpool is Sydney's third-largest location, offering 40 desks, 30 private offices, 3 meeting rooms, relaxation areas, and a kitchen and bar. Its clientele comprises freelancers, consultants, and a blend of established and emerging businesses. I take this opportunity to recognise the great addition to Liverpool's small business landscape that WOTSO provides, in the heart of the CBD. During the launch, I had the pleasure of meeting local entrepreneur Jovana Karajcic, who shared her journey of establishing her own business, whilst getting married and becoming a mother, all within the last four years! Her decision to become a WOTSO Liverpool foundation member, reflects that this type of service is much needed within our community. WOTSO prioritises the creation of an uplifting and collaborative atmosphere with natural light and artistic murals to stimulate mood, creativity, and concentration. I welcome WOTSO to Liverpool, and look forward to seeing their contributions to businesses in our local community.

#### **MARK 'MONO' STEWART AND DEB STEWART**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)**—Today I recognise the extraordinary achievements of Mark 'Mono' Stewart in his dedication in bringing Australia's first international adaptive surfing event to Byron Bay. With the help of his wife Deb, the championship was a success and I was proud to sponsor it. After five years of planning, Mark secured an event spanning five days in his hometown. The event showcased the talents of approximately 100 competitors across nine divisions tailored to accommodate a spectrum of physical disabilities. Every participant had an opportunity to showcase their surfing skills on the big stage. Through the commitment of volunteers, stall owners, sponsors, and the Byron Bay public, the event not only allowed competitors to showcase their talent, but it also evolved into a celebration of triumph over adversity and an example of community solidarity and inclusivity. Mark has helped create an opportunity to bring together members from a variety of backgrounds, whilst sharing the pristine local beaches. Congratulations to all competitors who participated, and a big shout out to Mark for winning his division. I give my thanks to Mark and Deb, and all the volunteers who gave their time.

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