

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 19 June 2024

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Bills

GOVERNMENT SECTOR EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT 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 a later hour.

RICE MARKETING AMENDMENT 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 a later hour.

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motions]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): A number of members on both sides of the Chamber exceeded 30 seconds when giving their notice of motion. I ask members to keep within the time limit so that other members do not miss out.

Bills

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AMENDMENT (INDUSTRIAL MANSLAUGHTER) BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 4 June 2024.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (10:18): I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. The Liberals and The Nationals broadly support the proposed amendments to introduce industrial manslaughter to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. The Coalition is committed to harmonising work health and safety laws across our country, having implemented the model in 2011 as well as being among the first to adopt many of the Boland review recommendations in 2020. Under the leadership of then Minister Victor Dominello, the previous Coalition Government entered into an agreement in February 2023 with other States and Territories to amend the model work health and safety laws to allow for the introduction of industrial manslaughter. The Liberals and The Nationals have been and will remain committed to ensuring the health, safety and lives of every individual who works in this great State.

Every person who heads to work each morning should have the assurance that they will be safe from any potential threat to their life at their workplace. Unfortunately, this has not always been the reality. Too many families have had to endure the nightmare of receiving a phone call informing them that a loved one has been involved in a workplace incident and has tragically lost their life. To the families who have suffered through this torment, I extend my deepest condolences on behalf of myself and the Opposition. To Patrizia Cassaniti and the entire Cassaniti family, your strength and resolve in the face of such a dark time is a testament to your love for Christopher, who was cruelly taken from you far too soon. Your advocacy for the introduction of this amendment will ensure the safety and lives of workers across our great State.

Amongst the States and Territories which agreed to introduce industrial manslaughter to work health and safety laws, New South Wales and Tasmania are the only jurisdictions to not do so. New South Wales remains the State with the highest number of workplace fatalities. With the introduction of industrial manslaughter, an

offence will be committed when a person or an officer of a person conducting a business or undertaking, with a health and safety duty, engages in gross negligence that causes the death of a worker or another individual to whom they owe a duty of care. The maximum penalty for such an offence is 25 years imprisonment for an individual or \$20 million for a body corporate. This will make New South Wales the harshest amongst all jurisdictions that have an industrial manslaughter mandate. Volunteers will be exempt, as they should be, from the offence of industrial manslaughter.

Concerns have been raised by the NSW Minerals Council regarding the singularity of maximum punishment given to individuals, and that is something that ought to be looked at. Likewise, stakeholders have raised concerns about the absence of a statute of limitations. Proposed section 34E provides there is to be no limitation period for commencing proceedings for an industrial manslaughter offence. In addition, when a charge of industrial manslaughter is reverted to a category 1 charge, there will also be no limitation period. NSW Farmers, NSW Minerals Council and Business NSW oppose the absence of a limitation period. Their argument is that, without such a limitation, industrial manslaughter prosecutions could potentially remain unresolved indefinitely. This could place significant burdens on defendants and prolong the suffering of victims' families. They advocate for establishing a reasonable time frame for initiating prosecutions, to ensure the timely, complete resolution of cases. The Coalition notes that no other jurisdiction imposes a limitation period, but it also understands and sympathises with the concerns raised by these industry bodies. The Opposition will return to that point.

NSW Farmers have highlighted an important issue regarding the distinction between a place of work and a residence. Of course, many farm workers live on the same property where they work. NSW Farmers seek clarification and certainty that no offence will apply where death results from engaging in personal, recreational or domestic activities on the property. The Opposition will return to that point also. The bill proposes that proceedings for an industrial manslaughter or category 1 offence against individuals will proceed through indictment. For body corporates, these proceedings will be handled summarily, allowing for flexibility based on the recommendations of prosecutors.

Furthermore, the bill states that a statutory review of the amendments must be held 18 months after the commencement of the provisions and a report tabled to each House of Parliament three months after the review is completed. This welcome step is important to ensure that any unintended consequences or unforeseen issues are addressed in a timely fashion. I thank Minister Cotsis and her team, NSW Farmers, NSW Minerals Council, Business NSW, Unions NSW and all other stakeholders who were involved in bringing the bill to this stage. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (10:24): I contribute to debate on the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. Since 2013 a worker has died every week. Since 2019 there have been 300 workplace fatalities—meaning 300 life sentences for families. Due to the inaction of the previous Liberal-Nationals Government, New South Wales is the only mainland State in Australia without an industrial manslaughter offence. The Minns Labor Government is fulfilling its election promise and following through with its ongoing commitment to legislate for an industrial manslaughter offence and tougher penalties for negligent workplaces. This bill strikes at the very heart of our shared values and responsibilities—the safety and wellbeing of every worker in New South Wales. It marks a watershed moment in the Minns Labor Government's effort to ensure that every worker can return home safely to their family at the end of each working day.

In my first full-time job with the Trades and Labor Council of Sydney, now Unions NSW, I worked in the occupational health and safety training unit. My role was to advocate and educate for safer workplaces. We trained many unionists who were involved in building Darling Harbour. For too long businesses have been able to get away with cutting corners to improve their bottom line at the cost of their workers' health or lives. The Occupational Health and Safety Act was passed in 1983, when I worked at Unions NSW. I witnessed a training video that was shown to the Darling Harbour construction workers called "Alice's fight for life". It was about a woman who acquired asbestosis. Alice died a slow and painful death from mesothelioma. It was incomprehensible to me that someone might never return home from work to their loved ones due to a workplace incident or accident or acquire a terminal disease just from doing their job. That is why this bill is so important; it holds negligent employers accountable.

For too long we have seen the tragic consequences of inadequate workplace safety regulations. Families have been torn apart by the loss of loved ones due to preventable workplace incidents. The pain and suffering endured by those families is immeasurable and yet the penalties imposed on those responsible have been insufficient. They have escaped with only small fines for their negligence. We have heard stories from parents who have buried their children. No-one should have to bury their child, and especially not because of a preventable workplace accident or incident. This bill is not just a piece of legislation, it is a statement of our values. It is a declaration that the lives of workers are invaluable and that any negligence leading to the loss of life will be met with the sternest consequences.

The bill introduces several crucial changes, the first being severe penalties. The bill imposes significant penalties on both corporations and individuals found guilty of industrial manslaughter. This includes fines of up to \$20 million for a body corporate and up to 25 years imprisonment for an individual. This is a significant increase on the current maximum penalty for the highest offence, category 1, under the Work Health and Safety Act, which is five years imprisonment for an individual or a \$3.8 million fine for a body corporate. A unit will also be established in the New South Wales Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions that will be responsible for the prosecution of industrial manslaughter. These offences will go against individuals and, where appropriate, related bodies corporate.

The importance of the bill extends beyond its legal implications. It is about instilling a culture of safety within our workplaces. It is about ensuring that every employer, manager and worker understands that safety is not just a priority, it is a fundamental right. We must foster an environment where safety protocols are rigorously followed, where concerns about unsafe practices can be raised without fear of reprisal, and where everyone is committed to the wellbeing of their colleagues. We acknowledge that implementing these changes will come with challenges. Employers will need to invest in better safety managers, training programs and compliance mechanisms. However, the cost of inaction is far greater. The loss of even a single life due to workplace negligence is a cost too high to bear.

The success of the industrial manslaughter bill will depend on collaboration. It will require the joint efforts of the Government, employers, workers and trade unions. Together, we must work towards creating a safer working environment for all. Employers must lead by example, demonstrating a genuine commitment to safety. Workers must feel empowered to speak up about unsafe conditions. Unions must continue to advocate for the rights and safety of their membership. As legislators, we must remain vigilant, ensuring that our laws protect those who are most vulnerable.

I thank the Minister, who has supported this action for many years. I congratulate her on this legislation and thank her for her passion and commitment to workers throughout New South Wales. I also thank the Attorney General and the staff members involved. I acknowledge Unions NSW and the whole trade union movement for their perseverance in working on this legislation and ensuring that every worker in New South Wales is protected going forward. This bill provides a strong deterrent, incentivising safer workplaces in New South Wales. It sends a clear message that individuals and businesses who place a worker's life at risk will be held to account in the event of a workplace death—and so they should.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (10:32): I contribute to debate on the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024 on behalf of The Greens and offer our strong support. I acknowledge the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety, who is present in the Chamber as we debate this significant legislative change. I also acknowledge the Government members who spoke earlier about the absolutely critical nature of this reform.

Before I turn to the detail of the bill, I wish to acknowledge and pay tribute to a number of people. This has been a long campaign. In the Minister's second reading speech, she referred to the 20-year campaign by families, friends and unions to effectively deter and prevent workplace deaths and injuries in New South Wales by discouraging unsafe work practices and holding the individuals responsible to account. I go back 20 years because it was actually The Greens at both the Federal and State level who, in 2003 and 2004, were pushing for this change. They were working with the impacted families for a significant reform that would see industrial manslaughter inserted as a specific amendment into the Crimes Act.

At one point, well before Adam Bandt's time, The Greens had a lower House member: the member for Cunningham, Michael Organ. Around 2003 he sought to introduce a private member's bill on industrial manslaughter at the Federal level. Sadly, I am advised that he could not get a seconder in the Chamber. He was the only Greens member in the House of Representatives at that stage, so he could not get a seconder for his private member's bill. There is no record of that bill and no details in *Hansard*, but I acknowledge the work that he and his staff did. I will disclose a conflict of interest. Bizarrely, my partner was working in Michael Organ's office at that time. That is why I know the detail of what happened, even though there is no record in *Hansard* because the member could not get a seconder.

I acknowledge a former member of the other place, Lee Rhiannon, who in 2004 brought a crimes amendment industrial manslaughter bill to the Legislative Council. She, along with others, worked with union representatives and impacted families to push for the introduction of that legislation. That is referenced in a book entitled *White-Collar Crime and Prosecution for "Industrial Manslaughter" as a Means to Reduce Workplace Deaths* by Rick Sarre. I acknowledge that history because it is important, particularly in the current times, to realise that social and economic change, protection for workers and equality in the workplace can take a very long time to achieve. In fact, it has taken two decades of campaigning for this reform.

I say that because I know there are a lot of younger people at the moment who are engaging in insecure work. They are working in what is referred to as the gig economy, often under unsafe conditions as delivery drivers, in contracted work where it is unclear who the employer is and who is responsible for their safety. I acknowledge that the campaigns and movements that those young people are starting now can be part of significant reform. It should not take two decades to make this kind of reform. But if we know that there is a genuine desire to keep pushing in that direction, significant change can take place, even if it does take a very long time.

I acknowledge that the new Labor Government has brought this bill to the House and recognise that it is sadly overdue. In her second reading speech, the Minister referred to the fact that over the past five years, tragically, there have been 300 fatal workplace incidents in New South Wales. I hate to think about the five years before that, and the five years before that, and the five years before that, and the loss of life that has occurred. Sadly, so many bosses and corporations are more interested in prioritising their profits over the health and safety of their workers.

The bill amends the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to insert a new industrial manslaughter offence. That will fulfill an election commitment made by the New South Wales Labor Party. The criminalisation of industrial manslaughter has been a long-held Greens policy. We have advocated for it in Parliament, as I said, for many years—in fact, for multiple decades. Most recently, The Greens worked closely with Labor members while they were in opposition in 2021 to help craft and pass a bill in the Legislative Council. That bill was trapped and unable to proceed through the Legislative Assembly while the Coalition was in government. There has been a long-held commitment from The Greens to work with Labor on this reform, even while Labor was in opposition. We look forward to the quick passage of this bill now.

The industrial manslaughter offence will align New South Wales with the seven other jurisdictions in Australia—all but Tasmania—that have already introduced their own industrial manslaughter offence. In August 2023 the work health and safety model laws at a Federal level were also amended to include a jurisdictional note, and recommended maximum penalties in dealing with industrial manslaughter. The bill inserts a new industrial manslaughter offence that will apply to a person, including a body corporate, that has a health and safety duty under the Act and is a person conducting a business or undertaking, or is an officer of a PCBU.

The offence will apply where the person engages in conduct that constitutes a failure to comply with their WHS duty, causes the death of a worker or another individual to whom the person's WHS duty is owed, and is grossly negligent. The gross negligence test is to mirror the threshold for other manslaughter offences in the criminal jurisdiction. The maximum penalty for the offence will be a fine of \$20 million for a body corporate and 25 years' imprisonment for an individual. Those penalties will make New South Wales the harshest penalty jurisdiction in the country for the industrial manslaughter offence.

There will be no limitation period for an industrial manslaughter offence, which is consistent with the manslaughter offence under the Crimes Act 1900, and a person may be found guilty of a category 1 offence in the alternative. Proceedings against an individual will be dealt with on indictment. Proceedings against a body corporate will be dealt with summarily, unless a prosecutor elects otherwise. It is critical to note that Unions NSW and the entire union movement have been strong advocates for this reform. I particularly acknowledge the CFMEU and Unions NSW, which have worked closely with The Greens over many years—most recently with Ms Abigail Boyd in the other place, who is The Greens' spokesperson for work health and safety issues. They are supportive and have been consulted widely on the reform. They were critical in ensuring that it was an election commitment of the Minns Labor Government.

I also acknowledge the incredible contribution over many years of an incredible group of people who are part of the Injured Workers Campaign Network. I acknowledge their work in making sure that we do not forget that people's lives are impacted by this. We can talk about it in terms of penalties and amendments to the Crimes Act, but the reality is that no-one should ever go to work and not come home. The families impacted by that loss suffer a unique and horrific form of tragedy. Their loved one goes to school or work one morning, rushes out the door, may be on shift work and quickly says goodbye without thinking of the significance of that farewell. Then, in the course of their work shift, they tragically die at work. In cases where there is negligence on the part of an employer or a person responsible for a worker, the tragedy becomes twofold. That death could have been avoided. That is a true tragedy.

We hear stories every year about people who lose their life at work and the impact that has on their families. The impact on their colleagues and people who work in those industries also adds to the trauma and fear. It is one of the reasons why, over so many years, the union movement has been committed to ensuring that there are strong unionised workplaces, especially in high-risk workplaces. It is absolutely critical. I pay tribute to those workers and unionists. I acknowledge the long history of Greens members, well before I was in this place, pushing for the change that we are seeing today.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (10:42): I strongly support the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. I echo the comments made by the Minister for Industrial Relations in her second reading speech. She said:

I am very proud to be standing here. It is very hard. It is very difficult, because we wish that we were not in this position. We wish that we were not losing young workers. We wish that it was not necessary to introduce this legislation. But we are taking a very important step today. We are fulfilling the Minns Government's commitment to introduce an industrial manslaughter offence in New South Wales to ensure that the most serious work health and safety breaches carry a severe penalty. These new laws are intended to profoundly alter the safety culture in New South Wales by raising the bar higher.

I thank the Minister for Industrial Relations and the Attorney General for their work in bringing this important bill to the House. The bill amends the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to create an offence of industrial manslaughter and to provide for matters relating to gross negligence, and amends the Industrial Relations Amendment Act 2023 to remove a redundant provision. The safety of every Australian at work should not be taken for granted. In the past five years 300 people have been killed at work. The previous Government was not just asleep at the wheel, but their downgrading of SafeWork NSW showed more than passive disinterest in worker safety. Accordingly, I welcome the New South Wales Government's announcement that it will transform SafeWork into a standalone regulator and continue to work to create a modern, strong and fit-for-purpose work health and safety regulator. The days of ringing in advance to announce an inspection will be over.

The announcement follows a 12-month inquiry by former judge the Hon. Robert McDougall, KC. Many of the independent review report's recommended reforms started after March last year, including reviewing SafeWork's capabilities in triaging of incidents, improving the responsiveness of contact centre staff and pulling together SafeWork staff previously spread across the Department of Customer Service. Another critical recommendation was to require SafeWork to keep those affected by workplace incidents, including families of deceased workers and those seriously injured at work, informed of the progress of investigations and prosecutions. One would think that would be self-evident, but apparently it is not. Other recommendations include training more inspectors in dealing with psychosocial hazards in the workplace, such as extreme workload and bullying; reviewing the complaint-handling policies; and formalising data collection and analysis to make better compliance and enforcement decisions.

In opposition, Labor fought for the establishment of an inquiry to ensure that workers were protected, following a spate of scandals under the Liberal-Nationals Ministers, such as their inadequate response to the emerging silica threat. Ms Patrizia Cassaniti was in the gallery when the Minister for Industrial Relations delivered her second reading speech. I acknowledge Patrizia's longstanding campaign for the legislation. Just four days after her son Christopher's eighteenth birthday in 2019, a nine-storey scaffold collapsed at his worksite at Macquarie Park, crushing him. As he was dying in the rubble, he held a colleague's hand while calling for his mother. The builder and scaffolding company both escaped with fines. Since his death, Ms Cassaniti and her husband, Rob, have been campaigning for stronger protections for workers. I cannot imagine the pain and memories that the debate will reignite for Patrizia. I am truly sorry that it has taken five years for the bill to be brought to this House. I thank her for her continuous campaign, which has led to the point that this Parliament can now make industrial manslaughter a crime.

The bill creates the offence of industrial manslaughter, carrying a maximum penalty of 25 years imprisonment for individuals or \$20 million in fines for body corporates. It is a landmark moment for worker safety in New South Wales. Unbelievably, New South Wales is the last mainland State to introduce such legislation. It comes after extensive consultation across the community. The Government has listened to work health and safety experts, business groups, unions, legal professionals and, most importantly, the families who have lost loved ones in workplace tragedies. Their voices have shaped this important bill, ensuring that it delivers the strong message that a worker's life is paramount.

For too long, the existing penalties under the current Act have been woefully inadequate in deterring reckless behaviour and holding those responsible for workplace deaths fully accountable. The previous Government had an opportunity to get that right, but it chose not to. The current maximum penalty for a category 1 offence—the highest under the existing legislation—is five years imprisonment for an individual or a \$3.8 million fine for a corporation. Those penalties simply do not reflect the gravity of taking a life through negligence. It is no less a loss if a person dies at work due to someone else's negligence than if they die anywhere else. The new industrial manslaughter offence will address that imbalance. It will hold both individuals and corporations accountable for their actions, with the clear message that gross negligence that leads to a worker's death will be met with the full force of the law. It is not about punishing honest mistakes; it is about ensuring that those who deliberately cut corners, or prioritise profit over safety, face serious consequences.

Let me be clear: The legislation is not about placing an undue burden on businesses. The Government understands that a strong, healthy economy needs a thriving business sector. However, that success should never come at the cost of a worker's life. Strong safety practices are good for not only workers but also business. They

foster a positive working environment, reduce injuries and downtime and ultimately lead to increased productivity. To ensure effective enforcement of the new offence, a dedicated unit will be established within the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. That unit will have the expertise necessary to investigate and prosecute individuals and corporations responsible for industrial manslaughter.

The introduction of the bill is just one step in the ongoing journey towards achieving zero workplace fatalities in New South Wales. The Government's commitment to worker safety extends beyond legislation. The Government is continuously working with stakeholders to improve safety standards across all industries. It is investing in work health and safety awareness campaigns, providing resources for businesses to implement best practices and strengthening enforcement capabilities. The bill sends a powerful message: Worker safety is not negotiable. It is a core value of this Government, and we will not tolerate situations where corners are cut and lives are put at risk. The Government is committed to creating a safer working environment for all New South Wales workers.

This legislation honours the memory of those who have lost their lives in the workplace. Each year in my electorate I attend Cumberland City Council's workplace tragedy memorial ceremony at the old Goodlet and Smith Brickworks site in Holroyd Gardens to acknowledge workers who have died as a result of workplace injury or disease. The old brickworks site is historically significant as the first mechanised brick plant in the region and one of the very earliest in New South Wales. It was the first place in Australia to manufacture Marseille tiles, and the brickworks site is also a site where workers lost their lives. The memorial ceremony is always attended by representatives of the Asbestos Diseases Foundation, who come every year because so many people in our area have lost their lives or are faced with the horrors of terminal illness through asbestos diseases. Every year we hear from a guest speaker who has lost a loved one through a workplace accident.

The ceremony is a sombre occasion at a sombre location. For those who have lost a loved one to a workplace injury or illness, they can honour their memory and raise awareness about the importance of work safety by requesting that a name plaque be mounted on the wall of memory. It provides a clear path to justice for families and loved ones who have suffered unimaginable loss, and each year I am moved when reading the plaques. Just a few of them read: Anthony Paul Cini, age 48 years, mesothelioma; Herbert Timothy Maley, age 50 years, crushed; Christopher Poumale, age 40 years, heart failure; and Selwyn Subritzky-Wano, age 18 years, fall.

Each plaque reminds us of a person who prematurely lost their life at work. Their loss is simply devastating for all involved, and the workplace tragedy memorial is an annual reminder to all of us to redouble our efforts to make work safe. Worker health and safety should never be an area where we in this Chamber disagree. The bill is one step towards ensuring that every worker in New South Wales goes home safely at the end of every working day. Every life saved is a victory. Every worker protected is a success. Together we can build a safer future for all. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (10:51): I make a contribution to debate on the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. In April 2019 a tragic incident occurred that shook us to our core. Christopher Cassaniti, a young man with his whole life ahead of him, was killed in an accident at work. That tragic loss of life is a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of negligence and inaction. Christopher's family—particularly his parents, Patrizia and Robert Cassaniti, and Christopher's brothers, Adriano and Michael—and their entire extended family have shown incredible strength and resilience in the face of unimaginable grief. Rather than letting their pain consume them, they have channelled it into a powerful force for change, and that is the reason we stand here today debating this bill that we hope will become law.

I share a personal anecdote. Christopher and I went to the same primary school. While I finished a few years ahead of him, our families knew each other, and my sister went to school with Christopher's brother. The tragic news of the accident sent shock waves through our community, the Concord community, everyone from our school at St Mary's and the Sydney Italian community. We were touched by that tragedy and everyone shared in collective grief, devastated by how that could happen. But the reality is that it could happen to anyone and to any family. The bill goes towards protecting working people, and deterring and preventing workplace deaths and injuries in our State. By encouraging safe work practices and holding the individuals responsible to account, we are doing everything in our power to ensure that does not happen again.

I acknowledge the Minister for Work Health and Safety is in the Chamber. In her second reading speech she outlined that over 300 fatal workplace incidents have occurred in New South Wales in the past five years. That statistic shocked me. It should shock all of us. She said that 300 families have been given a life sentence, and I could not agree more. As a member who represents many tradies and skilled workers, I support a bill that protects workers. Sadly, the 300 people who have lost their lives, including Christopher Cassaniti, are a stark and tragic reminder of the importance of prioritising safety and accountability in the workplace. No family should have to go through what the Cassaniti family and others have endured.

I acknowledge the Touched By Christopher Foundation, established by Patrizia and Robert in Christopher's memory. That foundation is a testament to their unwavering dedication to preventing tragedies, raising safety awareness for workers, and offering general and financial support for families who have sadly lost a loved one in a workplace accident. The foundation's tireless efforts have helped raise awareness about the importance of industrial manslaughter laws in New South Wales. Something that will forever stick with me is the image of Patrizia holding her teddy bear with Christopher's ashes inside, standing up at many press conferences and talking about the importance of this legislation. I say to Patrizia, you are a brave woman, and I am in awe of your strength. I am so sorry for your loss.

The industrial manslaughter laws in New South Wales are an important step forward in ensuring that workplaces prioritise safety. It has taken a lot of time and work, but we are here. Let us honour Christopher Cassaniti's memory by advocating for a safer, more just future for all workers. I want to commend the entire Cassaniti family—Patrizia, Robert, Andriano, Michael and the extended family and friends, and the Touched By Christopher Foundation for their unwavering commitment to creating a world where no-one must suffer the loss of a loved one due to workplace negligence. Together, we can make a difference and ensure that every worker returns home safely at the end of each day. It starts with this legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (10:55): I speak today about the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. We all support workplace safety. Nothing is more important to any of us than our lives and the lives of others. On that basis, superficially, the bill looks like a step in the right direction, but the bill has a number of clear problems. The first problem is how city-centric the bill is. Too often, this Government—and governments right across Australia, for that matter—write new legislation with a one-size-fits-all mentality. If we ask a city-based politician to imagine a workplace, they automatically think of a factory. If we ask a rural politician to imagine a workplace, they often think of a farm. I know that during the COVID lockdowns a lot of city folk had to get used to the idea of working from home, but working from home is nothing new for farmers. Farmers have been working from home for thousands of years. For many of us, our homes are also our workplaces. No consideration has been given to that fact when drafting the bill. It is easy to argue that an accident that happens in a factory is work-related because if someone is at a factory they are almost always there for work.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The Clerk will stop the clock. Members will enter the Chamber more quietly.

Mrs HELEN DALTON: But people also live on farms where accidents also occur and the bill gives no consideration to accidents on farms that are not strictly work-related, not that I can see. At a minimum, the prosecution guidelines for the bill must take into account the unique nature of life on a farm. If there is an accident on a farm, it is a community tragedy. Everyone feels the shock and grief. A lot of lives are changed forever. At the heart of the bill there seems to be a desire to personalise blame for what can sometimes simply be a tragedy. The bill gives investigators everything they want and, typically, the investigators want a villain. They want an individual who they can pin all the blame on. They want a head on a stick so they can make an example of a boss and frighten all the other bosses into submission. By doing this, my concern is that the bill will simply divide farming communities and add to the trauma that people are already suffering. The fact is that a farm owner can be incredibly careful and meticulous about safety, yet accidents can still occur. Tragedies can still happen. Under the bill, genuine tragedies will be made a lot worse by politicised witch-hunts. Considering the closeness of rural communities, we simply cannot allow that to happen.

The idea of good intentions brings me to the next point. The legislation is meant to be all about the victims and their families. If extraordinary fines are paid, that money does not go to the victims and their families. Under the proposed bill, it goes to consolidated revenue. I have asked the Minister to change that. If the bill is about helping victims and their families, the State Government should not pocket the money. SafeWork should not see the fines as a way to build an empire for itself. I have also told the Minister that I have other grave concerns about the bill. How can we pass a bill that has a criminal penalty of 25 years imprisonment while disallowing a jury trial and many of the defences available in other criminal manslaughter cases?

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

*Members***MEMBER FOR HAWKESBURY
MEMBER FOR WAGGA WAGGA**

The SPEAKER: I wish a very happy birthday to the member for Hawkesbury and the member for Wagga Wagga.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I extend a warm welcome to my guests from Lake Macquarie, who join us in the front row of the public gallery. I also welcome to the gallery a guest of the member for Leppington, Arnav Maharaj, and a guest of the member for Monaro, Glen Crump from the SHAE Academy. Finally, I acknowledge and welcome students from high schools across New South Wales, who are attending programs conducted by the parliamentary education unit. It was nice to meet with them this morning and share a few introductory comments. I hope they enjoyed meeting the members from their respective areas. The members really enjoy that opportunity.

*Announcements***BOWEL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**

The SPEAKER: Many members are wearing a ribbon today for Bowel Cancer Awareness Month, being June. Wednesday 19 June is Red Apple Day, which highlights the impact of bowel cancer. The campaign raises both awareness and funding for Bowel Cancer Australia, the community-funded charity dedicated to prevention, early diagnosis, research, quality treatment and care so that everyone affected by bowel cancer can live their best life. I acknowledge and thank the Minister for Health and the member for Davidson for their advocacy in that space.

SPEAKER'S BIGGEST AFTERNOON TEA

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that this afternoon I am hosting the Speaker's Biggest Afternoon Tea to raise funds for the Cancer Council, which supports those impacted by cancer. The afternoon tea will be held from 3.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. in the Speaker's Garden. Members and staff have already been very generous in giving donations. If members have not donated yet and wish to do so, please join us this afternoon.

*Question Time***STATE FINANCES**

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (11:06): My question is directed to the Attorney General representing the Minister for Finance. There are 3.6 million households in New South Wales. The Minister's budget papers show that in two years the Government is increasing State taxes from nearly \$40 billion to over \$48 billion a year. How can the Minister possibly justify slugging New South Wales households an average of over \$2,300 a year during a cost-of-living crisis?

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (11:07): Yesterday Opposition members asked questions, particularly of the health Minister, that were not underpinned by truth or the figures in the budget paper. The Leader of the Opposition seems to be following on from that practice. Opposition members had a few hours yesterday to digest the budget, but they have now had almost 24 hours.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: The assertion made by the Leader of the Opposition that the housing measures and modest tweaks to land tax contained in yesterday's budget result in an impost on the families of New South Wales is simply unfounded. The modest revenue measures in the budget yesterday will raise a total of \$2.4 billion over four years, which will be used to fund measures in the budget to address the housing crisis.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order. I call the member for Oatley to order for the first time.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: The former Government introduced or increased taxes, removed concessions or adjusted thresholds 22 times.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, direct relevance. I am asking the Attorney General about the comparison between \$48 billion and almost \$40 billion shown at the

bottom of page 4-7 of *Budget Paper No. 01*. How can he possibly justify that average \$2,300 per household increase in the middle of a housing and cost-of-living crisis?

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. The Attorney General will be directly relevant to the question.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: The question of the Leader of the Opposition is based on a false premise. It just does not exist. The conclusion that he reached about the impost on ordinary families is incorrect.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: The measure outlined in the budget yesterday are long, long, long overdue. The Opposition sat and did nothing in relation to housing.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I will remind the House by going through the full list. There were \$35 billion of revenue-raising measures during the Coalition's time in government. Does the Leader of the Opposition want me to go through each of the 22? Would he like to give me an extension of time?

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Attorney General will resume his seat. The Attorney General should not ask questions of Opposition members across the table and all answers should be directed through the Speaker. Question time will proceed in an orderly fashion. The Attorney General's time has expired.

STATE BUDGET AND BULK-BILLING

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (11:10): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier please update the House on the New South Wales Government's bulk-billing support initiative that will keep the cost of going to the doctor affordable and reduce the pressure on New South Wales emergency departments?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:11): I thank the member for East Hills for her question—one that would be front and centre for every member of Parliament in this Chamber, and that is what has been effectively the collapse in primary health care across New South Wales. This has put enormous pressure on the public hospital system's emergency departments as well as seeing many people going without the treatment they need to stay healthy, to live productive lives and get the help that they need. A poll of general practitioners by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners in 2023 estimated that only 3 per cent of clinics would be in a position to absorb payroll tax costs that they may be liable for, and 78 per cent of clinics said they would be forced to raise fees as a result.

Given we currently know there is a record low number of people accessing primary health care, accessing their local GP, the prospect of raising those fees would be devastating, particularly for vulnerable people. More often than not, in a chronic situation they would present to an emergency department and be seen by a doctor. That, of course, would happen, but that adds pressure to the public hospital system. A recent survey of the general population shows that a massive 72 per cent were extremely concerned about the cost of health care. That is why, in yesterday's budget, the New South Wales Government has taken action with a \$190 million bulk-billing support initiative. It will provide new ongoing payroll tax rebates for contractor GPs who have clinics that meet a bulk-billing threshold.

We have put that threshold in place. It is not generally applicable. It is only in metropolitan doctors' surgeries where 80 per cent of the people who come through the door are bulk-billed, and in regional communities that number is 70 per cent. This is an attempt by the New South Wales Government to lift the rate of bulk-billing in our communities. It should not be forgotten that on 18 April 2018 the then Chief Commissioner of State Revenue launched an action against three medical centres for a payroll tax assessment totalling \$800,000, which really kicked off this tax arrangement for GP clinics across New South Wales. Of course, that was under the previous Government in 2018, which is when the initiative was launched. The Opposition had many years—five long years—to make that intervention and refused to do so. This Government has taken action. A look at supportive comments from the industry is very instructive.

Dr Michael Bonning from the Australian Medical Association [AMA] said that they welcome the decision of the New South Wales Government. He said:

The Minns Government will be the first state to offer this guarantee in legislation.

[*Extension of time*]

He went on to say:

Minister Park and Minister Houssos have been responsive to the concerns of general practice from the moment they took their portfolios.

That is probably the last time they will get a supportive statement from the AMA. Whatever—we will take it.

Mr Matt Kean: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Premier will resume his seat. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Matt Kean: My point of order relates to relevance. While the Premier is reading out testimonials, he is failing to read out a testimonial from the Primary Care Business Council, which says his policy will be ineffective in preserving bulk-billing.

The SPEAKER: If the member for Hornsby continues to behave in that manner he will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr Matt Kean: I don't care.

The SPEAKER: The member for Hornsby has not resigned yet. He is still under my jurisdiction in this Chamber. The Premier has the call.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: We had a couple of minutes when Matt was not in the spotlight, but he dragged it back.

Mr Matt Kean: And you still hate it, mate.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: It is a real shot in the arm for poor old Speako to have a by-election. They always quit when things are about to turn around. The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners said:

The RACGP applauds the NSW Government exempting GPs from retrospective payroll tax. This gives GPs across NSW certainty that they can continue to operate ...

This is a fundamental basic premise. There has also been support from some unlikely quarters. I will not read out who said it until the end, but this is a quote from a prominent and somewhat respected member of our community. This person said, "The GP payroll tax exemption is a worthwhile initiative." He says, "It's a cost-of-living measure for people going to the doctor and we welcome it." That is from the shadow Treasurer, Damien Tudehope. A cost-of-living measure is not exactly one of the talking points from the Opposition, but we cannot get in the way of a good idea. This is a good initiative. It is central to the budget. It is exactly what has been required and needed when it comes to primary health care in New South Wales. Frankly, it is long overdue and should have been done by the previous Government, but it is being implemented by the New South Wales Labor Government.

STATE BUDGET AND TRIPLE-A CREDIT RATING

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (11:17): My question is directed to the Minister representing the Minister for Finance. Minister, a loss of triple-A credit ratings would push up borrowing costs. Your *Budget Paper No. 01* states that over the budget and forward estimates, interest expenses are projected to increase an average of 9.1 per cent per year. Do the budget numbers assume that New South Wales will keep or lose its triple-A credit ratings?

The SPEAKER: Members, including the Premier, will come to order.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (11:17): Now the modus operandi of the Opposition from the last 24 hours has been laid bare. Opposition members have spent their time not consulting with each other. They have spent their time not consulting with experts and, if the last question is any indication, they have certainly spent their time not talking to anybody in the housing industry either on the construction side or on the domestic violence side, or anyone for that matter. What we have now is a question where Opposition members just stumble through the budget papers, seize upon a number, come up with a false premise.

Ms Eleni Petinos: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Attorney General will resume his seat. The member for Miranda rises on a point of order.

Ms Eleni Petinos: It has been 45 seconds and the Attorney General has not had the courtesy to address the question. Mr Speaker, I ask that you instruct him to be directly relevant under Standing Order 129—unless, of course, he has nothing to say about the budget.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Attorney General has the call.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I have plenty to say on it. I was making some introductory comments. What the Opposition has done is come up with a bald assertion and walk up to the centre table to ask a question that ignores reality and, more importantly, ignores history. I stood on this spot yesterday and talked about debt. The member for Miranda wants to talk about borrowing costs. Nothing drives up borrowing costs more than the borrowings themselves—the gross debt. I will remind you, Mr Speaker, of what I had to say to this House yesterday.

The SPEAKER: Government members, particularly frontbench members, will come to order.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: It is taken under Standing Order 129, direct relevance. The question is about assumptions. It is not about who is at fault. It is about how the Government calculated the number.

The SPEAKER: I understand the question; I do not need an additional explanation. I have upheld the point of order previously. The Attorney General will return to the question.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Direct relevance involves a number of things. The previous Government left the two biggest deficits in the history of this State—\$15.3 billion and \$10.6 billion. The former Treasurer—and I wish him well—went on a \$27 billion spending spree in the nine months to the election.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: One hoped the notes would help. The question is very simple: Do the budget numbers assume that New South Wales will keep or lose the triple-A rating?

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Attorney General has the call.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I think the Treasurer has made clear that there is a significant risk that we will lose the triple-A credit rating. But that will depend on what the ratings agencies do when they look at the budget and after they have a discussion with the Treasurer. [*Extension of time*]

I answered the question directly. I remind the House that this Government, through the measures taken last year and this year, has stabilised debt.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: In June 2026 gross debt will be \$9.3 billion lower compared with the trajectory it had when we took office. When we took office, gross debt was projected to be 22.3 per cent of gross state product by June 2026. We reduced this to 20.3 per cent in last year's budget.

Ms Kellie Sloane: Point of order: Mr Speaker, if the Attorney General does not understand the question—

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Vacluse cannot take a point of order in that manner. The Attorney General has the call.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I have answered the question directly and now I am entitled to remind those opposite that it was their actions—

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order or they will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I have directly answered the question. Now I am entitled to spend the rest of my time continuing to remind those opposite that it was their actions that have left a great burden on this Government.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Well might the member for Hornsby laugh. He is fleeing the jurisdiction after being one of the most profligate Treasurers the State has ever seen.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: When you go, just say sorry on the way out the door, pal.

Mr Matt Kean: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Hornsby that if he does not raise a point of order—

Mr Matt Kean: These feeble attacks come from the worst Government that delivered the worst budget in history. We still charted a path back to surplus and we kept the triple-A—neither of which they are doing.

The SPEAKER: The member for Hornsby will remove himself from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A until the end of question time.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Hornsby left the Chamber at 11:22.]

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: If I were the member, I would want to waste time too. But before he walks out the door on his final day, he should just say sorry.

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

STATE BUDGET AND DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (11:23): 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 State budget is building a better New South Wales by investing in domestic violence prevention, intervention and responses?

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (11:23): I thank the member for Blue Mountains for her question and for her absolute and ongoing advocacy in this space. Domestic and family violence can happen to anyone, and it affects everyone. This year we have seen too many deaths and too many people injured, often with lifelong consequences and sometimes multigenerational consequences. It is clear—and it has been clear for some time—that the status quo is not working. It is not good enough. We should not accept the status quo, and the New South Wales Labor Government does not accept the status quo.

With this year's budget, we are taking important steps to deal with the crisis of domestic and family violence and to build a better New South Wales, where people can live safely in their homes and in the community. In this year's budget we have made major investments in crisis support, emergency support, medium- and long-term housing opportunities and ensuring that victim-survivors receive appropriate support when they flee violence. Fundamentally, though, we know we need to make investments in early intervention and primary prevention, and we are doing exactly that. We need to address the drivers of violence and hopefully stop the violence early or before it begins.

This morning I was incredibly pleased to join the Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Housing and the Attorney General to speak about our \$5.1 billion investment to deliver new public housing. Fifty per cent of that new build will be prioritised for people who are fleeing domestic and family violence. It will deliver stable, long-term housing for at least 3,100 people who are leaving abusive relationships. In addition to that incredible investment—the largest investment in public housing ever made in this State—our \$245.6 million domestic violence package is really about changing the status quo. We are changing the status quo with our crisis response. There is \$48 million to enhance our Staying Home Leaving Violence program across New South Wales and the Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services Program so that people can choose to stay safely in their homes and also to deal with more complex cases. [*Extension of time*]

We know the impact of domestic and family violence on children in families, and for that reason we are committing \$48.1 million to secure increased funding for children who are accompanying mothers to refuges, so that the cycle can be broken. We are expanding those specialist workers from 20 refuges to 30 refuges. There is \$45 million to improve bail laws and the justice system for our responses to domestic and family violence, and \$29.6 million to enable the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service to meet the incredible increase in demand from victim-survivors who require support navigating the justice system and to continue the really successful support at court hearings and also the co-location pilots that are occurring in some of our key police area commands.

There is \$700,000 for the domestic violence hotline so that when people needing support pick up the phone, there is somebody at the other end providing them with that support. There is \$38.3 million for the implementation of New South Wales's first primary prevention strategy for domestic, family and sexual violence. We have never before seen that kind of investment in primary prevention in New South Wales. We need to stop violence before it starts. That is what our commitment is all about. There is \$5 million to improve the training that domestic violence and family workers and our generalist workforce receive. Our budget is an incredibly important step in addressing the drivers of family violence, supporting those who are experiencing it and holding perpetrators to account.

ORANGE SPORTS STADIUM

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (11:29): My question is directed to the Premier. The Orange sports stadium project has been plagued with delays and cost blowouts since it was announced in early 2019. Will the Premier outline the priorities and progress for the \$60 million Orange sporting precinct to ensure its delivery?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:29): I thank the member for Orange for his question. He is right; the Orange sports complex is a key priority for the Orange community and the New South Wales Government. Its announcement in the 2019 election was quite controversial initially; I will get to that in a minute.

In any event, a \$60 million commitment is in the budget but we have to get cracking on it. The first stage of the project, which the council and State Government agreed upon, has eight multipurpose playing fields. My understanding is that it is well underway and should be completed by the end of this year.

The second and crucial stage—the one that caused so much controversy in the 2019 election—is a multipurpose stadium. That has to be the priority. The Government has allocated money for it but, as anyone undertaking a civil construction infrastructure project in this State will tell you, time equals extra money in either labour costs or costs associated with construction, so we do not have a moment to lose. We are happy to work with the council and the local member but we want to deliver the playing fields and the stadium as soon as possible. If there are to be variations on the site, we are happy to work with the local council. I have absolutely no doubt that the member for Orange will be kicking down our door looking for supplemental money, but at the moment the priority needs to be to deliver what was promised. The Government is committed to delivering what was promised notwithstanding the fact that the member is not a member of the Labor Party. If I could cast everybody—

[Opposition members interjected.]

They get so upset! What's wrong? There are some new members here. They were not here during the previous Parliament but older hands will remember that in 2019, the then Premier, Gladys Berejiklian, promised the new Orange sports complex but the people of the Orange electorate first had to elect a National Party member to Parliament. It was called a conditional promise. Those opposite engaged in pork-barrelling and then they said, "You know what? Let's just be honest. If you don't put in a Nationals MP, you're not getting a cent." Anyway, the people of Orange will not be told what to do. The member for Orange will not mind me saying this but he was elected with a 500-vote margin in the by-election after the conditional promise from the then Government. It was a 15 per cent swing. There you go—that is the power of intimidation.

Mr Philip Donato: Mr Speaker, I seek additional information.

The SPEAKER: I assume the member for Orange is liking what he is hearing. I grant an additional two minutes.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Media reports at the time said that the then Opposition leader, Michael Daley, accused the then Government of "blackmail" and made a comparison of its conditional promise. He was quoted as saying:

I'm not sure if it's blackmail or a bribe but the message is clear: if you don't do what you're told, you're not going to get your stadium.

Well said! At the end of the day, it was a put-on by the previous Government, but it is a commitment made to the local community and it needs to be delivered. Frankly, it has gone too long. The project needs to be done. Promises are important. They are important in sport, education and in the Health portfolio in particular. There is a vacancy in the shadow Health portfolio on the other side. I am curious to see who will take over, the Liberal Party or the National Party? The shadow Minister for Regional Health is in the National Party but the incumbent shadow health Minister is a Liberal, so will the shadow ministry be filled by a Liberal or by a National member? I guess it depends on whether Tooley comes back as the Nats leader or not. If he was the leader of the National Party, he would insist on it. He would demand it. But Dugald? He is happy to let the Libs run right over it.

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Health will come to order.

STATE BUDGET AND ESSENTIAL SERVICE WORKERS

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (11:33): My question is addressed to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales budget is rebuilding our essential services by paying our essential workers fairly?

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (11:34): That is a great question from a hardworking and excellent member, who is a very strong advocate for her essential service workers in Wallsend. The Opposition seems to spend a lot of time worrying about the wage rises for our essential public sector workers. If recent media is anything to go by, those opposite sit around in a huddle—less so now with the shadow Minister for Health leaving—and write some figures on the back of their beer coasters, and say, "This union said this", "This union said that" and "It equals to that." Do you know what? They have got it wrong. For 12 years those opposite did no work, but now this side of the House has taken the dust off and opened things back. We came to government on a very strong mandate to remove the wages cap.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Terrigal to order for the second time. The Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: We were elected on that mandate and we are delivering on it. In November last year, after extensive work and consultation, we brought a bill to this House to remove the wages cap and put in place a fair and reasonable bargaining framework, which our Ministers, with their agencies, are currently utilising.

There is a lot of work to do because those opposite did nothing. There was no award reform. They did not even establish a strategic workforce plan in the growth centres in north-west and south-west New South Wales. They may have promised new hospitals like the hospital at Rouse Hill—we know because we are delivering it. They built a number of them in certain areas but they did not provide the nurses, allied health workers or paramedics; they left that to us. In child protection the Minister for Community Services has told the public time and time again about the worst thing that those opposite did: ripping \$1 billion out of the budget in 2011-12. That disgraceful Minister, Pru Goward, removed \$1 billion from child protection, which means that today, New South Wales does not have the child protection workers. [*Extension of time*]

Mr Dugald Saunders: Are you seriously talking about 13 years ago? It's your budget.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: No, you left us with a big mess.

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

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: Those opposite left us with vacancies in the Police Force. As you heard from our hardworking police Minister yesterday, there are over 1,500 vacancies because those opposite shut the door to wages. They did not even sit down and bargain. They said if the police want a pay rise, they have to cut their entitlements, their long service leave and their annual leave. That is what those opposite want, even in their own electorates where their margins were cut. The essential workers in their electorates said loudly that they wanted a wage rise but those opposite, in 2020 and 2021, stood up every day and said, "The heroes are out there. The health workers and the paramedics are doing a great job." But then they went to the Industrial Relations Commission and offered those workers a big, fat zero. They went from a 2.5 per cent wages cap to zero. They talked about how amazing they were but then they come to this place and showed their true colours.

We are working methodically, line by line, to make sure that our essential service workers in the regions get their dues. The National Party know that there are vacancies. They should be out there shouting from the rooftops. I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to tell us and the essential workers in his budget reply tomorrow that he is bringing back the wages cap.

STATE BUDGET

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (11:39): My question is directed to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Police are demanding 25 per cent wage increases; nurses and midwives, 15 per cent; rail workers, 36 per cent; and firefighters, 20 per cent. The budget provides for 10½ per cent over three years. In the biggest taxing budget on record, is 10½ per cent the limit of what those unions can hope for or will that budget be further shot to pieces?

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Before I call the Leader of the House on a point of order, I remind Government members that the member asking the question will be heard in silence. Government members might not like the question, just as sometimes the member who asked the question might not like the answer. But members will be allowed to ask their question and I will determine whether it is in order.

Mr Ron Hoenig: The question infringes Standing Order 128. It clearly contains inference and imputation. It should be re-asked without those expressions.

The SPEAKER: The question was in order but some of the additional comments were not.

Mr JORDAN LANE: I went off script.

The SPEAKER: You went off script. I uphold the point of order. The member for Ryde will ask the question again so that it is in order. If he does not ask the question directly I will sit him down. The member will be heard in silence.

Mr JORDAN LANE: My question is directed to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Police are demanding wage increases of 25 per cent; nurses and midwives, 15 per cent; rail workers, 36 per cent; and firefighters, 20 per cent. The budget provides for 10½ per cent over three years. Is 10½ per cent the upper limit of what those unions can hope for?

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (11:42): I do not accept most of the premise of the question from the member for Ryde.

The SPEAKER: The member for Coffs Harbour will come to order.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: He must remember that he won his seat by 54 votes.

Mr Kevin Anderson: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume her seat while I hear the point of order from the member for Tamworth.

Mr Kevin Anderson: The point of order is on relevance. Mr Speaker, I ask that you direct the Minister to return to the leave of the question. She is attacking the member for Ryde.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will be relevant to the question. However, it is very early in her answer.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: With respect to the member's question about the claims of the nurses and the police, guess what? It is a bargain; it is a negotiation. The Government has made a multi-year offer of 10.5 per cent over three years, and of course there will be counteroffers.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question is about the upper limit. Is 10.5 per cent the upper limit? We are not asking about the Government's bargaining power. The Minister must have assumed something. Is that offending you? Sorry!

The SPEAKER: The member for Dubbo will resume his seat. The member for Summer Hill will come to order. The member for Dubbo can leave the Chamber if he wishes, but I would prefer him to resume his seat. I do not uphold the point of order. The Minister is being relevant to the question; Opposition members are just not hearing the words they want to hear. The Minister has the call.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: Negotiations are in hand at the moment. That is what is happening.

The SPEAKER: The member for Coffs Harbour will come to order.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: We have made an offer of 10.5 per cent as a baseline to negotiate, and that is what we are doing. There are negotiations and discussions, and a lot of methodical work is currently being undertaken because a lot of those awards were not reformed.

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question is whether 10.5 per cent is the upper limit of what those unions can hope for.

The SPEAKER: The member for Coffs Harbour will resume his seat. I have already ruled on the point of order.

[*Interruption*]

It is my call.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: Tomorrow members opposite have to clarify for the people of New South Wales whether they are bringing back the wages cap.

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

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: That is what we want to know: Are they bringing back the wages cap?

STATE BUDGET AND WESTERN SYDNEY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (11:45): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Western Sydney. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the State budget invests in building better communities across Western Sydney?

The SPEAKER: Before I call the Minister, I welcome the student leaders who have joined us in the upper gallery. It is lovely to have them in the Legislative Assembly. The Minister has the call.

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:45): I thank my Western Sydney colleague the member for Prospect for his important question about the impact of the New South Wales Labor Government budget on the region that we represent in the western part of Sydney. Last month the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the other place criticised the Government for being too focused on Western Sydney. I thank her for that, because Government members will wear that badge each and every day. We are very focused on Western Sydney, and I am sure that the member for Badgerys Creek and the member for Winston Hills will take great delight in that criticism from their colleague in the other place.

The difference between us and members opposite is that we make no apologies for cleaning up the mess that they left us in Western Sydney—making up for 12 years of neglect, particularly for our fast-growing communities. Local schools were not built where people lived. Local roads were not upgraded, and people had to travel on country tracks in and out of new estates. The member for Camden, the member for Riverstone, the member for Leppington and I can give many examples of that. This budget delivers the must-haves—the must-delivers—for Western Sydney. Unlike the budgets under those opposite, this budget does not deliver more toll roads for the people that we represent in Western Sydney.

Instead, we are delivering life-changing road infrastructure that will make a massive difference to the communities in north-west and south-west Sydney. Let us take as an example the absolute disaster of Richmond Road, which we were left with in my electorate and in the electorates of the member for Blacktown and the member for Riverstone. We have partnered with the Commonwealth Government on an upgrade that will unlock a critical part of growth in north-western Sydney, enabling people to get to employment, to get their children to school and to get to work and back home to their family. Members opposite have absolutely no idea what it is like to have to sit on a road like that every day in order to live one's life.

Mrs Sally Quinnell: Hours and hours.

Ms PRUE CAR: For hours and hours and hours. Importantly, as well, we are delivering key upgrades like Mamre Road stage two, the widening of Elizabeth Drive and the upgrade to Garfield Road East. Of course, when it comes to education, the Government is moving apace to make up for what we were left with in the growing parts of Western Sydney. [*Extension of time*]

The enrolment growth audit that Labor did upon coming into government found that 10 of the highest student growth areas were in Western Sydney—240 per cent growth in the past five years. That is why we are finally delivering for the communities that need high schools and primary schools in areas like Box Hill, the Gables, Austral, Leppington, The Ponds and Riverbank. On Monday the member for Riverstone was speaking to the students at Riverbank about that important upgrade. We are doing that because the people of north-western Sydney and south-western Sydney deserve the upgrades that they were denied by those opposite. I use this opportunity to speak about a few things that my colleague the Minister for Industrial Relations mentioned about the transformational work we have done to raise wages because a large portion of essential workers—120,000—live in Western Sydney.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: And Ryde.

Ms PRUE CAR: And Ryde—there are definitely more than 56, I would hazard a guess. There are 27,000 teachers alone in the west of Sydney. Yesterday afternoon the member for Vaucluse came into the House—taking some time off from singing to Taylor Swift on TikTok—to criticise us for raising teachers' wages to deal with the cost of living, as well as essential worker vacancies that we inherited.

STATE BUDGET AND EDUCATION

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (11:50): My question is directed to the Minister for Education and Early Learning. Page 6-2 of *Budget Paper No. 2* shows that apart from employee expenses, the Government is cutting other education operating expenses by 7.5 per cent this year, even before considering inflation and population growth. What programs is the Minister cutting or what are parents being forced to pay for?

The SPEAKER: The Premier will come to order. The Deputy Premier is quite capable of answering the question.

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:51): I am delighted to answer the question from the member for Drummoyne because I want to give the Opposition a bit of an education. The most expensive thing that we do in education is provide lessons by teachers in the classroom. Employee-related expenses are a massive part of the amount that we spend in education. Members opposite will not get a gotcha moment on us by saying that we are spending more on employees in education. Guess what? We are, and we are proud of it. Today is another example of an Opposition backbencher who really needs to do their research when handed a question by the tactics committee. We are delivering a record spend in education, more than the Opposition ever did in any of its 12 years in government. Opposition members come into this place every day and ask us questions about education, because they have negative—not zero, but negative—credibility when it comes to teachers on the ground in classrooms. They were fleeing. We have given them a wage rise, from which we are now starting to see green shoots. The Coalition left us with 10,000 merged and cancelled classes.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: The question relates to the non-employee expenses, the operating expenses, being cut by 7.5 per cent. The Minister has not addressed the question, which is what programs are being cut.

The SPEAKER: I understand the question. I am sure the Minister will be directly relevant. I uphold the point of order.

Ms PRUE CAR: Imagine being a political party that is so miserable that it comes to the House and complains that in public schools employee expenses are up.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: The capital spend is up.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: We are spending all this money on teachers and building new schools.

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Point of order: I know maths is not the Minister's strong suit, but she is cutting operating expenses by 7.5 per cent this year. What programs is the Minister cutting or forcing parents to pay for?

The SPEAKER: I just upheld that point of order. That is not the appropriate way to take a point of order. Members will seek the call, not come straight to the lectern and assume they have the call. The Minister has the call.

Ms PRUE CAR: The Opposition's big attack on us the day after the budget has been handed down is to ask what are we doing in education apart from schools and teachers.

STATE BUDGET AND HOUSING SUPPLY

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (11:54): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Will the Minister outline to the House how the Government's budget and planning reforms will help more young people—such as those who were in the gallery—find a home that suits their needs?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (11:55): I am happy to. I congratulate the member on her recent elevation to the Parliamentary Secretary ranks, a well-deserved promotion. The combination of the Government's planning reforms and budget initiatives will see tens of thousands of homes built throughout New South Wales. That means more homes for key workers, renters and people fleeing domestic and family violence, and more homes in suburbs close to where people work, to transport and to amenities. We have identified surplus land that will help deliver 21,000 market and affordable homes. Landcom is set to receive an additional \$450 million, on the back of \$300 million in the last budget, to deliver build-to-rent homes for key workers like the HSU members—and Adam Hall is in the gallery today.

We are investing in the planning system and the technology behind it to make it more efficient, as well as supporting councils to get more planners to quickly make assessments. We are investing in the enabling infrastructure, including \$200 million set aside for those councils that are meeting or exceeding their housing targets. That is on top of more than \$200 million announced last month for infrastructure investment to deliver more homes. Yesterday we added a further \$85 million to that. Members can say thank you to the Government, to the member for Tweed, the member for Wagga Wagga and the member for Shellharbour for investment in their electorates.

The work of the Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education is making sure that there are fee-free TAFE places for apprentices in carpentry, electrical and plumbing trades to ensure there are more workers to build those homes into the future. We are introducing a first in New South Wales, a pilot government financing guarantee to help us bridge the gap to private finance and allow construction underway faster. We have asked the NSW Productivity Commission to make recommendations if there are any barriers that we have missed. We have done a lot, but we might have missed some things.

Those measures have been welcomed by the Master Builders Association, Business NSW, Housing Now! and others—real, genuine housing advocates. They recognise that this is good news not only for people looking to rent or buy a home but also for the thousands of tradespeople and suppliers who will be involved in building those homes. Labor budgets offer hope for the long term, not sugar hits like the one the outgoing member for Hornsby provided, leaving us to deal with the sugar crash afterwards: the biggest debt for an incoming government in the State's history. Members opposite would rather wreck, but we would rather build. They still have a bill in the other place to undo our planning reforms.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. The Minister was answering an important question and I believe he was not being afforded respect.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: It happens every day.

The SPEAKER: Today it happened a bit more than usual. The member for Tamworth will come to order.

SCHOOL MAINTENANCE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (11:59): My question is directed to the Minister for Education and Early Learning. The Minister announced a school maintenance budget of \$1 billion going backwards from the 2022-23 Coalition budget of \$1.3 billion. Which schools will the Minister let fall into disrepair or will the parents foot the bill?

The SPEAKER: All members will come to order. The Deputy Premier has the call.

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (12:00): Before I get into a dissertation about what maintenance was left to us by the former Government, I will directly answer the member's question, because I know how the Opposition has added up those numbers. If the Government were to use the same calculation method, its spending would actually be \$1.9 billion—so that is my answer. I remind Coalition members, as they seem to have forgotten, that they were in government for 12 years. I hazard a guess that every school in their electorates has basic maintenance requests that have been with the department for over a decade.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: In fact, I am going to call them out. I have visited schools, with the member for Heathcote, where previous Premiers and education Ministers have announced a maintenance spend and then no maintenance has been carried out. I invite the Opposition to ask me about school maintenance every day, because finally the principals, teachers and students of public schools in New South Wales have a government that is going to get basic maintenance right. The biggest proportion of the record school maintenance spend that the Government is engaging in—and it might be uncomfortable for members to admit this—is for basic upgrades to toilets.

The previous Government left a situation where students cannot go to the bathroom at school, because it did not ensure basic maintenance was performed. So the member for Tweed can talk about the previous Government's funding allocation for maintenance, much of which was never spent, but I can go into examples about schools at Heathcote, Bonnyrigg—every member of this House would have examples from their electorate—where basic minor works and maintenance requests have been ignored. The previous Government left us a dying education system in terms of school maintenance.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: The Opposition claims the Coalition Government spent more on school maintenance than this Government is spending, and that is clearly not the case. It is tactics.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: We have been in opposition. I am telling Opposition members not to ask silly questions when they do not have all the information. The truth is that parents of students who attend public schools voted in the Labor Government to value this sort of stuff, and that is what this Government is doing through a record maintenance and minor works spend. The department is going through the backlog of maintenance requests that the previous Government left, and New South Wales will have schools where kids can use a safe and clean bathroom—what a novel idea.

Mr Geoff Provest: Mr Speaker, I request further information.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has concluded her answer. All members will come to order.

COST OF LIVING

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (12:03): My question is addressed to the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government.

The SPEAKER: All members will come to order. The member for Cabramatta will ask his question in silence.

Mr TRI VO: My question is addressed to the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales budget is caring for the people of New South Wales by assisting with growing cost-of-living pressures?

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (12:04): I thank the member for Cabramatta for his question. He is an outstanding member and an ornament to the Parliament. He represents a community that well and truly understands cost-of-living pressures. This Government recognises the challenges and the cost-of-living pressures that families and businesses are facing. The best thing that we can do to address the cost of living is to put downward pressure on inflation. This budget does exactly that, by controlling spending, cutting waste and limiting new spending to must-have items. We recognise that it is a tight fiscal environment. That is because we are cleaning up the mess of the previous Government, as well as dealing with an unfair share of GST. We are providing real and important targeted relief, especially to those communities that are doing it tough.

One of the initiatives we have delivered in my portfolio of Customer Service and Digital Government is the Cost of Living hub. I have previously spoken in this place about the hub and what it does. It provides resources and tools. Mr Speaker, if members opposite do not want to hear about initiatives to support their communities—

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Port Macquarie to order for the second time. The member for Wahroonga will come to order. I call the member for Wahroonga to order for the third time.

Mr JIHAD DIB: If the member for Wahroonga and the member for Port Macquarie do not want to hear about initiatives that support their communities during a cost-of-living crisis, then I think that needs to be called out.

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

Mr JIHAD DIB: The Cost of Living hub is on a government website. It highlights all of the different opportunities and supports available to people in the community, which is really important. Unlike the previous Government, we want people to explore those different options. People accessing the hub can discover a range of options and supports. Over one million households will benefit from energy rebates. This year's budget includes an extra \$100 million to increase both the NSW Family Energy Rebate and the NSW Seniors Energy Rebate to \$250, and to increase both the NSW Low-Income Household Rebate and the NSW Medical Energy Rebate to \$350. That is on top of the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance vouchers, the \$110 NSW Gas Rebate and the National Energy Bill Relief package which gives \$300 to households and \$325 to small businesses. [*Extension of time*]

Let us not forget that under the previous Government Sydney became the most tolled city on earth. Those opposite do not want to talk about it. This Government has committed \$561 million over two years to toll relief. The \$60 toll cap will benefit 720,000 motorists. I am sure the member for Badgerys Creek appreciates that people in her community will benefit from that toll cap. The biggest beneficiaries are motorists from Baulkham Hills, Blacktown and Bankstown—some good alliteration there. This Government also wants young people to realise the dream of owning their own home. We have helped an additional 8,200 first home buyers since July last year; they paid no stamp duty. We are also providing a \$10,000 First Home Owner Grant, rental assistance through Rent Choice, Advance Rent, Rentstart Bond Loan, and pensioner concessions for council rates. As we heard earlier, the other important change is to the payroll tax liabilities of general practitioners. This Government believes that when people are sick, they should be able to afford to go to a GP. We are working with GPs to ensure everyone can do that. I encourage all members, even those who are talking over me and do not want to listen, to speak to their constituents in their communities about the Cost of Living hub.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Myall Lakes to order for the first time. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time. I call the member for Myall Lakes to order for the second time.

Mr JIHAD DIB: They should remind their constituents that Service NSW also offers personalised meetings and appointments with people to assess their eligibility for discounts and support. In the past 12 months, 28,000 people have done that. We will support families. We know they are doing it tough. I encourage people to use the Savings Finder tool.

ONCOLOGY SERVICES

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (12:09): My question is directed to the Minister for Regional Health. In December last year, the Government committed to removing out-of-pocket costs for radiotherapy and medical oncology treatment for those attending the Riverina Cancer Care in Wagga Wagga. Will the Minister update the House on progress on that critical issue?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (12:09): I thank the member for the question. I also thank him for his advocacy on behalf of the community that he represents—and the Riverina, to be honest—and for the work that he is doing as chair of the Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health. Last year I had the opportunity to speak

with the member for Wagga Wagga about an issue that concerned me considerably. In Griffith, in the electorate of the member for Murray, there is a centre that bulk-bills cancer treatments. The opposite was happening in Wagga Wagga: Access to cancer care and cancer treatment was being distorted. We started a process to change that and provide bulk-billing services for outpatients attending the Riverina Cancer Care Centre.

Recently I looked at the mortality, morbidity and epidemiology data. Every year approximately 2,080 people in the Murrumbidgee Local Health District get cancer—the Wagga Wagga electorate shares that local health district with other electorates—and across New South Wales the number is more than 50,000. This subject is very important to me, and I know it is important to the member for Wagga Wagga. I can update the House and announce that as a result of the member's advocacy and the work that he did on behalf of his community—and the opportunity he gave me as the Minister for Health, and Minister for Regional Health to work on the issue—we have signed an agreement with the private provider of that service that will ensure that services will be bulk-billed for communities in the Riverina. That is a terrific outcome.

The member for Davidson and other members in this place who have gone through their own cancer journeys will no doubt inform us—as have many staff in this space, and the Cancer Council—that the out-of-pocket expenses added to a cancer diagnosis are very challenging. Those expenses are magnified in regional and rural areas where the distance between treatments can be very significant. I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for his advocacy. He works tirelessly for his community, which I know will welcome this announcement. [*Extension of time*]

Cancer is something that affects all of us. It affects all of our communities. What people may not know is that those receiving cancer treatment in regional, rural and remote New South Wales have some unique challenges. After cancer treatment, people may feel very unwell for significant periods of time. People in rural, regional and remote areas often have to travel large distances to get back home, which is something those of us in large metropolitan areas do not experience. When we make decisions like this, we are not just looking at—to be blunt—what is happening across the State. We are also looking at the unique set of circumstances that presents in regional, rural and remote areas when it comes to health care, particularly in the rollout of cancer services. That is part of the laser-like focus that the Government has had over its first 12 months on trying to improve health care for those living in regional and rural New South Wales.

We certainly have not finished the job. The member for Murray and others, like the member for Wagga Wagga, are terrific advocates for southern New South Wales and that part of the world. They will continue to agitate and advocate, and I understand that. We need to understand the unique challenges that some of the communities they represent face when it comes to accessing the health care that many people in metropolitan areas take for granted, given their proximity to those services. I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for giving me the opportunity to work with him and his community to get this fixed. It is a great credit to the member for Wagga Wagga and his advocacy. I look forward to continuing to work with him and other members to deliver better health outcomes for people across rural, regional and remote New South Wales.

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (12:15): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales Government is continuing to back regional communities by investing in vital road and transport infrastructure?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:15): I thank the member for his question. It is a great question. The budget delivers a record-breaking \$44.5 billion for regional transport and roads, with an investment of \$11.1 billion this year alone. The member for Upper Hunter says that it is not a good deal for the Hunter region. There are a billion reasons, just this year, that it is good for his community. The member for Dubbo wants the regional seniors travel card back. Which \$390 million project is he going to cut?

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: The Minister was pointing across the table and not directing her questions—

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga will resume his seat. I remind the member that he is on three calls to order. The Minister has the call.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: It is an amazing budget for such great work. Local Government NSW, the Country Mayors Association, the NSW Farmers Association and the NRMA all love it. They know that it is good for New South Wales. The Government has committed \$2.8 billion to road safety. It has committed to renewable energy zones. The Government is doing it all. Everyone should say thank you. I thank the member for Cootamundra for saying thanks. We appreciate it.

HOUSING SUPPLY

Mr RON HOENIG: By leave: Pursuant to Standing Order 131 (7), I table a written response from the Premier to a question asked of him by the member for Kiama during question time on 6 June 2024.

Petitions

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

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

The Hon. Jenny Aitchison—Ulmarra Ferry—lodged 15 May 2024 (Mr Richie Williamson)

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: VALEDICTORY SPEECH

Mr RON HOENIG: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide for the routine of business on Friday 21 June to be interrupted at approximately 11.00 a.m. to permit the member for Hornsby to give his valedictory speech.

Motion agreed to.

Bills

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AMENDMENT (INDUSTRIAL MANSLAUGHTER) BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (12:19): I continue my contribution to debate on the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. Industrial manslaughter cases can already be prosecuted under section 18 of the Crimes Act 1900, so why do we need the bill? Similar bills have been passed in other States, and it is now being pursued in New South Wales. Is it so Labor governments and their union mates have more power over employers? If that is the case, no-one should support the bill. The punishments in the bill are much higher than those included in the Work Health and Safety Act. Where is the evidence that high penalties and fines will have any impact on workplace safety levels?

Finally, while I am willing to accept that SafeWork should continue in its role as an investigator, SafeWork should not undertake the prosecution of those cases. Any prosecutions should instead be undertaken by the Director of Public Prosecutions. The DPP exists for a reason: They check the work of investigators before a prosecution is sought. Under the bill, SafeWork will check its own homework, which will lead to prosecutions being sought without sufficient evidence. We cannot allow that to happen. Put simply, the bill is not fit for purpose in its current form. I call on the Government to make the changes that I have outlined in order to make the bill workable and safe. I intend to move amendments to the bill during the consideration in detail stage.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:24): I speak in support of the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. I thank the wonderful Minister for Industrial Relations, the member for Canterbury, for bringing the bill to the House. The Minister has a long history in this place of supporting workers, and I commend her for that. In opposition, Labor made a promise to introduce tough new laws to deter bosses from risking the lives of their workers, and the bill makes good on that commitment. Earlier this year the Government undertook significant public consultation on the issue of industrial manslaughter, as well as targeted consultation with families that have lost a loved one in a workplace incident. Extensive consultation was also undertaken with industry and unions to ensure that the bill is well balanced and fair to all.

As a former trade union official who has seen plenty of unsafe workplaces, I agree with the Minister that it is about time that an industrial manslaughter offence was introduced into the New South Wales work health and safety framework. I note that New South Wales is the last mainland State in Australia to introduce such laws, so the laws are welcomed by all workers in the community. Every worker deserves to be safe in their workplace and must be able to come home at the end of the day. Labor has been saying that for the past 12 years, but it has gone unheard. The thought of someone dying at work due to an unavoidable accident is devastating, but to have someone die at work because their boss is grossly negligent must be seen for what it is: industrial manslaughter.

Too many people continue to die in workplace incidents. In New South Wales, approximately 300 people have lost their lives at work in the past five years. How many other lives are affected by the loss of a life? Including families and friends, the number would run into the hundreds of thousands. Every single one of those deaths has a lasting impact on the families, friends and colleagues of the victim. It is our job, as members of Parliament, to

send a clear message about workplace safety to bosses who are grossly negligent. The bill is timely, as unscrupulous bosses seek to cut costs and increase profits at the expense of workers' health. Those days are over. The Minns Labor Government will not tolerate such behaviour. Bosses that behave in a grossly negligent manner should face serious consequences.

Importantly, the new offence will not create new work health and safety obligations for those bosses who are currently doing the right thing. It essentially reinforces the fact that bosses must comply with existing rules. The industrial manslaughter offence will cover those whose behaviour or decisions have the power to strongly influence the activities and culture of a workplace. It will apply to instances where bosses are deemed to have acted in a grossly negligent manner, similar to the definition of manslaughter in the Crimes Act 1900. It is about time that grossly negligent behaviour that causes a death in a workplace is treated similarly to such behaviour outside of a work setting.

Under existing laws, the maximum penalty for grossly negligent behaviour that causes a death at a workplace is five years imprisonment for individuals and only \$3.8 million in fines for a body corporate. The current penalties for bosses who deliberately skimp on protection measures such as safety rails, resulting in workers falling from great heights, being electrocuted or being crushed by heavy items or machinery, are clearly too lenient. Under the bill, the maximum penalty for industrial manslaughter will be increased to 25 years imprisonment for an individual or \$20 million for a body corporate. That is appropriate.

The new punishments proposed in the bill reflect how serious the crimes are and will be a strong deterrent to those currently willing to take risks that endanger the lives of their workers. They will also offer some level of justice for the families of those killed in such workplace incidents. I am delighted to see that a new unit within the DPP will be established and will be responsible for the prosecution of the industrial manslaughter offences. The bill will save lives by making bosses think twice about skimping on workplace safety. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (12:29): In New South Wales one person a week does not come home from work because of a workplace death. This shocking statistic reveals a failure in the work health and safety system to adequately remove risks. Despite such high rates, not a single employer in this State has gone to prison for a death in their workplace. No matter where someone works or what job they do, everyone deserves to come home from work alive and safe. The Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024 will create an offence of industrial manslaughter for gross negligence by a person or company with a duty of care if the negligence causes death. We are the last mainland State to adopt an industrial manslaughter offence, and I congratulate the Minister and the Government for working so hard to make that happen. I also acknowledge Unions NSW, the CFMEU and everybody who has worked on this long overdue law reform.

I strongly support the bill. It will ensure that those with a duty of care towards their workers are held accountable if they are negligent in exercising that duty. The bar for negligence is not low and it appropriately reflects what an employer would reasonably be expected to do. It will not make responsible employers who diligently exercise their duty of care liable for reckless or careless behaviour. The offence provides an important reminder to employers of how important their duty of care is towards their workers, and I hope that creates a deterrent effect and a safer State. According to Unions NSW, certain jobs have greater risks, including road and rail drivers, farmers, farm managers and other labourers. The laws are especially important as we move into a building boom to ensure that safety is given the priority it needs while there is pressure to speed up construction.

I know that the loved ones of people who have died at work have been calling for this change for some time. I recently met with unions and with Patrizia Cassaniti, whose son Christopher died in an industrial accident on a construction site in 2019. I thank Patrizia for sharing her deeply personal and sad story. I am sure that it has not been easy, but her work has helped so many of us understand the ongoing trauma that families experience from unsafe workplaces. I hope that she is proud of her success in making New South Wales a safer place for workers. I also thank the union movement for standing up for workers to get this bill before the House.

I will not support the Opposition amendments for a statute of limitations. Prosecutions are unlikely to be initiated until after SafeWork has done a thorough investigation and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has had time to assess the evidence. A limitation will only act to deny justice. I will also not support the member for Murray's amendments, which weaken key provisions in the bill and are not in the spirit of the legislation. The bill ensures that all employees' lives are valued at work and will help make the workplace safer for everyone. I commend the bill to the House.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (12:33): Every person who goes to work deserves to come home safely. Devastatingly, over the past five years, 300 fatal workplace incidents have prevented New South Wales workers from returning home to their families. That is 300 families who have lost a son, a daughter, a father, a sister, a brother, a friend or a colleague. Every family in New South Wales who loses a loved one at work is given

a life sentence. That is 300 life sentences for families whose loved ones' only fault was showing up for work. We must act to deter and prevent tragic workplace accidents in New South Wales, and to ensure that only those who fail in their paramount duties are truly punished. This is a momentous day for the labour movement in New South Wales and a momentous day for the rights of workers across our State. As Parliamentary Secretary for the Attorney General, the member for Prospect and a proud Labor MP, I support the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024, which will better protect the safety of our workers at work.

I thank the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety for her tireless efforts driving this important legislation over many years. I also acknowledge the enduring efforts of the many families, friends and trade unionists who have campaigned fiercely for 20 or more years to see this change. Particularly, I recognise all the families of victims, who have bravely fought to prevent further tragedy in workplaces in New South Wales. The bill establishes new part 2A of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 [WHS Act]. It introduces an industrial manslaughter offence. Currently workplace deaths may be prosecuted as an offence of common law manslaughter under the Crimes Act 1900. That offence has a high threshold and has been insufficient in dealing with workplace fatalities. A prosecution under common law requires proof of criminal negligence on the part of a particular individual identified as the directing mind and will of the company.

As highlighted in the key Victorian case *Nydam v R* [1977] VR 430, criminal negligence requires proof beyond reasonable doubt that the accused owed a legal duty of care to the deceased, and that the act by the accused which caused death "involved such a great falling short of the standard of care which a reasonable man would have exercised and which involved such a high risk that death or grievous bodily harm would follow that the doing of the act merited criminal punishment." Given the nature of most workplace accidents, it is difficult to satisfy this standard against the relevant directing mind. In New South Wales that has resulted in only one successful prosecution of this offence in the context of a workplace death. It is evident there is a significant and terrible gap in our existing legal framework which must and will be corrected by this bill.

The bill also introduces new section 34C to the WHS Act to establish the industrial manslaughter offence, the most serious offence under the Act. To satisfy the elements of industrial manslaughter, a person must firstly have a health and safety duty and be either an officer of a business or undertaking or the relevant person conducting the business or undertaking, which I will refer to as the PCBU. That requirement in section 34C (b) limits industrial manslaughter to those who are already subject to a number of work health and safety duties, including a primary duty of care to ensure the health and safety of workers at work. New section 34C (b) has been developed in accordance with Professor Marie Boland's *Review of the model Work Health and Safety laws: Final report*, published in December 2018, and is also consistent with industrial manslaughter offences in other Australian jurisdictions.

A PCBU includes a corporation, partnership, unincorporated association, self-employed person or sole trader. Those persons have influence over the safety environment in a workplace and are responsible for governing specific activities and behaviours that determine the success or failure of health and safety initiatives. Whilst we recognise everyone has a responsibility to ensure safe workplaces, by limiting the application of this offence we ensure that industrial manslaughter is aimed at those whose behaviours or decisions have power to influence activities in a workplace. That will help to deter workplace accidents, by targeting dangerous workplace cultures where it matters most.

New section 34C (c) provides the second element of the offence. A PCBU or officer of a PCBU that has a health and safety duty will commit the offence if they engage in conduct that constitutes a failure to comply with that duty, and the conduct causes the death of a worker or another individual to whom the duty is owed. In interpreting the new section, the definition of a worker is aligned with the Work Health and Safety Act. It includes an employee, a contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a labour hire company assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking, an outworker, an apprentice or trainee, a student gaining work experience, a volunteer, or a person of a prescribed class. The broad definition ensures that the offence is applicable in circumstances which involve the death of not only a direct employee but also a subcontractor or, in modern language, a gig worker. Industrial manslaughter will apply where there has been a death of a person to whom a duty is owed. It is straightforward in its definitions and scope, and it needs to be.

New section 34C (d) provides the final element for industrial manslaughter—that is, a person is required to engage in conduct with gross negligence. Gross negligence is akin to the concept of criminal negligence and has been thoroughly explored under the common law. As identified earlier, it denotes a great falling short of the standard of care a reasonable person would exercise and such a risk that death or grievous bodily harm would follow that it merits criminal punishment. The District Court of New South Wales case *SafeWork NSW v AI Arbor Tree Services Pty Ltd* [2023] NSWDC 256 illustrates the standard of conduct. In that case, a 40-year-old worker was fatally injured when he was pulled into a woodchipper.

The worker was Samuela Cirivakayawa, a Fijian national working in this country. He was killed and I am sure his family still grieves because of that accident. A1 Arbor was found grossly negligent and convicted of a category 1 WHS offence. The court found that A1 Arbor did not complete a risk assessment of equipment, had defective equipment, provided little supervision and did not provide suitable training to workers operating the equipment. That case resulted in a fine of over \$2 million—the single largest court-imposed fine for a business in New South Wales. Gross negligence has been deemed the most appropriate legal benchmark for an industrial manslaughter offence because it aligns with the treatment of manslaughter under the Crimes Act. [*Extension of time*]

Penalties for the new industrial manslaughter offence also align with manslaughter under the Crimes Act. It will carry a maximum penalty of 25 years imprisonment for an individual and \$20 million for a body corporate. The alignment with the Crimes Act emphasises that grossly negligent conduct that results in the death of a person should not be treated less seriously, just because it happens in a workplace. The penalties represent a fair and just punishment and serve as a strong deterrent to organisations and individuals who breach their workplace duties. It is important to note that this offence does not create any new work health and safety obligations or duties. Rather, it reinforces the importance of complying with existing duties. As a key measure to ensure that these important laws remain fit for purpose, the amended section 276B of the Work Health and Safety Act establishes a statutory requirement to review the industrial manslaughter provisions within the bill. The review is to be undertaken 18 months from commencement of the provisions.

In 2019 New South Wales mourned the death of 18-year-old apprentice Christopher Cassaniti when a parameter facade, loaded 18 tonnes over capacity, collapsed at a GN Residential Construction site. The District Court of New South Wales convicted GN Residential Construction of a category 2 WHS offence, issuing a \$900,000 fine. The loss suffered by the Cassaniti family far exceeded the damages awarded, and the punishment for the grossly negligent actions was completely inadequate. I acknowledge the courage of Christopher's mother, Patrizia, and his father, Rob, who have fought through their grief to achieve justice for their son and prevent other families from facing the same anguish. Christopher's story is one of the too many tragic, preventable workplace accidents in New South Wales. We need a purposeful industrial manslaughter offence to fix our workplace health and safety culture in New South Wales and to prevent another devastating loss to our community. No worker should be killed at work. It is as simple as that.

The Prospect electorate contains the largest number of industrial, manufacturing and logistics businesses in the Southern Hemisphere. From the manufacture of zero emission bus chassis at Aluminium Revolutionary Chassis Company, to vital dialysis equipment at Fresenius Medical Care, to everyone's favourite biscuits at Arnott's, Prospect has a dedicated industrial workforce. We are extremely proud of our hardworking employees in Prospect and, with this legislation, we are determined to ensure that each and every one of them returns home to their families at the end of each working day. In 2022 New South Wales recorded 51 workplace fatalities. So 51 of the 195 fatalities recorded in Australia that year were attributed to New South Wales. We recorded the highest workplace fatality rate across the nation. What a disgrace. We should be ashamed. We must take action now to ensure that workers in our State are better protected.

The bill is the culmination of a 20-year campaign by families, friends and the trade union movement to effectively deter unsafe work practices, prevent workplace deaths and hold those who fail in their paramount duty of care to account. With this legislation, we are sending a clear message: Unsafe work practices will not be tolerated in any workplace in New South Wales. The amendments will profoundly alter the safety culture in New South Wales, to ensure that all our loved ones come home safely after their shifts. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (12:47): I support the Government's Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. I thank Minister Sophie Cotsis and her staff for their hard work and commitment in making the bill a reality—and hopefully it will have the support of the House. There is no such thing as a workplace accident; they are workplace incidents, and they are all preventable. In the opening remarks of her second reading speech, the Minister stated:

The families who have lost loved ones in New South Wales at work are the ones who have been given a life sentence. This bill is aimed at rectifying that injustice. This bill continues the Labor Party's legacy of supporting working people's right to a safe workplace.

Before being elected to this place, I proudly represented members of the Australian Workers' Union [AWU]. Alongside wages, conditions, consultation and disputes—our bread-and-butter issues—the saddest moments in my career at the AWU were undertaking workplace death incident investigations, including investigating what had happened and what was immediately needed so that the tragedy did not reoccur, sitting in on hearings, consoling workmates, families and friends of the deceased, and attending funerals. Unfortunately, many union officials have had to undertake those difficult and stressful tasks, hence why the introduction of this industrial manslaughter bill is so important.

After I started working for the AWU in about 2004, the first workplace death where the union assisted family and work colleagues was the death of a construction worker on the Cross City Tunnel. Experienced AWU construction official Kevin Brown assisted the family directly and the work colleagues on the site. He had to deal with the tragic death of Ronald Shores, who died on 29 July 2004 when a section of roof collapsed on him while he was working on a ventilation tunnel. The investigations and processes do not happen overnight. For three years the family had to deal with the uncertainty of what happened at that time. Three years after the incident the New South Wales Coroner found that the builders should have done more to protect Mr Shores, who was killed in a rockfall while drilling a hole under an unsupported roof. I repeat: Mr Shores, a resident of Penrith at the time, while working on the Cross City Tunnel construction project, was drilling a hole underground underneath an unsupported roof. In what language or world is that not a preventable death if the right thing had been done?

At the time Mr Norris was a systems manager for Downer Engineering Power and was concerned that Downer's 300 workers were operating in unsafe and unpredictable conditions. Mr Norris repeatedly sent warnings about defined safety concerns and breaches of legislation for which, as an employer, Downer could be prosecuted by WorkCover. There were similar concerns about the tunnelling staff, of which Mr Shores was one, although they were not linked to Downer's operations at the time. The importance of this legislative reform is that it will focus potential industrial manslaughter investigations directly on the person conducting the business or undertaking [PCBU]. In her second reading speech, the Minister said:

To commit industrial manslaughter, a person must firstly have a health and safety duty and either be the relevant person conducting the business or undertaking [PCBU] or an officer of a business or undertaking ... Officers of PCBUs are also required to comply with duties including exercising due diligence to ensure that PCBUs comply with their duties and obligations under the Work Health and Safety Act.

If there is a potential sentence of imprisonment for industrial manslaughter, I assume a PCBU will have to demonstrate that they did more than just send a few emails expressing that unsafe work practices could be prosecuted by WorkCover under a fines regime. Mr Shores' widow, Marlene, said at the time that she is still angry her husband was not provided with a safe working environment. "It happens all the time," she said. "It's not a real accident—it's preventable." Her lawyer, Stuart Barnett, said that she is still seeking closure—three or four years after the death and after the NSW State Coroner's inquiry. He said, "She still has to finalise her compensation claim and there is still the occupational health and safety prosecution to sit through, so it goes on for the family and those around her." WorkCover has prosecuted five companies in the tunnel consortium for breaches of occupational health and safety laws. I hope the Minister will examine the time that it takes to process the prosecutions and to follow up on payments to workers' families after a death has taken place.

I was also the union official at Cement Australia at Kandos where 39-year-old Colin David Fuller was killed in the workplace when he was crushed between two hydraulic rams while working at the factory on 13 September 2009. Cement Australia had breached the Occupational Health and Safety Act by failing to install fixed guards along the entire length of a feeder and conveyor system, as required by Australian safety standards, and by failing to provide adequate supervision and instruction to Mr Fuller. In her judgement, Justice Anna Backman found that the systems in place at the time of Mr Fuller's death were comprehensive but defective in a number of respects. Mr Fuller's mother, Colleen, described the "dreadful sense of loss and grief" experienced by the family following his death. Justice Backman expressed her deepest sympathy to the family. She said that, in accordance with the law, the victim impact statement could be acknowledged but not taken into account for sentencing. That will be a question for the Minister: Will the victim impact statement be taken into account when sentencing in relation to industrial manslaughter?

The maximum penalty for the offence was \$550,000. Justice Backman noted the "significant presence" of Cement Australia in donating \$30,000 a year to community programs every year, and the resultant fine was only approximately \$100,000. An employer just donates to the local community and gets a discount on the fine. I do not think the two matters should be linked in any way. Justice Backman said that given the prevalence before the courts of offences linked to unguarded machinery, general deterrence needed to be considered. But she found that as Cement Australia was not adversely recorded it was "entitled to a leniency normally extended to first-time offenders". Cement Australia is a major organisation that, at the time, had a \$400 million turnover. It should be dealt with separately from small businesses. It had an entire occupational health and safety team. Cement Australia at Kandos had been in operation for over 100 years, yet it got a fine of only \$100,000 because it gave \$30,000 to the local community. It was ridiculous.

Locally in the Blacktown area, Joel Exner, aged 16, suffered fatal injuries on his third day at work when he fell 12.5 metres from the roof of a warehouse under construction at Eastern Creek on 15 October 2003. The Industrial Relations Commission found that only three weeks earlier the roofing contractor whose work practices led to the death of 16-year-old Joel Exner had put at risk the lives of other young employees carrying out roofing work. I put on record my appreciation to Rebel Hanlon of the CFMEU, who, even today, 21 years after Joel's

death, brings together workers, including Gary Windred and local council representatives, for a memorial service. *[Extension of time]*

I also acknowledge former AWU union leaders: former New South Wales AWU State Secretary Russ Collison, current State Secretary Tony Callinan and Australian National Secretary Paul Farrow. They have all shown leadership, commitment and drive in improving workplace safety and in dealing with recalcitrant employers. I make special mention of Dr Yossi Berger, who passed away a few years ago. Yossi was the AWU national director for work health and safety and a person who was willing to spend time with union officials, particularly with me, to discuss and facilitate learning. Over the years we formed a great partnership going out to various sites from golf courses to manufacturing plants. He was a great supportive help for workers, management and me, particularly with the investigation of Colin Fuller's death at Kandos.

The member for Murray raised some concerns earlier today about farms and the bill going too far. She queried why the Government is taking a Sydney-centric approach. I remind her and every other member of this House that agriculture and farming account for one in every five worker deaths in New South Wales as a result of quad bikes, tractor flipping, animal handling, biosecurity hazards, tree work, noise and electrical work. Yes, it affects manufacturing sites and transport workers, but people in rural areas will benefit particularly from the extra protections. In 2021 the AWU raised the issue of the unacceptable number of fatal road accidents involving seasonal workers employed on farms across Australia. The then national secretary, Daniel Walton, said:

We have a duty to treat our neighbours from the Pacific Island far better. They come here expecting to save up money to take home to their families, but instead we have workers going home in a coffin.

As Mayor of Blacktown, I was proud to initiate the International Workers' Memorial Day service, which has been held annually since 2015, at a nice location in the Blacktown Showground Precinct, where there is a boardwalk and the Workers Memorial island. Artefacts are accumulating in the natural, peaceful ambience of the location. These events would not have grown without the dedicated support of the council and unions, including the AWU and Unions NSW. Most important is the ongoing drive and support of Rebel Hanlon and the CFMEU leaders and members who mark that day, regardless of whether it falls on a weekend or a weekday, whether it is raining or sunny and whatever the challenges posed by COVID.

These important memorial days enable families and friends, work colleagues, unionists, employers and politicians to gather and remember those who have died in the workplace and commit to doing everything we can to stop a tragic workplace incident occurring again. Hopefully, this bill will make a difference and will keep people who are responsible for safety from leaving any issues to doubt and from not addressing every concern raised by workers and unions. Together, we can make a difference and save people's lives. I commend the bill to the House and thank the Minister for her passionate support.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (13:01): I speak in support of the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024 and in support of the rights of workers in Newcastle and across New South Wales. Last year we lost 175 Australians to workplace accidents. This year we have already lost 44 workers. The bill seeks to make industrial manslaughter a criminal offence. Employers and bosses have a responsibility to ensure that their workplaces are safe and have a duty to protect the health and safety of their employees. The bill will ensure that they are held accountable for workplace tragedies that result from gross negligence. As home to one of the largest ports in Australia, Newcastle has many workers who spend their days operating heavy machinery. Good workplace health and safety practice is an absolutely essential part of their jobs. All those workers deserve to go home safe and unharmed at the end of every day.

I cannot help but think back 12 years to one particular workplace death that occurred in Newcastle, when a 20-tonne pallet of aluminium that was being loaded onto a ship in Carrington fell on stevedore Greg Fitzgibbon. I knew Greg personally, so this one hit a little closer to home. After the incident an extensive investigation was carried out. It found that, while Newcastle Stevedores—the company Greg worked for—had not had a workplace fatality before, there had been multiple incidents of falling cargo. The investigation also found that Greg was working his fourth 15-hour double-header shift in a seven-day period when the incident happened, making fatigue a likely factor in his death. He is survived by his daughters, Georgia and Taylor, who have been great advocates for improving workplace safety for seafarers and wharfies.

Only a Labor government will protect our workers. That was made clear when my colleagues and I pushed for these reforms back in 2021, when we were in opposition. The Coalition would not support New South Wales workers then, and it will not support New South Wales workers now. The good Minister and I met with Hunter Workers and union officials on May Day this year to discuss the urgent need for industrial manslaughter reforms, and I represent them with great pride here today. Around two weeks after that, Unions NSW representatives came to this place to advocate for these reforms, and I was proud to stand alongside them and promise to do what I can

to protect every worker. Unfortunately, that same morning a worker died in Newcastle after falling from a power pole.

Every year, rain, hail or shine, like the previous speaker, we hold a memorial to workers who were killed in the workplace. It is a sombre but good event. I pay tribute to Leanne Holmes, the president of Hunter Workers, and also to Leigh Shears, the secretary, who work extremely hard and are hugely passionate about this cause. Leigh has always been forthcoming on this issue, and I know the Minister is well aware of Hunter Workers and their passionate advocacy. I spent 10 years of my working life in the mine workplace health and safety area. I am very aware of the risks, the issues and the need for vigilance and a high standard of health and safety in the workplace. We have witnessed too many incidents in the mining industry. Every year miners also have a memorial event for workers who were killed in mines. If people visit the CFMEU offices in Cessnock they will see a long wall bearing the names of over 1,000 people. The memorial event is sobering and poignant, with wonderful bagpipes and always an amazing speech in memory of those workers who were killed in the workplace. This legislation cannot come soon enough. Every worker deserves to go to work and return home safely.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (13:06): Nearly every week in New South Wales one family loses a child, a parent, a partner or a sibling to a workplace death. They never come home. That is simply unacceptable. Each year my colleagues in the Hunter and I attend the Mining and Energy Union's Northern Mining & NSW Energy District's Annual Memorial Day Service at Aberdare. Each year we attend as a gesture of support for those in our communities whose family members and friends have lost their lives. Some years names are added to this wall and we see firsthand the raw emotions of grief and sadness from their families, their friends, their colleagues and their communities. Regardless of whether we are there to pay our respects to someone whose name is being etched on the wall or to the more than 1,800 names already on the Jim Comerford Memorial Wall—some of which have been there for many years—we know that the grief, the sense of loss, the injustice and the pain remain for those who are left behind.

On 28 April each year, in a series of commemorative services, people across the world mourn workers who have been killed at work. In New South Wales the services are hosted by Unions NSW and, in my area, by Hunter Workers. I acknowledge president Leanne Holmes and secretary Leigh Shears. It disturbs me that neither of these commemorative events has the same official bipartisan support as many other commemorative days that we mark in our calendars. In fact, I have not seen many of those opposite at any of those events. We can never forget those who die at or because of their work. We must do more to respect them and to act to prevent further such deaths. Looking in the eyes of surviving family members at one of these events gives you a different perspective from looking at a set of numbers.

It was not until the tragic death of Christopher Cassaniti, an 18-year-old apprentice who died at a Sydney construction site in 2019, that the former Government was finally galvanised into strengthening penalties for deaths at workplaces and responding to the 2018 SafeWork review, the Boland review, and the 2018 Senate inquiry into industrial deaths. I pay my respects to Christopher Cassaniti and his family and I acknowledge the very deep pain that the ongoing discussion of his death continues to bring them. I pay my respects to all the families and friends who have lost a loved one at work. I thank Patrizia and Rob Cassaniti for their courage and bravery, despite their grief, in working to prevent such a tragedy from happening to others.

Having previously owned a business in the high-risk industry of transportation and heavy vehicles, and with a long commitment to workplace safety and critical incident management as a former union delegate and union official, and now as the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, I have seen, very sadly, firsthand the impact of injuries and fatalities at work. The protection of workers' safety must come from a whole-of-organisation approach and it must be led by the highest levels within an organisation. That takes time, effort and money but it is always worth it. It means employers must ensure that everyone in the workplace is properly trained in safety, empowered to work safely and that they all take responsibility for safety. It is about all of us. It is about developing a workplace health and safety culture and employers must be committed to achieve that.

Sadly, sometimes that commitment does not come only from being told what you should do. One of the biggest issues in the sector is that often employers do not think it applies to them until they have experienced a critical incident. They do not have the imagination to see what could happen if proper procedures were not followed. That is why we have long needed a proper regime for dealing with industrial manslaughter. I am so proud to be a member of the Australian Labor Party today and a member of the broader labour movement in this State. I sincerely thank Minister Cotsis for her incredible work to bring the legislation to this place. It carries the huge weight of the trauma of the families who are left behind. The Minister has worked so hard. She has listened to so many stories and sat with families as they grieve. It is a struggle. Minister, you are a hero to all of us.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: It is a team effort.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: She will not take the credit but she deserves it. It is a campaign that has been going for at least 20 years—in fact, really generations and centuries—led by the union movement and supported by communities and ethical employers that will not accept that it is normal to die at work. We have a standard or a community expectation in Australia that people should be able to go to work and come home every time. That expectation means employers must deliver safe systems and processes that guarantee the health and safety of their workers. The legislation delivers that expectation for our community. While it will not bring back those who we have lost, it will give some comfort to their families that their loss has not been in vain and that something important has changed. And it will.

Those opposite begrudgingly passed legislation in 2019; this bill completes that unfinished business. In addition to those people who die every week at work, I take this opportunity to pay my respects to those many people who also lose their lives to long-term illnesses, diseases and suicides caused by their work. Those people will never be counted in the final statistics; they are the forgotten people so we must remember them as well. However, we are dealing with workplace deaths—the violent immediate deaths that make the news or the long, slow, drawn-out deaths that destroy the lives of people and those all around them—and for the sake of those workers and for those they leave behind we must do better. We must stop workplace deaths however they occur. Labor will always go further to protect the lives of workers in New South Wales. The bill will make a vital contribution to saving lives in New South Wales. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (13:13): I make a brief contribution in support of the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. The bill will introduce an offence of industrial manslaughter into the New South Wales work health and safety legislation. Work health and safety is incredibly important in New South Wales. Every workplace death is one that can and should be preventable. Workers in New South Wales should come home safely at the end of each day. Regrettably, in the past five years there have been 300 fatal workplace incidents in New South Wales. Introducing an offence for industrial manslaughter shows the Government's dedication to solving the issue and to creating safer working environments. Under the Crimes Act 1900 certain cases of workplace death may be prosecuted as common law manslaughter; however, that rarely occurs. That suggests the current legislation has been insufficient when dealing with workplace deaths.

The bill amends the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to establish an industrial manslaughter offence. It outlines the application of the offence and the requirements to establish the offence of industrial manslaughter. To commit industrial manslaughter, a person must have a health and safety duty and be either the relevant person conducting the business or undertaking [PCBU] or an officer of a business or undertaking. Under work health and safety laws, PCBUs have a number of work health and safety duties including a duty of care to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers while they are at work. The new offence is not intended to create any additional work health and safety obligations; however, it will act to reinforce the importance of complying with those duties.

Further, the bill specifies that a person who can commit the offence is limited to a PCBU or an officer of a PCBU, as they are the people who have the power to strongly influence the activities and culture of a workplace. To clarify that volunteers may still be liable for a workplace death caused by their own dangerous or unsafe actions, the bill states that volunteers may still be subject to a manslaughter offence under the Crimes Act. Finally, for manslaughter to have been committed it must be established that the person has engaged in the conduct with gross negligence.

The bill provides that the offence will carry a maximum penalty of 25 years imprisonment for an individual and a penalty of \$20 million for a body corporate. The maximum period of 25 years imprisonment is in line with the existing maximum penalty for manslaughter under the Crimes Act 1900. A statutory alternative will be available in cases where the court or jury is not satisfied that the defendant has committed the offence of industrial manslaughter but is satisfied that they have met the criteria for committing a category 1 offence. The bill amends the Act to clarify that a work health and safety undertaking, also known as an enforceable undertaking, is unable to be accepted by the regulator for contravention of an alleged industrial manslaughter offence. That clarification acts as a further deterrent and aims to bring justice to those affected by unsafe work practices and negligent conduct.

Reflective of the significant penalties attached to the offence, under the Work Health and Safety Act proceedings commenced against an individual for industrial manslaughter must proceed on indictment and may be heard before the District or Supreme courts. Contrary to that, proceedings commenced against a body corporate for an industrial manslaughter or category 1 offence will be dealt with summarily in the newly re-established Industrial Court. The bill provides that a statutory requirement to review the provisions related to industrial manslaughter within the bill must be undertaken 18 months from the commencement of the provisions.

The bill clarifies that the fault element of gross negligence is the responsibility of the body corporate. It specifies that gross negligence may exist on the part of a body corporate without an individual of the body

corporate having engaged in the conduct with gross negligence. Under the Work Health and Safety Act, a proceeding through the District Court for a backup or related offence to an indictable category 1 offence currently allows the court to deal with those matters as though they were sitting as the Industrial Court. The bill removes that subsection because it is inappropriate for the District Court to sit as the Industrial Court because the Industrial Court is a higher jurisdiction. The bill advocates strongly for workers and for families that have been affected by workplace deaths. It will deter negligence in the workplace and will hold those who engage in and promote unsafe practices accountable. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (13:19): I support the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024, which will introduce an industrial manslaughter offence into the New South Wales work health and safety framework. As a member of the Labor Party and the labour movement, I am proud to support the bill brought by my beautiful friend the Minister for Industrial Relations. I appreciate the incredible work that she has done to bring the bill to reality, alongside families who have had loved ones killed. Nobody can comprehend the level of grief when a loved one does not come home from work, and our Minister and her team have carried those stories into the legislation.

I also put on record my sincere thanks to everybody who works in work health and safety in SafeWork NSW. I thank them for the work they do as inspectors and SafeWork enforcers. Last month I had the privilege of visiting the Gosford office with the Minister to thank the workers in that area, who do important work. I had the privilege of being part of the Paralympian WorkCover "Work safe" team. Whilst I did not have a workplace injury, everyone else in my team went to work and came home in a different body. That is a really tough thing. Adjusting to a different body is one thing, but adjusting to not having somebody there is another level again. After 20 years, New South Wales is the last State to bring this legislation to the Parliament.

The bill fulfils a commitment to protect and support our workers' right to a safe workplace. Too often we hear of workers incurring significant injuries at work. Too often we see workers dying on worksites because systems have failed. As the Minister stated, there have been 300 fatal workplace incidents in New South Wales. One death at work is one death too many; one person a week is not good enough. It is sad to have to put in place additional measures to make people make their workplaces safer, but if that is what we have to do then I am proud to be part of a movement that will make people safe in their workplace.

The 2018 Boland review and the Federal Senate inquiry into the prevention, investigation and prosecution of industrial deaths both recommended the introduction of an industrial manslaughter offence, as the current framework is not an adequate deterrent to prevent unnecessary deaths in the workplace. I thank my colleague the member for Blacktown for the work he has done as a delegate for the Australian Workers' Union, as well as all union officials who are there to protect the wellbeing of workers in workplaces.

Union officials do important work to make workplaces safer after a death has occurred in the workplace, with the complex relationships and the conflict, pain and grief that occur there. Nobody trains people to be truly able to deal with that level of grief and concern, so I thank all of our union officials for the work they do and their input into the legislation. The bill will deter those who cut corners and take risks when it comes to worker safety. It is a clear message that those who put workers' lives at risk will be held to account. I commend those vitally important amendments, which mark a significant step in ensuring that the most egregious breaches of work health and safety carry a substantial penalty.

I turn to new section 34C, which provides the elements of the industrial manslaughter offence. The offence of industrial manslaughter occurs when a person conducting a business or undertaking has a health and safety duty and engages in conduct that fails to comply with that duty, causing the death of the person to whom the duty is owed, and where the conduct is grossly negligent. Those elements align with the pre-existing New South Wales work health and safety framework and duties, which are well understood by businesses and organisations. They reinforce the importance of complying with those duties and send a clear message that there is no place for unsafe work practices. There is no place for cutting corners on our worksites. There is no place for saying, "She'll be right, mate", and "just making do" when dealing with a human life or part of a human body. I am proud to be part of a government that is bringing in legislation that says just that.

Further, new section 34C will introduce maximum penalties of imprisonment for 25 years for individuals and a \$20 million fine for bodies corporate. Imprisonment for a maximum of 25 years is consistent with penalties for manslaughter under the Crimes Act 1900. While 25 years is more than the model work health and safety law, grossly negligent conduct that results in death should be treated with the same seriousness regardless of whether it occurs in the workplace.

The proposed industrial manslaughter offence does not impose a new duty; rather, it ensures that when those duties are breached and the breach results in a person's death, the penalty reflects the severity of the crime. The bill reflects a 20-year effort by those involved in the union movement to protect workers in New South Wales.

An industrial manslaughter offence has been a long time coming, and I thank the Minister and the families of the victims. They have come together to put pressure on the Government to change the legislation. It has been a very tough journey for many families who have lost loved ones, and I have heard many stories today in the Parliament of deaths in the workplace. Despite their pain, they continue to rally, speak out and put public pressure on the Government to create the change that is essential to make sure that does not happen to the next young person on an industrial workplace—or any workplace at all.

The bill is a significant step forward for work health and safety reform in New South Wales. I thank the member for The Entrance and his office staff, who do an incredible job every year of maintaining our memorial to those killed at work. It is a small but very important service, and every year I sit beside people whose names I do not know as they bring flowers or put small notes on the wall to cherish the memory of loved ones who are no longer with us. It is an important place in Ourimbah and I thank all of David Mehan's team, who mow it and put chairs out. Beautiful singers come along to commemorate the lives lost, and it is an important part of our community.

I also thank the SafeWork NSW teams across New South Wales for the incredible work they do travelling to worksites and responding to calls. I thank everybody who makes those calls to report a workplace that is not safe. It is important that we have the facilities to allow people to be brave enough to report that their workplace is not safe, and I thank the workplace inspectors who go out across New South Wales to look after people. It is clear that unsafe work practices will not be tolerated in this State. My physiotherapist looks after people who are injured in their workplace, day in and day out, and I call it out in the New South Wales Parliament: People from the big Woolworths industrial warehouse on the Central Coast are being injured in their workplace. They are not people with high skills, so it is really difficult for them to move into different kinds of work. That is just one example of a workplace that needs to step up and make sure it is safe.

I reflect on my time as part of the Paralympian Speaker Program, talking to workplaces across New South Wales. I was privileged to go to a place in Williamtown that maintains jets. I talked to workers and leaders there who value their colleagues, and the Paralympian Speaker Program continues to be available to workplaces as a reminder to be safe in the workplace. I thank everybody who acts as a work health and safety officer in their workplace. It is a really important job, often for no additional remuneration. It is almost a loveless position, from my experience in schools across New South Wales. They put up their hand to make sure that there is someone to go to, and they step up the game to look after work health and safety. We know in the beautiful New South Wales union movement that that is super important. No workplace injury is okay, and this legislation says that workplace safety is of utmost importance. Every person in New South Wales should be able to go home from their workplace.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): It being 1.30 p.m., the debate is adjourned. I set down resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour. I shall now leave the Chair. The House will resume at 2.30 p.m.

COAL MINE SUBSIDENCE COMPENSATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Anoulack Chanthivong, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

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) (14:31): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Amendment Bill 2024. Underground coalmining has occurred across New South Wales, with some areas being mined over 150 years ago. Current operating underground coalmines still exist across New South Wales. Subsidence from old or current mining can cause damage to buildings and other property. The Government acknowledges that subsidence damage can be alarming and stressful for affected communities. The Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Act 2017 makes proprietors of coalmines liable for compensating property owners if their property is damaged by an active coalmine. It also provides for Subsidence Advisory NSW to administer the compensation system, and assess and manage risks associated with subsidence resulting from underground coalmining. The bill proposes amendments to implement in full the recommendations of the statutory review of the Act, which was completed in 2023.

The amendments in the bill will expand compensation to assist those who need it and improve the claims process to support claimants and enhance the capability of Subsidence Advisory to respond to subsidence impacts and risks. Key amendments include extending relocation compensation to affected tenants; adding more support

from Subsidence Advisory in mine subsidence events; allowing claims to be lodged outside of the Subsidence Advisory online portal; adding powers to direct pre-mining inspections; requiring information and documents from coalmine operators; clarifying the roles of Subsidence Advisory and mine operators in the assessment and determination of claims; expanding the scope of the approved procedures; increasing penalties in line with inflation for existing offences in the Act; clarifying provisions for work to prevent or mitigate damage; and clarifying the responsibilities of the chief executive of Subsidence Advisory.

Taken together, those amendments will strengthen the compensation framework and ensure that people who are affected by coalmine subsidence within New South Wales, whether they are from Wallsend or Wollondilly, are able to access compensation and support. I now turn to the specific amendments in the bill. The Government is committed to ensuring that all customers affected by coalmine subsidence damage are adequately compensated. Currently, only an owner-occupier of a property is entitled to compensation for relocation expenses if their property becomes uninhabitable due to mine subsidence. However, renters are also affected if property they are leasing becomes uninhabitable or may be under repair due to mine subsidence damage. Proposed changes to section 7 (1) (c) of the Act will ensure that renters are eligible for compensation for relocation or short-term accommodation expenses.

During subsidence emergencies the chief executive can order residents to evacuate, requiring residents to relocate. Under the current Act, there is no clear power for the arrangement of temporary accommodation for affected residents. The bill will amend section 27 by introducing additional powers to allow Subsidence Advisory to arrange accommodation for residents who are required to relocate. Additionally, the Act does not provide Subsidence Advisory with the power to reimburse residents who may incur out-of-pocket expenses for food, clothing and other incidentals due to emergency relocation. Further changes to section 27 will allow residents to be reimbursed for expenses arising from emergency relocation in addition to the chief executive arranging temporary accommodation.

Local infrastructure, such as roads or sewers, may require emergency repairs following damage from mine subsidence. Typically, the asset owner, such as a local council, will carry out the repairs and Subsidence Advisory reimburses the asset owner from the Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Fund for those works. While section 27 provides power for Subsidence Advisory to carry out repairs, there is no clear basis in the Act to make transfers from the fund to the asset owner to carry out the repairs themselves. Additional amendments to section 27 will ensure that Subsidence Advisory can fund repairs to infrastructure undertaken by relevant public authorities.

Currently, the Act allows a person to apply for compensation through an online portal accessed through the Subsidence Advisory website. However, it does not consider that some customers may have trouble lodging their claims through an online portal. The bill proposes changes to section 11 of the Act so that Subsidence Advisory is given the power to set the way a claim can be made. This will enable claims to be lodged outside the online portal. It will ultimately benefit customers as it provides greater flexibility and increased accessibility for claimants, and will assist in futureproofing the claims process.

The purpose of a pre-mining inspection is to determine the condition of a property and any improvements that have been made to the property before mining commences. Making pre-mining inspections a prerequisite to submitting a claim promotes a fair and efficient process to resolving claims should damage from mine subsidence ever occur. New section 10A will make a pre-mining inspection a condition to a claim when it is directed by the chief executive. It should be noted that the chief executive will also have the power to accept a claim for compensation in instances when a pre-mining inspection was required but not carried out—for example, when a pre-mining inspection was refused by a previous property owner and the current property owner-claimant is not at fault.

Further, new section 31A of the Act will make Subsidence Advisory responsible for arranging pre-mining inspections. Currently, pre-mining inspections can be carried out by appropriately skilled contractors, such as licensed builders or structural engineers, at the request of mine operators. However, Subsidence Advisory lacks visibility over this process and is only able to access some pre-mining inspections once an individual has made a claim. The new section will give the chief executive the power to direct a pre-mining inspection be carried out if they believe there is a risk of damage arising from mine subsidence. This will allow Subsidence Advisory to have clear evidence of the state of a property and its improvements prior to mine subsidence, and claimants will be provided with the most fair, efficient and sustainable method for determining claims.

Additionally, at present Subsidence Advisory has no clear powers to obtain information, such as survey data and maps, of proposed mining activity from mine operators. This difficulty has been due, in part, to that type of information falling outside the scope of the Act. New section 31B in the bill will require mine operators to provide that additional information to Subsidence Advisory. The new provision will give Subsidence Advisory the power to instruct mine operators to hand over that information so that they are able to efficiently assess and determine claims.

There is confusion among community stakeholders that believe mine operators play a role throughout the assessment process for claims in active mining areas. However, that is not the case because Subsidence Advisory conducts the initial assessment to determine if damage falls within a mine operator's zone of influence. Following that, Subsidence Advisory selects an independent assessor to carry out assessments and to prepare a report detailing if the damage is the result of mine subsidence or not. New section 11A in the bill will clarify that Subsidence Advisory is responsible for all claims of compensation. The proposed amendment will make it clear that Subsidence Advisory is responsible for assessing claims and will remove any misconceptions about the assessment process. Further changes to section 12 will clarify that the chief executive is responsible for determining all claims.

Currently, the approved procedures developed by Subsidence Advisory may only deal with the assessment and determination of claims. However, it is necessary that the approved procedures include the steps that happen before mining starts or before a claim is lodged. The bill seeks to change section 14 of the Act, which will see the approved procedures outline in more detail the steps that occur before, during and after the determination of a claim. Additionally, further changes in the bill seek to include a no-cost review process in the approved procedures to support the resolution of claim disputes. Currently, a compensation claim that is wholly or partially disallowed can seek an independent no-cost review by the secretary. A mine operator can also seek a review of the chief executive's determination. However, the statutory review heard feedback from both industry and property owners regarding challenges with this process. The changes proposed in the bill seek to provide greater clarity by describing the process for revising the determination of claims in the approved procedures.

The proposed amendments to section 14 of the Act will allow a no-cost review process to be included in the approved procedures for claimants and mine operators. This will provide an additional review to the secretary review process. The bill also increases the maximum penalties for existing offences to reflect changes in inflation, as measured by the consumer price index. The Act provides Subsidence Advisory NSW with enforcement tools to effectively oversee and enforce compliance with the Act. However, the maximum penalty levels have not been adjusted since the Act's commencement in 2018. The proposed amendments to increase penalties for all existing offences will ensure that the deterrent effect of the penalties is maintained over time.

Currently, a person is entitled to compensation in relation to works to prevent or mitigate damage from mine subsidence. However, some claimants were confused as to whether the compensation related to works for existing or for future structures. The proposed amendments to section 7 of the Act will clarify that a person is entitled to compensation for works to prevent or mitigate mine subsidence damage for existing structures only. This means that costs related to works to prevent or mitigate mine subsidence damage for future development are not eligible for compensation. This amendment will minimise any uncertainty for claimants.

Additionally, changes to section 29 will give the chief executive power in some circumstances to carry out works to prevent or mitigate mine subsidence damage. This would be used for works such as sub-surface mitigation, while a claim is pending. While section 29 gives power for Subsidence Advisory NSW to fund expenses that may arise from works to prevent or mitigate damage, there is no clear power in the Act for the chief executive to carry out the works. The proposed change to section 29 will give the chief executive powers to direct that such works be carried out and to ensure repairs are not impacted by further subsidence damage. Further changes to section 29 of the Act give the chief executive discretion to fund reasonable expenses that may arise from the works to prevent or mitigate mine subsidence damage.

Under section 29 of the Act, the chief executive can spend money from the fund to pay for works to prevent or mitigate mine subsidence damage. In some circumstances, residents may need to relocate. However, payments for relocation expenses are not payable under section 29. The proposed change will give the chief executive discretion to fund expenses relating to works to prevent or mitigate damage, such as temporary relocation expenses. This allows residents to be compensated for relocation expenses while preventative and mitigative works are completed. Currently, a person is entitled to compensation from the fund to carry out works to prevent or mitigate damage. However, there are no current limits on the number of claims a claimant can make to carry out works to prevent or mitigate damage, or for any damage caused by these works.

New section 10B will limit claims where an owner is paid out to carry out works to prevent or mitigate damage. This means that where an owner is paid out to carry out works to prevent or mitigate damage, any future damages associated with or caused by these works are not eligible for future compensation. In instances where the chief executive believes that the land may subside due to previous coalmining, the chief executive may refuse a development application. However, the current wording of section 22 (7) of the Act creates confusion as to whether it refers to coal to be mined in the future or coal that has already been mined. Proposed changes to section 22 of the Act will clarify the application process for developments and create certainty about the chief executive's power regarding development approvals over past and future mined land.

Proposed changes to section 26 of the Act will allow the chief executive to order the demolition of damaged structures or buildings if it is not realistic to restore them to the condition they were in before mine subsidence damage occurred. The proposed changes expand the chief executive's options for dealing with property or land after purchasing from owners affected by mine subsidence. Without this power, it could be costly to Subsidence Advisory NSW to knock down and rebuild structures to their prior condition. Proposed changes to section 52 of the Act will limit the broad delegation powers, allowing the secretary to transfer their responsibilities to any officer in the department. A key responsibility of the secretary is reviewing claim determinations. Under the Act, the secretary can assign this power of review to any person employed by the department, including the chief executive, which means the chief executive would be reviewing their own decision. The proposed changes to the Act will ensure that the review of claim determinations is fair and cannot be delegated to the chief executive or any person employed in Subsidence Advisory NSW.

The bill implements in full the nine recommendations of the statutory review that was tabled in this place in August 2023. The bill also reflects feedback from members of the public on the subsidence compensation system, particularly local communities in the Wollondilly and Newcastle areas. I thank everyone who provided feedback to the public consultation on the statutory review, and on this bill. The bill will expand the compensation framework to assist more people who have been affected by coalmine subsidence. It reforms the process of assessing and determining claims and enhances the ability of Subsidence Advisory NSW to handle issues that come from coalmine subsidence. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AMENDMENT (INDUSTRIAL MANSLAUGHTER) BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (14:47): I contribute to debate on the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. The bill introduces an industrial manslaughter offence into the New South Wales work health and safety framework. When I started reading this bill, I thought of my personal experiences in life. I ran or managed other people's businesses and also managed my own small law office for about 20 years. During those years, I also managed community organisations in New South Wales and across the country. So I think I know a little bit about the financial pressures of running a business, and also about managing people. We always need to encourage and support businesses, especially small businesses, but we cannot do so at the expense of, or compromise the safety of, workers—the people who are helping to drive those businesses. We need to think of their families, friends and loved ones who, each and every day, depend on them to put food on the table. They need them to come home safely.

The Government believes that every worker who goes to work in this State should come home safely at the end of the day. Accidents do happen, but every workplace death is a tragedy that could have been avoided. It is under the control of the owner and/or the manager of the business. New South Wales is the last mainland State without an industrial manslaughter offence. The Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety—who I acknowledge is currently in the Chamber—stated in her second reading speech that in the past five years there have been 300 fatal workplace incidents in New South Wales. Similar facts are in the *Key Work Health and Safety Statistics Australia, 2023* report. There were 195 work fatalities in Australia just in 2022. The highest number was in New South Wales, with 51 fatalities. Of those, 93 per cent were men and 7 per cent were women. Many of the fatalities were from vehicle incidents, being hit by moving objects, being hit by falling objects or falls from heights.

The Government is delivering on a key commitment to protect working people. This has been a 20-year campaign. The bill will see the establishment of part 2A within the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, which will establish an industrial manslaughter offence. In certain circumstances, workplace deaths in New South Wales may be prosecuted as an offence of common-law manslaughter under the Crimes Act 1900, but this has rarely happened. The prosecution of large corporations for manslaughter is difficult. Similarly, the highest tier offence under the Work Health and Safety Act, being a category 1 offence, can include circumstances where a workplace death has occurred, but it is not designed to specifically address this issue. There is a gap in the existing legal framework and this bill addresses the deficiency. As a result, it will make our workplaces safer, especially serving as a deterrent.

Firstly, new section 34C outlines the application of the offence and the elements required to establish the offence of industrial manslaughter. This is a new section under section 34. To commit industrial manslaughter, a person must firstly have a health and safety duty and be either the relevant person conducting a business or undertaking [PCBU] or an officer of a person conducting a business or undertaking. Secondly, although everyone

has a responsibility to ensure workplace safety, under this bill an industrial manslaughter offence will cover those whose behaviour or decisions have the power to strongly influence the activities and culture of a workplace. Section 34C (b) states that a person who can commit the offence is limited to a PCBU or an officer of a PCBU. A PCBU can include a corporation, partnership, unincorporated association, a self-employed person or a sole trader.

The bill utilises existing definitions and concepts within the work health and safety legislation. Through proposed new section 34D, the bill makes it clear that the industrial manslaughter offence is not intended to apply to volunteers. The bill inserts a note that volunteers may still be subject to an offence of manslaughter under the Crimes Act. The definition of a worker in the Work Health and Safety Act is broad and includes an employee, a contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a labour hire company that has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking, an outworker, an apprentice or trainee, a student gaining work experience, a volunteer, or a person of a prescribed class.

The offence could also apply to a subcontractor at a construction site or a gig worker such as a food delivery rider—that is, the offence of industrial manslaughter will apply where there has been a death of a person to whom a duty is held. The final element that must be established for manslaughter to have been committed is detailed in new section 34C (d): a person is required to have engaged in the conduct with gross negligence, falling short of the standard of care that a reasonable person would exercise, and it must involve such a risk that death or grievous bodily harm would follow that it merits criminal punishment. The bill details that the offence will carry a maximum penalty of 25 years imprisonment for an individual and a penalty of \$20 million for a body corporate.

Proposed new section 34E provides that proceedings for an industrial manslaughter offence may be commenced at any time after the commission of the offence and will not be subject to a limitation period. That is consistent with criminal manslaughter offences under the Crimes Act 1900 and all other serious criminal offences in every other jurisdiction in Australia. New section 34F clarifies that category 1 offences will be available as a statutory alternative in circumstances where the court or jury is not satisfied that a defendant has committed the offence of industrial manslaughter but is satisfied the person is guilty of meeting the threshold of a category 1 offence instead.

The bill amends section 216 (2) of the Work Health and Safety Act to clarify that a work health and safety undertaking, also known as an enforceable undertaking, cannot be accepted by the regulator for contravention of an alleged industrial manslaughter offence. Under amended section 229B (2) of the Work Health and Safety Act, proceedings commenced against an individual for industrial manslaughter must proceed on indictment and may be heard before the District Court or the Supreme Court. This is consistent with the Criminal Procedure Act 1986, the offence of manslaughter under the Crimes Act and the existing category 1 offence in the Work Health and Safety Act.

Under new section 229B (3A), industrial manslaughter offence and category 1 offence proceedings against a body corporate will be dealt with summarily in the newly re-established Industrial Court, which is appropriate, given that court's specialty and jurisdiction. The prosecutor could elect to have proceedings against a corporation dealt with on indictment. SafeWork NSW and the NSW Resources Regulator, as work health and safety regulatory authorities, will have carriage of summary prosecutions, being those prosecutions against a PCBU only.

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions will have carriage of indictable prosecutions, as is the situation now. The DPP will be resourced to run the prosecutions through the establishment of a specialist unit within the DPP to conduct the prosecution. Both the regulators and the DPP are expected to thoroughly investigate workplace deaths as quickly as possible, with no delay. All existing defences for the offence of manslaughter that apply under the Crimes Act and under common law will be available for industrial manslaughter where applicable.

The bill outlines that the review is to be undertaken 18 months from the commencement of the provisions. A report on the outcome of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within three months after the completion of the review. The difficult issue mentioned earlier is the fault element of gross negligence attributed to a body corporate. Under new section 244BA (2), gross negligence may exist on the part of a body corporate despite no individual of the body corporate having engaged in the conduct with gross negligence, if the conduct of the body corporate is grossly negligent when viewed as a whole, as determined by aggregating the conduct of more than one authorised person. The new section 244BA (3) provides some attributes to determine gross negligence.

The bill will make a minor consequential amendment to the Industrial Relations Amendment Act 2023 to ensure consistency in prosecuting alternative charges. The provisions of the bill related to industrial manslaughter will commence via proclamation. This is to ensure that all procedures and processes can be thoroughly considered and well established prior to the commencement of the offence. I understand that before the introduction of the bill, there was extensive public consultation, and 420 people responded to the Government's survey. Businesses also supported the legislation. I thank the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and

Safety, who is present in the Chamber, and the Attorney General for their work on the bill. Hopefully these new laws will be more of a deterrent and will change the safety culture in New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (14:57): I contribute to debate in support of the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. I commend the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety, who is present in the Chamber, and the department for the proposed amendments in the bill. It will ensure that the most serious health and safety breaches carry a significant penalty, and it sends a clear message that people who place workers' lives at risk will be held to account. These reforms recognise the significant loss suffered by the families of workers who have lost their lives in a workplace incident. For over 25 years as a Federal public servant, I prioritised worker safety in my role as a work health and safety officer. I know firsthand the importance of ensuring that workplaces are safe.

Fortunately, I never had to deal with a death in my workplace. However, this issue has touched friends of mine and I am well aware of the significant and tragic impact that workplace deaths have on families. I will never forget the traumatic experience that my friend endured when she had to tell her children that their dad was never coming home because he fell through a roof at work. I have also spent time with another friend who often speaks of the pain she feels of having lost her apprentice electrician son in a worksite accident more than 20 years ago. Those types of incidents happen far too often in workplaces in New South Wales and, tragically, touch far too many of us.

The industrial manslaughter offence will not be subject to a two-year statute of limitations period. A limitation period refers to the time limit in which legal proceedings must be commenced for an offence. After the limitation period has expired, it may no longer be possible to commence legal proceedings for that offence. The bill provides that there will be no limitation period for an industrial manslaughter offence and that proceedings may be brought at any time after the commission of the offence. That is consistent with criminal manslaughter offences under the Crimes Act 1900 and reflects the seriousness of the offence. Not having a limitation period is essential, given the seriousness and complexity of investigating and commencing proceedings for workplace fatality matters.

Currently, SafeWork NSW has two years from the date that it is made aware of an alleged category 1, 2 or 3 offence to undertake initial inquiries, complete a comprehensive investigation, review the brief of evidence and make an enforcement decision. Investigations can have a varied range, depending on the complexity of the matter, before a brief of evidence is ready for review. Industrial manslaughter investigations are expected to be highly complex. SafeWork NSW investigates all fatal incidents as a matter of priority, and that will not change. A matter may proceed as either an alleged category 1 offence or as an industrial manslaughter offence, depending on the brief of evidence and whether the elements of the offence are met. By providing no limitation period, it will allow all matters to be effectively investigated as required. That is the same for other manslaughter offences in New South Wales.

New section 34E represents a consistent, measured and practicable approach to ensuring that the investigation and prosecution of potential industrial manslaughter offences can proceed appropriately, are consistent with our criminal justice system and are in line with other jurisdictions that have introduced an industrial manslaughter offence. It is also important to note that new section 34F provides for an alternative verdict of a category 1 offence, which gives a court or jury the flexibility to find that a person charged with industrial manslaughter is instead guilty of a category 1 offence. That can occur where the court or jury is not satisfied that a defendant has committed the offence of industrial manslaughter but is satisfied that the person is guilty of a category 1 offence. To remove any doubt, there will be no limitation period applicable when a category 1 offence is relied upon as a statutory alternative charge to industrial manslaughter. That is to ensure that an alternative verdict can be returned in conjunction with an industrial manslaughter ruling, without limiting the time that can be taken to investigate those matters.

It should be noted that the existing limitation periods for category 1 offences will continue to apply when they are not pursued as a statutory alternative charge for industrial manslaughter. That means the regulator has up to two years to go to court after the offence first comes to the regulator's notice. It is important to note that the bill and its proposed industrial manslaughter offence do not impose any duties that are not already owed under current workplace laws. The industrial manslaughter offence only applies to a person conducting a business or undertaking [PCBU] or an officer of a PCBU who holds a duty under the WHS Act. If duty holders under the WHS Act are already complying with their duties under the WHS Act and regulations, then compliance remains unaffected. Instead, it ensures that when duties are breached and results in the death of a person, the penalty reflects the severity of the crime.

I acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of Patrizia Cassaniti, who lost her son in a tragic workplace accident. She is a formidable advocate for safety in the workplace and has been instrumental in giving workers

the courage to speak up. The bill represents an important step forward in improving workplace safety in New South Wales and recognises the significant loss suffered by families of workers who have lost their lives in a workplace incident. I commend the bill to the House.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (15:04): I make a contribution to debate on the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. The Labor Party and the trade union movement have always led the fight on industrial reform and cracking down on unsafe working conditions. In particular, the trade union movement has been the leader on industrial reform—whether that be annual leave, sick leave, maternity leave, domestic violence leave or insurance for workers—and work health and safety reform. None of those reforms would have happened if not for the trade union movement. Bosses and corporations are not putting their hands up to implement those reforms. The trade union movement has always had the interests of workers at heart.

I acknowledge and commend the Minister for Industrial Relations for her remarkable work on the bill, as well as the trade union movement, which has worked closely with the Government to make sure the bill is fit for purpose and will deliver the changes to industrial relations and work health and safety that are needed. Every worker deserves to go home to their loved ones at the end of the day. The reform is about the families of working Australians who worry about whether their loved ones will come home at the end of the day. It is about the unsafe pressure that employers place on working people who are trying to make enough money to pay rent for the week. The bill is about the people whose workmates did not return to the worksite. It is about the trade unions that have fought for years to keep everyday working people safe at work.

I make it very clear that the Liberals and Nationals did practically nothing to address the issue over 12 years in government. Industrial manslaughter must be criminalised for good. Deaths on the job are preventable. Employers must be held accountable when workers die. Too many businesses are going unpunished, and we need to make sure that this legislation is here to stay. The bill will literally change lives, because employers will be forced to instate safe work practices over profits. No government should ever want to have to use these laws. Any workplace death is a tragedy. When a person with a work health and safety duty has been careless or irresponsible, they must be held accountable.

The offence of industrial manslaughter will apply to the worst of the worst cases, where gross negligence has caused the death of a person in a workplace. The maximum penalty under the legislation will be 25 years in jail for an individual or \$20 million for a body corporate. The significant maximum penalties that will apply for the offence make it clear how important it is to take a proactive approach to meeting work health and safety obligations to provide a safe workplace. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (15:08): I am proud to speak in support of the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. The primary objective of the bill is to introduce an industrial manslaughter offence into the State's work health and safety framework. I echo the statement the Minister made in her second reading speech that every workplace death is a preventable death. Each and every person should expect that when they travel to work they will come home at the end of their shift. Unfortunately, those avoidable tragedies are far too common, because there have been 300 fatal workplace incidents over the past five years. That is 300 families who will never see their loved ones and 300 lives lost way too soon. The ripple effect of that is felt by many others. Establishing an industrial manslaughter offence is long overdue, and I recognise that this bill follows over 20 years of campaigning by families, friends and unions. I pay tribute to them.

I pay particular tribute to the family of Christopher Cassaniti, who was killed at work in Macquarie Park after a 15-metre scaffolding tower collapsed on him. In the face of such grief and anguish, Christopher's mother, Patrizia, founded the Touched By Christopher Foundation to campaign for this very offence to be introduced in our State. In many ways this is Christopher's law. I share Patrizia's goal of bringing safety to the forefront for every worker while striving for zero deaths in the workplace. I also pay tribute to Unions NSW and my former colleagues and comrades at the CFMEU, especially legal officer Sherri Hayward, who has been working with the families impacted by death in the workplace for many years. The unions have been waiting for the introduction of this offence for quite some. The bill is a legacy of their tireless campaigning. The Minns Labor Government has long been committed to legislating for an industrial manslaughter offence. That was the case when we were in opposition. The bill will align New South Wales with every other jurisdiction on the Australian mainland that already has an industrial manslaughter offence on the books.

Under the existing provisions, workplace deaths are sometimes prosecuted as a common-law manslaughter offence under the Crimes Act 1900. However, this is extremely rare and has been insufficient in dealing with workplace deaths. It makes the prosecution of large corporations especially difficult. That is because the law as it is currently written requires criminal negligence on the part of an individual who can be identified as the directing mind and will of the company—an exceptionally difficult assertion to prove. The bill creates an industrial manslaughter offence in new part 2A of the Work Health and Safety Act. New section 34C establishes that the

offence applies to a person if they have a health and safety duty and are a person conducting a business or undertaking [PCBU] or are an officer of a PCBU. The offence will apply where that person engages in conduct that constitutes a failure to comply with their work health and safety duty and causes the death of a worker.

The definition of "worker" in the Act is broad and includes an employee, a contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a labour hire company that has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking, an outworker, an apprentice or trainee, a student gaining work experience, a volunteer, or a person of a prescribed class. That encapsulates the changing and diverse nature of employment within our fast-changing workplaces in the State. The offence could therefore apply across a wide range of circumstances where a death of a person to whom a duty is held occurs. New section 34D of the bill makes it clear that the offence will not apply to volunteers. That is consistent with other jurisdictions. I note that volunteers may still be subject to a manslaughter offence under the Crimes Act.

New section 34F of the Act will clarify that a category 1 offence will be available as a statutory alternative in circumstances where the court or jury is not satisfied that a defendant has committed industrial manslaughter but is satisfied the person is guilty of meeting the threshold of a category 1 offence. That alternative will empower judges and juries to convict with the most appropriate offence in all circumstances and provides flexibility in the prosecution of serious work health and safety breaches. For both the industrial manslaughter and category 1 offence, there is no applicable limitation period. That ensures that the time for investigation into those serious matters is not limited. Under the bill, proceedings for an industrial manslaughter and category 1 offence will be dealt with on indictment. For a body corporate, these proceedings will be dealt with summarily unless a prosecutor elects otherwise. Thus, proceedings against an individual will be brought before the District Court or Supreme Court, whereas proceedings against body corporates will be brought before the Industrial Court in most cases.

The maximum penalty for the industrial manslaughter offence will be a fine of \$20 million for a body corporate and 25 years imprisonment for an individual. It sends a strong message to those doing the wrong thing. That is in line with community expectations for serious breaches of work health and safety duties. The Government is committed to ensuring that the laws remain fit for purpose and consistently meet their policy objectives. That is why the bill will insert a statutory requirement for the provisions to be reviewed 18 months after their commencement. A report into the outcome of that review must be tabled within three months after the completion of that review. Industrial manslaughter is a serious offence, and we should strive to ensure that the laws continue to be effective. The bill is a welcome step to ensure that every family in our State can be confident that when their partner, parent, child or other loved one goes to work every day, they will be back at home at the conclusion of their shift.

The reality up until this point is that so many people have been needlessly killed as a result of negligence on the part of companies or individuals who have an explicit obligation to ensure work health and safety. The bill ensures accountability for such negligence. It also ensures a deterrent impact, encouraging companies to raise the standard and embed a culture of workplace safety with the highest stringency. We cannot stand idly by and allow a culture of cutting corners to fester. The community expects better than that. Members should expect better than that. We should expect that the lives of our community members in this State stand above profits. That is what this Government believes. I commend the fantastic Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety, who is in the House, for her close attention to this matter, and I commend the work of her staff and her department. She is a fantastic advocate for the workers of this State, and we are lucky and proud to have her. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (15:16): International Workers' Memorial Day is observed on 28 April each year. The rallying cry of that day is "remember the dead, but fight for the living", and it is a rallying cry that the Australian labour movement takes seriously. The Australian Labor Party is the child of the Australian labour movement, which understands that its purpose is to make laws that make work safer and fairer for all working people in this nation. In doing so, it sets an example worldwide as to how a fair workplace and working life is to be produced in a society. The Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024 delivers on a Labor Party policy and election promise to make industrial manslaughter an offence which is properly punished by force of the law.

The object of the bill is to amend the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to create an offence of industrial manslaughter and to provide for matters relating to gross negligence. In the creation of the offence of industrial manslaughter, a person commits that offence if that person has a health and safety duty, is a person or an officer of a person conducting a business or undertaking, engages in certain conduct that causes the death of a worker or another individual to whom the person's health and safety duty is owed, and engages in conduct with gross negligence. It is an appropriate legal remedy to ensure that when people go to work or when they conduct business in this State, they understand that they have a particular obligation to ensure that workplace is as safe as possible.

On the Central Coast at Ourimbah, each year we conduct a service to recognise Workers' Memorial Day, and have been doing so since 2006. The workers memorial wall at Ourimbah contains the names of 26 Central Coast people who lost their lives at work. I appreciate the comments of my colleague the member for Gosford about that service, which my staff and I put effort into conducting each year. It is an important service, allowing people who have lost family members at work to gather and remember them in an appropriate and dignified manner, but also to send a message to the community that we need to redouble our efforts to ensure that workplaces and working life are made safer. The bill is part of that process, and I am proud to be part of a Labor government that is delivering it. I commend Minister Cotsis for her long attention to this matter within the labour movement and for being the vehicle that delivers the aspirations of that movement in the Minns Labor Government. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (15:20): As members have heard, the purpose of the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024 is to introduce an industrial manslaughter offence into the New South Wales work health and safety framework. The Labor Party is committed to ensuring that every worker who goes to work in this State comes home safely at the end of the day. The bill aims to hold businesses and their senior officers accountable for workplace deaths due to gross negligence or reckless conduct. Despite 20 years of campaigning by families, friends, campaigners, unions whose members have been killed at work and the wonderful Minister for Industrial Relations, New South Wales is the last mainland State without an industrial manslaughter offence. That fact alone points to how terrible the past 12 years of government were under those opposite. We used to call ourselves the "Premier State". We were premier in many ways, including leading the nation in important reforms for the labour movement. While it is fantastic to see the bill in the House, it is an indictment on those opposite that New South Wales is the last mainland State to pass such legislation.

Since 2019 New South Wales has witnessed the tragic deaths of 300 workers in workplace incidents. Each statistic represents a person with a family, friends and dreams that were cut short due to workplace negligence and inadequate safety measures. In 2021 the Labor Opposition introduced a bill to create an offence of industrial manslaughter. That bill had the support of our friends in the other place. It passed the Legislative Council, but regrettably it lapsed in the Legislative Assembly. Since that lapse, 125 more workers have, sadly, lost their lives in workplace incidents. That potentially could have been prevented, had we had stronger legislation and more stringent enforcement in place. To put that in perspective, in 2022 alone New South Wales recorded 51 workplace deaths, making it the State with the highest number of workplace fatalities in Australia. The frequency of those tragedies works out to be about one a week, and as a result they demand our immediate attention and action. I turn again to the fact that New South Wales is the last mainland State to have such laws, and it is not a coincidence that we also have that tragic record of the most workplace deaths.

The bill incorporates learnings from other jurisdictions. Queensland, the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and Western Australia have already implemented such laws. We have had time to see what works and what could be improved, and that has been incorporated into the bill. Of all those laws, none has a statute of limitations. That is an important element. Some peak bodies and employer groups have pushed back on the legislation, including on the issue of a statute of limitations. It is important that this offence is available forever. With some tragic incidents, such as a building, scaffolding or bridge collapse, the facts are not known for many years. That is why it is important that there is no statute of limitations for the new offence. Additionally, the bill aligns with the recommendations from the Boland review of model work health and safety laws, which highlighted the need for stronger deterrents to prevent workplace deaths.

The bill has several key elements. Firstly, it makes it a crime for business operators and officers to fail grossly in their health and safety duties, causing death. That offence can include fines of up to \$20 million or 25 years imprisonment, with no time limit for prosecution, as I mentioned. The offence applies to a person conducting a business or undertaking or an officer of a person conducting a business or undertaking. That ensures that those with the power to influence workplace safety are held accountable. There has been much talk in the media and the other place this week about my role as a director. In my time as a director, I have taken work health and safety extremely seriously, and it is incumbent on anyone who holds a similar position in any organisation to do the same.

The bill clarifies that volunteers will not be liable under the industrial manslaughter offence, which is an important carve out. However, they may still be subject to manslaughter charges under the Crimes Act 1900. A specialised unit within the DPP will handle the cases. Proceedings for an industrial manslaughter offence may be commenced at any time after the commission of the offence and will not be subject to a limitation period. That is all very technical and legalistic, but what matters is the bill will change people's lives. I reflected on that at the beginning of my speech, when I referenced the number of people who have lost their lives due to workplace accidents and the fact that families and friends will never see their loved ones come home from their job again. I now reflect on a couple of real-life examples to show how important it is that we pass the legislation.

A number of my colleagues have spoken about the incident in April 2019 involving Christopher Cassaniti, who was 18 years old when, on a construction site in Macquarie Park, there was a collapse of nine floors of scaffolding. The company was found to be grossly negligent in overloading the scaffolding and ignoring safety warnings. However, the penalty was only \$2 million, which is effectively a slap on the wrist and which Christopher's family has had to live with since that tragic incident. Another incident occurred in May 2021 in Hurstville, where a 23-year-old scaffolding labourer fell to his death. The incident also caused injuries to two pedestrians and another worker. Both cases reflect a pattern of disregard for safety that must be addressed with strong legal repercussions. That is no reflection on the particulars of those incidents, but in my neck of the woods, where there is a lot of building and construction, some building practices are effectively seeing cutting corners and fines as a cost of doing business. We cannot develop that kind of culture in this State for something so final and serious as workplace deaths.

In conclusion, the Labor Government is committed to addressing this issue head-on by introducing the legislation. The proposed legislation is in no way about targeting businesses unfairly. It is about ensuring that those in positions of power take their responsibilities seriously. It aims to create a safer working environment by fostering a culture of safety, accountability and justice for the victims of workplace fatalities. The penalties will serve as a serious and crucial deterrent against unsafe work practices and ensure that businesses prioritise safety and prevent the devastating consequences of negligence.

Some members who contributed to this debate said that they hope we never have to use these laws, and I echo that. We do not want to use these laws, but we hope that they will act as a serious deterrent and that the scourge that is workplace deaths caused by gross negligence is never seen again in this State. By holding employers accountable and imposing severe penalties, we will save lives and foster a culture of safety. The memories of those we have lost will be honoured when we ensure that their deaths will lead to meaningful change, make our workplaces safer and prevent future tragedies from occurring.

I echo the words of other members in commending the amazing work of the Minister for pushing the bill through. The amount of work and the time that the Minister has spent working on this and other industrial relations reforms is an inspiration to every single one of us newbie members from the class of 2023. The fact that the Minister has fought as hard and as long as she has is a testament to her strength. As I said, the Minister is an inspiration to us all. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (15:30): In reply: No bill is more important than the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024. This is what it means to have a Labor government. As members have heard, the Government is strongly committed to ensuring that workers in New South Wales are safe at work and come home safely each day. That should be the primary goal of any government's work health and safety regime. The Work Health and Safety Act 2011 is designed to create a strong framework for protecting workers from harm by managing risks to health and safety in New South Wales. However, this has not been enough to prevent ongoing incidents of serious injuries and workplace deaths, with over 300 people killed at work since 2019.

Despite years of campaigning by families, unions and employers of those killed at work, New South Wales is still the last mainland State without an industrial manslaughter offence. The families in New South Wales who have lost loved ones at work have been given a life sentence, and this must be addressed. Today it is being addressed. I do not take anybody's support for granted. Later I will acknowledge all the members we have spoken to and the really important contributions that have been made today. Obviously, we still have a way to go before the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Industrial Manslaughter) Bill 2024 passes this House today and in the other place. I will continue to be strong and diligent on this until we have seen the last vote at every point in this debate.

It is vital that these reforms take effect in New South Wales workplaces as soon as possible to ensure that a change in approach takes place across industry to embed a higher standard of workplace safety culture. The severe penalties included in this bill will send a clear message to individuals and organisations that those who put a worker's life at risk will be held accountable in the event of a workplace death. I foreshadow that the Government will move two technical amendments to the bill, which I will address later. So that the amendments do not cause controversy, we have spoken to the Opposition and the crossbench about them. I note the Legislation Review Committee's comments on the bill. The committee's report considered whether the new offence in the bill trespassed unduly on personal rights and liberties of those charged with the offence. As I have said repeatedly when talking about this bill, I hope that it is an offence that we never have to use.

As I said in my second reading speech, and as members noted in their contributions to the debate, every death at work is devastating. It means that a family, colleagues and friends have lost somebody very dear to them. One workplace death is one death too many. Three hundred workers have been killed at workplaces since 2019. Therefore, I welcome the committee's recognition that "the increase in custodial penalty is intended to deter and

prevent workplace deaths and injuries." I also note the committee accepts that "the proposed commencement by proclamation is intended to allow consultation to take place among relevant agencies, and for processes to be thoroughly considered and established before the offence provisions commence."

I thank the committee for its consideration of the bill. I now comment on issues raised during the debate. The bill proposes a maximum imprisonment of 25 years for an individual, which is consistent with the offence of manslaughter in the New South Wales Crimes Act 1900. The proposed maximum penalties reflect the seriousness of the offence and are designed to help to prevent workplace deaths by creating a strong deterrent for organisations and individual officers against breaching their work health and safety duties. I acknowledge that the Opposition will move an amendment regarding the proposed statute of limitations. I also acknowledge that the Opposition is being diligent. I have a lot of respect for the back and forth and the robustness between me and the Opposition.

I put on the *Hansard* record that the Government will not support any move to impose a statute of limitations on the offence that brings the industrial manslaughter offence out of line with the manslaughter offence in the Crimes Act. In the Government's view, the death of a worker should not be treated differently to a death that occurs outside of a workplace. With all due respect to those who are moving this amendment, and to my friends in business, industry and the farming community for whom I have immense respect, this bill is not targeting businesses, as my colleague the member for Leppington said. The Government absolutely supports economic investment and the work done by our industries and businesses. But let us stop and think about this. Three hundred workers have been killed since 2019.

I sought some information from my agency, and I will give members opposite a fact because I keep being told about this or that scenario and this or that case study, and asked what if this and what if that. At the moment, there are category 1, category 2 and category 3 offences in the Work Health and Safety Act. Under category 1, the number of charges commenced in 2016-17 was zero; in 2017-18, zero; in 2018-19, zero; in 2019-20, zero; in 2020-21, two; in 2021-22, four; and in 2022-23, a total of 14. Successful category 1 charges in 2016-17 were zero; in 2017-18, zero; in 2018-19, zero; in 2019-20, zero; in 2020-21, zero; in 2021-22, zero; and in 2022-23, one successful charge.

Of the 20 SafeWork NSW prosecutions for category 1 offences listed in the table, none of those offences occurred on farms. I have exceptional respect for my colleagues in industry and our farmers. My family and I have farming in our blood from where my parents come from overseas. I understand the hardships—very much so. We have looked at the serious injuries and the statistics. In 2019 not only young Christopher Cassaniti but also young Joel White and a number of other young people were killed at work. It was absolutely disgraceful. Many of their cases have gone to the District Court, and my colleagues the member for Prospect and the member for Blacktown raised a number of them. We must be mindful. I listen to facts and case studies, not what-ifs. I am a realist in all of this. I have just provided a breakdown of the category 1 prosecutions since 2016, and they are the facts. It is important to remember there is no time limitation when a family member dies at work. It is a life sentence.

I acknowledge my friend and colleague the member for Murray, who, as a relentless, diligent member of Parliament, advocates strongly for her constituents and for the regions. The member for Murray, the Minister for Agriculture and I held a roundtable meeting in Griffith a couple of months ago, and it was incredible. There were about 50 people there: representatives from various organisations, including SafeWork, as well as mum-and-dad farmers, small operators, big pastoralists and citrus farmers. Everyone around that table was there from nine o'clock till three o'clock. No-one left. Everyone was around the table, because in our regions and in the bush there is strong commitment to keeping our farming families and our workers safe. Sitting alongside all of those representatives, whether they were in dairy, citrus or livestock, was incredible.

I thank the member for Murray for organising that meeting. It was excellent. To the member for Murray and to the representatives who attended, I commit that in the next couple of days I will respond to the issues raised and the actions we will bring forward, because I am not someone to have a roundtable meeting and thrash things out and then say, "See you later, alligator." I want to make sure we see those actions through. We will have robust discussions. We live in this great State of New South Wales, and we want to make sure that we do all the right things. But I commit to the member for Murray that we will have a serious response to those actions.

We will consider some of the matters raised by the member for Murray during the consideration in detail stage. The member suggested that charges against an individual would not be tried before a jury. But I assure the member that the bill does provide for a jury trial for an individual and that all defences to manslaughter under the Crimes Act are still available where the charge is industrial manslaughter. As I said, I will address the member's concerns further when her amendments are discussed.

The proposed industrial manslaughter offence is not about placing additional burdens on our hardworking farmers. I reassure our farming community that this bill does not do that in any way. I have heard the member for Murray and others who represent farming communities. I have also heard the member for Blacktown, who used

to represent agricultural workers. Those workers do work very hard. Of course, it is different from working in manufacturing. One size does not fit all. When the Work Health and Safety Act was introduced in 2011 by the former Government, it was framed to encompass every industry. There has been a lot of consultation on this bill with all sectors. I understand their concerns, but I reiterate that any one of the workers killed since 2019 is one too many. This offence and, indeed, the whole workplace health and safety framework is about ensuring that workers are as safe at work as is reasonably practical, which is what the community expects.

The Government will do whatever it can to help farmers attend to their work health and safety obligations. Currently, we have the Farm Safety Advisory Program, which SafeWork and NSW Farmers deliver together, and, as I mentioned, our successful farm safety roundtable meetings. I will report back to the member for Murray's constituents. I am happy to visit the constituents of any member, whether they are Independent, crossbench or Opposition. I will be there. I am happy to come to their communities, hold roundtable meetings, have our officials there and work together, like we did with the farm safety round table. Everybody stayed for that because we wanted to make sure not only that our industries are thriving, surviving, growing and employing more people but also that those people are safe.

I will address a number of other issues during the consideration in detail stage. The member for Blacktown asked about the victim impact statements. The bill does not affect how those statements are received by the court. The court will continue to be required to receive and consider victim impact statements in sentencing proceedings where they are tendered. Victim impact statements are frequently tendered and considered by the court in workplace health and safety prosecutions now, and that will continue with industrial manslaughter offences.

I thank members for their valuable contributions. I appreciate not only the time they have taken to consider the bill but also their effort and deep work. I acknowledge the shadow Minister, the member for Willoughby, who is a tough opponent. We have had robust discussions. He has been present in the Chamber during debate on the bill and will continue to make sure that the Government and I are held accountable and follow through on our commitments. I acknowledge his diligent work with the stakeholders and in asking a number of questions and holding a number of meetings. I acknowledge the Opposition's effort.

I acknowledge the member for Heathcote for her strong advocacy on behalf of workers and for her contribution to the bill as a strong deterrent to incentivise safer workplaces in New South Wales. She is a strong advocate for working people and throughout her career and, indeed, as the new member for Heathcote has been at the forefront of some important work, particularly in assisting women from non-English-speaking backgrounds with their workplace safety concerns. I acknowledge The Greens for their support for the bill and for their long-time advocacy, particularly the strong advocacy of the member for Newtown. I also acknowledge Ms Abigail Boyd in the upper House.

Over the past 12 years many of my colleagues have held the Work Health and Safety portfolio. The member for Cessnock has contributed to this area over the years, and I acknowledge his efforts and diligence. I thank the member for Granville for her contribution and for her acknowledgment that the laws will profoundly alter the culture of safety in our workplaces. The member for Drummoyne, who is a new member, certainly put her heart and soul into her contribution. I acknowledge her efforts and her work. She knows the Cassaniti family and talked about the impact of Christopher's death on not only the people of Concord but also the wider community. She spoke of how her community rallied together to support the Cassaniti family and all the other families who have been devastated by workplace deaths.

The member for Murray has been a number one contributor on this issue. I acknowledge the passion with which she represents her community and thank her for the incredible work she has done. We will continue to have robust discussions and debate. The member for Shellharbour talked about how the bill will save lives. It is a critical deterrent. But I acknowledge that for representatives of regional communities distance is a challenge and sometimes makes it hard to raise critical awareness. We are trying to do that today by saying enough is enough. We do not want anyone to go to jail, but we want to make sure the bill is not only a deterrent but also recognises safety as the number one priority.

I thank the member for Sydney for strongly supporting the bill and acknowledge his contribution to debate. He noted that despite the number of workplace deaths, not one of the employers involved has gone to jail. He said the bill will ensure that employers are held responsible for egregious breaches of their duty. The member for Prospect highlighted a number of cases and spoke about gross criminal negligence being the appropriate standard for the offence. I thank him for his work. The member for Blacktown outlined his experiences dealing with families and as assistant secretary of the Australian Workers' Union. He acknowledged the leadership of the union and spoke about sitting down with a family who had just lost a loved one—the breadwinner killed at work. Many moons ago, when I was a union official in the hospitality sector and worked at Sydney airport, I spoke with grieving families, and I know there is no manual to help with that.

Talking to families who have lost loved ones—particularly the main breadwinner—is tough and devastating. We have cited the statistics about falls from heights, which continue to occur. They have to stop. I urge employers, industry, unions—everyone—to work together to prevent those falls. I get notifications of them every day. It is mainly blokes who fall from heights and—I am saying it—they are usually the breadwinners. Some blokes who break their backs have a working life of 20 more years. Their kids are at private or independent schools. Who will pay the school fees? Who will pay the mortgage? Who will pay the rent? Who will pay the insurances? Their life changes completely. We have to draw a line in the sand. I am sick and tired of receiving those notifications day in, day out—sometimes it is three or four a day. It has to stop.

Everyone must get the message. It is not about big, bad government, big, bad SafeWork or big, bad unions. There is only so much that health and safety representatives or delegates can do. There are great employers out there. We are running a campaign at the moment with the retail industry in the big end of town and the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association to stop customers abusing, bashing, spitting on and otherwise intimidating staff. The employers and the union are working together to say enough is enough. We are sick and tired of the abuse; things have to change.

As for safety at work, I keep hearing, "It is a cultural thing; we have to change the culture." No, it is 2024. It has to stop. My message is clear: We need change now. With every notification and every statistic, it is the same thing again and again. We have to take this issue seriously. It is not a Labor thing, a union thing or an ideological thing. Workers who live and work in north-west Sydney and who vote for the Coalition are falling from heights. They are getting seriously injured, which is affecting their families. It has to stop. The member for Newcastle spoke about critical issues in the Hunter. I attended a round table with him and had a robust discussion with Hunter Workers union secretary Leigh Shears and other union representatives. They did not hold back in sharing their views on a whole range of issues. I acknowledge their work, their fight and particularly their strong advocacy to protect workers and to ensure that governments make changes over time.

The member for Maitland spoke about the importance of the bill to the people of the Hunter and how it delivers justice to those who have lost a loved one. I agree with her 100 per cent, but we cannot bring back those loved ones—we all know that. The member for Maitland is a strong advocate for her community, and I know that during her time as a business owner she really supported her workers. The member for Mount Druitt is a great Western Sydney member. He outlined some technical elements of the bill and how it will reinforce the importance of a person conducting a business or undertaking [PCBU] and their officers complying with their work health and safety obligations. The member for Gosford also made a great contribution. She spoke of how the bill is the culmination of a long campaign by families and talked about how she, as a champion Paralympian representing Australia, met fellow Paralympians—fellow athletes—who had been seriously injured at work. I urge people to read her excellent contribution.

The member for Cabramatta represents a very large multicultural community and has had a lot to do with workers from those communities in particular. He said that a deeper dive into the statistics reveals that, unfortunately, many people from multicultural communities have been seriously injured or killed at work. That is the reality, and I am happy to provide those statistics to anyone who asks for them. We need to do more to help people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and the member for Cabramatta has raised that with me on many occasions. We will do more work to help those members of the community.

My mum is from a non-English-speaking background. She worked as an outworker and a school cleaner, worked in kitchens and was a jack of all trades. She was an unskilled worker without an education. In a technical sense—and this is no disrespect to her or her amazing intelligence—she was illiterate, because she left school when she was 10 or 11 years old and did not finish school. The reality is that workers like my mum and a lot of her cohort were injured at work because they were not made aware. Things were not put to a lot of workers from non-English-speaking backgrounds back in the day, 20 or 30 years ago, but we have become a better State. Some great members who were in government over the past 20 or 30 years, including members opposite, did make efforts to translate information for members of the community from non-English-speaking backgrounds. I feel passionate about that, because the statistics show that a lot of people who have died from dust diseases and workplace causes—

Ms Anna Watson: Asbestos.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: —and people who have been diagnosed with mesothelioma and silicosis are from non-English-speaking backgrounds. Back in the day I lost a couple of uncles; a lot of members have experienced that. But with parents from a non-English-speaking background, I saw it with my own two eyes. That disadvantage was a disgrace, whether it was because of the governments of 40 or 50 years ago, before we became a lot better and more sophisticated, or the employers who did the wrong thing by not providing information in different languages. Under the Whitlam Government, the Wran Government and the Greiner Government, progressively,

we got better at providing information to people who do not speak English. We are a much better State for it, but we still have a way to go.

The member for East Hills talked about the importance of the offence not having a statute of limitations and about her experience as a work health and safety delegate at her workplace. I thank her for her contribution. The member for Coogee spoke about the importance of the bill to working Australians and those who have lost colleagues at work. I thank her for her contribution. The member for Liverpool spoke about the importance of the bill to her community in south-west Sydney and noted that it fulfils an election commitment of this Government. The member for The Entrance said that the bill will create fairer and safer workplaces, and I acknowledge the work he does on the International Day of Mourning in Ourimbah. The member for Leppington said it really well: We are not attacking or unfairly targeting anyone. It is about ensuring that we all have a safe workplace.

The bill will strengthen this Parliament's efforts to reduce workplace fatalities and injuries, and embed healthy and safe practices in New South Wales workplaces. It is the culmination of years of campaigning by the families of those who have lost loved ones, as well as unions, workers and small businesses. Small business operators have said to me, "Our workers are our family. We don't want to lose our family." That is the message that I am getting from small businesses.

I pay special tribute to the Family and Injured Workers Support and Advisory Group for its considered engagement with the process leading to the creation of the bill. My second reading speech acknowledged all the stakeholders that we have met and the round tables that we have held. I have acknowledged all the unions and businesses, and I will not repeat that, but I pay tribute to the many families in this State who are watching or have read the *Hansard*. Some family members said to me, "I can't watch; I can't read; I can't listen. I just can't do it." I absolutely respect that.

I pay tribute to the Cassaniti family, who have been campaigning for years for this offence to be put on our statute books. Colleagues have been campaigning for this for 20 years. Labor brought a bill to the House a few years ago but it did not get through. This bill would not be possible without the effort and attention of all the people who participated in the extensive public consultation process. As I mentioned, that included 400 responses from members of the public and groups representing all areas of the workforce, including work health and safety professionals, unions, businesses, law firms, legal associations, and the farming and mining sectors. I also give special thanks to the Attorney General, his wonderful staff and his department. I thank my incredible staff, who have been working very diligently, day and night. I thank the department and Chris White, as well as Tom Craven from my office.

As a final point in this reply, I put on the record that the bill is not ideological. It is about the moral, ethical and right thing to do. The bar is high, and the bill is about doing the right thing. We need to make sure that people are safe at work. There are many challenges in the workplace, and I am happy to talk about those another time. But we need to work together. It is not ideological; it is not about my side or the other side. It is about doing the right thing to make sure that when people say goodbye to their families, leave home, take their kids to school or preschool, kiss them goodbye and go to work, they come home safely. That is what the bill is about. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Ms Sophie Cotsis, Mr Kevin Anderson and Mrs Helen Dalton.

Consideration in Detail

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): By leave: I will deal with the bill in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (16:08): By leave: I move Government amendments Nos 1 to 3 on sheet c2024-089C in globo:

No. 1 **Health and safety duty**

Page 3, Schedule 1[2], proposed section 34B, line 10. Omit "**Definition**". Insert instead "**Definitions**".

No. 2 **Health and safety duty**

Page 3, Schedule 1[2], proposed section 34B. Insert after line 14—

health and safety duty has the same meaning as in Part 2, Division 5.

No. 3 **Officers of persons conducting a business or undertaking**

Page 3, Schedule 1[2], proposed section 34C(c), lines 21–25. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

(c) the person engages in conduct that—

(i) for a person conducting a business or undertaking—

(A) constitutes a failure to comply with the person's health and safety duty, and

(B) causes the death of a worker or another individual to whom the person's health and safety duty is owed, or

(ii) for an officer of a person conducting a business or undertaking—

(A) constitutes a failure to comply with the officer's health and safety duty, and

(B) causes the death of a worker or another individual to whom the person conducting a business or undertaking owes a health and safety duty, and Amendments Nos 1 and 2 amend schedule 1 to the bill to make clear, for the abundance of caution, that the meaning of "health and safety duty" in new part 2A of the Act is the same as it is in the existing part 2, division 5 of the Act. They are technical amendments to put the construction of "health and safety duty" in the new offence beyond doubt. With respect to amendment No. 3, again for the abundance of caution, the Government is moving to amend new section 34C in schedule 1 [2] of the bill to ensure the consistency of the new offence with the existing provisions within the Work Health and Safety Act, particularly existing section 31 of the Act, or category 1 offence.

This amendment clarifies how the offence applies to the officers of a person conducting a business or undertaking [PCBU]. It clarifies that an officer of a PCBU commits an offence if they engage in conduct that causes the death of an individual to whom the PCBU owes a health and safety duty. This technical amendment removes any ambiguity over who an officer's duty is owed to. These technical amendments are minor in nature but are critical as they ensure consistency within the Work Health and Safety Act and remove any ambiguity. We have consulted with legal advisers, the Opposition and the crossbench.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that Government amendments Nos 1 to 3 on sheet c2024-089C be agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (16:11): I move Opposition amendment No. 1 on sheet c2024-098B:

No. 1 **Exception where worker or individual engaged in non-work activities**

Page 3, Schedule 1[2]. Insert after line 33—

34DA Exception where worker or individual engaged in non-work activities

A person is taken not to owe a health and safety duty to a worker or other individual for the purposes of section 34C when the worker or individual is engaged in domestic, personal or recreational activities.

I acknowledge the immense pain and trauma that grips everybody following a death in the workplace. Each death leaves a long-lasting scar in the minds of the families, friends and colleagues. Regional Australia is a hub for industry, whether that be farming, forestry, manufacturing, mining or many others. The drawback of these industries is that they are dangerous, they carry risk and, while we must put every effort into making them as safe as possible, there is always a chance that something may go wrong. My thoughts are with Rob and Patrizia Cassaniti and their family following the death of their son Christopher in April 2019. I was the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation at that time. I sat with Rob and Patrizia in their home for several hours listening to them tell stories about their beautiful boy.

The focus of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 is on prevention. The goal of all of us must be to drive a preventative, risk-based approach to work safety in New South Wales, one that will save lives. I am proud that over the past decade of the Coalition Government, including my time as Minister, we achieved a significant reduction in workplace fatalities, serious injuries and illnesses. Those reductions exceeded the target set by the national *Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022*. While the Coalition is broadly supportive of these laws as far as creating more accountability for ensuring safety on worksites, it has concerns about how these laws will apply to family farms across our State. That is why I am moving this amendment.

Every death at work is tragic but we need to ensure that, as a Parliament, we are focused on prevention and improving the safety of workplaces. Accountability is a key element of that, but we need to ensure that the laws are workable and targeted at the tangible lowering of risk in our workplaces. We need to acknowledge a unique situation of industries, such as agriculture, and give those business owners the confidence that those who do the right thing will be protected under the law. Sheet c2024-098B deals with the amendment providing an exception that will give clarity and peace of mind to our agricultural sector and farming families surrounding activities

undertaken on a site that are domestic, personal or recreational and not done for the purposes of the business activity.

There are many industries where workers will travel and stay on site as part of their job but will have times of work and times of rest and recreation. A key example of that is agriculture, where a large number of workers may stay on during busy times, such as harvest or shearing. It is fair that a property owner may be responsible for what they do during the day, but if during the down period a worker staying on the property chooses a recreation after hours but while on the property, such as a motorbike ride, swimming or undertaking activities that carry risk, the property owner should not bear the same responsibilities for those decisions. I commend the amendment to the House.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (16:15): I acknowledge the former Minister who was responsible for work health and safety and thank him for his contribution. I also acknowledge that under his ministry he did some positive things in this area. I put that on *Hansard*. He was the Minister at the time when that terrible tragedy happened to Christopher. I know the family holds the member for Tamworth in very high regard for his compassion, for sitting with the family and for everything that he was able to do to assist not only that family but also other families as well. I want the member to know the important role that he played. This is very serious. As I said earlier, this is not ideology. He is a very compassionate man. I put that on the record and acknowledge his work.

The Government does not support the Opposition amendment. I say to the many stakeholders listening to the debate that the member for Tamworth is a very strong member. He is very diligent. He is very tough. He is relentless and he has not stopped. We have made it very clear that the proposed offence does not place any new obligations on persons under the work health and safety legislation, including farms. The framework is there. Nothing in the framework is being amended. We are adding the offence of industrial manslaughter. The elements of the proposed industrial manslaughter offence have been designed to fit within the existing work health and safety framework, which is already well understood by persons conducting a business or undertaking [PCBU], including farmers.

All duty holders will continue to maintain those duties following the introduction of the industrial manslaughter offence. All PCBUs, workers and volunteers' duties remain the same. In fact, currently, a category 1 offence, which has a maximum of five years prison time, already applies in circumstances on a farm if the PCBU or an officer of a PCBU has recklessly or grossly negligently exposed a worker to the risk of death. To date, and as I mentioned earlier in my reply, there have been no category 1 prosecutions for conduct occurring on a farm in New South Wales. The bill proposes a new offence for only the most serious of breaches under the Work Health and Safety Act that result in the death of workers or others. For a person to commit industrial manslaughter, all elements must be met.

The person must have a health and safety duty and be a PCBU or an officer of a PCBU. Their conduct must cause death. The conduct must be grossly negligent. Gross negligence is regarded as falling greatly short of the standard of care required by a reasonable person. Gross negligence is the appropriate legal benchmark for an industrial manslaughter offence. As mentioned, it is also a fault element for a category 1 offence, the most serious offence under current work health and safety laws. This is in line with the treatment of manslaughter under the criminal law.

Section 19 of the Work Health and Safety Act makes it clear that the primary duty held by a PCBU or by an officer of a PCBU to a worker only applies in circumstances when a worker is working in the business or undertaking. The duty is to ensure the worker's health and safety only so far as is reasonably practicable. The bill will not extend that duty. The duty owed to other persons who might be put at risk from the conduct of the business or undertaking on a farm or at residential or recreational facilities, for example, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The steps required to discharge that duty will depend on the individual circumstances at the site, including what safety measures would be reasonably practicable. If the activity undertaken is within the scope of the duty holder's health and safety duties, the proposed industrial manslaughter provisions might be applicable. However, for the industrial manslaughter offence to apply, any breach of the health and safety duty would need to have been grossly negligent.

The duty held by a PCBU with respect to a farm worker who resides in onsite accommodation owned by or under the management or control of the PCBU is outlined in section 19 (4) of the Act. The PCBU must, so far as is reasonably practicable, maintain the premises so that the worker occupying the premises is not exposed to risks to health and safety. The bill does not increase or reduce that duty. In determining whether prosecution is appropriate, the prosecutorial guidelines will be considered, which includes consideration of whether it is in the public interest to prosecute.

The Government believes that the Work Health and Safety Act already provides appropriate guidance for determining when a work health and safety duty applies to a worker. The primary purpose of the Act is to keep workers safe at work, and this is reflected by section 19, which makes clear that a duty to a worker only applies in circumstances when a worker is working in the business or undertaking. The duty is to ensure the worker's health and safety only so far as is reasonably practicable.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that Opposition amendment No. 1 on sheet c2024-098B be agreed to.

Amendment negatived.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (16:22): By leave: I move Opposition amendments Nos 1 and 2 on sheet c2024-097 in globo:

No. 1 **Limitation period**

Pages 3 and 4, Schedule 1[2], proposed section 34E, line 34 on page 3 to line 3 on page 4. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 2 **Limitation period**

Page 4, Schedule 1[2], proposed section 34F(2), lines 11 and 12. Omit all words on the lines.

I thank the Minister, who is in the Chamber, for graciously giving the Opposition the opportunity to explain why it wants these amendments and for taking the time to explain the reasoning behind the position the Government has taken. The Opposition does not agree with that position and will continue to advocate on behalf of those in the agricultural sector. The amendments on sheet c2024-097 relate to retaining the two-year statute of limitations, aligning with the limitation period set out in section 232 of the Work Health and Safety Act. This will provide a balance between legal certainty and accountability in industrial manslaughter cases.

We have heard from a range of stakeholders, particularly farmers, that when these tragic accidents happen business owners wear guilt and fear, even if no fault is found. It is important that we give certainty to families and to business owners by imposing a timely limitation period to encourage swift prosecution and accountability for workplace fatalities. This will deter potential offenders and foster a culture of compliance with safety standards, ultimately contributing to the prevention of future incidents. Prevention of injury or death at work is something we should all strive for. The amendments will give certainty to families and business owners by having cases prioritised and settled in a timely manner, and not allowing uncertainty for prolonged periods of time.

The Opposition has included a safeguard: an extension of the time within which a person can request regulators to bring a prosecution in relation to a workplace fatality, from 12 months to 18 months. The Opposition understands that complex workplace incident investigations can take longer than 12 months and believes that this should be accommodated, so that victims and families can have the matter comprehensively reviewed by the Director of Public Prosecutions before the expiry of the two-year limitation period. I commend the amendments to the House.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (16:25): I thank the member for Tamworth for his diligent work on these amendments. I know there have been some very robust discussions and that he has taken a strong lead on this as a former Minister who had responsibility for this very important area of public policy. I know that he cares very deeply for his constituents and is a strong advocate for the farming and agricultural sectors, for whom I have enormous respect. I know stakeholders might think, "Yeah, that's what politicians say." I come from the city, but I do have family who are in the farming sector. When they first came from overseas, my family lived and worked on a farm. Agriculture is very important to our communities and to our State. Our primary producers, our farmers, do incredible work for the people of New South Wales. I have enormous respect for the work that they do.

However, the Government does not support the Opposition's amendments with respect to the statute of limitations. The reasons for that are: there is no statute of limitations for manslaughter covered by the Crimes Act; there is no other jurisdiction in Australia that has such a limitation for industrial manslaughter; and in terms of category 1 offences, for which people can be sentenced to jail for up to five years, there have been no prosecutions involving the farming sector—I mentioned that statistic earlier. It is not a statistic that we should all crow about. There should be no workplace deaths in any sector. This bill is about making it clear that the death of a worker due to gross negligence is equivalent to manslaughter under the Crimes Act 1900. Manslaughter in the workplace should not be treated differently. When their loved one is killed at work, people want and need answers. They want to know what happened. No other jurisdiction in Australia has a statute of limitations for industrial manslaughter. The Government opposes the amendments.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that Opposition amendments Nos 1 and 2 on sheet c2024-097 be agreed to.

Amendments negatived.

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (16:29): By leave: I move my amendments Nos 1 and 2 on sheet c2024-104B in globo:

No. 1 Prosecutions

Page 4, Schedule 1[4]. Insert after line 28—

- (3B) Proceedings for an offence against section 34C may be initiated only by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

No. 2 Prosecution guidelines

Page 4, Schedule 1. Insert after line 28—

[4A] Section 230 Prosecutions

Insert after section 230(4)—

- (4A) The guidelines for the prosecution of offences under this Act must deal with the prosecution of offences against section 34C and must take account of—
- (a) the unique nature of farming, and
 - (b) the inherent risks and challenging working conditions of farming that differ significantly from other industries.

Firstly, I thank the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety, for all her work. She visited the wild west, which is Griffith. It takes a lot of courage to get out to Griffith.

Ms Anna Watson: It's beautiful.

Mrs HELEN DALTON: Some members have not visited—

Ms Kate Washington: Lately.

Mrs HELEN DALTON: —lately. Thank you. The Minister's diligence, caring nature and commitment is outstanding, and there is no doubt about that. The other outstanding thing about the Minister is that her door is always open, which I appreciate. I thank the Minister for all the work she does. I speak to my amendments to bill. The Government wants to make a series of amendments to the current Work Health and Safety Act in order to create the offence of industrial manslaughter, but I believe two key amendments must be urgently added to the Government's proposed bill in order to make it safe and workable. Some of those issues were also covered by the member for Tamworth in his contribution.

We all support workplace safety. Nothing is more important to any of us than our lives and the lives of others. On that basis, this bill looks like a step in the right direction, but there are a number of clear problems. The first problem, as has been outlined, is the city-centric nature of the bill. Too often, when this Government—and governments right across Australia, for that matter—writes new legislation, it has a one-size-fits-all mentality. If we ask a city-based politician to imagine a workplace, they automatically think of a factory, whereas if you ask a rural politician to imagine a workplace, they imagine their farms because that is where they spend most of their time.

During the COVID lockdowns, a lot of city folk had to get used to the idea of working from home, but working from home is nothing new for farmers. Farmers have been working from home for thousands of years. Put simply, for many of us, our homes are also our workplaces. No real consideration has been given to that fact in the bill. It is easy to argue that an accident that happens at a factory is work-related because the person is there at the factory to work. But on a farm, a person is also there to live. People are there 24/7. They never clock off. What consideration has been given in the bill to accidents on farms that are not strictly work related? The member for Tamworth also touched on that issue.

At a minimum, the prosecutorial guidelines in the bill must take into account the unique nature of life on a farm and the unique nature of farming workplaces. One of my key amendments relates to that. If there is an accident on a farm, it is a community tragedy. Everyone feels the shock, and everyone feels the grief. A lot of lives are changed forever. There seems to be a desire at the heart of the bill to personalise blame—to search for blame. Someone must be to blame, when it is simply a tragedy.

The bill gives investigators everything they want and, typically, investigators want a villain. They want one individual that they can pin the blame on. Who is to blame? They want a head on a stick so they can make an example of that to everyone. My concern is that by doing that, the bill will simply divide farming communities and add to the suffering of people who are already suffering. No-one wants a workplace accident or death. The fact is that a farm owner can be incredibly careful and meticulous about safety, and yet accidents can still occur.

Tragedies can still happen. Under this bill, genuine tragedies will be made a lot worse by politicised witch-hunts. When we consider the closeness of rural communities, we simply cannot allow that to happen. That is why we need an amendment that creates prosecutorial guidelines that take into account the unique nature of life and work on farms.

Finally, while I am willing to accept that SafeWork should continue in its role as an investigator, it should not undertake the prosecution of these cases. Any prosecutions should instead be undertaken by the Director of Public Prosecutions. We have DPPs for a reason. They check the work of investigators before a prosecution is sought. Under this bill, SafeWork checks its own homework, and that will only lead to prosecutions being sought without sufficient evidence. We simply cannot allow that to happen. That is why the amendment I have proposed will give ultimate responsibility to proceed with a prosecution to the Director of Public Prosecutions. SafeWork cannot be allowed to effectively be judge, jury and executioner on such important matters. Put simply, I think the bill could be better. I call on the Government, the Opposition and my fellow crossbench members to back my very sensible amendments. If the amendments I have proposed are supported, I believe that the Government's bill will then be both safe and workable. In fact, it will be excellent.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (16:35): I acknowledge the important work and strong advocacy of the member for Murray. She is a fierce opponent with very strong views. She is very determined, which is why she has been elected to this place for a number of terms. When I visited Griffith—as the member for Murray said, "the wild west"—I saw it as an important area for New South Wales and for our greater community. I have heard what the member continues to say: We cannot compare farming communities and mum-and-dad farmers with someone in a factory or on a building site. That is why there is no one size that fits all. But the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 provides a framework that has been worked together with all sections of our workforce over time. Of course, there have been updates, amendments and changes over the term of the former Government. The member for Murray raised concerns about SafeWork at the round table. I have also heard her concerns about prosecutions. I hear what she is saying, but the Government will not support her two amendments.

The industrial manslaughter prosecutions against individuals will be conducted by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. As those offences carry a potential term of imprisonment, unlike prosecutions against corporations, which carry a fine, it is appropriate that the DPP prosecute those matters. The Government has made that commitment. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is the State's independent prosecuting body, established under the Director of Public Prosecutions Act 1986. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions prosecutes serious offences committed against the laws of this State on behalf of its people. Its principal function is prosecuting indictable offences in the District and Supreme courts. That will include industrial manslaughter offences when charged against individuals, as those offences will have to proceed on indictment.

The New South Wales Government has committed to the establishment of a unit within the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to prosecute industrial manslaughter offences involving individuals and, where appropriate, related bodies corporate. SafeWork NSW, as the work health and safety regulator, does have deep experience. I hear what the member is saying about her concerns. We will come back to those. With respect to the expertise in prosecuting work health and safety offences, including those committed by corporations and other organisations, it is appropriate that SafeWork has the ability to conduct prosecutions against those entities for industrial manslaughter. The prosecutions will proceed in the new Industrial Court of New South Wales. The Government's proposed reforms of SafeWork will make SafeWork a better place to perform that function. The member for Murray's second amendment states:

- (4A) The guidelines for the prosecution of offences under this Act must deal with the prosecution of offences against section 34C and must take account of—
- (a) the unique nature of farming, and
 - (b) the inherent risks and challenging working conditions of farming that differ significantly from other industries.

That is to be inserted on page 4 of schedule 1. SafeWork adopts the DPP's prosecution guidelines and has supplemented them with further publicly available guidelines that clearly and carefully guide decision-making in all prosecutions. The guidelines require consideration of the prospects of conviction on the admissible evidence and the public interest. The Government's view is that each sector has unique circumstances and that the current guidelines that are applied by SafeWork, and the guidelines that will be applied by the DPP, are well equipped to enable the appropriate and thorough consideration of the individual facts and circumstances that apply to each prosecution. The current provisions on prosecution guidelines are therefore appropriate. As I indicated in my second reading speech, there will be a review in 18 months time. Within that period, my door is open to the member for Murray and to anyone else, because we all care about this. I hear the concerns that the member has, but I have outlined the reasons the Government will not be supporting the amendments.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that amendments Nos 1 and 2 of the member for Murray on sheet c2024-104B be agreed to.

Amendments negatived.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 and 2 as amended be agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 and 2 as amended agreed to.

Third Reading

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

ENERGY SECURITY CORPORATION BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 4 June 2024.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:43): I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Energy Security Corporation Bill 2024. The object of the bill is to establish the Energy Security Corporation [ESC] for the following purposes: to accelerate private sector investments in clean energy projects in New South Wales that improve the reliability, security and sustainability of the electricity supply in New South Wales; to support the New South Wales Government in meeting its emissions reduction targets under the Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023; to complement other government initiatives and partner with the private sector for clean energy projects in New South Wales; and to achieve a government-mandated rate of return through a portfolio approach.

The Energy Security Corporation was announced by NSW Labor more than 15 months ago and introduced into the Parliament only this month. During the 2023 State election, Labor announced the taxpayer-backed fund to solve a lack of renewable energy investment; however, fast forward 15 months and that is not the primary issue holding up the energy transition in this State. New South Wales is facing delays in planning, permitting, regulatory reform and the rollout of transmission infrastructure. Whilst planning issues are plaguing the renewable energy transition in New South Wales, the Energy Security Corporation has an opportunity for success if it can facilitate household, commercial and industrial electrification, as well as increase the uptake of consumer energy resources, like community and household batteries, and be clear about what it is trying to achieve when compared to other funds in existence.

The Minns Labor Government is yet to reveal the investment mandate for its \$1 billion taxpayer-funded State energy corporation. It would do well to consider its own Electricity Supply and Reliability Check Up. In particular, recommendation 34 of the reliability check-up noted the potential contribution of the proposed Energy Security Corporation to the development of pumped hydro and other long-duration storage projects, and flagged its potential role as part of a broader strategy to encourage consumer energy resources. On page 90 it states:

Consumer Energy Resource is an area of untapped opportunity that will continue its growth trajectory in coming years. High grid prices encourage further uptake of CER in all its forms. While not an alternative to the Roadmap utility scale infrastructure, unlike the Roadmap there is an immediate opportunity to make progress on a CER Strategy.

The recommendation ultimately states that having a consumer energy resources optimisation program as part of the mandate of the proposed Energy Security Corporation would be a way to encourage innovation and leadership in New South Wales. Recommendation 33 states:

That the investment mandate of the proposed Energy Security Corporation (ESC) include CER optimisation projects on the distribution grid.

As I noted, the mandate is yet to be revealed. The importance of getting the investment mandate right is heightened by the fact that the proposed New South Wales fund will join a crowded field of government-backed renewable energy investment funds, including the Federal Clean Energy Finance Corporation and its sub-funds, the \$1 billion Household Energy Upgrades Fund, the \$500 million Powering Australia Technology Fund, the \$300 million Advancing Hydrogen Fund and the \$200 million Clean Energy Innovation Fund. Labor has not made the investment mandate public, so the areas of investment focus are unclear, as is the average rate of return expected from the fund. It may be likely that the fund mirrors the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, where the board must target an average return of the five-year Australian Government bond rate plus 2 per cent to 3 per cent per annum over the medium to long term as its benchmark return.

It will be good if the investment mandate of the fund is technology neutral and focused on areas of market need, such as storage, small grid enhancements and ready-to-go hydro power. The little we know about the investment mandate is that it will include matters of risk and return, guidance on technology, areas of investment focus and other investment parameters and limits for the corporation's investments. The intent is for the Minister for Energy and the Treasurer to issue the ESC's first investment mandate at some point prior to the board being appointed. The Opposition hopes that is sooner rather than later.

The corporation will be able to provide concessional debt financing, make equity investments, invest both directly in projects and indirectly through other investment vehicles, and use a range of financial instruments to fill what the Government claims are investment gaps in private funding. Last year the Minns Government received the recommendations of its own energy reliability check-up and has only managed to "consider" many of the recommendations but not implement them. Given the challenges facing the energy road map, highlighted by a report in February identifying that planning approvals in New South Wales take two to three times longer than in other States, the Government continues to sit on its final planning approval framework, which has been in draft since January 2024. There is a huge opportunity for commercial and industrial solar and consumer energy resources like community batteries in New South Wales. Frustratingly, home battery installations have ground to a halt following the announcement of a subsidy that is not due to start until November.

The Government claims that it has considered the legality of using a New South Wales-based subsidiary of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation to manage the fund on behalf of the New South Wales Government, which would be quicker. However, they say this is not practical. But as with other road map bodies, the corporation could be progressed within an existing body. That would mean the \$1 billion would be available to the market sooner and would overcome the challenges and inevitable delays of recruiting staff. That speaks directly to finding 7.8.1 of the Electricity Supply and Reliability Check Up, which states, "The Energy Security Corporation was a promise made by the then opposition, now government". It also states that it should be using an existing body and a mandate that is technology neutral and focused, and that the ESC could be progressed within an existing body. The Opposition encourages the Government to consider that but notes there are a number of reasons it provided as to why that is not possible.

Feedback provided directly to me from industry, essentially, sent a clear message that legislating an election commitment that was announced more than 15 months ago will not solve the issues the New South Wales energy system is currently facing. However, whilst there is a degree of scepticism, this is a welcome initiative. The reality is that there is significant private capital available for serious renewable energy projects. What industry and communities are seeking is the streamlining of the planning approvals process, clarity around planning decisions and deep engagement from the Government, which gives investors the confidence to risk their own capital.

Several renewable energy investors and proponents put to me that there are already many government investment schemes and, unless the latest corporation here in New South Wales is somehow addressing a different need or is much more streamlined and efficient than any of those I have listed previously, it will struggle to accelerate efforts to provide clean, reliable and cheap energy for New South Wales. Energy investors and builders are seeking meaningful engagement and a clarified approvals process. They have directly put to me their desire for this to be improved. So, whilst noting the above, we encourage the Government to consider how it can expedite approvals and provide a point of difference for the Energy Security Corporation from other previously mentioned funds.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:51): I am pleased to speak in support of the Energy Security Corporation Bill 2024. The establishment of the Energy Security Corporation was a key election commitment of the Labor Government. After a decade of failed privatisation, the Minns Labor Government is delivering on its promise to the people of New South Wales to create a State-owned body that will accelerate investment in renewable energy assets to deliver cleaner and more reliable energy and help to keep the lights on. This is what Labor governments are for. Labor is taking action on climate change and supporting renewable energy that will power the State and reduce household energy bills. The New South Wales Government is focused on decarbonising the electricity sector and replacing the New South Wales coal-fired power stations as they reach the end of their operational lives with new renewable electricity that is reliable and dispatchable.

New South Wales has an ambitious 20-year plan to deliver the renewable energy it needs to replace ageing coal-fired power stations and provide the bedrock for the future New South Wales economy. We have the technology. We know that we need to build it. We know how much we need. We know where we need it, and we are already doing it. Our plan is for five renewable energy zones across New South Wales, powered with wind, solar and storage and linked with transmission, acting as modern-day power stations generating low-cost power for homes and businesses that need it. Achieving that goal requires new and accelerated investment in clean energy projects that improve the reliability, security and sustainability of electricity supply throughout the State. We are

making progress. We have enough projects signed up to get us halfway to our 2030 renewable energy target, and we are a quarter of the way to our long-duration storage target.

But we have heard from the clean energy sector that investment gaps exist for important clean energy technologies. While we are lucky to have a bipartisan commitment to renewable energy in New South Wales, the Government believes we must do more. That is why I support the bill. The Energy Security Corporation is necessary to leverage government's unique position to cover investment gaps by crowding in private sector investment as the energy transition continues. As the Minister for Emergency Services said in his second reading speech, our communities are already experiencing the impacts of climate change caused by greenhouse gas emissions. It is essential that we take action, and the \$1 billion investment in clean energy by the New South Wales Government is a critical step. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (16:55): I contribute to debate on the Energy Security Corporation Bill 2024 on behalf of The Greens. I congratulate the Minister of Energy for her work on the bill and, quite frankly, even though I will be speaking stridently about the crisis we find ourselves in, I genuinely, 100 per cent, believe, as do The Greens, that our only hope is to have a minority Labor government working with the crossbench in this State putting continued pressure on the Federal Labor Government. That is our only hope. As António Guterres said of the year 2023, unfortunately, "We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot still on the accelerator." I heard a former speaker for the Opposition talking about a raft of funding investments in clean energy as if it was a problem. That is quite shocking to me. I am not suggesting that we are not closely monitoring the Government in terms of the actual delivery of those enormous aims, which we have to have and have to deliver, but having lots of money invested in clean energy is not something The Greens are at all concerned about.

Ms Trish Doyle: It's a good thing.

Ms TAMARA SMITH: It's a very good thing. How many speeches do we need? I have been here nearly 10 years. I only got into politics because of climate change, and it is very heartening to me to see this level of investment. I note the work of our spokesperson in the other place, Abigail Boyd. I know she is seeking some amendments to the bill, but the money is on the table and, certainly, the spirit of this bill is incredibly welcome. That is not to say the Coalition did not put forward renewable energy zones, before their Federal counterparts completely lost their minds and reinvigorated their version of climate denial—which is now nuclear denial. Leaving that aside, there was good work done but, quite frankly, we did not see the money and we did not see the detail. The Greens welcome this bill to establish the Energy Security Corporation, and we particularly welcome the seed money of \$1 billion. That is money on the table and, obviously, we will continue to monitor how that rolls out.

The year 2023 had the highest temperatures in living memory, but it will be the coolest for the next 50 years on this planet. That is what the climate scientists are telling us. As an example, the wildfires in Canada were the worst ever recorded, with 16½ million hectares of forest destroyed. I have family in the north of Canada, and it is shocking beyond belief that seven to eight billion tonnes of carbon dioxide were emitted between January and October 2023. Joëlle Gergis is the lead author for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's sixth assessment report. I encourage everyone to read her essay entitled *Highway to Hell: Climate Change and Australia's Future*. It is mandatory reading. It should be compulsory in every school and for every politician. The year 2023 scared the hell out of every climate scientist because the trajectories on the graphs were completely blown out of the water. The temperatures in the atmosphere and the ocean were well beyond anything they had comprehended.

Before COVID, two-thirds of people in the community were very concerned about climate change. We saw a change of government, not just in this State but federally. We also saw the rise of the teals and progressive Independents, who are committed to strong action on climate change. We thought we saw the Coalition coming on board. However, with the cost-of-living crisis and massive misinformation, we find that the Coalition party, at the State and Federal levels, is captured by the coal and gas industry. We want to amend the bill to ensure that the \$1 billion can never be used for investment in coal, gas or native forest logging. We will be moving that amendment in the other place.

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

Public Interest Debate

STATE BUDGET

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (17:01): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that the Government has broken its promise that wage increases would be funded by productivity offsets.
- (2) Notes that as a result the Government has lost control of the budget and, despite record revenue, the 2024-25 budget contains no new cost-of-living support; real cuts to health, education and police; and deficits and increased debt for as far as the eye can see.

Let us talk about the state of play in New South Wales. It is very simple. The budget simply fails the people of New South Wales. More than that, the budget confirms that the Government will collect more revenue than any other government in the history of this State. But despite that, it could not find a single cent for cost-of-living support for the people of New South Wales during a cost-of-living crisis in the community. The Minns Labor Government has lost control of the finances. We must ask why that is the case. The shameful truth that those opposite will not admit is that the Government lost control of the budget because of the deal with the unions. Before the election the Premier told the public, when trying to get their votes, that the union wage deals would not cost the people of New South Wales a single cent and that they would be "fully offset" by productivity savings. That is an outright lie. That is not what has happened. The Premier's broken promise means that notwithstanding record revenue, there is no cost-of-living support and, shamefully, there are cuts to schools, hospitals, frontline services and infrastructure across all communities. Further, there is \$6.4 billion in union demands sitting unfunded and unaccounted for in this year's budget papers. That is a liability that this State simply cannot afford.

Households and businesses across this State are being left behind at a time when they should be supported by the Government. They looked to the Government yesterday for support, and it was not provided. They got nothing. We cannot be surprised, because for weeks we have heard about how the Treasurer could not manage the budget because New South Wales lost money in the GST distribution. All members know that the State lost GST funding, but the Premier and the Treasurer have been claiming that Canberra is responsible for an \$11.9 billion GST rip-off. It is well documented on the public record. But the budget papers confirm, "Over the four years to 2027-28, GST revenue has been revised down by \$6.2 billion." The GST revision is more than an offset to the huge increases in revenue collected by members opposite. If they cannot work out how much GST revenue they are losing in the budget, then how can they possibly manage billions of dollars that should be invested in communities? It is Labor economics. They never get it right, and they did not get it right yesterday.

Let us look at some of the things that have increased. There is a \$1.5 billion land tax grab, which not only breaks the Government's promise of no increased taxes but is also going to make the housing crisis worse by forcing up rent, as well as imposing costs on already struggling businesses. Shamefully, the Minister in this House could not address that yesterday when asked in question time. The sad thing about struggling small businesses is that those opposite got excited about \$5 million in the budget going into a business bureau. We talk about billions of dollars for everything else, but there is only \$5 million for business support. What kind of government invests money in a business bureaucracy and not directly in struggling businesses, especially with record levels of insolvency in the State? It is simply breathtaking that those opposite do not get it.

On top of that—since we are talking about businesses—payroll tax is going to hit \$12 billion for the first time. Those opposite are happy to see businesses paying more than ever to keep people employed, and they do nothing to support those businesses. Many other things are happening, but I will make it simple for members opposite. They say there are no cuts to education, but new and upgraded school projects are slowing down under Labor. Only 13 new schools have been added to the pipeline in this budget, with three already announced in last year's budget and a further two expanding works that are already underway. When the Coalition was in government, 213 new and upgraded schools were delivered since 2011. That is a record that those opposite are simply never going to match, and it is in the area of education, which they are always crowing about. They are not delivering. I understand that we will now have time to debate Labor's shameful budget in this House. Ultimately, it is a bad budget for the people of New South Wales.

Mr Gareth Ward: Mookheynomics.

Ms ELENI PETINOS: Mookheynomics. Labor promised a surplus and it has not delivered it. Labor promised not to increase the debt and it has. Labor promised not to risk the triple-A and it will. It is very simple: Members on this side of the House know that the Minns Labor Government only cares about repaying its union mates. And the people of New South Wales are worse off because, by the 2027 financial year, nearly 46 per cent of expenditure will be on public sector wages.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (17:08): I note that sometimes when I am in this Chamber, it just hurts to be here.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I bring to the attention of the House that a number of members were placed on calls to order during question time, including members who are currently interjecting.

Mr Gareth Ward: Shame!

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I do not need assistance from the member for Kiama. Members will come to order. The member for Cessnock will be heard in silence.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: As local members of Parliament, we get people ringing us with some pretty crazy and zany ideas.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I call the member for Kiama to order for the first time.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: What I just heard was somewhere between chemtrails, microchips and 5G, but I make two important points at the start. The first is that this Government has been in power for about 15 months after the Opposition was in government for 12 years. Any complaints, concerns and so on that are raised are probably a consequence of the past 12 years rather than the past 15 months.

Ms Kate Washington: They are going to deny that as well.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: I will speak to that a little more.

Mr Gareth Ward: That is point one. Here is point two.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: Can you just shut up, Gareth?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order! I do not need assistance from the member for Cessnock. Members will come to order. I call the member for Kiama to order for the second time.

Mr CLAYTON BARR: Members opposite need to understand that when public sector wages increase, it helps to put pressure on wage increases across all sectors. When Opposition members talk down increases in public sector wages, they are talking down increases in wages across the board. If Opposition members want to compose a newsletter, go out in their communities or say to their constituents that they detest every extra cent or dollar that people are getting in their pay packet each week, then go ahead. Government members look forward to none of those opposite being here after the next election.

We know that we are in a cost-of-living crisis. I know that my grocery prices have increased by 4 per cent, 5 per cent, 6 per cent, 7 per cent or 10 per cent over the past couple of years. We need to support families by putting a little extra money in their pocket. There is a bit of extra money for public sector wages, not to mention many rebates available through Service NSW. Labor has encouraged our doctors to bulk-bill and has removed stamp duty for many people purchasing a new home. We have done so much. That is my segue to housing affordability. If people are to afford a house, one of two things must happen—either house prices need to come down or wages need to go up. It is pretty simple.

If members opposite want to campaign to decrease the value of the homes of mums and dads—if that is their philosophy, and it must be because they oppose wage increases—then they should put that in their newsletter as well. Opposition members should tell mums and dads, "I hate the fact you're getting an extra dollar in your pocket and I hate the fact that your home is worth as much as it is. I want it to go down because I don't want you to have more money to afford a house." That is the Opposition's housing affordability policy. Finally, I say this about the public sector because it might appeal to members opposite. It is the free market, baby. That is part of the Opposition's philosophy, is it not?

If the public sector is in despair and crisis and if people do not enrol to become teachers, nurses, cleaners and doctors, it is a market indicator. The market indicator is in part—and there are other factors—that wages are just not attractive enough. This Government makes no apology for increasing public sector wages. It makes no apology for dealing with the crisis that those opposite left it. The Government makes no apology for dealing with housing affordability, and it makes no apology for all the changes and instruments that it has committed to in the budget to deal with the cost-of-living crisis. The motion is a shocker, and I feel really sorry for the member for Miranda.

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (17:13): I really do not know where to start, because I am afraid I will never stop. The member for Cessnock began his speech by saying it hurt to be in this Chamber. I have to say that to the extent there was any hurt in this Chamber, he only made it worse with that performance. The member for Cessnock made an interesting observation and sought to redefine Keynesian economics as we know it. He said the way to address housing affordability is for either prices to go down or wages to go up. If wages increase and everyone has more funds, then house prices will go up because there will be more money to place demand on housing supply. Prices are brought down by building more supply. The way to build more supply is to improve cost-of-living measures so that people have the funds and the ability to invest in their future.

But this Government's answer is not for people to buy houses. It is to have government buying, building and owning the houses for them. Instead of people having their destiny in their hands, the Government would

rather have their destiny subject to and supplicant to government and feeding on the teat of government. The Liberal Opposition supports nurses, teachers, police officers and firefighters, and it supports them having improved wages. But it does not support public servants sitting in ivory towers telling us how to live our lives or public servants who may also be elected in this place having jobs in super funds, where they are earning six-figure salaries as directors of what are effectively managers of public money. Public service fund managers are sitting on boards and earning six-figure salaries while effectively taking funds from their members. We have to wonder about the hours and the effort they are putting into that work. As a former local government councillor, I know the hours put in are significant. But I dare say the hours put in on a super board are probably substantially less.

I had the pleasure—or should I say the pain—of going through this budget, which is an interesting read. As I read through the budget, I thought if someone said, "ChatGPT, give me a budget that increases taxes, increases cost-of-living pressures, decreases services and leaves everyone worse off", this is the budget they would get. The budget is not worth the paper it is written on. The budget delivers an extraordinary increase in the taxation impost on our community. I will give an example. Just last year the Government forecast that land tax would be \$7.3 billion in 2024-25. Do members know the land tax forecast for 2024-25 in the budget? It is \$8.169 billion. In last year's budget the Government anticipated that land tax for 2026-27 would be \$6.9 billion. Do members know what it is in the budget?

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Tell us.

Mr RORY AMON: It is \$9.309 billion—which is a mere \$28,000 increase for every land tax payer in the State. That does not improve the cost of living. It increases the cost of living. That does not make life easier. It makes life harder. To reinforce the fact that this budget is just a product of ChatGPT, I compared it with last year's budget. It proved to be interesting reading. This year's budget states:

The State's largest operating expense is employee-related expenses ...

The same line exists in last year's budget. This year's budget goes on to state:

As the scope of any decision by the Commission or the Court is unknown, the impact on the Budget is also unknown.

That is important because under this Government—and we are all going to be underneath it—wages will increase significantly as a percentage of spending. They will increase from 36 per cent to 41 per cent of total expenditure. But the kicker is that, under this Government, operational expenditure and investment infrastructure will decrease from 48 per cent of expenses to 39 per cent of expenses. That means we get less and pay more, and everyone will be worse off.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (17:18): I do not know about the member for Pittwater, but his contribution suggests that his entire approach to his parliamentary work is to outsource it to artificial intelligence, which is telling. The numerous references to artificial intelligence probably mean that that is the approach he is taking. The Minns Labor Government and I are under no illusion: We are experiencing difficult cost-of-living pressures and economic headwinds at the moment. This budget gets to the core of that issue. Those opposite can feign ignorance, but they know, as we do—

Mr Nathan Hagarty: They're not feigning; they are ignorant.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA: I acknowledge that interjection by the member for Leppington. They are ignorant. We are doing everything we can to combat those cost-of-living pressures and put—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Members will come to order. The member for Liverpool will be heard in silence.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA: We are doing all we can to put downward pressure on inflation, and this budget does that by controlling spending, cutting waste and making sure that we fund the absolute necessities for our community. The economic prudence of this Government and this Treasurer means that we can deliver \$8.7 billion in responsible cost-of-living relief. I will give the Opposition a run-down. We are delivering \$189 million to safeguard bulk-billing at our GP clinics across the State, and we are doing that by providing a payroll tax waiver for GPs who bulk-bill a minimum of 80 per cent of appointments in metropolitan areas and 70 per cent in regional areas. Those opposite may laugh about that, but earlier this week I stood in this place and spoke about the impact of not being able to see GPs in my community. South-western Sydney is haemorrhaging GPs and is unable to replace them because of the cost of providing GP services.

[An Opposition member interjected.]

Sure. Let's do a trade for a little bit. Members opposite may laugh about the impact of not being able to see GPs, but it means that people in my community then front up to emergency departments and wait 16 to 18 hours and, in the end, give up. They go home because they are not able to access care either at the GP or in the emergency

department. The changes will actually make a difference, and all members opposite can do is laugh. We are also continuing an investment to cap tolls at \$60 a week. This is after those opposite sold off our motorways and made Sydney the most tolled city in the world. Now they care about the cost of living.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The Clerk will stop the clock. Members will come to order. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. The member will be heard in silence.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA: We are also delivering \$250 in energy rebates for all seniors and families and \$350 for low-income households and those with medical conditions. That is on top of \$300 of energy relief for every household, provided by the Federal Government. Let me come to the State's essential workers. After 12 years of absolute disregard from those opposite, we are delivering a pay rise of 10.5 per cent. The wages cap those opposite instituted caused real wages to go backwards. The member for Pittwater can talk about emergency services, but would it not be nice if he wrote to the Minister about something substantial related to the pay of those essential workers, rather than about larger or essential signage? We are making moves to rectify this.

It is utterly ridiculous that those opposite waltz in here to lecture us about budgets, because they delivered the two biggest budget deficits in our State's history: deficits of \$15.3 billion in 2021-22 and of \$10.6 billion in 2022-23. When the former Treasurer and member for Hornsby announced his resignation, economists everywhere breathed a sigh of relief because the biggest economic vandal in our State's history will no longer have his hands anywhere near the purse strings of this State. In the nine months to the 2023 election, the former Treasurer shovelled \$27 billion of new policy measures into the budget, leaving behind the biggest debt ever handed from one government to the next. And those opposite have the temerity and audacity to come into this place and talk about a budget deficit. [*Time expired.*]

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (17:24): This reminds me of an episode of *Gilligan's Island*. Grab some popcorn. Just sit right back and you'll hear a tale, a tale of a fateful ship, which is Labor. It is sinking faster than a stone in a lake.

Mr Adam Crouch: A Mookhey berg.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: A Mookhey berg. We welcome the contribution of the member for Liverpool, who had one job today: to ask for an extension. So what did those opposite do? They said, "No, you've got to go and speak in the public interest debate."

Mr Warren Kirby: Point of order—

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: "That's your penance. Come to the Chamber and have another crack."

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The member for Tamworth will resume his seat. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Warren Kirby: My point of order relates to relevance. I do not see what relevance question time has to this debate.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The member will return to the leave of the motion.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I am just taking a call from the library—they want the member back. The member for Liverpool had one job. Tomorrow we will give her some notes on how to stand up and seek an extension of time. I congratulate her on her new role as Parliamentary Secretary. The member for Cessnock has been slogging away for 13 years. What a good man. I will respond to the good member for Cessnock in relation to public sector wages. He talked about the raising of public sector wages. In fact, just like *On the Good Ship Lollipop*, those from *Gilligan's Island* across the road never employed anyone in their lives. They are living on some fantasy island. They just pushed the wages up.

Rising public sector wages create a significant challenge for small businesses. The Labor Party has never had to employ anyone in its life. Rising wages hurt the retail sector and the hospitality industry. I see the Minister for hospitality, a good man, sitting opposite. His head is down and he is thinking, "This is going to hurt." Hospitality hurts. Restaurants and hospitality are really hurt on the back of increasing wages. Everybody expects a fair wage for a fair day's work, but by the same token a lot of hospitality and retail businesses end up suffering. They run on skinny margins as it is. The owner of the business—

Mr Warren Kirby: How do you pay for it if you don't have the wages?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: The member for Riverstone does not have to pay for it. He has never worked a day in his life. Hang on a second. If he pulled out his wallet, moths and butterflies would come out. He is living in fruit-loop land over there. They have never had to employ anyone in their life. Retail businesses bear the brunt when wages go up. The owner is often the first person in and the last person out, on skinny margins. They look

after their staff. They pay their staff first. A fish and chip shop operator in the Chamber had the best fish and chip shop in Forster-Tuncurry for how many years?

Mrs Tanya Thompson: Twenty-three years.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: She was the first in and the last out and made sure that the wages of her staff were paid first. When I was running my marketing and media business, Centreboard Media, I was the first in and last out, and I made sure my staff received wages first. When you start raising the costs and start looking at the cost of living, small retail and hospitality businesses hurt. All the Coalition members sitting in the front row have been in small business. The member for Coffs Harbour is a blueberry farmer. He put a blueberry in the middle of the National Party room one month and it stayed there for six. We did not even see the colour change. That tells you how good they were. We were not game to go near it—but that is another story for another day. Anyway, this is a joke. In terms of this motion today, those opposite have no idea.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (17:29): We on this side do not apologise for our wages policy. Our first budget was all about one thing: rebuilding essential services in this State. Central to rebuilding essential services was scrapping the cap. The cap had done its work. In the November 2022 report of a study for the Nurses and Midwives' Association, The Australia Institute stated:

The arbitrary pay cap system in NSW has contributed to falling real wages, made it more difficult to attract workers to vital service roles, and undermines wage growth across the broader labour market.

I thank Dr Jim Stanford from The Australia Institute. The cap had done its work in this State, as we know. We had chronic teacher shortages. Instead of teaching, teachers were managing combined classrooms where no education was going on. Instead of dealing with patients, nurses were managing closed wards due to healthcare worker shortages. Because of privatisation and a miserable wages cap, we had thousands fewer bus drivers than were needed in this State. The wages cap had to be stopped to get back on top of fixing our relationship with our essential workers.

The wages cap was just one part of an industrial relations system that governs how an employer deals with its workforce. It was compared with a completely new industrial relations system built upon neutral bargaining with our State workforce. It was about talking to our essential workers as equals. It was about resolving grievances at the workplace and talking to our workforce face to face rather than saying to them, "The managers will manage and you will just do what you are told to do in the workplace." This Government has made a generous wage offer to State employees of 15 per cent over four years, fully budgeted, because \$13 billion of savings were found through the comprehensive expenditure review done by the finance Minister in the other place. Those savings mean we can make the most generous wage offer in the past 10 years, at least, to public sector workers in this State. The unions understand that.

The unions understand what the wages system is in this State. An offer of 15 per cent over four years has been made. If unions want more, then we bargain for it on the basis of productivity. In *The Australian Financial Review* today, an article by John Kehoe and David Marin-Guzman reported the Secretary of Unions NSW, Mark Morey, as saying—

[Opposition members interjected.]

Those opposite need to listen, because our staff in the public services—the State employees—understand our wages system even though those opposite do not. Mark Morey said:

People have worked to get productivity offsets to find ways to get beyond the government baseline offer and we'll be bargaining to get this up.

He went on to say:

Any deal so far has had offsets in it. It's not just handing out cash to us—it's very much about capturing the productivity.

Our staff in the public services and our staff in our forward-facing services dealing with the public who want better public services in this State understand our wages system. It is about mutual gains bargaining. The Government has made an offer. If our workforce considers that offer to be less than what they would prefer, then they have to bargain with the State for productivity gains to pay for pay rises so that it does not impact on the budget, and then we go to the commission if we have a disagreement. It is very simple. It is completely understandable, but those opposite do not like it. They do not like dealing with their workforce as individuals or as equals. They want to just tell their workforce, "This is what you are getting, and nothing more." By moving this motion, those opposite have shown that they completely misunderstand industrial relations and they completely misunderstand the aspirations of working people. The question for those opposite is: Will you bring back the wages cap should you ever gain the government benches once more?

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (17:34): In reply: I am somewhat flabbergasted by what members have just heard.

Mr Adam Crouch: Not surprised, though.

Ms ELENI PETINOS: Not surprised, though. I will, out of courtesy, thank the member for Cessnock, the member for Pittwater, the member for Liverpool, the member for Tamworth and the member for The Entrance for their contributions. If we thought Mookheynomics was bad, some of those statements about the way the economy should work are mind-boggling. Any university student would be baffled.

Ms Charishma Kaliyanda: Then you lot are not university students, I guess.

Ms ELENI PETINOS: I turn to the member for Liverpool, who is having a bit of a yell right now. I am going to break it down to the simplest of terms: You do not pay payroll tax until you reach \$1.2 million. No-one in this State is currently paying payroll tax as a GP or medical practitioner. Basically, the only way that a tax would have been imposed and will be imposed on those practitioners is because of those opposite. Medical practices are not going to reduce fees as a result. If you bulk-bill, there is no change to the fee. It is a simple concept. Members on this side of the House have been working with GPs for as long as those opposite have. I am really glad that we have this opportunity to educate them about how payroll tax works, because everything that they said was so far off mark that it is not even funny.

Given that the top of the economy food chain is the Treasurer—and Mookheynomics has been handed down in the budget—I am not surprised that that is what is coming up through Labor's alleged talent pool. The reality is that those opposite have failed their communities and the people of New South Wales. This budget is the absolute worst in New South Wales history. It is the highest revenue-driven, taxing budget in history. How do they justify the new and increased taxes that they are levying on the community to pay their union masters? What happens with Labor is that mums and dads come last, but the unions come first. It promised to protect the surplus, but it did not. It promised not to increase debt, but it did. It promised to keep the triple-A rating, but that is about to go out the window.

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

The House divided.

Ayes33
 Noes47
 Majority.....14

AYES

Amon, R	Griffin, J	Roberts, A
Anderson, K	Henskens, A	Saunders, D
Ayyad, T	Hodges, M	Singh, G (teller)
Clancy, J	James, T	Sloane, K
Cooke, S	Kean, M	Speakman, M
Coure, M	Kemp, M	Thompson, T
Cross, M	Lane, J	Toole, P
Crouch, A (teller)	Layzell, D	Tuckerman, W
Davies, T	Perrottet, D	Ward, G
Di Pasqua, S	Petinos, E	Williams, L
Donato, P	Provest, G	Williams, R

NOES

Aitchison, J	Hannan, J	Quinnell, S
Atalla, E	Harris, D	Saffin, J (teller)
Bali, S	Haylen, J	Saliba, D
Barr, C	Hoening, R	Scully, P
Butler, L	Holland, M	Shetty, K
Car, P	Hornery, S	Smith, T
Catley, Y	Kaliyanda, C	Stuart, M
Chanthivong, A	Kirby, W	Tesch, L
Cotsis, S	Leong, J	Vo, T
Crakanthorp, T	McDermott, H	Voltz, L
Daley, M	McGirr, J	Warren, G

NOES

Davis, D
Dib, J
Doyle, T
Finn, J
Hagarty, N (teller)

McKeown, K
Mehan, D
O'Neill, M
Park, R
Piper, G

Washington, K
Watson, A
Whan, S
Wilkinson, K

PAIRS

Preston, R
Taylor, M
Williamson, R
Wilson, F

Minns, C
Harrison, J
Li, J
Kamper, S

Motion negated.

*Bills***ENERGY SECURITY CORPORATION BILL 2024****Second Reading Debate**

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (17:45): I continue my contribution to debate on the Energy Security Corporation Bill 2024. Government members cannot cut emissions with one hand and open new coalmines with the other. They need to commit and execute. Labor, with The Greens and Independents, can deliver this, even with the Federal Liberal Party and The Nationals kowtowing to their donor lobbyists as usual. My community and communities of the member for Lismore, the member for Tweed, the member for Clarence and other members across the Chamber have been reeling, having seen the front line of climate change in 2022 and 2023. That was on the back of the Black Summer bushfires, so we are in no doubt of what is coming for us. We are in it.

We have seen a strong response from Labor to support the future through the NSW Reconstruction Authority, based on the model of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority. It is going slow and it is a big ship, but we are getting there. But, quite frankly, adaptation is the action of the defeated. It is towns and villages becoming doomsday preppers. By "doomsday", I mean catastrophic weather and extreme heat. Adaptation is the action of the defeated. We are a generation on the threshold of sealing the fate of our children and our grandchildren for what is estimated to be hundreds of years.

While The Greens support any investment in the rollout of renewable energy, we hold some concerns about the corporation's current structure. That is why we will move some amendments in the other place. Another significant concern is that the bill is not designed to create any new public ownership in the energy system. I was pleased to hear the Opposition spokesperson talking about the renewable energy grid, which will require virtually every household in New South Wales—or certainly each neighbourhood—to have battery storage. We welcome the announcement of a rebate for batteries, but we must accelerate it, not just because it is the grid of the future but also because those weather systems will not wait for us to get it together.

My community want to get off grid so that they are not without telecommunications or electricity for months. Landslide-affected communities like Upper Main Arm are still unable to get the school bus up their road and are still living in very dangerous conditions after their houses fell down the side of a mountain. We are in it and adaptation is defeat. We must do everything we can to reduce our emissions. I believe the Minister for Energy has that goal and that passion, and we are very pleased with the level of investment. The Greens are in the process of negotiating amendments because we are looking to ensure that the corporation cannot in any circumstances invest in coal, gas or native forest logging. Those things have to end.

I reflect on the attitudes of the Duttons of the world. I normally never name an adversary, but how can he look his own children and grandchildren in the face and still suggest that we go down the path of nuclear energy at this stage of the game? Maybe 20 years ago—obviously other developed nations have gone down that path. But there are lots of reasons that it is illegal in this State, and I commend the Premier for staring down those overtures. I feel very sorry indeed for people who reside in the electorates of members who announced that they potentially will have nuclear reactors in their electorates. Good God! How on earth is that where we are today? I remind the House that 2023 had the highest temperatures in living memory and we are told that this will be the coolest year on the planet for at least the next 50 years. Let's get on with it. We are here to help in any way to deliver energy security in renewable energy, which is the future.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (17:49): I make a contribution to debate in support of the Energy Security Corporation Bill 2024. The bill is aimed at ensuring a sustainable future for New South Wales. The object of the bill is to establish the Energy Security Corporation [ESC] to accelerate private sector investments in clean energy projects in New South Wales that improve the reliability, security and sustainability of the electricity supply in this State; to support the Government in meeting its emissions reduction targets under the Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023; to complement other government initiatives and partner with the private sector for clean energy projects in New South Wales; and to achieve a government-mandated rate of return through a portfolio approach.

The bill is a landmark legislative effort aimed at enhancing energy security, promoting sustainability and ensuring reliable power for the people of this State. The bill is fulfilling an election commitment made by the current Government while in opposition, while reflecting on a strong political will to address critical energy challenges. The announcement of the bill was made in Nowra with the now Premier and several members of Parliament underscoring its importance. It was a significant commitment made during the election campaign, and its realisation today demonstrates the Government's dedication to fulfilling its promises. Minister Sharpe played a pivotal role in bringing the bill to fruition and is to be congratulated for her exceptional efforts in that regard. I also acknowledge Minister Dib for introducing the bill to this Chamber.

Climate change necessitates urgent and effective action to ensure a sustainable future for the people, economy and environment of New South Wales. The Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023 has set ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, including achieving net zero emissions by 2050. The electricity sector—being the highest emitting sector in New South Wales—is a primary focus for decarbonisation efforts. Rapid decarbonisation is essential to meeting those targets and safeguarding the environment for future generations. As the grid transitions to renewable energy, it remains crucial that the system is able to provide consistent and reliable power. The Australian Energy Market Operator has highlighted the need for critical investments in generation and storage to mitigate the risk of power outages, particularly in the coming summers.

The Government's commitment to maintaining a reliable and secure electricity grid is evident in the provisions of the bill. Reliable electricity is particularly vital for residents of Western Sydney, who experience significant urban heat. The bipartisanship surrounding the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap has facilitated progress in decarbonising the energy system and transitioning away from coal-fired generation. The road map's successful delivery is a whole-of-government priority and the Energy Security Corporation is designed to accelerate that transition. The bill establishes the ESC—seeded with \$1 billion—to accelerate investments in clean energy projects, including storage and firming assets. The ESC aims to ensure a dispatchable supply of renewable energy while addressing concerns about the intermittency of solar and wind power. By co-financing and attracting additional private investment, the ESC seeks to fill funding gaps in clean technology projects, leveraging the economic opportunities presented by the renewable energy transition.

The ESC is modelled on similar successful bodies, such as the Clean Energy Finance Corporation. It will operate as a statutory corporation with an independent board, ensuring a balance between autonomy and government oversight. The ESC's investment decisions will be guided by an investment mandate issued by the Minister for Energy and the Treasurer, but the board will retain the autonomy to make specific investment decisions within those parameters. The bill establishes two funds: the Energy Security Corporation Fund, seeded with \$1 billion from the Restart NSW Fund, and the Energy Security Corporation Operational Fund. Those funds will be managed to ensure the proper allocation and oversight of public finances.

The ESC will employ various financial instruments to address market gaps and crowd in private funding, facilitating the transition to a renewable energy-based system. The ESC's objectives include accelerating private sector investments in clean energy, supporting this State's emissions reduction targets, complementing other government initiatives, and achieving a government-mandated rate of return. Those objectives ensure that the ESC not only supports public policy goals but also operates with a commercial focus, maximising the benefits of the clean energy transition for New South Wales consumers.

The bill's successful implementation is expected to stimulate significant investments in clean energy infrastructure, creating jobs, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing energy security. It represents a comprehensive approach to transforming the energy landscape in New South Wales, ensuring a sustainable and resilient future. The Energy Security Corporation Bill 2024 is a pivotal step toward a sustainable energy future for New South Wales. By promoting renewable energy, enhancing infrastructure and fostering innovation, the bill aims to create a robust energy system that can withstand future challenges and drive long-term prosperity. It fulfils a critical election commitment and sets the stage for a transformative period in the energy sector in New South Wales, ensuring that the benefits of the renewable energy transition are enjoyed by all. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast) (17:57): I make a contribution in support of the important Energy Security Corporation Bill 2024. The bill establishes the Energy Security Corporation that will be responsible for overseeing around \$1 billion of funding from Restart NSW to invest in storage projects, address gaps in the current market and improve the reliability of the electricity network whilst the State transitions to renewable energy. Those investments will help the State meet its legislated emissions reductions targets and the road map minimum objectives of 12 gigawatts of new renewable energy generation and two gigawatts of long duration storage by 2030.

That is an important part of that road map that was developed by those opposite. While it created a nice document and put some great intentions in place around renewable energy zones, it is now up to this Government to implement the rollout of the on-the-ground infrastructure to make sure that this important reform goes ahead. I note that at the time of debating the road map, there was bipartisan support for it. In fact, I know that members from the Central Coast and Hunter moved amendments that were accepted by the then Government to include a renewable energy zone on the Central Coast. Part of that is the Waratah Super Battery, which is currently under construction at the site of the old Lake Munmorah Power Station. It will form a really important part of the overall grid, given that those large-scale batteries are used to—I do not know the exact term—equalise the voltage.

Mr Jihad Dib: Stabilise.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: Yes, they will stabilise the grid so that the renewable energy works and is a reliable source. But there is a great threat to all this, and that is the Federal Coalition. Today the Federal Leader of the Opposition has been announcing the proposed sites for nuclear power plants under a Coalition plan. There are many issues around that. CSIRO reports have clearly stated that nuclear energy is the most expensive form of energy. While large-scale nuclear energy is cheaper than small pod-size power sources, it is significantly more expensive than wind-generated power, being the cheapest, and solar energy, which is the second most affordable. The danger comes not from the proposal to build nuclear power plants many decades from now; the problem is the real agenda of the Federal Coalition to create uncertainty in the market, to slow down investment and to cause chaos around the rollout of renewable energy in Australia. That is the real risk, because for the private sector to have the confidence to invest large amounts of capital in renewable energy, it has to have long-term certainty.

By circulating this furphy of its plan to build nuclear power plants—which it will probably never do—the Federal Coalition has created uncertainty, and that will impact investment in the technology and infrastructure that must be rolled out to make a renewable energy system work. In the media today, members of the National Party, the member for Bathurst and the member for Upper Hunter, spoke out in opposition to the Federal Coalition's plan. They stated there has been no consultation with their communities about having nuclear power stations at Lithgow and Liddell. I also note that the owners of the proposed sites say they have had no discussions around the possibility of a nuclear power station being built there, and that it is not in their plans. They say they are technology neutral.

This is a tactic by the Federal Coalition. It is throwing a policy out there, just before the next Federal election, to try to win over those people who are a little bit scared. And people are rightly scared about the cost of power and the long-term future of energy sources. The Federal Coalition is generating fear in the community to try to win votes. That is what this is all about. It is not about the long-term certainty of our electricity market. It is not about creating technology that will deliver cheaper electricity for our households and businesses. It is about creating chaos and unsettling confidence in a cheap effort to win votes. It is one of the most cynical attempts. We have seen it before with immigration policy. When the Coalition has no idea, it goes to the fear campaign. It tries to generate fear or introduce uncertainty, because when people are unsure, the Coalition has a better chance of picking up their votes. It is absolutely reprehensible.

Unfortunately, the comments from the now Leader of the Opposition were a little bit flaky. I hope those opposite hold solid, because they developed the road map. They had bipartisan support and I hope that they do not now try to play a cynical game of division, undermining what everyone agreed at the time was a great policy, through siding with their Federal colleagues to create uncertainty and chaos. It would put \$32 billion worth of investment in this State at risk. Let us think about that—\$32 billion worth of investment put at risk for cheap political opportunism. Members may have heard of "boiling frog syndrome". It is a metaphor used to describe the failure to act against a problematic situation which will increase in severity until reaching catastrophic proportions. The member for Ballina summed it up beautifully. We have had really intense fire seasons. The predictions are that they will increase in severity. We have had floods like never seen before, which have exceeded one-in-100-year floods. In my community, which would flood maybe once in every 10 years, we have had four floods in five years.

People might say, "That's a bit unlucky", but it is demonstrating to us what we were told more than two decades ago: Climate change increases the severity of the weather. We will have hotter summers and more rain.

We need to combat climate change with a coherent response that preserves jobs, looks after households and encourages investment. We are doing that through the renewable energy road map, which had bipartisan support. We are building on what the previous Government did. What we are seeing from the Federal Coalition is an absolute disgrace. Its State colleagues should call it out. I note that National Party members are already saying, "Wait a second, we did sort of support nuclear, but not in our backyard. We don't want it near us." Are they discussing nuclear energy with the private sector who might have to invest in it? No. It is an absolute furphy. We should stand united, particularly against those extreme right-wing parties whose—

Mr Jihad Dib: Modus operandi.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: —modus operandi, that is right, is to win votes from the major parties through fear. They create conspiracy theories. We have heard a little bit about that during this debate. They twist the facts. They try to zero in on things that back their argument, and they deny all other factors. [*Extension of time*]

We have to fight back against those right-wing parties that are trying to chip votes away from the two major parties through fear campaigns, exploiting people's lack of education by twisting the facts. If we, as responsible members of this place, stick together on these important policies, then we will reach conclusions that benefit the community. But it is a long and difficult journey. When the former environment Minister announced the road map, he mentioned that there would be hurdles along the way, but we have to trust that this is the right way to go.

My community is based on the northern Central Coast. It has had power stations at Lake Munmorah, Vales Point and Eraring. Two of them are still operating. Vales Point station is quite old now and Eraring Power Station is getting towards the end of its life. We have been forced to extend its operation because there have been issues getting planning approvals for transmission and other things for the new renewable energy zones. In my community, people have suffered respiratory problems because of emissions from the power stations. We have cancer clusters. We have ash dams. We have all of those things. The only way to fix that, to preserve the health of our communities and to help our environment, is to move to clean energy.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (18:09): In reply: This is a really special day. A few members have contributed to debate on the Energy Security Corporation Bill 2024. I will address all the contributions, but first I want to start on a positive note. This is an outstanding piece of legislation for the New South Wales Parliament, if it passes. It is an outstanding example of what can happen when members in opposition come up with an excellent plan that is incredibly future-focused. We remember that time.

Mr Steve Whan: Not necessarily fondly.

Mr JIHAD DIB: Not fondly, no. But we did come up with an idea. Sometimes, when in opposition, one can actually come up with the best ideas. It is important to see those ideas come to fruition in Parliament. I was a shadow Minister at the time, and I must acknowledge James Connolly, who was my staffer. We only had one staffer, so he acted in every position. I know that he feels incredibly proud because he had a lot to do with this policy. We will pass this legislation. Minister Sharpe was very keen on him. But if Penny Sharpe and her team are watching, they should know that he is not going anywhere. He is staying here.

On a serious note, I acknowledge James Connolly. It is hard to be in opposition, thinking about what one would do in government. We made the announcement somewhere around Nowra. I remember that it was a humid day. It was a very important announcement to make: \$1 billion for a project that would seed a change to the way we moved and ensure that the renewable transition would take place. I feel an incredible sense of pride that our Government made that decision. There was a bipartisan road map, but it was this Government that legislated it. We tried to move the legislation from opposition, but it did not work. In government, it was one of the first things that Minister Sharpe brought up. This is the end result.

Today is an important day because on the same day that this Parliament is showing incredible leadership in moving towards safe, clean and renewable energy, people in other Parliaments—namely the Opposition leader in the Federal Parliament—have said, "No, we're going to kick all that away and we're just going to go nuclear." I will not get into an argument about nuclear energy, but I thought my ministerial colleague and the member for Wyong spoke exceptionally well about the risks that we can take as a responsible society. We have done that, in making sure that we are sensible and that we do not come up with arguments that are used specifically to divide people.

I thought the most telling point was the fact that two members of this Parliament, in whose electorates nuclear reactors are slated to sit, were very quick to say, "Not for me, thanks." In other words, it is similar to the response to planning: "We're happy to have it, but not in my backyard." I am looking forward to hearing tomorrow—or perhaps this evening—from every single Coalition member as they say, "You know what? Nuclear

is not where we want to go." Let us see how it goes. Obviously, the member for Hornsby got a heads-up about the plan. He was so disgusted that he thought, "I'm out of here." At least he had some integrity about the issue of renewable energy. He knew something that we did not.

I thank honourable members for their contributions to debate on the Energy Security Corporation Bill 2024. In particular, I thank the shadow Minister, the member for Manly, for his work and his passion in organising the Opposition's support for the bill. I recognise the bipartisanship. I acknowledge his comments regarding the corporation's investment mandate, but there is no secret there. The Government has consulted extensively with industry on the design of the corporation and the investment mandate so that the clean energy sector can have confidence in its role and the support that it will provide for the transition. The investment mandate will be issued as a ministerial direction rather than included in the legislation to allow the Government the ability to make and change the Energy Security Corporation's [ESC] investment focus over time in response to evolving energy market needs.

To start, the ESC is expected to focus on storage and other grid reliability measures, such as community batteries. There is a community battery between Punchbowl and Bankstown, which is fantastic. It collects solar energy during the day and stores it during the evening, which helps the local community. We will see more community batteries across the board. That approach will allow the ESC to maximise its impact as a long-lived entity. The Government thinks that is very important. I also acknowledge the member's comments about the importance of consumer energy resources. We take that very seriously. Minister Sharpe has made it a priority since we came to government. The Government looks forward to finalising its consumer energy strategy, which I note already has over \$200 million in reserve in the budget. The Government is putting its money where its mouth is. It has moved the legislation and made the commitment to funding. We will get on with it.

This Government also takes planning approvals very seriously. Minister Sharpe and Minister Scully have been working together on new guidelines for renewable energy projects to speed up the approval and delivery of renewable energy projects. That might have been a round of applause from the gallery. I am not used to that. We can do the standing ovation later. The Government has already unblocked the pipe. Last year it approved the first new wind farm in New South Wales in 2½ years. We have moved on with the road map. Members have heard about the community consultation during debate on other forms of legislation. The Government is also putting real energy into activating the renewable energy zones.

I will not do what Opposition members did when they were in government and be constantly critical of the other side. I acknowledge that we reached the road map through a bipartisan approach. While in opposition, Labor moved amendments that made the road map better in terms of including the Hunter and Illawarra regions. That is what good Parliaments do. Bad Parliaments do not do that. I note that when we came to power, those road maps had not progressed much. It became a priority for this Government. The priority is clear in investment, in legislation and in getting things going.

The member for Blue Mountains, and Parliamentary Secretary always speaks eloquently and passionately about renewable energy, the environment and community. She hit the nail on the head when she spoke about the Government's plans to deliver more renewable energy for New South Wales and how the Energy Security Corporation will support those plans. I acknowledge on the public record her longstanding commitment to action on those issues from the time we were in opposition and even before she entered Parliament. This is a longstanding passion for the member for Blue Mountains, which is important to acknowledge.

The member for Ballina spoke really well about what a Labor government can achieve. I really appreciated that. We have gone beyond the talk. She spoke about the importance of action on climate change. As I have said before, we must move beyond the debate on whether climate change exists or not. It exists. We see it; we now need to act on it. People used to deny climate change. Now they are starting to deny different forms of action. That is how more and more time is wasted. We cannot afford to waste time. The Government is committed to the 2030 and 2050 targets. That is going to happen. We need it to happen. We need to stop the arguments and actually get on with the business of doing things. I note that the member foreshadowed amendments to be moved in the other place. This bill already makes it very clear that the investment is for clean energy projects, not fossil fuel projects. Investment for clean energy projects was one of the most important design principles of the Energy Security Corporation.

The member for Mount Druitt is across every detail of every piece of legislation that passes through the Parliament. I know Hansard have got him down pat because he speaks on every single piece of legislation. That shows his absolute commitment and passion. The member for Mount Druitt spoke about the importance of delivering on the election commitment, and about how the corporation will support New South Wales to accelerate the road map's renewable energy targets to maximise benefits for energy consumers.

The final speaker was my colleague the member for Wyong, Minister Harris. He spoke about renewable energy, the opportunities it brings and what it means. He also spoke about something that touched me as the Minister for Emergency Services: the number of natural disasters. I have had many conversations with Minister Harris in recent times, particularly after some of the storm, flood and rain damage we have experienced around the Central Coast. It is almost as though as soon as we get through one point, we get to the other. These are the impacts of climate change. I do not deny that we will experience more and more natural disasters. We are seeing the frequency and severity of them, whether that be fires, floods or storms. I acknowledge and thank the Temporary Speaker, the member for Oxley, for fighting fires in his community late last year as a volunteer with the RFS. Natural disasters have a devastating impact on communities. We must do what we can to reverse climate change.

The member for Wyong also spoke with passion about the importance of not getting involved in arguments that will divide people. Members make decisions about how they will conduct themselves in this place. They can either be a bridge or a cliff. Let us be bridges and bring people together. Let us use our privilege and the enormous responsibility that we have been given to do something good for the people of New South Wales. It does not happen easily, and it is a struggle a lot of the time, but we will get there. I appreciate that the member for Wyong calls things out. He called out that the Federal Coalition's announcement about nuclear energy was cynical. The challenge for members opposite is to tell us what they think about nuclear energy. Are they happy about it? Their Federal colleagues are saying that they will do that, not now, not tomorrow, but in 16 years. It is much more expensive. It is simply because they have a belief that renewable energy is problematic.

I am glad to have carriage of the bill in this House. It was one of Labor's key election commitments. I spoke about the pride I felt seeing previous bills come through the House, and this bill is a great example of seeing something through from being in opposition to being in government. The Government is proud to be delivering on its election commitment to establish a new corporation to accelerate investment in clean energy. It is investing \$1 billion to make sure that happens. The corporation will focus on storage assets—things like community batteries, pumped hydro and other projects that support a reliable grid. I explained in a previous speech that we can collect the energy, but we need to store it somewhere. We do not need to build megaprojects; we need small- and medium-duration programs. I proudly talked about the batteries for homes program, community batteries, small hydro and reusing disused mines. There is so much potential. The Government is putting \$1 billion into a corporation that will make sure that gets done.

The energy transition in New South Wales is well under way. We can, and must, do more to support reliable energy for households and businesses. The corporation will earn a return for the people of New South Wales, after more than a decade of the privatisation of the State's electricity system. The people of New South Wales will own it, which is fantastic. Opposite to what we saw under the former Government over a 12-year period, when everything was sold off, this Government is committing to having public assets. That is in this bill, and it was in yesterday's announcement about social housing. The Government believes in public assets in supporting the public.

I thank my fellow members and government agencies for working together on the bill. In particular, I thank Phoebe Colman, Nikki Nicholson and Alison Pepper from Minister Sharpe's department, as well as the many people who supported them. I also acknowledge Minister Sharpe's parliamentary team. There are too many to mention. I again acknowledge James Connolly, who was there at the very start. I also acknowledge people from Premier Minns's office who, when we were in opposition, helped put this together. The Government is delivering on its election commitment to stand up a government-owned corporation to invest in our energy system and the transition to clean energy. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr JIHAD DIB: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

COMMUNITY SERVICES SECTOR (PORTABLE LONG SERVICE LEAVE) BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 5 June 2024.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (18:24): I speak in support of the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024, which meets the Government's commitment to establish a portable entitlements scheme for community sector workers. The bill responds to the rise of insecure work in the disability and community sectors and forms part of the Government's commitment to attract and retain key workers in New South Wales. Community services workers are known for their dedication to promoting social inclusion and wellbeing. They play a vital role in caring for individuals and communities across New South Wales, including people with disability, families experiencing domestic violence and people experiencing homelessness. That work is often physically and emotionally demanding and challenging. Many workers face stress, burnout and insecure employment arrangements, and there is a high level of casualisation. This landmark bill could expand long service leave entitlements for up to 250,000 workers in New South Wales.

It is important to note that some 75 per cent of workers in the social services sector are women. When I was shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, I visited many community service workers across the State, predominantly those working with victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence and with people experiencing homelessness. I remember one of the first workers that I met in that role. I will call her Kylie, which is not her real name. Kylie was tired. She was working an insurmountable workload after the former Government's terrible Going Home Staying Home reforms shut down refuges across New South Wales.

Before our chat was over, I knew that if I were to come back a couple of months later, it would be unlikely that Kylie would still be there. She could not have sustained the pace of the work, the emotionally exhausting and traumatic toll that it was taking on her or the lack of support. It was not because there was something wrong in her but because of the nature of the work and the lack of ongoing funding, with many organisations having to continuously apply for funding every year just to continue. I knew that she would not survive in that workplace much longer.

Sadly, my prediction came true. The next time I visited the service, Kylie had left. It caused me enormous sadness because she had such passion for her work, despite its enormous difficulty, but was unable to continue in the role. It was even worse for Kylie. Her years of service in the sector, across a number of agencies, meant that she would never qualify for long service leave. That sabbatical that helps to reinvigorate a worker's enthusiasm and passion for their work, allows them time for upskilling or retraining and provides them with a reward for loyalty to their work was unavailable to her. While I am so proud of the work that the Government has undertaken to provide more funding to refuges and other domestic violence and homelessness services, and the improvements in delivering longer term contracts in the community sector, it must do more to encourage workers who need to "take a break" to stay in the sector.

Listening to trauma day after day can cause vicarious trauma. While refuges and other domestic, family and violence services have mitigations in place, with counselling for workers and in-service training and debriefing, it takes its toll. Going to another service that does not deal with that kind of trauma could be helpful in allowing workers to take a career break while still remaining in the sector and using their skills on something that may feel more positive. However, someone like Kylie could not use her skills at another community service without losing her entitlement to long service leave, so she just gave up.

Portable long service leave entitlements will allow workers to access paid long service leave based on how long they have been employed in the sector, rather than how long they have worked for a single employer. Under the legislation, eligible workers will benefit from 6.1 weeks of paid leave after seven years of employment in the sector, with pro-rata entitlement for each extra year. The scheme is not mandatory for contractors, but it allows them to opt in. It provides a 12-month gift of service for workers who register in the first six months from commencement.

Workers with existing long service leave entitlements will not be disadvantaged by the scheme. Importantly, the bill establishes a four-year break in service before service credits are at risk of being forfeited. That is important for those community sector workers in the early stages of their career who might be parenting young children or those with older parents who may need to undertake caring responsibilities in their families. It gives them the breathing space they need to serve their communities but also take on those important roles for their families. This is an initiative which is well-past due for implementation. The legislation on the table today allows us to provide community sector workers with the same flexibility that we already provide to the building and construction industry and to contract cleaners. If passed, the legislation will come into effect on 1 July 2025 to allow time for employers, workers and the Long Service Corporation to prepare properly for implementation.

While I am talking about our amazing community service workers, I also give a shout-out to all those in my community who provide those services. That includes people who work at places like Carrie's Place, a homelessness and domestic violence service; Maitland Region Community Support; Early Links; Maitland

Community Care Services, which looks after our Meals on Wheels and other home and community care services; Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council; CatholicCare; Maitland Family Support; Sunnyfield; Samaritans; Father Chris Riley's Op Shop; Lifeline; Woodberry Place of Friends; the Benevolent Society; Hunter Prelude; and St Vincent de Paul Society.

Those organisations play such an important role in caring for the most vulnerable people in our community. They choose a life of caring and committing effort to help raise up others in our community; it is about time our communities did the same for them. I thank the Minister, who has been such a leading light on this issue and has such care for all of the workers in New South Wales. As we have seen already today, she has a passion for improving the lives of working people in New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (18:31): I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Opposition in debate on the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024. Community service workers are disadvantaged in their ability to access long service leave due to the nature of the industry, especially the prevalence of short-term employment contracts reflective of short-term service agreements, including, it should be noted, with the New South Wales Government. Portable long service leave schemes facilitate access to long service for workers in industries where it is structurally difficult for an employee to work for the same employer for the requisite number of years.

The New South Wales construction and cleaning industries already have portable long service schemes that have been operating successfully for some time. The community services portable long service scheme is based on the payment by the employer of a long service levy for each employee to the Long Service Corporation. The scheme is designed to be self-funding from the levy itself as well as from profits derived from the investment of the fund monies by TCorp. The levy is likely to start at 1.7 per cent but decrease as the fund grows in size with resulting revenue from investments. Employers are obligated under the current law to set aside funds to pay potential long service leave liabilities for all their workers, so there is no new direct cost here. Rather, there is a redirection of those funds to the Long Service Corporation.

The NSW Council of Social Service has nonetheless expressed some concern about the impact of the levy on smaller not-for-profits as well as the additional administrative burden. It has also raised concerns about the slow progress on the Government's plans to move towards routine use of five-year service agreements for the delivery of community services. Many service providers and their employees are still waiting anxiously to learn whether their service agreements are being renewed from 1 July 2024. The scope of the community services covered is set out in schedule 1 to the bill. The list can be amended as needed by regulation. Child care and aged care are not currently included because of additional complications with those sectors. Clause 4 of the bill appropriately enables the addition to the kinds of services covered in schedule 1 either by amending the description of a listed service or by adding a new service.

However, clause 4 also includes a provision that empowers the Minister to omit a listed service from schedule 1. In the Opposition's view, that is inappropriate because once the levy has started to be collected for the class of employees covered by that listed service there will be funds in what, by definition, is a long-term scheme. In raising that matter with the Minister, it was agreed that there was no scenario where that power would be needed. If, for any reason, a service needs to be removed from the list, that would need to be done by way of amending legislation that also provided transitional arrangements to appropriately deal with any funds so far collected from levies plus any profit on those funds. Consequently, during the consideration in detail stage, the Opposition will move an amendment to that effect which, I am pleased to note, the Government has agreed to support.

The bill provides for a contractor to voluntarily join the scheme as a "registered worker". Contractors will pay a levy at a rate to be set by the Minister after receiving advice from the Long Service Corporation. The Opposition supports that approach. As self-employed persons, contractors providing community services should have the freedom to manage their own financial affairs and to opt in or decide to remain out of the government-run long service leave scheme. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (18:35): I am proud to speak in support of the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024. I commend the Minister for Industrial Relations for bringing this important bill before the House. The bill is a testament to the fundamental role played by the community services sector in supporting the most vulnerable members of our society. The community services sector is a cornerstone of our economy, contributing \$15.4 billion during the 2019-20 financial year and accounting for one in eight jobs. This sector's importance extends across metropolitan and regional areas. In my electorate of South Coast, community workers make up a large percentage of the workforce, and the demand for community service workers is set to double by 2050. That growth highlights the essential nature of the sector and the critical need to support it.

The bill introduces a portable long service leave scheme for community services and will bring multiple economic benefits. By ensuring that workers have access to long service leave entitlements, the scheme will directly enhance job satisfaction, productivity and the overall quality of services delivered to our communities. Under the bill, workers are allowed to take a break in service for up to four years while preserving their accrued service. This allows workers to take necessary time off for caregiving or health reasons without losing their accumulated long service leave benefits. Those provisions in the bill not only support the wellbeing of workers but also incentivise them to return to the sector to continue their careers. That flexibility benefits employers by reducing burnout among workers, leading to lower absenteeism and increased efficiency within the sector. Given workers' increased motivation to remain in the sector rather than switch to one that provides leave entitlements, employers should also expect to save on costs associated with training and recruitment.

The economic benefits of the bill extend beyond pure financial gain. By supporting the stability and wellbeing of our community services workforce, we make a long-term investment in our society's health and wellbeing. The benefits arising from the bill will be substantial. A stronger community services sector could result in reduced social welfare costs and lower healthcare expenses, and will foster a more resilient and self-sufficient population. When individuals and families receive robust community support, they are better positioned to contribute positively to the economy through productive work and business opportunities. Equally importantly, the bill promotes economic equity by ensuring comprehensive coverage for community service workers. All eligible workers, regardless of their employment arrangements, including those on short-term contracts, will have access to long service leave benefits. That coverage extends to employees in both profit and non-profit government organisations.

Many community services workers are women—women like Christine who, during the department's public consultation, spoke of a thirty-year career broken up by bereavement, caring responsibilities and short-term contracts. Christine worked in a women's refuge for six years and a women's health centre for four years. She had a few short-term jobs for eight years and is now in her sixth year working in domestic violence support. Despite three decades of dedicated work, Christine has never qualified for long service leave. She expressed hope that the next generation of carers might benefit from the scheme, as a way of not only attracting and retaining employees but also ensuring quality of life for those people and their families. The broad scope also supports smaller community service providers that may struggle to attract employees due to lesser capacity to offer competitive benefits and opportunities for workers to progress their careers. The bill promotes a balanced and healthier sector by levelling the playing field and addressing those challenges, making the sector more attractive for workers to join. The scheme makes the community services sector more attractive and sustainable, ensuring the continued provision of essential services and economic stability.

I thank people like Narelle Clay and Angus McFarland for their years of advocacy. As a result, the bill will help to attract and retain skilled workers, address ongoing shortages, and strengthen local economies with stable jobs. For people like Christine, who have dedicated their careers to caring for others, it will give an opportunity to rest, spend time with loved ones and return to work feeling rejuvenated. It feels like an obvious solution to a long and widely suffered problem. Finally, the bill futureproofs the sector and will assist in delivering better economic outcomes for the community. By improving worker retention, boosting job satisfaction and improving the quality of service delivery, the bill is a significant step towards creating a stronger, fairer and more resilient community services sector. I commend the bill to the House.

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (18:40): I support the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024. I commend the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety, for her work in this space. The main purpose of the bill is the creation of a new portable long service leave scheme for community services workers. The scheme gives eligible workers access to paid time off based on how long they work in the sector rather than with a single employer. The bill defines the types of eligible community services, the workers who will have an entitlement, the employer obligations under the scheme, and the regulation-making powers and determinations, so that the scope of the scheme can evolve. The benefits of the bill to eligible workers include the provision of 6.1 weeks of paid leave after seven years of employment in the sector, with a pro-rata entitlement for each extra year, with the option for contractors to opt into the scheme.

The bill also provides eligible workers a 12-month gift of service for workers who register in the first six months from commencement and a four-year break in service before service credits are at risk of forfeiture, and ensures that workers with existing long service leave entitlements are not disadvantaged by the scheme. Furthermore, the bill establishes administrative arrangements that benefit the compliance and enforcement of the scheme, including the establishment of a sector committee with equal employer and worker body representation that will hear and determine appeals of administrative decisions and provide advice on the scheme, such as customer service standards. Provision is also made for the Long Service Corporation to maintain powers to monitor compliance, cancel, suspend and restore a registration, appoint inspectors with information-gathering powers, and engage in debt collection. The bill has been developed following extensive consultation with

stakeholders across the community services sector. It fulfils the Government's commitment to establish a portable entitlement scheme for community sector workers and builds on the success of two existing schemes in New South Wales for the contract cleaning and building and construction industries. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (18:42): I speak in support of the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024. The proposed scheme for portable long service leave in the community services sector will provide far-reaching, long-lasting and flexible support for thousands of workers in New South Wales. These workers support the wellbeing of individuals and communities across a wide array of specialised sectors—from disability, youth and domestic violence support to social work and neighbourhood outreach. Community services work is emotionally and physically demanding. Workers in the sector support people with complex needs and often challenging behaviours. However, those workers struggle with the overwhelming stress, burnout and fatigue resulting from the emotional and physically taxing nature of the job. They are also impacted by rapid industry growth, skill shortages and the tendency for short-term contracts, which create insecurity and hinder skill development and productivity.

The workforce within the community services sector is highly mobile, with many workers switching employers and often moving across the sector. This places them at a disadvantage, as many workers may lose their accrued service leave overnight through no fault of their own. Catherine was a wonderful community services worker employed at the Dundas Area Neighbourhood Centre. She supported vulnerable residents living in the City of Parramatta, particularly those individuals and families living in public and community housing in Telopea, Dundas, Dundas Valley and Ermington. Catherine always wore a smile, nothing that was asked of her was too great a challenge and she had great ambition to help people in incredibly difficult personal situations. I knew Catherine in my former role as a local councillor and lord mayor and saw firsthand the work she did to change and turn lives around. But when Catherine made a career move to another community services provider, she spoke to me about the fact that she would not be able to transfer her long service leave entitlements. It was devastating for Catherine that to achieve career progression, she had to forgo the long service leave she had accumulated while working so hard for the people in my local area.

Portable long service leave is crucial in a sector where over 75 per cent of workers are women. A 2022 survey showed that over half of women in the sector in New South Wales cited insecure work as a career obstacle and one in two felt that it was unlikely they would be in the social services sector in five years. Workers themselves are laying out the case for a solution. During public consultation on the bill, a woman named Stacey shared that despite having worked in the industry for over 20 years, she has never received long service leave due to frequent short-term contracts, experiences of burnout and the subsequent need to change jobs. The bill benefits all workers in the sector, especially workers like Stacey. The scheme is fit for purpose, inclusive and flexible for workers. At its core it will provide support to thousands of workers who are currently unable to access long service leave entitlements.

Under the scheme, workers will have the same weekly accumulation of entitlements under the Long Service Leave Act 1955 but will be able to access long service leave after just seven years in the sector. Workers who register with the scheme within the first six months of its commencement will also be provided with a one-off gift of service, which will further reduce the wait time to access long service leave down to six years instead of seven. Additionally, a worker may access long service earlier than the seven-year vesting period in certain circumstances. An early payment may be made in instances where a worker has reached five years of service and intends on permanently leaving the sector. It was important that the design of the scheme reflected the specific character of the community services sector. Aligning with parallel schemes in other jurisdictions, eligibility following seven years of service is fit for purpose, given the strenuous nature of community services work. It aims to capture more workers by beating the burnout that affects so many workers following many years of service.

The majority of the workers in the community sector remain working in the sector for more than 15 years, yet few experience long service leave. The nature of the community and disability sector leads to many workers moving from one employer to another, not by choice but by necessity. That is a consequence of a number of characteristics of the sector, including insecure funding, competitive tendering, and smaller organisations that do not have a clear career pathway within an organisation for experienced and highly skilled workers. Workers' entitlements do not transfer to new employers. Consequently, workers lose their entitlements, including long service leave, when they change employers. A break of up to four years would allow workers time for studying and further education or self-care and regeneration before returning to the workforce. In a sector as highly feminised as community services, at any one time a proportion of workers will be on leave to fulfil their care responsibilities. The benefits in the scheme will attract skilled workers to return to the community services workforce, which benefits the sector as a whole. This is a win-win for workers, organisations and the community.

The portable long service leave scheme seeks to recognise the diversity in work undertaken across the sector, as employers and workers perform a mix of roles and services. It will cover all workers who provide

community services, even if they do not provide frontline services. For example, an individual who works in administration or accounts for a community service provider would be covered by the scheme. This ensures that all workers in the sector are covered, including those who are essential in the running of a community service. The inclusive scope of the scheme is intended to ensure that the skills of workers are retained in the sector. This allows for workers to have their time in the sector recognised and supports workforce retention and development as workers continue to progress through their careers. The bill also seeks to provide support to those workers who, for a variety of reasons, may wish to take some time off but want to remain in the sector. During the department's consultation period, the stories of workers were unveiled. They are stories that illustrate exactly why the bill is so significant for workers in the community services sector. This is Christine's story:

My name is Christine Smith and I have worked in the sector since the mid 1990s, when I began a role in a women's refuge. I worked there for approximately 6 years before I left due to family caring needs following a bereavement. In 2000, I returned to the sector for approximately 8 years before working for organisations with short term funding contracts. I then worked at a women's health centre for almost four years before beginning my current role at a women's domestic violence support service in 2018. My worklife has been broken by bereavement, caring responsibilities and short term funding contracts. During these years I have also missed opportunities to care for my aged parents, and to take time to care for myself, because I have not had access to long service leave. Due to my age I may not benefit from portable LSL, but I feel it is something which will help attract and retain the next generation of workers, not only as a workplace benefit, but also as a method of ensuring quality of life for workers and their families.

Phillip's story is not dissimilar:

I'm a disability support worker who has never been eligible to access long service leave, after 12 years of working in the sector. The longest I have worked at one organisation is 5 years, broken up by some independent work. My previous employer was absorbed by another company, and our entitlements weren't carried over. A break would benefit me greatly.

Under the scheme proposed in the bill, workers will be able to take a break in service of up to four years without it affecting their entitlement. This aims to accommodate for work and life changes that should not and will not jeopardise an individual's ability to accrue leave. A portable long service leave entitlement for workers in the community services sector will assist in attracting these workers to a career in the sector. Organisations want the portable long service leave scheme to be accessible to all workers in the community sector and to be implemented as quickly as possible and at the lowest cost that is sustainable for providers. Organisations do not want our workers in New South Wales left behind their colleagues in the Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and Queensland, who have already established portable long service leave schemes for the sector. This is particularly important for community services organisations in border towns.

I thank all stakeholders who have been involved in getting the bill to this stage, especially the Australian Services Union for its strong advocacy. I give a big thankyou to our dedicated and tenacious Minister, who has worked tirelessly with her parliamentary colleagues during this term and in previous terms. The solution is to support the bill. Ultimately, the flexible, inclusive and portable nature of the scheme provides the best solution possible for community services workers in New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (18:53): I support the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024 on behalf of The Greens and acknowledge that the Minister for Industrial Relations is in the Chamber with us. This is the second bill of the day that has encouraged debate about good industrial relations reform, and it is lovely to debate this. I cannot recall in the almost 10 years that I have been in this House a time when I have been so happy about government legislation before us, and now I have had two good bills in one day. The Greens were very welcoming towards the industrial manslaughter reform that was debated earlier, and we enthusiastically support this portable long service leave bill.

We know that the Australian Services Union [ASU], which I should declare is my union, has been a strong advocate of this reform for many years. We know that the establishment of this scheme for the portability of long service leave for workers in the community services sector will have an incredible impact on the ability to recruit and retain staff and to address serious issues with burnout and people shifting. It will also be a way to address what has been a sad indictment on funding in the community services sector, which has seen insecure work through short-term contracts because of short turnaround government grants processes or timelines for funding. That has had a huge impact on our community services sector being able to provide secure employment and clear career pathways.

The Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill will allow workers to access paid long service leave based on how long they have been employed in the sector rather than how long they have worked for a single employer. That is critical. This is valuable reform that The Greens in New South Wales, along with the community services sector and unions, have long supported. This reform will impact over 250,000 people who are currently employed in the community services sector in New South Wales, including people working in disability care, family and domestic violence services, and homelessness services, 75 per cent of whom are women. The ASU is an incredibly strong advocate for ensuring equal pay but, when considering ongoing

disadvantage and gender inequality in our society, we need to recognise that boosting workplace rights for women-dominated professions and industries will have a huge impact on addressing some of those inequities.

The bill responds to the rise of insecure work in the disability and community services sector and aims to support the sustainability of the sector by boosting worker retention. While this portable long service leave bill is essential for the sector, it is critical that it never be used to justify that it is okay to continue short-term government funding to community services. It should never be used as a way to say we can do these questionable project-by-project trials, pilots and grant schemes that mean that our community services workers do not get that security of employment. The bill should provide additional protections and rights for these workers. It should never be used as an excuse to underfund our community services such that they know people can shift and change between jobs because there is so much more to consider in that space.

In that vein, I strongly support the need to ensure ongoing and long-term funding in the community services sector, and I recognise the work of the NSW Council of Social Service in advocating pre-election and post-election to ensure we see that change. I strongly encourage all members in this place to get behind the critical call for the New South Wales Government to provide core funding to our neighbourhood centres. We know that is critical and we know that many of these community services workers we are talking about are connected to our neighbourhood centres. We have a requirement to ensure that, in addition to addressing the burnout experienced by people not having access to portable long service leave, we address the burnout experienced by people working in the sector. Some services in the sector are not funded for the necessary level of staffing, meaning that staff members have to deal with long waiting lists or spend hours on their phone every day telling people that they do not have the capacity to be able to help them or refer them because that service is not funded to provide the necessary staff.

Community services workers play an essential role in caring for and supporting our communities, but for years they have struggled in a sector with poor retention and high turnover, in large part due to sometimes less than ideal work conditions and huge pressures. The bill is a welcome step forward but must be in line with the idea of funding those direct community services. I echo the concerns with the bill and recognise that a dialogue must occur between the Minister for Industrial Relations and the Minister Family and Community Services to ensure that we are funding these services adequately. We must not alleviate the pressure from one point of view but maintain the pressure from high workload, underfunding and understaffing. They are also industrial relations issues, and we need to make sure that we are addressing them in a holistic way across government. I acknowledge that the Minister is nodding, and I know that she is absolutely committed to that.

The Greens also understand that the Minister intends to move an amendment that will address an omission, which The Greens picked up—and it is my understanding that it was an unintended omission—to ensure that sexual assault services are included as part of the scope of the bill. We know that it is absolutely critical to ensure that they are recognised as part of the community services sector. While I am speaking about amendments, I acknowledge that the Opposition has foreshadowed its intention to move an amendment that would remove the power for the regulation to amend schedule 1 by omitting a service from the schedule. That is the list of the community service workers. We absolutely support that sensible amendment. If there is an intention by this Government or any future government to omit certain types of workers from the community services sector, then that should certainly be brought to the attention of Parliament rather than taken through a separate process. The Greens acknowledge and will support both the Government and Opposition amendments.

We have been talking about the bill in the sense of portable long service leave. Everyone gets excited about that, but we must recognise that it is only portable long service leave for the community services sector. When we say, "We will talk about a portable long service leave bill", people, particularly those in highly casualised and highly insecure workplaces, including early childhood education, hospitality, retail and other areas, immediately say, "Oh my gosh! That would be amazing." We know that the kinds of things that happen in those sectors absolutely happen in other sectors too. I urge and encourage the Government to open a conversation about what it looks like to have a broader scheme that recognises insecure work and the kinds of pressures, and the right that people have won to ensure that their long service leave is not lost in the shift to a casualisation of the workforce and a focus on profit over the idea of protecting people's rights. Maybe we can find a space to open up those dialogues and conversations once we celebrate this win, and we should absolutely celebrate this win.

Members have mentioned Angus McFarland, the secretary of the ASU, whom I have known for many years. We campaigned against voluntary student unionism together back in the day when we were both at Sydney university. I note that certain members are in the Chamber who I know love voluntary student unionism and no doubt campaigned on the other side. While we might not have succeeded in stopping that introduction entirely, working and campaigning with Angus to ensure that at least the University of Sydney's student organisation survived under our watch made it clear that Angus was going to make an incredible contribution. It is so great that he is now leading our "mighty ASU"—I will leave other members to say that. It is absolutely critical for

community workers in this State to have this reform. I will end as I started by saying that it is so lovely to be in this place and to be passing legislation that we know is good for the people of New South Wales.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (19:02): I make a brief contribution to the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024. The Government committed to establishing a portable entitlement scheme for community sector workers, and we are delivering. The bill will create a new portable long service leave scheme for community service workers. As we have heard from members in this place, the scheme will give eligible workers access to paid time off based on how long they work in the sector rather than with a single employer. It will build on the success of two existing schemes in New South Wales for the contract cleaning and building and construction industries.

The bill was developed following extensive consultation with stakeholders across the community services sector, and they tell me that they feel heard. Those stakeholders included peak bodies and unions representing workers and employers as well as New South Wales government agencies and Australian jurisdictions that already have portable long service leave benefits for community service workers. It is exciting to hear such good news that up to 250,000 community sector workers will see their leave rights expanded under this remarkable legislative reform. The reform will allow community sector workers to access their long service leave sooner and accrue leave based on the time employed in the sector rather than time employed by a single employer. Workers across the disability care and family and domestic violence services, homelessness services, neighbourhood centres and many other essential services in all of our communities will benefit from the reform.

The move responds to the rise of insecure work in the disability and community sectors and forms part of the Government's commitment to attract and retain key workers across our State. Members often acknowledge the good people who are our community services workers as part of our community recognition statements and private members' statements in this place. Those people work not for recognition but because they want to support the communities in which they live. They are dedicated to social justice. They are dedicated to promoting social inclusion. They care about the wellbeing and mental health of their community. But, as has been pointed out, so many workers face issues such as stress, job insecurity and burnout, and the high level of casualisation impacts this sector more than any other.

Employers and employees have told us for a long time that a portable leave scheme would help address those particular issues, and I am proud to be part of a Labor Government that is delivering this reform. It is great to have a shared vision for supporting workers. As the member for Newtown and many other speakers have pointed out, the fact that more than 75 per cent of those 250,000 workers in the community services sector are women must be noted in this contribution. Women play a strong role in our community services sector in those caring roles and on those tough issues that are not easy to get up and speak about. I feel that I have heard so many stories over the years that I have worked in the political field from many of those women, who have had to put their families and their time out aside in order to continue earning a wage.

I acknowledge, for the record, that the key elements of the scheme include offering paid long service leave up after seven years, rather than 10 years, and allowing workers to accrue long service leave across multiple employers within the sector, ensuring the portability of leave. Under existing rules, community service workers lose that leave if they move from one employer to the next, despite the nature of the sector seeing workers frequently shift between organisations and employers. Having one central agency administer that long service leave, including records and leave payments, is also an element of the scheme. As the Minister pointed out, we are bringing New South Wales in line with other jurisdictions that have already established portable long service leave for those sectors, and the Minns Labor Government has decided that New South Wales cannot be left behind. We value those essential workers.

I now acknowledge the words of the mighty Australian Services Union [ASU] in its booklet that it has shared with many members in this place—and I note that I am a proud member of that union:

This bill comes after years of campaigning by ASU members who know that this change would improve the sector, keeping workers ... in the sector, no matter happens to funding.

It is a basic working right for so many of those dedicated employees, but workers have found that they have rarely been able to access that right. I acknowledge the fabulous Angus McFarland, a Blue Mountains boy. I also acknowledge all the other ASU members and workers in the sector whose faces are in the booklet, including the fabulous Jan Primrose, Narelle Clay, Amanda Carr—one of the ASU organisers, again from the mountains—and my mate Helen Westwood, a former member of the other place, who now works and campaigns for the ASU and maintains her belief in workers' rights. I express gratitude to the Blue Mountains Community Interagency and its hundreds of member organisations. I cannot possibly list all of them in 2½ minutes, but I have always said that my community services sector in the Blue Mountains is a best-practice model. I have said that to every Minister from across the political sphere.

Stories from Blue Mountains community services workers often speak to vicarious trauma, fatigue and employment disadvantage. Those people step in and care for some of the most vulnerable members of communities, and they work in precarious and insecure work themselves. Finally, like other members—and rightly so—I thank the Minister and her team for their commitment to supporting workers across this great State. I congratulate the Minister, and I commend the bill to the House.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (19:11): The introduction of the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024 fulfils the New South Wales Labor Government's commitment to create a portable long service leave scheme for the community sector. It is interesting to note that this scheme is introduced exactly 50 years after the introduction of the Building and Construction Industry Long Service Payments Bill 1974. Fifty years after a male Minister stood in this Chamber and introduced the scheme for that male-dominated industry, a female Minister in the New South Wales Parliament has finally introduced a scheme for a female-dominated industry. That is the strength of having, for the first time in New South Wales history, a Cabinet that is 50 per cent female. We get this kind of legislation into female-dominated industries. It also follows on from the introduction of portable long service leave for contract cleaners just a couple of years ago.

The University of New South Wales has conducted social policy research that looked at the community sector in New South Wales. It found that the community sector workforce remains predominantly female, with 77.6 per cent of positions held by women. Notably, one in five organisations operate entirely with female staff. That statistic speaks volumes about the gender dynamics in the sector. Another key aspect is the age demographic of community sector workers. Approximately one in four employees is aged 55 or over, indicating that a substantial proportion of the workforce is facing retirement. The trend is even more pronounced in smaller organisations, where the figure rises to one in three among those with five or fewer staff. In terms of employment types, part-time positions surpass full-time roles, with a ratio of roughly four to three. That highlights the job instability that many workers face in the community sector.

Additionally, casual employment is significantly prevalent, with 31.5 per cent of the workforce in casual roles—a figure that is far higher than the national average. Academic qualifications vary widely across the sector. About 40 per cent of staff hold degree-level qualifications, with higher proportions in health-related services and lower proportions in those focusing on ageing, disability and carer services, particularly in regions outside metropolitan Sydney. The sector is indeed growing, with 45 per cent of organisations reporting an increase in staff over the past year, driven primarily by the expansion of the NDIS. However, recruiting and retaining skilled staff remains a formidable challenge. Funding uncertainty and low wage levels are major barriers, with over 40 per cent of organisations struggling to retain degree-qualified practitioners. In the community sector, it really is about living pay cheque to pay cheque, and every MP in this House has received that frantic call from a community group whose funding rests on the whims of political budgets.

The difficulty is compounded when recruiting specialised roles such as multilingual staff, Aboriginal workers, solicitors and allied health professionals. To manage fluctuations in demand and the uncertainty of funding, many organisations resort to offering casual positions or fixed-term contracts. That strategy impacts on the stability and continuity of service in community support roles. It is clear that the community services sector faces many challenges. The introduction of the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024 is just one step in addressing those challenges. The scheme will be funded by a quarterly levy on employers that is similar to the levy in the other two schemes. Eligible workers will benefit from 6.1 weeks of paid leave after seven years of employment in the sector, with a pro-rata rate entitlement for each extra year. The scheme is not mandatory for contractors but allows them to opt in, and it allows for a four-year break in service before service credits are at risk of being forfeited.

Workers in the following services will be eligible to join the scheme: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community services; accommodation support services; alcohol and other drug services; and child safety and support services, including education, community development services, community care services, community legal services, mental health support services and recreation services—so sporting organisations should take note. Further services include transport, welfare, disability support, employment, family and domestic violence, family support, financial counselling, foster care—and the list goes on. The bill is great news for the thousands of community workers across the Auburn electorate. An area as diverse as the Auburn electorate, with some of the poorest residents in the State, is highly dependent on community services.

Auburn ranks third among electorates where residents' mortgage repayments exceed 30 per cent of their wage. Forty-eight per cent of households in the Auburn electorate live on less than \$649 a week, and 3 per cent have no income whatsoever. We are so grateful for our community services workers, particularly in organisations such as the Salvation Army, Barnardos, CASS Care, the Western Sydney Community Centre, STARTTS, the Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre, and mosques, temples and churches, which do so much community work. There are so many community organisations that the list is too long to mention here. But we are greatly

appreciative of the work they do. The community services portable long service leave scheme is one step towards making their job more secure.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (19:17): I support the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024, and I thank the Minister for Industrial Relations for bringing this important legislation to the House. I also thank Narelle Clay and Angus McFarland from the Australian Services Union for their amazing advocacy on behalf of workers from the community and disability services sectors in New South Wales. We are truly lucky in New South Wales to have people of the calibre of Narelle Clay and Angus McFarland. Services like homelessness support, mental health support, disability support and women's health support are just a few of the many community services that will benefit from the passing of the bill. The bill will make this important sector more attractive, equitable and fair for the people who provide those critical services, mostly under stressful and demanding conditions.

We have made significant strides since long service leave was first introduced in Australia. When the Labor Party presented the Long Service Leave Bill in 1955, the primary goal was to help workers recover their health and strength after many years of continuous service. Times have certainly changed since then. Working conditions and the nature of employee tenure have changed dramatically. In New South Wales under the current legislation, full-time, part-time and casual employees can access 8.66 weeks of paid leave, but only after 10 years of continuous service with the same employer. Unfortunately, long continuous service with the same employer is not common in the community services sector—hence, the reason for this bill. The sector is very agile. Workers frequently change roles and work for multiple employers, often not by choice but due to short-term funding arrangements and contracts.

Employees work under challenging conditions. Quite often they face burnout and fatigue, which force them to change jobs or take an extended break from the industry, making them ineligible for long service leave. Service providers complain that they lose workers to other industries and sectors that provide better and more secure entitlements for workers. But the bill seeks to fix that problem. The bill will provide portable long service leave for the community services sector. That will allow a community service worker to keep accruing their long service leave, even if they change employers, as long as they continue working in the community services sector. The bill also provides easier access to long service leave compared to the traditional model. Instead of 10 years, an employee will be able to take paid long service leave after just seven years in the sector.

The NSW Department of Customer Service conducted public consultation on the proposed changes with strong engagement from stakeholders. There were over 700 survey responses and 50 formal submissions. Over 70 people shared their experiences of working in the community services sector. Over 200 people, including workers, employers and peak organisations attended workshops and information sessions held by the department. The message received from the sector was loud and clear. Around 96 per cent of survey respondents agreed that community services workers should have access to portable long service leave. That included 93 per cent of workers—or 555 workers out of the 580 who responded to the survey—and 74 per cent of employers. Public consultation also made clear how beneficial the scheme will be for workers' motivation to remain in the vital community services sector, empowered by the opportunity to take a break or change employers when needed.

Schedule 1 to the bill outlines the services that will be captured by the scheme. The scope was prepared after extensive consultation with the sector and is designed to be broad and inclusive. I understand that it aligns with the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award, which is broadly applied across the community services sector. The scheme recognises that all workers in the community services sector play a vital role, not just frontline workers. Unlike equivalent schemes in Victoria, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory, the proposed scheme applies to all workers employed by an organisation that provides community services. That includes frontline workers, administrative workers, and mid-level and senior management alike. The reality of a career progression in the sector often involves changing between frontline and administration roles. There are also workers, particularly in smaller organisations, who wear multiple hats and perform a range of work—from client-facing work through to payroll processing. By ensuring that all workers are included, the scheme promotes career progression in the sector and reduces the burden of complex administration.

The benefits provided by the bill will increase attraction to and retention in the sector. Given that community services providers generally operate on tight budgets, every single dollar counts. Retaining workers and skills in the sector not only benefits the families and individuals who receive services but also yields savings for providers in areas like recruitment and training—rewarding the sector at large. One workshop conducted by the department as part of public consultation was attended by 14 workers with cumulative experience of over 250 years in the sector. However, only four of the attendees had been able to access their long service leave just once. That shows the scale, depth and reasoning behind the bill. In fact, one worker felt it necessary to use their long service leave in conjunction with their maternity leave just so they could spend some more time with their baby. The bill permits workers to have a break in service of up to four years without affecting their entitlement.

Prescribed circumstances, such as ill health or caring responsibilities, extend that four-year threshold further. That flexibility allows the workforce, the majority of which is female, to take a break when needed without putting their service accrual at risk.

It is unfair that people who provide care and support for our communities struggle to access a leave entitlement that is designed to benefit their own wellbeing and reward their dedication. The community services sector works to improve and uphold community wellbeing while also freeing up labour resources for the rest of the economy. Given the significance of the sector, I commend the Minister for persisting with her vision to improve the working conditions for community services workers. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (19:24): I join in debate on the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024, another terrific Labor bill. It is a great day in Parliament when we help, support and thank our New South Wales workers. The bill is so important for the many community and disability workers who provide such crucial services right across the State. I acknowledge the work of the Australian Services Union, Angus McFarland and his team, who have advocated for those essential workers for years. Providing portable long service leave not only recognises them, as it should, but also assists with recruiting and retaining workers in the community and disability sectors. Joanna, a disability worker, says:

Having portable entitlements is a necessary change. The industry has become more complex, and having portable entitlements will help acknowledge that our work is professional.

Leanne says:

It's common to change jobs in our sector. I was at one organisation for 9 years. Even after all that time on the frontline I wasn't entitled to long service. Even though I worked hard for it, was loyal to the sector and kept vulnerable people safe.

The skills and caregiving of Joanna, Leanne and all disability and community workers are vital. We hear, we see and we thank them all. However, thank you is not nearly enough. They need to be given the same conditions as other workers in those sectors right across Australia. The Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory have already established portable long service schemes for the disability and community sectors. New South Wales should not fall behind. Workers in our State deserve the same support and respect.

The bill covers workers in alcohol and other drug services; child safety and support services; community legal services; disability supports and services; family and domestic support services; foster care services; homelessness support services; out-of-home care services; settlement and refugee services; social housing services; women's health support services; Youth Justice services; and youth support services. All of them are really important jobs for the people of New South Wales. They are huge and often high-stress jobs, and they take a toll. Worker turnover can be high because of the demanding nature of the work. Crisis and trauma are associated with these jobs, which can lead to burnout.

The benefits of the bill are tenfold for the worker, their friends and family, and of course the community of New South Wales. It will allow them to take an extended holiday to spend time with family; complete further education and training; and address health issues that require rest. It will provide savings to employers and the community; reduce recruitment costs; attract more workers; and create savings in training. Clients will have the same workers, and workers will be able to follow those clients to different services or packages. That is really important because it can be quite unsettling for some who do not have the same worker day in, day out. Long service leave will reduce burnout and stop experienced staff leaving the sector. Those conditions are so reflective of the Minns Labor Government's values: equity, fairness, respect and opportunity.

It is only with the New South Wales Labor Government that workers' rights are put front and centre. I congratulate the Minister, who is in the Chamber, and her hardworking team. I think she has not left the Chamber many times today. Our Minister is a strong unionist and advocate for workers in New South Wales and has a long record of taking care of these workers. I thank the Australian Services Union and the mighty trade union movement for fighting for these rights for a long time. We wrap our arms around our community and disability workers tonight and thank them for their care and contribution to New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (19:29): I support the Government's Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024 and thank the Minister and her team for introducing this wonderful bill. The nature of long service leave has changed. For the vast majority of the workforce, gone are the days when you would work for one employer for decades. Today people are anticipated to have at least five career changes and probably lots of jobs in between. They will probably work across different industries. Today we have an increasingly casualised workforce. Employers in the pursuit of profit maximisation are demanding more from their employees in being an on-call workforce, receiving ad hoc hours, in a casualised environment.

This bill allows community services workers to have access to portable long service leave, which has been previously approved for contract cleaners and construction workers. Many of these workers suffer from the dual

flexibility concept, working odd hours across the week, on limited contracts, as funding for programs is generally from one to five years. Once the funding ends, so does their tenure with the organisation. This bill has been discussed with the sector and has many great initiatives, including a 12-month gift of service for workers who register in the first six months of the program, up to a four-year break of service before service credits are at risk of default and, for eligible workers, 6.1 weeks of paid leave after seven years of employment and pro-rata leave after that. This bill commences from proclamation, with the intention to begin on 1 July 2025, allowing time for employers, workers and the Long Service Corporation to prepare.

This bill is a great success for women in a woman-dominated sector. I thank the Australian Services Union for its strong campaign. I pick up what the member for Auburn said today. She referred to the original long service leave bill in this place, which came from a male Minister in a male-dominated industry, and to having a female Minister for Industrial Relations bringing in portable long service leave for a female-dominated industry. I love history and looking back, so I might, if the House wishes to dwell for a couple of moments, bring to its attention the people who stood at this very dispatch box and what was said when the long service leave bill was first introduced in 1951.

The first long service leave bill in the English-speaking world was introduced in this Parliament, in New South Wales. It was seen as novel and experimental legislation. The great Labor Premier James McGirr, who is great-uncle of the current member for Wagga Wagga—whom we hope will see the light one day and return to the Labor fold—introduced amendments to the Industrial Arbitration Act to give to all employees working under State awards the right to long service leave. It did not give it to them outright; it was experimental. All they had to do was to ask the Industrial Commission or the conciliation committees dealing with their industries for suitable clauses to be inserted into their awards. That was a flexible bill. Imagine us introducing bills that say, "You have the right to ask."

The experimental legislation may not have been the best, and it had to be amended in 1952 and then again in 1953, before landing on the current Long Service Leave Act 1955, which was introduced by Mr Abram Landa, the Labor member for Bondi and the Minister for Labour and Industry, among other portfolios. On 20 October 1955, in his speech on the second reading of the Long Service Leave Bill, he said:

We on this side of the House, and, in fact the Labour movement in New South Wales, are very proud of being the pioneer of this historic piece of legislation for the improvement of conditions of life of the people.

Whilst concerns were raised at the time by the Opposition, it too was supportive. Ivan Black, the member for Neutral Bay, was leading for the Opposition and said:

The Opposition does not oppose the principle of reasonable long service leave ... Long service leave is a good principle.

Today's bill will allow flexibility within the community services industry, as a person goes from one employer to another. Mr Black from the Opposition may have foreshadowed something 69 years ago, when he said, on behalf of the Liberal Opposition, "Long service leave will tend to create a greater desire in both parties"—being the employer and the employee—"to maintain continuity of association in industry." He also went on to say that, in the move from a contract to full-time employment, the worker will tend to say, "Here is an opportunity for continuity of association with long service leave to come." This results in happier industrial relations. It is quite good to see that both sides of the House and all members of the crossbench, since day one in 1951, with the exploratory legislation, through to today, hopefully, continue to support the principle of long service leave. As we see particularly in the community services sector, we are trying to retain and attract workers, who are actually being rewarded for their long-term commitment in an industry, in a service that actually enhances and supports people's lives.

The Minister has introduced and passed the industrial manslaughter legislation in this House and is soon to have portable long service leave extended to community services workers. She continues the tradition as stated by the Labor Minister Abram Landa in 1955, personally and on behalf of all the Labor MPs and MLCs, "to pioneer historic pieces of legislation for the improvement of the conditions of the life of the working people", which is the basis of the Labor philosophy.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:38): I support the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024, which will provide a scheme for portable long service leave for our community services sector employees. Long service leave for me as a teacher was a human right. It was something that unions fought for. I had the privilege to possess and use it as a Paralympian for extended periods of preparation for my Paralympic campaign, because I had banked it up over years of service to public education. It is wonderful to know that we are now, thanks to the Minister and her team, offering long service leave to a sector of our community that has never been afforded that privilege, which is so important for people's wellbeing and their investment in their ability to contribute in other parts of their own lives and also in other parts of their community.

Those employees support the wellbeing of individuals and communities across a variety of service areas, including homelessness and housing, disability, family and domestic violence support, social work and neighbourhood outreach. All those employees are absolutely crucial—and so important and valued—to our communities for the contribution they make to the lives of vulnerable people, in particular, across our communities. In the sector short-term employment arrangements are common due to the physically and emotionally demanding nature of the work. Workers are stressed, burnt out and fatigued due to the taxing nature of their work. They often deal with very difficult clientele. Demand and skill shortages as well as lack of job security, given the prevalence of casual and contract work, compounds that stress and hinders skill development and, sadly, productivity.

The community services sector has a highly mobile workforce that sees many workers switching employers and moving within the sector. That makes it challenging for workers to accrue service, with many losing their benefits through no fault of their own. On the Central Coast I often meet people who work in the social work sector who then transfer to a different employer in the homelessness and housing sector and then work in the disability sector with a different employer, so transferability is important. Also, employees in the sector often pick up only a few hours of work at various places each week to fit in with being a mum, for their personal wellbeing or to accommodate a disability or ability, so flexibility of work is also important.

Providing long service leave to the community service sector is important, and I give credit to the team that has created this opportunity. It is a highly feminised sector, with women making up approximately 75 per cent of the workforce. Average wages are lower than in other sectors and employment is less secure, with an estimated 50 per cent of the workforce employed as casual or fixed-term staff rather than permanent. In a 2022 NSW Council of Social Service survey, 53 per cent of respondents cited insecure work as a career obstacle, with half the respondents feeling it was unlikely that they would be working in the sector in five years time. Some of that reflects the challenging nature of government and government contracts, so the Labor Government has extended the three-year contract to a five-year contract in some of the sectors to try to create more permanent arrangements for the workforce.

Establishing a portable long service scheme will give our workers access to an entitlement that recognises their hard work in caring for our community. It is a fit-for-purpose, inclusive and flexible scheme that will support thousands of workers who are currently unable to access long service leave entitlements. Under the scheme, workers will have the same weekly accumulation of entitlements under the Long Service Leave Act 1955 but will be able to access long service leave after seven years in the sector—lucky them; it took me 10 years. It is a great outcome for people who work in a difficult and challenging sector and is important to the delivery of services in our communities. In certain circumstances a worker may access long service earlier than the seven-year vesting period and early payments may be made in instances where a worker has reached five years of service and plans to leave the sector permanently.

Workers will also be able to take a break in service of up to four years without it affecting their entitlement. That is designed to accommodate work and life changes that should not jeopardise an individual's ability to accrue leave. I commend the Minister and her team for providing this opportunity because, as a sector staffed primarily by women, being able to take leave to look after kids without being penalised is important. It is a responsible role that women choose to take and if they have the financial capability to do that, they should not be penalised. The design of the scheme reflects the needs and character of the community services sector. Aligning with comparative legislation from other jurisdictions such as Victoria, the seven-year vesting period is fit for purpose given the strenuous and exhausting nature of community services work. It aims to capture more workers and reduce the burnout that affects so many of them.

The scheme is inclusive, covering all workers who provide community services—even those who are not providing frontline services, such as workers in administration or accounts. It creates an incentive for workers to keep their skills within the sector, which will reduce staff turnover and minimise the costs associated with training and replacing staff. Ultimately, it gives workers an incentive to stay in the industry, boost their skills and extend their careers in a rapidly growing industry. Once again, I thank the Minister and her team. This is a hugely important labour bill. On the eve of passing the industrial manslaughter bill, this Government is changing the nature of work and looking after workers in this State who do not necessarily have good support as individuals but have the support of government and the unions. The bill will change the lives of so many people who do such important work in our community. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (19:44): It gives me great pride to support the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024. I congratulate the Minister for Industrial Relations on bringing the bill to the House, putting Labor policy into practice, delivering on a promise that we made to the trade union movement, and extending the benefits of long service leave to an important part of the workforce in a comprehensive way. The bill extends long service leave not only to roughly 250,000 workers in the community

services sector who are employees but also to those who are contractors. That is an important part of the bill because long service leave has traditionally been an entitlement of employees of an employer. Back in the 1970s and 1980s the building workers unions determined that they wished to see long service leave extended to casual workers, who constituted the majority of the workforce in that industry at the time. They were successful in that regard back in the 1980s—I think it was 1986. The former Labor Government extended the provision of long service leave to workers who were employed by cleaning contractors throughout the State—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: In 2010.

Mr DAVID MEHAN: —in 2010. Now in 2024 we are extending it to a large and important sector of the workforce and a growing part of our community—the non-government providers of social services throughout the State. It will be pleasing for my constituents who work for NDIS employers, and it will be welcome news for my constituents who work for tenants' advice services. I give a shout-out to the Central Coast Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service. That is one good example of the benefits that the bill will bring to workers in that industry. The career of those workers is often marked by moving from one small tenants' advice service to another so they can gain experience and move up the award ladder. In the past, moving from one employer to another meant that an employee would lose the long service leave accrued at one employer when they moved to another. Now they will be able to stay in the industry and accumulate long service leave—being two months leave after 10 years of service—which will be a great benefit to them.

The member for Blacktown mentioned the Minister for Labour and Industry, and Minister for Social Welfare—the then member for Bondi—who, back in 1955, introduced the original long service leave bill, which became the Long Service Leave Act 1955. It is important to remember that moment today. At the time the Minister made the point that the bill was intended "to extend long service leave to workers generally in the State" because at the time it did not cover casual workers. The Minister—who was a Minister in the Cahill Labor Government—also made the point that in 1951 a Labor government had extended long service leave to all employees under State awards. Before that, the only workers covered by long service leave were some public sector workers and a small number of workers covered by State awards who had achieved long service leave by the actions of their union. The Minister noted that, following those steps, it was the Government's intention to extend long service leave to all workers throughout the State. At the time he noted:

The humane benefits which our legislation now guarantees to workers often had their origin in a single claim by one union before the industrial tribunals. After, perhaps, lengthy agitation and many refusals it is one day written into an award. Later on it becomes fairly common in awards and eventually may receive recognition in an Act of Parliament.

That statement is an explanation of the way the labour movement in this State has operated in the hundred or so years since it was created in 1891. The trade union movement works hand in hand with the political arm of the labour movement, the Australian Labor Party, in State Parliament. Unions have pioneered benefits on the shop floor and Labor governments have extended those benefits widely to all workers, making sure that all workers in the State benefit from the efforts of trade unions and enjoy the fruits of their labour. As a Labor member of Parliament who joined the party in 1989, it gives me great pride to stand in the very House where the then member for Bondi and Minister, Mr Landa, introduced the original Long Service Leave Bill, and to be part of the chain of improvements for working people throughout the State. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (19:50): In reply: I thank members for their contributions to the very important debate on the Community Services Sector (Portable Long Service Leave) Bill 2024. In particular, the member for Maitland spoke about the taxing nature of community sector work and why the new entitlement will assist workers to stay longer in the sector. I acknowledge the member for Willoughby, and shadow Minister, who has been in the Chamber throughout this debate and the previous debate. I acknowledge his work. Opposition members stated that they will support the bill and acknowledged that the new scheme shows how much this Parliament values the work of the community service sector.

I agree 100 per cent with the shadow Minister for Fair Trading, Work Health and Safety. Many community organisations provide important and valuable work in all of our electorates, whether held by the Government, The Nationals, the Liberal Party, Independents or The Greens. As local members, we work and deal with them on a daily basis, so I agree with the member for Willoughby. The member for South Coast spoke about the important contribution that workers in the feminised community sectors do for our community and acknowledged the wonderful, amazing, incredible, diligent and relentless Narelle Clay. The member for South Coast also noted the importance of the community services sector in regional New South Wales, particularly in her electorate, and the valuable work that those community organisations and professional workers provide.

The member for Fairfield—a new member in this place, as is the member for South Coast—represents a very large, multicultural community in south-west Sydney. The community organisations in his electorate have played a critical role in supporting refugees and new migrants to Australia, and particularly providing very

important family and domestic violence services, homelessness services and legal services. The member for Fairfield acknowledged the important role that those services play. The member for Parramatta is also a new member. When she was making her contribution and acknowledged the Government's work, I thanked her for winning the Parramatta electorate because it means we are in government and can make those very important changes. The member for Parramatta spoke about how the bill will finally, for the first time, give long service leave to people who have worked for decades in the community services sector. The member also noted that the new scheme is a win-win for workers, providers and the community at large.

The member for Newtown acknowledged The Greens' support for the bill. The member for Newtown and I do not align on many issues. We have many robust discussions during debate in the Chamber, and on a number of issues we do not align. But all of us in this place tonight—The Greens, the Opposition, the crossbench and the Labor Government—acknowledge that we have all worked together. It has been a very open process and Government members have consulted widely. The member for Newtown acknowledged Angus McFarland and the Australian Services Union. They were at the University of Sydney together and fought together on a number of issues. Both are very successful, strong advocates, one for the union and one for her local community. The member for Newtown spoke about how the scheme will assist the sector in retaining and recruiting staff, which is absolutely critical.

I also acknowledge the member for Blue Mountains. When she and I were in opposition in 2014, we worked hand in glove to support community sector workers at a time when, unfortunately, the former Government made decisions about changes to the model of specialist homelessness services and the realignment of the way that funds would be allocated. We had a round table with community services. The strong advocacy of the member for Blue Mountains, and Parliamentary Secretary, for her community services sector in the Blue Mountains is absolutely pivotal because they do such incredible work.

The member for Auburn also represents a large multicultural community and has been a very strong advocate for workers' rights, particularly when it comes to improving the working conditions of women, and particularly women from non-English speaking backgrounds. The member has been tireless in her advocacy and has been very successful in establishing the five-year agreements the community services sector has today. She has been a very strong advocate and has acknowledged the importance of the scheme to working women in this State.

The member for Shellharbour spoke about how the scheme will assist in providing more secure employment in the sector and acknowledged the incredible work of Narelle Clay. She talked about the importance of community services for her regional community. The member for Heathcote noted that the new scheme should help to reduce turnover in the sector, and recruitment and training costs. The member is 100 per cent right, and that allows the people whom the community service organisations and professional workers serve to see the same people. That is really valuable for the people that they serve.

The member for Blacktown spoke about the history of the Long Service Leave Act. He is an avid historian and talked about the Government of former Premier James McGirr doing something innovative back then. It was innovative, and the labour movement continues to be innovative and progressive and to make sure that working people have fair conditions. I acknowledge what the member said about me, but I say to him, to all colleagues and to this Parliament that I am just a humble airport worker who has the privilege to represent an incredible electorate. I come from a non-English speaking background, and I am very humbled to be in the incredible position to stand before the House and strive for better conditions for community service workers across our State.

The member for Gosford talked about how the scheme would deliver improved working conditions for the State's hardest working members. A few months ago, the member for Gosford and I visited the Gosford office of SafeWork and a number of other offices, also the workers from the Long Service Corporation who are based in Gosford. It was fantastic to have a chat. The new Government has a different agenda of how we deliver services. I am very keen that we make sure to provide outreach services to our community. I acknowledge the Long Service Corporation staff in Gosford. They do important work looking after the two schemes we currently manage: the construction and building, and the cleaning schemes.

One of the initiatives that I have been pushing for is to make sure that we have our long service leave staff on sites. We will not be able to get to every site, but being on site and accessible, making sure that government has access points for the public. For the thousands of workers in construction and building, cleaning, and now in community services—many of whom are from non-English speaking backgrounds—we want to make sure that we have access points where they can not only call or email but also talk to somebody who can provide them with support. A few weeks ago—I do not like using the word pilot—a couple of our Long Service Corporation staff went to three building sites and served over 500 workers. They were there all day providing workers with support, assistance and answering their questions. That was fantastic. The workers all loved it and thought it was great.

We had government at the worksite, and that is a good thing. That is government delivering services right there at the worksite.

I also acknowledge the member for The Entrance, who is a hard taskmaster. He is a very strong advocate for workers' rights. As we heard, the member for The Entrance is a historian. He has been pushing to make sure that community services workers in his electorate are looked after as well as establishing this scheme in other sectors. I acknowledge the growing part of his community workforce is the community services sector. On 27 July and 28 July at the NSW Labor State Conference at the Town Hall we will be able to face the thousand delegates from across the State—from the furthest places of western New South Wales, our rural, remote and metropolitan region delegates—and report to them that the commitment that we made at the election with respect to delivering portable long service leave for community sector workers will be delivered.

I acknowledge the member for Penrith. Last year we went to Jamisontown with the Australian Services Union and visited Flintwood Disability Services—they do excellent work. I thank them for hosting us and providing us with great information. A priority for this Government is to listen and respond to the community's respect for our community sector workers. The bill is an opportunity to do just that. The bill is a win for women at work, with over 75 per cent of workers in the sector being women. For too long community service workers have missed out on benefits enjoyed by others due to the insecure, precarious and agile nature of their work.

Facing the stress and fatigue which comes with caring for the vulnerable in our community, dedicated workers have had to forfeit the entitlements they deserve through no fault of their own. Many workers in the community sector are employed casually or in fixed-term arrangements that provide little or no ongoing job security. We all know the issues that arise from insecure work. We saw how it played out during the COVID pandemic, with so many insecure frontline workers not having access to paid sick leave and having to take risks with their own health and the health of others just so that they could keep paying the bills.

The community services sector faces additional challenges due to short-term funding and service arrangements that fail to provide long-term employment security. The expansion of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, skills shortages and high rates of stress and burnout also exacerbate the problem of retaining key workers in the industry. Traditional leave entitlements also present challenges for community sector workers. This includes long service leave and, as a result of the prevailing job insecurity in the community services sector, workers will struggle to access long service leave due to the requirement of continuous service with a single employer. Our counterparts in Victoria, Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory have set the example, and it is time that New South Wales followed suit.

The bill will allow workers who perform community service work in New South Wales to continue accruing long service leave even if they have multiple employers. Eligible workers will be able to access leave after seven years. Services like alcohol and drug support, mental health support, disability support, women's health support, migrant support and legal support are just a few of the many community services that we all represent in our electorates. They will benefit from the bill. From administrative workers to frontline workers and senior management alike, the bill will provide attraction and retention to roles in the community services sector. Recruitment and training costs will be reduced in an industry where for most providers every dollar counts. By accommodating for changes in employers and a permitted break in service of up to four years, the bill will support opportunities for career progression that had previously been discouraged. The bill was born out of the long-held wishes of community service workers, and recent public consultation has the numbers to prove it. Of the 580 survey respondents, 96 per cent agreed that community service workers should have access to portable long service leave.

Tonight we have seen that there is support across the Parliament. I note that the Legislation Review Committee considered the bill in detail, and I thank them for that. There were some matters that they referred to the Parliament, which I will respond to. The committee made some comments on the wide official powers, property rights, right to silence and privilege against self-incrimination. In response, the powers granted to authorised officers under the bill are appropriate and necessary for effective administration and enforcement of the scheme. They are consistent with the powers provided in existing schemes in New South Wales for the building and construction industry and contract cleaning industry. Those powers, such as the ability to appoint inspectors and conduct audits, are crucial for confirming details of employers and workers, validating payments and ensuring procedural fairness.

The committee commented on the deferral of powers to regulations. In response, the regulation-making powers aim to ensure the framework can operate effectively and with clarity, which is likely to be particularly important in the community services sector, considering the diversity within. Powers, such as for appeals and leave payments, are modelled on the existing schemes and are used, for example, to recognise that exceptional circumstances may warrant an extension of time for an appeal. Finally, the committee remarked that section 4 (3) of the proposed Act allows for schedule 1 to be amended by the regulations, therefore amounting to a Henry VIII

clause by allowing the Executive to alter the operation of the parent Act without reference to the Parliament. The committee generally considered that an inappropriate delegation of legislative powers.

All statutory rules, including the one made under proposed section 4 (3) of the bill, have to be tabled in Parliament within 14 sitting days after publishing and can be disallowed under section 41 of the Interpretation Act. The Parliamentary Counsel's Office has been consulted. It agrees that the Legislation Review Committee's conclusion is incorrect. I also note that during the extensive consultation process for this bill, which involved an exposure draft on the legislation, parts of the bill were improved. One improvement that was incorporated in this final version of the bill presented to Parliament was to ensure that if a covered worker is eligible for a more generous long service leave entitlement under an enterprise agreement, then the more generous entitlement will apply.

The bill has truly been designed by all stakeholders in the sector so that it works for the sector. I flag that both the Government and the Opposition have amendments, which we will get to. Those amendments have the support of both sides of the Chamber. I am confident that this bill delivers meaningful change for the people, services and economy of New South Wales. The bill demonstrates this Government's continued commitment to the wellbeing of our community. In particular, it provides for those who dedicate their careers to improving the wellbeing of others. I thank all who contributed to the development of the bill: the Australian Services Union, Unions NSW, employers, community services providers and community members. I thank the Long Service Corporation and the NSW Council of Social Service for their considered input.

I particularly acknowledge the secretary of the Australian Services Union, Angus McFarland, and his predecessor, Natalie Lang, who campaigned for several years for this scheme to provide portable long service leave to the community services sector workforce. I thank the dedicated public servants within the Department of Customer Service for their diligent work on the bill: particularly Secretary Graham Head for his leadership, Anjaline Jayamohan, Abby Tozer, Grace Campbell, James Farquharson, Kaustubh Bhakay, Kevin Cen, Hannah McIntosh and Victor Chang—some of whom are sitting in the adviser's area tonight. I thank them for their critical contributions, outstanding work and their exceptional commitment to ensuring that this scheme is as beneficial as possible for workers, employers and our community at large. We are indebted to our wonderful public servants who cooperated with employers, the unions and the Government and listened to our members of Parliament. Without their sterling efforts, this bill would not be before Parliament today. I also thank my incredible staff. They have worked diligently on the bill and have done a fantastic job. I commend the bill to the House.

The SPEAKER: The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Ms Sophie Cotsis and Mr Tim James.

Consideration in Detail

The SPEAKER: By leave: I will propose the bill in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 to 107 and schedules 1 to 4 be agreed to.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (20:13): I move Opposition amendment No. 1 on sheet c2024-092A:

No. 1 **Community services**

Page 2, clause 4 (3) (b), line 23. Omit all words on the line.

As foreshadowed during the second reading debate, the Opposition is moving this simple amendment to remove from the bill the provision in clause 4 (3) (b) that would allow a service listed in schedule 1 to the Act to be subsequently omitted from the schedule. The effect of this would be that workers—both employees and contractors—for the type of community service that was omitted from the schedule would no longer be eligible to be registered under the scheme, and employers of such workers would not only not be required but also be unable to pay a levy for the worker into the scheme. It is not clear what would happen to funds already accumulated from the levies paid for those workers and contractors, including any proportion of funds raised by investing those levies, if a type of community service listed in schedule 1 was subsequently omitted.

If a legitimate reason for removing a type of community service from the schedule arises in the future, then it could still be done by way of amending legislation, which would need to include provisions for dealing with any such funds. I thank the Minister for Industrial Relations for identifying this flaw in the bill as presented, and the Government for its indication that it will agree to the amendment. I acknowledge and recognise Minister Cotsis, who has been here throughout much of today. It has been a big day for both of us. I acknowledge her hard work and that of her office and department teams. I appreciate the cooperative and collaborative spirit in which we have gone about this work today. I commend the amendment to the House.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (20:15): I acknowledge the member for Willoughby and thank him for his contribution to the bill. As I said earlier today, he is a tough opponent. He was knocking on our door and asking us questions to hold us accountable. I accept what the Opposition has put forward. The Government supports the Opposition's amendment to remove the ability of the Minister to omit a covered service from schedule 1 to the Act. I acknowledge the Opposition for working collaboratively on the bill. I acknowledge the Hon. Damien Tudehope in the other place, who we have been consulting with as well. This scheme will last long into the future and will benefit all of our community services sector workers.

The SPEAKER: The question is that Opposition amendment No. 1 on sheet c2024-092A be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (20:16): I move Government amendment No. 1 on sheet c2024-101A:

No. 1 **Community services**

Page 40, Schedule 1. Insert after line 27—

Sexual assault services

The Government seeks to make an amendment to include sexual assault services in schedule 1 to the Act. This is a clarifying amendment to put beyond doubt that sexual assault services are covered as an eligible service by the new portable long service leave entitlement. I acknowledge the member for Newtown, who brought this omission to the Government's attention. I thank her and her staff for their diligence.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (20:17): I thank the Minister for her acknowledgement. In the interests of full transparency, I cannot personally take credit for picking up the omission in the schedule. I pay tribute to my Greens colleague Ms Abigail Boyd, who did so. The Greens support the amendment and this scheme to provide amazing community services sector workers with portable long service leave.

The SPEAKER: The question is that Government amendment No. 1 on sheet c2024-101A be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

The SPEAKER: The question is that clauses 1 to 107 and schedules 1 to 4 as amended be agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 107 and schedules 1 to 4 as amended agreed to.

Third Reading

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

NOEMIE FOX

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (20:19): Penrith is abuzz with the news that local Noemie Fox will make her long-anticipated Olympic debut alongside her sister, Jess, at the Paris Olympics. Noemie earned her spot after competing in five races to take out the silver medal on the final day of the World Cup meet in Prague. While this will be Jess's fourth Olympics, she also has eight individual world titles as part of a total of 14 gold medals and is the most successful paddler in history. It will be all the more special to have her sister also competing in the kayak cross—an event that is also making its debut. With only three quota spots on offer in the new Olympic discipline of kayak cross, the stakes could not have been higher. Noemie was understandably emotional after a full day of competition and finally achieving a silver medal. She said, "The semi-final with the reigning World Champion, past World Champion and European medallist was probably the hardest thing. So once I got through that and I was in the final, I was just wanting to enjoy it." Penrith now has an extra reason to cheer.

TOM HOUGH

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (20:20): I congratulate Tom Hough of Bondi Surf Bathers Life Saving Club on being named New South Wales Lifesaver of the Year at the 2023-24 Sydney Awards of Excellence. Tom has amassed 135 hours of patrol this season in addition to his deep commitment to education, training and assessing. His selflessness, patience, dedication and unwavering support reflect his commitment to the surf lifesaving mission of achieving zero preventable drownings. Tom has enhanced the skill level and operational readiness of the other lifesavers at his club. His leadership and dedication have significantly impacted

the lifesaving community by fostering a culture of excellence and safety. He has inspired both current and future generations of lifesavers to continue pushing for higher standards and greater community engagement. I congratulate Tom on his amazing contribution to lifesaving.

IRRAWANG PUBLIC SCHOOL BOCCIA CHAMPIONS

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion) (20:21): Recently I met a very excited and talented team of students from Irrawang Public School who deserve a mention tonight. The students have achieved a first for the school: They are soon to represent Irrawang Public School at the State championships. The Irrawang Public School Support Class students play boccia. They recently had a successful day in Maitland, coming first in their pool and progressing to the State Primary Finals at Sydney Olympic Park on 13 August. Boccia is one of the world's fastest growing and most inclusive Paralympic sports, and Irrawang Public School has been offering students with disability the opportunity to participate in the sport for the past three years. I congratulate Bella, Indie, Noah, Jamesha and Meah on their success so far. I thank teacher and super coach Ms Leanne Green, SLSO and assistant coach Mrs Lucy Dallas and principal Stacy Mathieson for supporting these great kids on their exciting boccia journey. On behalf of the people of Port Stephens and this Parliament, I wish the boccia champions every success as they represent Raymond Terrace on the State stage.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I acknowledge Calvin Biag from Southwest Sydney Rotaract in the gallery, who is a guest of the member for Oatley.

NORTH COAST TOURISM AWARDS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (20:23): Coffs Coast businesses are being celebrated for their hard work and innovation at the 2024 North Coast Tourism Awards. Thirteen businesses are finalists in these prestigious awards, and I wish each of them every success at the awards ceremony on 1 August. The finalists from Coffs Harbour are Yarrila Arts and Museum; Pacific Bay Resort; the Hoey Moey; Giingan Gumbaynggirr Cultural Experience; Gumbaynggirr eco immersive stand-up paddle tours, known as Wajaana Yaam Adventure Tours; Coffs Coast Tickets by Paradox Media; The Big Banana Fun Park; Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary; Yarrowarra Aboriginal Cultural Centre; Shearwater Restaurant; Coffs Harbour Trike and Private Tours; Tiga Cross from the Coffs Coast Wildlife Sanctuary; and Lindsay Russell from Broken Open Productions. Tourism is the heart and soul of the economy on the Coffs Coast. We have so many businesses worthy of recognition and so many fun experiences that delight visitors and locals alike. If you are looking for something to do over the winter, I invite everyone—locals and those who come from a little further away. Let us support the local tourism industry.

TRIBUTE TO STEVE BLYTH

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (20:24): I remember and honour the life of Steve Blyth, known to many as Magpie #718, who recently passed away at Gosford Hospital at the age of 69. Steve's journey in rugby league began as a local junior with the mighty Berala Bears club when he lived on Kibo Road in Regents Park. His talent and dedication shone through in the Jersey Flegg team of 1972, playing in the memorable final against South Sydney at Pratten Park—a game still renowned for its controversial finish. Steve played 108 games for the Western Suburbs Magpies, including 49 first-grade appearances over five seasons. He was part of the Roy Masters minor premiership team in 1978. He continued with the Newtown Jets from 1979 to 1982 after being recruited by John Singleton, where he added another 44 first-grade games to his legacy, including the iconic 1981 grand final. Steve concluded his illustrious career as captain-coach of the Toukley Hawks on the New South Wales Central Coast. He was a formidable forward who played tough and is gone too young.

SURFING SOUTH COAST REGIONAL TITLES

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (20:25): The Parliament of New South Wales recognises junior Kiama surfing stars at the 2024 New South Wales Surfing South Coast Regional Titles held at Jones Beach last month. Hang ten and congratulations to the division winners from Kiama: Under 12 Boys, Zane Thompson; Under 14 Girls, Rubylee Neill; and Under 14 Boys, Jackson Fraser. Congratulations to Kiama placeholders Elijah Boardman, Abigail Woods, Banjo Carbone, Lani Cairncross, Coco Ramirez Derritt, Elina Wood, Dayan Conti and all the grommets and future stars who travelled to Kiama and participated. I thank Jo Collinge, Surfing NSW regional director for the South Coast, who ran the event for the fourth year. I also thank Kiama Downs Surf Life Saving Club, Kiama Surf Life Saving Club and all the volunteers. Surfing is a great sport, requiring skill and determination. The Parliament recognises these outstanding junior surfing stars from the Kiama electorate and the parents, clubs and volunteers who encourage and support them. I congratulate one and all.

MORE THAN WORDS: GAZA SOLIDARITY FUNDRAISER

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (20:26): On 2 June I had the privilege of attending the More Than Words: Gaza Solidarity Fundraiser, where we collectively raised over \$20,000 to aid those affected in Gaza. The crucial event was organised by Labor Friends of Palestine NSW and Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, with a contribution from Palestinian Christians in Australia. The funds raised will be directed to the MA'AN Development Center, ensuring that essential aid reaches those in need. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the donors, volunteers and fellow MPs who attended and demonstrated their unwavering support. Their generosity and dedication are making a significant difference to the lives of countless individuals facing immense hardship. The spirit of solidarity and willingness to help those in need was truly inspiring and serves as a reminder of our shared global humanity. For more information about the impactful work of the MA'AN Development Center and to learn how to further contribute, visit its website at www.maan-ctr.org. I thank those who stand in solidarity with Gaza for their continued support in these very desperate times.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I remind members that the time limit for community recognition statements is one minute or less.

ERNIE SMITH OVAL SYNTHETIC FIELD

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (20:27): On Saturday 15 June 2024 I attended the Southern District Football Club's official opening of the new synthetic field at Ernie Smith Oval, Moorebank. This synthetic field marks a significant enhancement in our local sports infrastructure. On behalf of the electorate of Holsworthy, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Southern District Football Club's leadership team: president Andy Favaloro, vice-president John Vukasin, general manager Phil Sampson, treasurer Silvo Pahor, secretary Gino Marra, assistant secretary Sam Kalouris and chairman Anthony Papallo. Their relentless passion and dedication has enriched our community. The new field will inspire future generations of footballers and community members, creating a legacy of sportsmanship, teamwork and community spirit. It is through efforts like these that we continue to build a community where everyone has an equal opportunity to thrive and succeed.

TRIBUTE TO FRANCO PALMIERI

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (20:28): I inform the House of the recent passing of Franco Palmieri of Milton. Franco was a great family man, a local serving volunteer of the Ulladulla State Emergency Service and a member of the Milton Ulladulla Men's Shed. Franco was born in Italy but moved to Australia in 1973 with his wife, Susan. They eventually settled in Milton, where Franco had a successful career in hospitality at the Mollmook Golf Club. Franco had a passion for food and cooking and saw it as a way to connect with people and share his love of family, friends and community. Eight years ago, Franco became a member of the Ulladulla SES and was always onsite preparing meals for the team, day or night. In recognition of Franco's contribution to the SES, last year Franco was recognised at the Shoalhaven State Emergency Services Awards ceremony as the winner of the SES division. At Franco's funeral SES commander Inspector Tracy Provest presented the family with Franco's helmet and a NSW State Emergency Service flag. Franco will be remembered for his devotion to his family, his passion for cooking and his community spirit. Vale, Franco Palmieri.

TRIBUTE TO RONALD STEPHEN SODEN

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (20:29): I pay my respects to a local Dubbo sporting legend who sadly passed away earlier this month on 9 June. Ronald Stephen Soden, affectionately known as "Ron" or "Ronnie", was born in 1939 and is renowned as one of the city's sporting characters. From footballer to boxer, swimmer to occasional golfer, he was a bloke who "had a crack at it all". Born and educated in Dubbo, Ron played rugby league with Macquarie Raiders from the late 1950s to the early 1980s. On the footy field, he became known for his remarkable ability to play in any position, a trait that made him every captain's dream. In 1972 he captained his team to the Group 11 reserve grade premiership. In 1960 Ron was crowned middleweight boxing champion of the west and won the New South Wales title in 1963. Outside of his sporting passions, Ron was a committed volunteer in the community, dedicating 22 years to the Apex Club. His contributions to the community have left a lasting legacy and cemented his reputation as one of the city's sporting legends. Vale, Ronald Stephen Soden. May he rest in peace.

PUNCHBOWL BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (20:30): I am immensely proud of Punchbowl Boys' High School for hosting a successful trade day expo. The event provided hands-on experience and valuable insights into various trades and professions. The expo featured an impressive line-up of local exhibitors who inspired and engaged the students, offering them a unique opportunity to interact with professionals from the trade industry. The expo was not merely about highlighting careers; it was about igniting the students' imaginations and

encouraging them to contemplate their future employment possibilities. The enthusiastic engagement between students and exhibitors highlighted the event's success and left the students feeling empowered and motivated by the trade professionals they met. As a former principal of Punchbowl Boys' High School, I am incredibly proud to see the school fostering positive and impactful experiences for its students. The event, held in partnership with the New South Wales Government, showed the significant value of partnerships in enhancing educational opportunities and improving our students' prospects. Punchbowl Boys' High School continues to set a high standard in empowering its students and preparing them for successful careers. I look forward to seeing the lasting impact of this remarkable initiative.

BRIANNA CASEY, AM

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (20:31): I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Brianna Casey on her ordination as a Member of the Order of Australia. Brianna was recognised for her remarkable contributions to early childhood education and care, social welfare, environmental conservation and extensive service to the community. During her tenure as CEO of the Australian Childcare Alliance of New South Wales and her role on the Ministerial Advisory Council for Child Care and Early Learning, Brianna demonstrated exemplary leadership and dedication. Her efforts significantly impacted the lives of countless families and children, ensuring access to quality child care and advocating for policies that support early childhood development. Currently serving as the chief executive officer of Foodbank Australia, Brianna continues to play a pivotal role in providing essential food relief to Australians in need, embodying the spirit of service and compassion. Her commitment to improving the lives of others exemplifies the highest ideals of community service. Her honour is well deserved. As the member for Ryde, I am proud to represent an electorate home to such a wonderful individual. I commend Brianna for her outstanding achievement.

BLACKTOWN CITY LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (20:32): I congratulate all 15 Blacktown City Local Business Awards winners in my electorate and across the Blacktown local government area, which has about 27,000 businesses. Of the hundreds of nominees, the winners were Better Vision, BODYTEC Skin Bar, Children First, Cincotta Discount Chemist, Donut Tempt Me, Family Vets Western Sydney, Flowers by Jody, Harvey's Social, Innovync, Lander Mitsubishi, McGrath Estate Agents, Mozemo Craft, Rebel Sport, Volcanos Steakhouse and Workhorse Staffing. From health improvement services to fast food, from restaurants to motor vehicles, there is a lot to be proud of this year. A special congratulations goes to Jody McCure, owner of Flowers by Jody, who not only won the award for Blacktown's most outstanding florist/plant retail store but also was named the 2024 Business Person of the Year. I congratulate all of the winners.

NATALIE COLE

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (20:34): I acknowledge the service to the local community of NSW State Emergency Service Sofala Unit Commander Natalie Cole, who could literally be described as a lifesaver. Ms Cole became a volunteer with the organisation in 2015 after hearing the story of a stroke victim that could not be airlifted because there were no SES members in Sofala who could light up the ground for a helicopter to land. Instead, a road crew had to be sent to attend to the person, who, thankfully, survived. However, it showed Ms Cole that there was a need for SES volunteers in that community, so she signed up in the hope that something like that never happened again. In November 2016 Ms Cole was able to prevent a tragedy for a Sofala family when she helped administer lifesaving medicine to a 10-month-old boy who was experiencing respiratory stress, which prompted his mother to call 000. Ms Cole was assigned by the NSW Ambulance control centre to provide care and, as a trained NSW Ambulance clinical volunteer, was able to step in and help save the day. I congratulate Natalie Cole. Her efforts are much appreciated.

PARRAMATTA MISSION

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (20:35): The things that can be achieved when a community bands together are truly remarkable, and the example set by Parramatta Mission is worthy of commendation. By supporting Meals Plus, we are enabling Parramatta Mission to continue providing a whopping 70,000 meals per year to our most disadvantaged. Parramatta Mission strives to help people who have fallen through the cracks. I recently attended its "Rich Person, Poor Person" fundraiser, which, in the words of general manager Davyn de Bruyn, encouraged us to "walk in the shoes of those that are less fortunate than ourselves, which is what brings about true change and transformation". At that event, Parramatta Mission initiated the "300 club", encouraging 300 donors to pledge their financial support monthly. It was a pleasure to pledge my support for Parramatta Mission's Meals Plus initiative, becoming number 19 out of 300. I thank Parramatta Mission for its tireless work in ensuring that the most vulnerable members of our community have somewhere to turn to in their time of need.

ROSS GRILLO

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (20:36): Tonight I recognise Ross Grillo for his contributions to the produce industry in Griffith and his extensive community service. Ross's family arrived in Griffith from Italy in 1939, and he still resides on the same farm. He is renowned for his passion for local produce and his advocacy for local farmers. Over the years, Ross has provided employment opportunities for students and those from multicultural backgrounds. Ross and his wife, Mary, have a long history of community involvement, including sponsoring a number of sporting teams. Ross has been an active member of local service clubs, supporting Griffith Post School Options, the Carevan Foundation, Hampers of Hope, Meals on Wheels and R U OK? Day. Additionally, he has helped provide relief in the form of produce to disaster areas. I congratulate Ross for his long and successful farming career and his generous contributions to the community.

TRIBUTE TO SUE GERSBACH

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (20:37): Tonight I pay tribute to Sue Gersbach, a member of the Camden community who sadly passed away late last year. Sue was born in Eugowra hospital to Ted and Sylvia. Ted was a butcher by trade and Sylvia was known to pack fizzy drinks, cream puffs and lamingtons for Sue's annual trip to Cowra Show. She lived with her family in Goolagong in central New South Wales and moved to Orange after the death of her father when she was 12 years old. Sue would go on to complete her schooling at Santa Maria College in Orange and commenced nurse training. Sue married my good friend Tom Gersbach on 12 May 1973 at St Joseph's Church in Orange. They have two children, Mel and James, and now have four grandchildren. Sue worked as an endorsed enrolled nurse for over 45 years in hospitals and community and aged-care settings. She mainly worked night duty to support her family and would later become more readily available for her grandchildren. She moved to Camden, ending up in Harrington Park. Sue died peacefully on 6 December 2023. May she rest in peace.

CHANTEL'S KINDERGARTEN

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (20:38): I recognise the incredible team at Chantel's Kindergarten in Sylvania for its exceptional work in ensuring that our littlest learners have the best start to their educational journey. Chantel's Kindergarten is a local multi-award-winning early education centre with a dedicated team that provides exceptional care to our littlest learners in the Sutherland shire. On 14 May 2024, the team at Chantel's Kindergarten worked with the Black Canvas Project to provide the preschoolers with the opportunity to redesign dozens of unwanted surfboards and promote the importance of sustainability. The surfboards, which were otherwise destined for landfill, were turned into one-of-a-kind pieces of art by the children using paint pens that were then donated back to the service or raffled off to find a new home. None of that would be possible without the hardworking team at Chantel's Kindergarten. I recognise Erin Rapp, Jasmine Magdy, Jayde Ainsworth, Bella McGregor, Indie Shanahan and Maddison Shave for their efforts. I commend Chantel's Kindergarten for educating our littlest learners on the importance of sustainability and extend my best wishes for the future.

NALIKA PADMASENA, OAM

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (20:39): I congratulate Nalika Padmasena for being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia. Nalika, who resides in Schofields, has been dedicated to community service throughout her career. Receiving her Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the multicultural community, Nalika has a host of both professional and volunteer experience under her belt. As a solicitor at the Senior Rights Service, she advocates for some of the most vulnerable members of our community. That extends to her services on numerous advisory committees at Blacktown City Council, Multicultural NSW, Western Sydney Regional Advisory Council and her various other roles helping immigrant women and the elderly community. Nalika has been dedicated to service for the better part of two decades. She exemplifies service and what it means to put people first. Nalika was a latecomer to the legal profession, but it did not stop her from becoming a trailblazer. I am immensely proud to represent a community with such a strong heart for service. I congratulate Nalika on her immense achievement. She has made Riverstone proud.

JENNY REA

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (20:40): Jenny Rea is a dedicated member and leader at Young Meals on Wheels. Jenny's passion for community service and advocacy for vulnerable people has been instrumental in the organisation's success. Under Jenny's guidance, Young Meals on Wheels has expanded its reach, now serving over 25,000 meals across various communities. Jenny has implemented innovative programs that focus on holistic wellbeing. She has introduced wellness checks and partnerships with local healthcare providers, enhancing the overall support system for their clients. Jenny has been involved with Meals on Wheels in Young for over 20 years. On Friday she will retire to enjoy more time with her family, leaving behind an honourable and lasting legacy. On behalf of the community, I sincerely thank Jenny for her contributions.

LIAM FRAPPELL

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (20:41): Mad Max is an iconic Australia film franchise, created and directed by renowned Australian filmmaker George Miller. Across the five movies, filmed in rugged Australiana, the likes of Hollywood superstars Mel Gibson, Tina Turner, Tom Hardy and Charlize Theron have all featured. Our community now has a local actor joining the Mad Max pedigree: Liam Frappell. Liam stars in the new film, *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga*, alongside Anya Taylor-Joy. He went to the premiere and has had photos with Chris Hemsworth and Anya Taylor-Joy. Liam is a "war boy" in the movie, and he loved the whole experience. He was asked to attend the media launch, which included climbing up the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Liam is a talented Sutherland local and an emerging actor, who has undertaken a workshop at NIDA and has been involved in two TV miniseries and television ads. In one of the TV miniseries, Liam starred with Jacob Elordi. I offer him a huge congratulations on being cast in this iconic film series.

MOSMAN CROQUET CLUB

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (20:42): On Sunday I had the pleasure of joining with members of the Mosman Croquet Club for a very special celebration of the club's centenary. It was a picture-perfect afternoon on the neatly manicured croquet lawns for friends and families of the club to celebrate an incredible milestone. The club's first meeting was held at Mosman Town Hall on 12 June 1924, and 100 years later the club continues to flourish as an integral pillar of the North Shore community and maintains a healthy waiting list for new members. The Mosman Croquet Club was founded by women, for women, and was an exclusive women's club until 1948 when, after two unsuccessful general meeting votes, it opened its doors to its first two male members. Today, 100 years after its inception, I am proud to report that women are still the cornerstone of this wonderful club. I congratulate its members and, in particular, current president Joanne Nimmons, as well as past presidents Mary Gibson and Cali Craig, who have done so much for the club over the years. I thank the Mosman Croquet Club for all it has gifted the community over the past 100 years and wish the club a happy centenary.

MUHAMMET ERIS

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (20:43): Muhammet Eris has been an integral part of the Fairfield and Liverpool districts, having resided in the local area since 2000. For over 30 years he has dedicated himself to the Bonnyrigg Turkish Islamic Cultural Association, serving as its president for 15 years. He was also involved as a congregant since the mosque's inception in 1992. His impactful contributions include spearheading key projects such as the construction of the main prayer hall, establishment of the computer IT room, organisation of monthly community breakfasts and initiation of daily iftar dinner programs during Ramadan. Additionally, he facilitated the procurement and installation of prayer carpets and travertine tiles from Türkiye. Muhammet's role extends beyond internal initiatives, as he actively represents the association at various community and government levels. His unwavering commitment epitomises the essence of community service and cultural enrichment. Under his leadership, the association has flourished and fostered a strong sense of belonging and unity within the local cultural landscape.

KALVIN BIAG

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (20:44): I recognise a talented individual who is doing some incredibly important things in communities across the State. Calvin Biag recently received the Outstanding Youth Leader award at the 2024 Zest Awards, organised by the Western Sydney Community Forum. He has consistently shown extraordinary leadership qualities well beyond his years. Since February 2022 Calvin has led the Southwest Sydney Rotaract as its president, heading up local initiatives that have made a significant difference. One achievement includes a successful petition to the local council to install appropriate signage to highlight the wonderful work of the Cerebral Palsy Alliance. Calvin has also organised his own Christmas toy drive, volunteered for the local SES and is a member of the Fairfield City Council Mayor's Crime Prevention Reference Group. Calvin is truly one of the leaders of tomorrow, and I think our State is in very good hands if dedicated and resourceful individuals like Calvin step up to the challenge. I congratulate him once again and wish him all the very best.

KARIONG BILLY CART DERBY

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (20:45): The people of the Gosford electorate never fail to amaze me with their events that bring our community together. Tonight I have the pleasure of recognising Kariong Church and Kariong/Somersby Rotary for their community billycart derby. This event consists of a chain of four different activity days which allow families to build their own bilycarts and test them before the race day. For a small fee of \$80, families can get a bilycart kit, which has been pre-cut and put together by the team of Kariong Church and Rotary. Our local families come together at different days to build and get to know each other. Moreover, there are free sausage sizzles, and tea and coffee are served at every event. The event attracts close to 20 different

families from across the southern end of the Central Coast. On the race day, we expected to see teams such as The Fast and The Curious, led by a magnificent four-year-old racer, followed by other just-as-wholesome teams. I thank the Kariong Church and Kariong/Somersby Rotary for organising the Kariong Billy Cart Deby and igniting our community spirit.

PITTWATER PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (20:46): I pay tribute to all school principals at Pittwater's public schools—Cindy Gardiner of Bilgola Plateau Public School, Brett Blaker of Barrenjoey High School, Heidi Currie of Narrabeen Sports High School, Rob Zappia of Narrabeen Lakes Public School, Adam Hughes of Narrabeen North Public School, Leesa Martin of Elanora Heights Public School, Shannan Griffith of Mona Vale Public School, Andy Rankin of Avalon Public School, Alison Gambino of Pittwater High School, Natalie Baldi of Newport Public School, and Adrienne Bruce of Terrey Hills Public School. Those women and men sacrifice so much to serve our communities and lead their schools. Their passion and commitment to furthering young people's education is inspiring. Whilst their work is often underappreciated, their impact echoes through the ages. Their students are future mums and dads, nurses, teachers, police officers, executives, community service workers and, yes, even politicians. Many of us have a story about a teacher who inspired us. Although some days may be tough, I thank our school principals and their staff. Their work matters and we owe them a great debt.

LONG JETTY OVER 50S CLUB

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (20:47): I acknowledge the Long Jetty Over 50s Club for Leisure and Learning Inc, located in Long Jetty in the wonderful electorate of The Entrance. The club has been operating since 1976, primarily run by volunteers, and was previously known as Long Jetty Senior Citizens Club. The club changed its name to cater for a much wider range of members. Not only does the club offer a meeting point for social interaction; it also promotes physical activity and mental stimulation in a positive and welcoming environment. There are over 20 different activities to choose from. There is something for everyone. I encourage anyone aged 50 years or over to drop in to 6 Thompson St, Long Jetty, anytime Monday to Friday between 9.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. to check out what is on offer. I am sure they will not be disappointed.

MARJORIE CAMERON

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (20:48): I acknowledge Camden Haven resident Marjorie Cameron for her inspiring leadership qualities and volunteer efforts in the community. At the age of 99, this remarkable woman is still dedicating her life to the service to others. Marjorie is described as a community treasure with a caring nature for the work she has undertaken on behalf of the Australian War Widows, Camden Haven Community at 3 Inc, Legacy and the Camden Haven Anglican Church. Marjorie was a registered nurse at Glen Innes before transferring to Gosford Hospital. Her time in health inspired Marjorie to continue caring for others outside of employment and into retirement. Marjorie joined the Australian War Widows NSW and Legacy in 2004. As the local coordinator for War Widows, Marjorie organised monthly meetings and commemorative events, and provided wellbeing support to the membership and their families. Marjorie led the 2023 Torch Relay walk in Port Macquarie and in 2015 was selected in a ballot to attend the 100-year commemorations at Gallipoli. In homelessness support, Marjorie regularly provides social connections, fundraising assistance, and health and wellbeing advice. Marjorie is a role model in our community. I thank her for her enduring service to those in need.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I draw members' attention to the fact that two members missed out on giving their community recognition statements because 20 others spoke for one minute and five or 10 seconds instead of finishing at one minute. I remind members to keep their speeches to one minute or less to ensure fairness for all members.

Private Members' Statements

SYDNEY CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS FOUNDATION

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (20:50): I represent a multicultural electorate—a community of people characterised by their diversity of values and beliefs, culture, language and faith. Despite their differences, one value that is equally important to all the members of the Parramatta electorate is the value they place on the wellbeing of sick children. Last year Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation [SCHF] reached out to me to speak in this place about the Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation Christmas appeal. During the Christmas appeal, SCHF donors generously gave over \$12 million. I acknowledge the 798 donors and 49 companies in my electorate of Parramatta who benevolently donate to SCHF, contributing to their Movement of Many and joining the single force of 70,000 people coming together to help sick kids, no matter where, no matter what.

The Children's Hospital at Westmead, a beneficiary of SCHF, is in my electorate. I have heard countless stories, and I experienced firsthand the care and compassion of those who work at the Children's Hospital at

Westmead when our son was admitted and cared for over several stressful nights. In turn, I have felt incredible pride in the stories of the communities who come together to support its incredible work. Over the past five years incredible donors in my electorate have raised almost \$1 million for SCHF, with over \$700,000 coming from individual donors. Corporations like NSW Rural Fire Service head office, Labourpower recruitment services and Vittoria Food and Beverage have all brought communities together to donate to SCHF. Donations from those organisations have funded mental health services, adolescent medicine, child protection, intensive care, respiratory, cardiology and oncology treatments, and the burns unit at the Children's Hospital at Westmead—the only paediatric burns unit in New South Wales.

In April, BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir in Rosehill gave me and the CEO of SCHF, former member of this place the Hon. Kristina Keneally, a tour of their Hindu temple and a brief cultural education on why giving back to the community is integral to the Hindu way of life. They shared their desire to help and support sick and injured kids. Last December, BAPS responded to my request for donations to the SCHF Christmas toy drive by giving over 100 toys, a wonderful act of generosity. SCHF is one of the largest and most trusted kids' health charities in the country, providing all children with access to the best possible health care, whenever and wherever they need it. SCHF is the exclusive philanthropic partner of Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, which includes the Children's Hospital at Westmead, Sydney Children's Hospital at Randwick, Bear Cottage at Manly, Kids Research, and the Newborn and Paediatric Emergency Transport Service, or NETS. All 158,000 children treated at the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network last year were provided with exceptional care that is supported and elevated through contributions from SCHF. The impact of SCHF donors is nothing short of incredible.

I draw the attention of the House to the Sydney Sick Kids Appeal, which runs until 30 June. The Sydney Sick Kids Appeal raises vital funds for Sydney Children's Hospitals Foundation to help give sick kids back their childhood. There is an opportunity for all members to encourage the communities in their electorates to support this incredibly important cause. I ask every member to join me in going all in for kids' health by donating and helping to spread the donation message amongst their electorates. A child in hospital is a childhood on hold. For some kids, instead of play dates, there can be appointments. Instead of firsts, there can be lasts. Instead of sleepovers, there are hospital stays. The children who go through that deserve our all, and I am proud to represent an electorate that comes together to support this universal cause and is willing to go all in for kids' health.

LANE COVE ELECTORATE BUS SERVICES

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove) (20:54): I draw the attention of the House to the proposed bus route changes in Lane Cove, as highlighted in a recent article in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. The proposals, which would see routes cut short or axed completely, seriously threaten the effectiveness and viability of our local transport network. Upon this revelation, outrage was almost immediate. Constituents are incensed that their commutes, already plagued by delays and cancellations, will be further complicated with extra travel time and uncertainty forced upon them.

To fully gauge the community sentiment, I raised a petition, which has received tremendous support from community members, with support growing daily. The imminent opening of the Crows Nest metro station should not come at the cost of our existing services. While numerous public transport services are essential, they should complement, not replace, the routes that have served our community effectively and reliably for years. The termination of the 252 and 261 routes at North Sydney rather than King St Wharf, and the complete abolition of the 294 route, would be a major disservice to the thousands of daily commuters from Lane Cove, Longueville, North Ryde and adjacent suburbs. Those routes are lifelines for students, parents, the elderly and anyone requiring direct access to the city. My constituents frequently talk about the city-bound buses that pass through their suburbs and express their gratitude for those services and their reliance on them. This plan is not how we should repay those constituents.

What astounds me further is the timing of the plan. Promises to increase the frequency of certain routes, admirable as they may be, are equally laughable. With a shortage of bus drivers plaguing the State, no logical individual believes that those extra services will materialise. Logic, as ever, is clearly eluding this Government. The real problem remains unaddressed. Before the last election, the Liberals and The Nationals had a road map to increase the number of bus drivers to keep our bus fleet full and reliable. It has been over a year, and bus routes are still struggling to run without spontaneous cancellations, paralysed by a Labor government that refuses to shift into gear and has not taken its eyes off the rear-vision mirror, blaming everyone but itself for what is occurring across the State's bus network.

To reiterate, a new metro station in Crows Nest should enhance our existing services and give more options to residents. It does not justify the slash and burn of our bus routes that Labor wants. Redirecting buses to boost metro riders on paper may benefit statistics, but it fails our community. I reject the proposed changes by Transport for NSW. Buses are more than mere vehicles; they connect us to work, education, family and life. On behalf of

my constituents, I call upon the transport Minister and the department to reconsider. Lane Cove's buses are essential. Please leave them be.

STATE BUDGET AND BLACKTOWN ELECTORATE

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (20:58): I speak about the positive impact of the 2024-25 budget on my electorate and the initial feedback to it. For the first time in 14 consecutive years, the drought in supporting schools in Blacktown has finally broken. After 13 years and 14 budgets—12 under the Liberal Government and, unfortunately, one under ours, having just come into power in March last year—there is finally money to support schools in the Blacktown area. That includes Blacktown North Public School, Crawford Public School, and what used to be part of my electorate and part of Lalor Park, the Lynwood Park Public School. It is great to see that each of the three public schools in my electorate will have a new preschool.

As far as school upgrades are concerned, two in my electorate have already been announced and they are Blacktown North Public School and Crawford Public School, but at the same time Seven Hills High School, which covers the Lalor Park and Seven Hills area, has been announced. The works are part of \$3.6 billion that will be invested across Western Sydney school infrastructure. There is a lot more to come, but at least the money has been set aside to consult with all schools in Western Sydney to find out what needs to be improved.

As we heard today in question time, the Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney said that even toilet blocks have not been upgraded for decades. Most of the toilet blocks in schools in my electorate are 70 years old, but they will be upgraded. Also dearly needed in my electorate are the 12 school crossing supervisors who will be employed. It may be a little-known fact but there is an award for school crossing supervisors. I was happy to be the union official who helped to negotiate that. Hopefully they are all good Australian Workers' Union members.

The Blacktown Hospital continues to be upgraded, with ongoing funding of \$120 million over four years to increase the number of beds in order to free up the emergency department. The last time the hospital's needs were debated was in response to a motion moved by me, which was agreed to with the support of Government members. The motion condemned the previous Government because it had spent \$700 million on building a hospital with very few services. When Labor lost office in 2011, 85 per cent of emergency patients were seen on time. When the Liberals lost office 12 years later, tier 2 patients, who must be seen within 10 minutes and who were being seen on time in the emergency department, went down to 16 per cent. In the first six months of the Labor Government, I am pleased to say that the rate has gone up 6 per cent, although there is still a long way to go. Elective surgery queues have been cut. Everybody in the Blacktown Mount Druitt Hospital is being seen on time.

Housing has been improving in the Blacktown area. At least three sites have been identified in the area in the last 12 months. Individual houses are changing to seniors living, which is the beginning of a solution to the housing needs in the Blacktown local area. People who have grown up in the area, who brought up their families in the area and who are now retired will be able to stay in the area. They will have the option of downsizing to a smaller house in the social housing mix. A social housing project for essential workers will cost something like \$450 million for approximately 400 apartments across four sites, and hopefully some of that will be happening in the Blacktown electorate.

The Government continues to invest in our parklands with an allocation of over \$2 million for Western Sydney Parklands. In relation to transport, I am pleased to say that a cost of \$520 million will be shared between the Federal Government and the State Government to upgrade Richmond Road. Another project to upgrade Prospect Highway also will be a shared funding arrangement between the Federal Government and the State Government at a cost of \$280 million, which has been a project underway for the past four years. Hopefully it will be completed shortly, or perhaps by the end of next year. We have just heard the member for Lane Cove talking about some of the bus routes. There will be more of them coming into Western Sydney, with some routes being expanded and some bus services increasing in frequency. There will also be a bus service from Badgerys Creek airport to Blacktown, which was denied by the previous Government, but will now be happening.

ASTLEY CUP AND MULVEY CUP

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (21:03): I take this opportunity to recognise an annual interschool sporting competition that began in Dubbo in August 1923, the Astley Cup. The longest-running interschool sports event in New South Wales, possibly Australia, began with a boys' rugby league game between the Dubbo High School and the Sacred Heart College in Dubbo. The Astley Cup trophy was donated by Laurence Astley, a Dubbo businessman and local motor dealer, and a staunch Methodist. Mr Astley made one of the conditions for running the cup that it was not to be played on a Sunday.

In 1925, Dubbo High School Principal, Mr Charles Crismas, instigated Bathurst High School and Orange High School to both join Dubbo High School in the Astley Cup. It was at this time the sporting competition was also expanded to include boys' and girls' tennis and athletics, girls' hockey, girls' basketball, and boys' rugby league. Little did they know that the piece of silverware with the words "play the game" engraved on it would outlast them, the Depression, World War II, Vietnam and lots of other conflicts, and even the late Queen Elizabeth II. The girls' basketball competition was later renamed netball when American basketball came to Australia during the 1960s, and boys' basketball and boys' and girls' soccer were also then included in the Astley Cup.

From its inception, the Astley Cup has highlighted a rich tapestry of sports catering to the diverse talents of the participating schools. It has been a real nursery for some of Australia's elite sports men and women. From Australian cricketers Brian Booth and Trent Copeland to Olympic boxer Brian Tink, Socceroo Archie Thompson, golfer Peter O'Malley and Australian netballer Sharon Pratt, there have been plenty of stars who started their careers at the Astley Cup. In 1936, the Mulvey Cup debating trophy was also introduced, and it has now also been an integral feature of the interschool rivalry for over 80 years. The Mulvey Cup was originally donated by Dr Roy Mulvey, a prominent Bathurst medical practitioner who was passionate about the advantages of school debates. Dubbo High School ceased as a school in 2000 when the three public schools in Dubbo merged to form Dubbo College, which now competes for the cup.

The merging of the schools saw no change to the previous passion or the rivalry demonstrated on and off the field during the competition for both the Astley Cup and the Mulvey Cup. Each school celebrated 100 years of Astley Cup last year with individual events. In Dubbo past students came together to support Dubbo College in its bid to win the cup on a significant milestone. It was a hotly contested competition that was celebrated in an exhibition at the Western Plains Cultural Centre, along with a reunion for players and supporters of the Dubbo High School and Dubbo College rugby league teams, and there was also a lunch hosted by the Bindyi Club. Unfortunately Dubbo College did not manage to come away with the overall win last year, and Orange took home the cup.

Orange High School won its first competition in 1930 and held the cup for over a decade of dominance from 1990 to 2001. It should be noted that the cup did have some controversy during that decade of dominance. In one year the school was accused of cheating in athletics for an incorrect relay change. No points were awarded and they still went on to win that year. Incredibly, the competition has been cancelled only four times: in 1924, 1931, 1940, and then most recently in 2020 due to COVID-19. The competition will look a little different this year. While there has been no change in the sports, there has been a change to pointscoreing and how points will be calculated for the next two years. Hopefully that will make it a bit less difficult.

Even after 100 years, the rivalry between the schools is strong, but so is the camaraderie, the sportsmanship and the lifelong friendships that are formed on and off the field. Dubbo College's campaign for the Astley Cup begins on 27 June, with the college taking on Orange High School in what is set to be a great match-up in all the sports. While the preparations start almost immediately after the finish of the previous cup, Dubbo College held its annual Astley Cup assembly this week to formally announce the teams and to get all the students into the spirit of the 2024 Astley Cup. Of course I am a tad biased, but I am very hopeful and very confident that Dubbo College can go on to win the 2024 Astley Cup and Mulvey Cup. I wish all students taking part the very best of luck. As the chant goes, "Esse esse quam videri, oh black and red army, Dubbo army. Go!"

GENDER PAY GAP

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (21:08): I am hoping Orange wins the Astley Cup this year, but that is just me. This year is a very significant year. Fifty years ago a significant event changed the lives of many people in New South Wales, particularly many of the women sitting in the House. We cannot let this year go past without noting this historic moment for women. As members of Parliament, we often get to talk about the history of change and the constant fight and struggle for equity. It is often thought that pay discrimination ended in 1969, but that is not true. It ended 50 years ago, in 1974. Although the women's movement and the fight for equality is a memory for many, and a moment in history, for many people of my generation and the women who preceded us—as I look around the Chamber, that probably includes most of the women present—it was very much a part of our day-to-day lives.

In my lifetime, when I was a 10-year-old girl growing up in the fibro city of Birrong in Sydney's western suburbs, the final nail to end discrimination against women on the basis of equal pay was put by the 1974 National Wage Case, which marked a pivotal end to the evolution of national wage principles aimed at eliminating explicit gender discrimination in wage determinations. Prior to this, female workers were not entitled to the minimum wage. The equal pay case of 1974 challenged the existing concept of "a family wage" and established the principle that women should be paid equally for their work. The 1972 equal pay case saw the commission maintain that keeping the male minimum wage did not obstruct the consideration of equal pay. Members must understand that

in 1972 they decided that men were entitled to a minimum wage but women were not. The commission did not see any contradiction in trying to establish a gender-neutral wage framework while upholding a minimum wage system that assumed family responsibilities were linked to an employee's gender. This tacit approval of the notion that women had lesser economic needs largely relied on the outdated stereotype of "the male breadwinner".

In the context of equal pay, the commission's 1972 refusal to extend the minimum wage to female employees stood as one of the final instances of direct discrimination against women within the Federal industrial arbitration system. By 1974, this explicit discrimination regarding minimum adult wage rates was abolished by extending the minimum wage to female workers. In 1974 the final nail was put in the coffin of pay discrimination against women based on their sex. In the 1974 national wage case proceedings the Australian Council of Trade Unions [ACTU] once again proposed at the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission a minimum wage that would apply to both adult males and females. Supporting the ACTU's stance were submissions from the Women's Electoral Lobby, the Union of Australian Women and the National Council of Women of Australia.

During deliberation of the issues raised, the commission started with a review of the events that had led to the establishment of the male minimum wage in 1969. For the first time, the commission recognised that it lacked sufficient data to make distinctions based on the diverse family responsibilities of workers in the labour market. The commission concluded that family needs should be addressed directly by government measures, leading to the decision to remove the family component from the minimum wage framework. Anywhere else when it was the fiftieth anniversary of such a significant decision, when discrimination in pay against women based merely on their sex was removed, you would think there would be a celebration. But this year that fiftieth anniversary has passed with barely a whimper.

I pay my respects to the women who led that fight, the women who for years and years fought for equal pay—women like Muriel Heagney, who ran a 60-year campaign, starting in 1910, for equal pay for women and Zelda D'Aprano, who chained herself to the front of the Commonwealth Bank in 1969. They changed our lives. They changed the lives of women in our lifetimes, not back in history. Discrimination in pay against women occurred in our lifetimes, and 50 years ago it was changed. I think that is a significant marker we should acknowledge in this Parliament.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN AUTHORITY

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (21:13): Today I speak about the extraordinary stress that rural communities in New South Wales are being put under. That stress is being caused by a shocking level of water mismanagement by the Federal Government. None of this is new. We have been talking about this endlessly in this Parliament and in previous Parliaments. When will anyone do anything to make things better? Out where I live, in the seat of Murray, I call it water torture, and out there we are all experiencing it. This water torture must stop. The Murray-Darling Basin Authority has no moral authority in seats like mine, because the MDBA has proven time and time again that it does not know what it is doing. So much of the damage done to rural communities is not being caused by what the famous poet Dorothea Mackellar referred to as Australia's droughts and flooding rains. No, the damage is being caused by the moronic and often political decisions made by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority.

I want Premier Minns to know that he will not be able to hold back the tide of anger in rural communities for much longer. Too many people in electorates like mine understand what a basket case the Murray-Darling Basin Authority is. These good people are sick of just shutting up and playing along as our communities are destroyed. I call on Premier Minns to take back some control of New South Wales's rivers. He has an elected responsibility to the people of New South Wales, and the people of New South Wales should always come ahead of the political needs of the Federal Labor Party. So what should the Premier do? What is the solution? Luckily, I have one. Helpfully, it is called the Menindee solution.

The Menindee solution was created by independent water experts who have not allowed themselves to be corrupted by politics. As solutions go, the Menindee solution is pretty simple. Right now the long-term average annual flow of water from the Menindee Lakes to the Murray River is 721 gegalitres. That means after evaporation and giving water to users on the Lower Darling, 721 gegalitres hits the Murray's rural New South Wales communities. At the same time, these communities must supply 696 gegalitres of water to make up for what is known as loss and dilution. The 696 gegalitres is a somewhat arbitrary figure, and for years New South Wales has just played along with it. Now most of this water ends up in South Australia. Remember that New South Wales is being forced to do all this under the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement.

But none of this makes any sense. That is because currently the Commonwealth is sending over 2,000 gegalitres of environmental water annually to South Australia under the Basin Plan. In other words, South Australia now gets significantly more water than it was ever entitled to, so there is no justification for it to be getting these 696 gegalitres of "loss and dilution flow water" from New South Wales. Under the Menindee

solution, which I wholeheartedly endorse, the 721 gigalitres of long-term average flows that enter the Murray from the Menindee Lakes would be counted as a replacement for the 696 gigalitres of that loss and dilution flow that the Murray must supply annually. This would be a lot fairer and simpler. It would also allow New South Wales' rural communities to have better control of their water and therefore their lives.

There are so many other benefits that the Menindee solution will bring. For one thing, the Menindee solution will allow the Menindee Lakes to be a metre higher on average. This would mean an extra 260 gigalitres of water could be stored in those lakes, which would increase water security. The Menindee solution would also take pressure off the constraints in the southern basin. Another benefit is that the solution would reduce the risk of a shortfall in delivery to licence holders below those constraints in the southern basin. This last point is really important because in 2019, for example, the MDBA was worried that there might be a shortfall in delivery of water to licence holders below the constraints in the southern basin. So the MDBA panicked and flooded the Murray River, causing an incredible amount of damage. In addition, this panicked flooding meant that the MDBA had to reduce the environmental water allocation in 2019.

So rural communities lost out and the environment lost out. How ridiculous is that? But that kind of lose-lose situation can be avoided completely if the New South Wales Government simply takes back some control of our rivers and embraces the Menindee solution. Enough is enough. The New South Wales Government cannot continue to force rural communities in New South Wales to face this ongoing water torture.

ELLA JONES

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (21:18): I inform the House about Emu Plains local Ella Jones and her journey to selection as a swimmer to represent Australia at the Paris Paralympics. Her story is quite inspirational. Ella was born at Nepean Private Hospital. She was one of triplets—two boys and a girl—born to Sharon and Chris Jones. During the birth her mum experienced complications, and Ella stopped breathing. Ella said that when growing up she was late to reach major milestones such as crawling and walking. She did not walk until three years old and at that age she was also diagnosed with triplegic cerebral palsy. She grew up in Emu Plains and attended Penrith Anglican College and McCarthy Catholic College. Ella had tried many sports, such as soccer, gymnastics and netball but she felt that they were not for her, so at around age 12 she quit sports.

At age 14 Ella, by her own admission, had started acting out, much to the frustration of her parents. One day, after yet another suspension or disciplinary action, her mum had finally had enough and took Ella to Springwood pool in an effort to involve her in swimming. It was at that time she met her first coach and local Paralympian Jenna Jones who was in training for the Rio Paralympics. Ella then discovered her passion for swimming. For the first time, Ella said she found something that did not make her feel disabled. For the first time she felt that there was a level playing field. Ella fully committed to the sport. She quickly moved up the ranks and made her first world championship team, competing in London in 2019 at age 18.

At the end of 2020 she met a new coach, Simon Watkins. She decided to pack up and relocate to Lismore. At that time it was just six months before the trials for Tokyo in 2021. Unfortunately she missed out on the selection for Tokyo and she was devastated. Ella says that one day one of the coaches sat her down and said, "How crappy does this feel?" Her response was "Well, pretty crappy." He said, "Remember that for next time so you never have to feel this crappy ever again." So she went back to Lismore to continue training and battled lockdowns and constant disruptions. At the end of 2021 the swimming program for the Commonwealth Games was announced. It was a shorter program so Ella decided to give the breaststroke and backstroke a go, which was a very bold move because those strokes were not her usual strengths. But she trained hard and the decision worked. In early 2022 it was announced she was selected for the Commonwealth Games team.

Not long after that Lismore was hit by the largest flood on record and the pool, equipment—everything—was lost. Despite having reduced access to pools and gyms she was able to train at Ballina and Alstonville pools. A few weeks before leaving for the games her coach, Simon, was offered a job in Adelaide and asked if she would like to come. After the games—where she claims she came nearly last or dead last in both events; Ella was just happy for the experience—she packed up her car again and moved to Adelaide after two years in northern New South Wales. For the first six months in Adelaide, the pool and facilities were still being built so she trained at the pool in the local gym. In April 2023, after floods and with limited training facilities, Ella qualified for her second world championships where she placed fourth in the 400 metre freestyle, fifth in the 100 metre freestyle and fourth in the mixed medley. To attain fourth in the world after the challenges she had endured, she should be justifiably proud.

This year, leading into the trials for Paris, has been tough going. Ella said that she has questioned her mental sanity and wondered why she did not choose curling or darts as a sport. However, when she heard she had been selected to represent her country in the team for Paris she was absolutely ecstatic. Ella has been working towards it for 10 years and has gone through hell and high water—literally—to get here. After two world

championships and one Commonwealth Games to now, finally, be selected for the Paralympics is awesome. She has watched the Paralympic movement grow a lot over the past 10 years and it has been amazing. Ella hopes that any young girl out there in Penrith or its surrounds with a disability knows that, even though they have a disability, they can still be the best and do their best. I know Ella is so incredibly proud of where she has come from and where her family is from. Ella says that for her she may be representing Australia but, importantly, she is also representing Penrith too. Go, Ella.

STATE BUDGET AND OATLEY ELECTORATE

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (21:23): I comment on the impact of the New South Wales Labor Government's budget on my electorate and the broader St George region. To be blunt, the State budget that was handed down yesterday by the Treasurer has completely failed the people of New South Wales. Nowhere is that more apparent than in my electorate of Oatley. When the New South Wales Labor Government handed down its first budget last year, it signalled the beginning of a worrying trend. In 2023 the Labor State budget delivered next to nothing for my community. Our infrastructure needs were ignored despite commitments made by Labor. However, I gave them the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps it was an oversight that the New South Wales Labor Government had simply forgotten its election commitments to fund those vital projects within my community.

This budget has shown that the Labor Government is just like a broken record—an endless cycle of cuts, lies and broken promises to my electorate. Again, this year's budget has no significant investments in the projects and infrastructure upgrades that the local community and I have been fighting for tirelessly. There is no funding to rebuild Carss Park swimming pool; to build the Oatley-Como walkway and cycleway; to upgrade Peakhurst West swimming pool, any of our local schools or Belmore Road; to widen the bridge over the railway line at Riverwood; or to revitalise Salt Pan Creek Reserve in Riverwood. Local residents continue to navigate down the same pothole-ridden State roads, cram into overcrowded trains during peak hour and wait for the promised local infrastructure to be delivered. Whilst I am pleased to see funding continued for the completion of stage one and the planning of stage 2A of the widening of King Georges Road, it does not change the fact that under Labor our area is moving backwards. We are in serious danger of falling behind. But it was not always like this.

Despite years of neglect under Labor, my community saw a complete transformation thanks to strong investment from the former Liberal Government. The former Liberal Government delivered an over \$740 million upgrade to St George Hospital for a new emergency care department, a birthing unit and ambulatory care facilities. It delivered significant upgrades to Oatley and Narwee railway stations, providing accessible and modern public transport solutions, and the King Georges Road widening project, which will significantly reduce congestion by upgrading the road to three lanes in each direction. It delivered more parking spaces in Riverwood and Beverly Hills by building two brand new multi-level commuter car parks. It delivered an upgrade to every school in my local community, including a record \$45 million for the redevelopment of Penshurst Public School.

There are thousands of households and businesses being left behind under this Government. Every day I hear from residents who feel let down and ignored. They are tired of the empty promises and are losing faith in this Government, which has no vision for our local area. During this difficult time our community is turning to the Liberal Party for more help. My electorate office has never been busier. We are seeing more and more people each day requesting urgent support due to the cost-of-living crisis. Local families are amongst the worst hit, with continued cuts to vital programs such as Back to School vouchers and Active Kids vouchers. Our local schools are also facing the pressure, with almost \$150 million cut from school budgets across the State.

What does the Minns Labor Government do in response to this? It does not deliver on any new cost-of-living relief or rebates. Instead, it is making life more expensive for hardworking families. This Labor Government will collect more revenue than any government in the history of our State, yet none of that revenue will go back into our community or the family budget. The State budget shows that when Labor runs out of money, it will come after yours. It is clear that the Minns Labor Government has totally lost control of New South Wales' finances. Local families will continue to pay the price for Labor's mismanagement. The people of New South Wales need a government that prioritises action over empty words. I will continue to hold this Government to account and make sure that our area receives the funding it deserves.

STATE BUDGET AND PORT STEPHENS ELECTORATE

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion) (21:28): Like all households right across the State struggling in the current cost-of-living crisis, yesterday's New South Wales budget was all about must-haves, not nice-to-haves. It is a budget that builds on the work that this Government has been doing to restore the very foundations our communities rely on—essential services and the workers who deliver them. These foundations were left to erode after more than a decade of privatisation, pork-barrelling and economic mismanagement under the former Liberal-Nationals Government, which made history when it left government by handing over the largest debt in

the history of the State to an incoming government. It is shocking but true that New South Wales was on track to be \$187 billion in debt. Add to that a Commonwealth GST rip-off and a once-in-a-generation cost-of-living crisis fuelled by high interest rates and inflation. So our Government must act carefully and responsibly when managing the scarce resources we have.

As the Premier said yesterday, the era of easy decisions is over. Knowing how hard families are doing it right now, Government members are focused on taking the pressure off New South Wales households and getting wages moving for millions of workers. We have already lifted the wages cap for essential workers like nurses, teachers, paramedics, police and child protection workers, who have been walking out the door for years because the former Government's approach delivered a real wage cut. The Labor Government values our essential frontline workers and the important work they do, and we are slowly rebuilding the workforce we need to keep our communities safe and strong by showing these workers the respect that they deserve.

To tackle the housing crisis, the Government is prioritising building more homes for New South Wales, including over 6,000 social houses. The Government will prioritise at least half of those new homes for people fleeing domestic and family violence. We are making the single biggest investment in social housing that New South Wales has ever seen. After years of going backwards when it comes to social housing—something we saw firsthand in Port Stephens—the Government will turn the dial and make the biggest investment ever. Government members know how hard it is to access health care in all of our communities, so we are incentivising GPs to increase their bulk-billing by offering a payroll tax exemption in return—a move welcomed by the Australian Medical Association and applauded by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

On the ground in Port Stephens, several must-haves are being delivered in this year's budget. First mention must always go to my pet project of Medowie's new public high school. It is fully funded and progressing at pace, with the site selection finalised. I cannot wait to give an update very soon on that life-changing project in my community. Meanwhile, massive upgrades are ongoing and are receiving more funding at Hunter River High School and Irrawang High School in Raymond Terrace. Also on our local list of must-haves is the duplication of Nelson Bay Road from Williamtown to Bobs Farm—a project promised over and over again by the former Government but one that was permanently stuck in the slow lane. In partnership with the Commonwealth, the Government has committed \$275 million to get it back into the fast lane.

Given the important role our waterways play in Port Stephens, another must-have is keeping them navigable. The beautiful Myall River has been silting in ways not seen before, which led to the Government's announcement earlier this year to dredge the navigation channel. Since then, it has been working hand in hand with MidCoast Council to deliver the best outcomes for the community whilst contending with environmental constraints. Local studies and consultation continue, with a community update coming very soon.

The good people of Tea Gardens and Hawks Nest can rest assured that the Government is working hard to deliver on its commitment to dredge the Myall River, with funding for the project in the budget coming from the Government's Waterways Fund. Another local must-have is the M1 extension to Raymond Terrace. One cannot miss the work underway, being driven by a \$1.4 billion injection for construction of the extension, which is proudly being fast-tracked by the New South Wales Government in partnership with the Commonwealth Government. After sitting in opposition for years, what a relief it is to be part of a government that deeply cares about the communities we all serve across this State. This is a budget that puts families first, builds better communities and delivers for the people of Port Stephens.

COFFS HARBOUR COMMUNITY

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (21:33): The Coffs Coast has many success stories, and all of them are worth celebrating. Local residents are achieving some great outcomes in our community through hard work and persistence across many disciplines and pursuits, and they all deserve recognition. I thank each of them for helping to make the Coffs Coast an even greater place to live and work, and I congratulate them on their successes. They should be extremely proud of all they are achieving.

Recently we celebrated an esteemed group of Coffs Coast residents who are marking a significant milestone. I congratulate each of them on achieving 50 years of continual service as New South Wales justices of the peace [JPs]. That golden jubilee of service is a magnificent milestone for local residents Philip Pearce, Kevin Jordan, Paul Owen, John Murtas and Garry Dew. The office of JP is steeped in a long and prestigious tradition of service. Much has changed in 50 years, and those local residents have witnessed important developments over that time. They have also been there for people at pivotal points in their lives, such as buying and selling property, applying for a passport or accessing superannuation. I extend my sincere gratitude to them for the countless hours of hard work that they have invested in helping others and supporting the efficient operation of our legal system.

Elsewhere on the Coffs Coast, a group of young people has every reason to celebrate important news about their careers and their futures. I was honoured to spend some time recently with three Coffs Coast apprentices who are pursuing their ambitions with dedication and passion. Mikyla Croft is studying beauty therapy, Nathan Delaney is studying aircraft surface refinishing and Trinity Kachel is studying cabinet making. They represent the future of our skilled workforce and are leading the way for other young people in our community. The prestigious Bert Evans Apprentice Scholarship is helping each of them to complete their training, gain a qualification and secure a brighter future. The scholarship, which provides \$15,000 over three years, aims to provide vital support to individuals who have demonstrated a strong aptitude for vocational education and training in difficult circumstances. I congratulate Mikyla, Nathan and Trinity on their scholarships, and I wish them every success for the future in their respective careers.

A small army of friendly Meals on Wheels volunteers deserves recognition for providing a vital outreach to many residents across the Coffs Coast. A recent get-together was held to celebrate the gift of time which volunteers give to both Meals on Wheels and Chill n Chat Café in Coffs Harbour. As many as 60 volunteers attended the special morning tea, where certificates of appreciation and gifts were presented. It was the perfect opportunity to catch up with old friends, and new friendships were fostered. As Coffs Coast Meals on Wheels president Margaret Hoschke explained, the volunteers have been involved with Coffs Coast Meals on Wheels for many years. They are grateful for the bonds they have built with the people they deliver to. The clients look forward to seeing the volunteers and catching up on what has happened in the past week or fortnight. Often volunteers are retired and are looking for continued social and cultural experiences based on the values and interests they share.

Coffs Coast Meals on Wheels delivers meals across a large area that includes Bonville, Coffs Harbour, Woolgoolga, Red Rock and all the places in between. The service operates from premises at Coffs Harbour Community Village and Woolgoolga, with the number of meals delivered now averaging about 9,000 per month. The volunteers are considered eyes and ears through their regular contact with the clients receiving their meals. Those wonderful volunteers deliver meals across the region to people who are often on their own or may feel isolated. In those instances, they are often the first point of face-to-face contact. I congratulate all of our Meals on Wheels volunteers and all of our residents on the Coffs Coast, who are achieving great outcomes in our community every day.

SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (21:37): Southern Cross University is my local university. It is based in Lismore, in the Northern Rivers region, and has additional campuses in Coffs Harbour and the Gold Coast, as well as Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane and Hayman Island. Members might ask, "Why Hayman Island?" Southern Cross University offers a Bachelor of Marine Science and Management, Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Coastal Systems and a Bachelor of Environmental Science. There is quite a focus on the coastal areas. The world-ranked university combines the academic and research excellence of a leading institution with the intimacy and support that comes with being located in some of the most beautiful and community-led regions of Australia. In recent years Southern Cross University has progressed up the QS rankings, the Times Higher Education rankings and the Academic Ranking of World Universities, also known as ShanghaiRanking. They are the most recognised international indices, and each has its own methodology.

There are about 11,000 universities globally. In recent weeks Southern Cross University has ranked among the top 100 young universities globally—that is, 50 years old or younger—and the top 600 universities globally in the Times Higher Education rankings. It ranked 576th and was the most improved university in Oceania in the QS World University Rankings. Southern Cross University improved by 80 places since 2023 and has jumped 200 places since 2020. In addition, Southern Cross University is ranked highly in individual disciplines globally: in the top 100 for oceanography in the ShanghaiRanking; in the top 300 for nursing in the ShanghaiRanking; in the top 300 for life sciences in the QS World University Rankings; and in the top 400 for education and for psychology in the Times Higher Education rankings.

Finally, just two weeks ago the 2023 Graduate Outcomes Survey was released, which showed Southern Cross University at number four in Australia in terms of employers' overall satisfaction. According to the Southern Cross University website, the Graduate Outcomes Survey sampled 116,000 recent graduates across the country from undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Southern Cross University graduates of the undergraduate programs reported an 82 per cent full-time employment rate. That is above the national university average, which is 79.4, and a \$72,500 median full-time salary, that is above the national median of \$71,000. The graduates of the postgraduate coursework programs reported a 92.6 per cent full-time employment rate and a median starting salary of \$110,000. The national university averages sit at 90 per cent and \$97,000 starting salary respectively.

That sort of result is very pleasing and the sustained improvement is testament to the hard work of students and especially the staff at Southern Cross University, whether they work in teaching or research, or are

professional staff, many of whom I know and have got to know over the years. I declare an interest because I am an adjunct professor at Southern Cross University—I just remembered, so I better declare that interest. I have been an adjunct professor for quite a few years in law and business but particularly to do with law. I am also a graduate in teaching from Southern Cross University. It is lovely as the local member to be able to come into the House and talk about a regional university with those sorts of results.

STATE BUDGET AND KIAMA ELECTORATE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (21:42): This week the New South Wales Government handed down its second budget since the election. I make some observations about the budget, which I would describe as having swings and roundabouts for my electorate. I thank the Government for hearing the calls by me and our community for investments in education infrastructure. A number of years ago a group of parents like Luke Mayberry of Calderwood, supported by their hardworking local councillor Kellie Marsh, joined with me to push for a new school at Calderwood. For those members not familiar with Calderwood, it is a beautiful and growing suburb nestled at the foot of the Illawarra escarpment west of Albion Park.

The southern Illawarra is the fastest growing area of our State outside of south-western Sydney. Local schools such as Tullimbar Public School are literally bursting at the seams because of growth pressures and a new school for Calderwood is absolutely necessary. Since the petition and campaign got underway, my office has been overwhelmed with messages of support. I thank the Government for listening to this grassroots community campaign and confirming that construction will start on a new school in this term of Parliament. I am also pleased that the Government has confirmed that the Calderwood public school will have a preschool on site. Before- and after-school care is desperately needed across our community and these investments cannot come soon enough. As the local MP I will hold the Government to account for this commitment.

In the last term of Parliament I started a campaign to upgrade my old high school, Bomaderry High School. I thank the former Government for committing to a major upgrade of Bomaderry High School and I thank this Government for reaffirming its delivery. As the local MP, I am proud to have secured several investments at Bomaderry High over the years: a new gymnasium, upgraded science labs, an upgraded library and the installation of air conditioning and new heating. However, as the only public high school in the Shoalhaven north of the Shoalhaven River, Bomaderry High School needed a comprehensive refurbishment to provide the quality experience that it prides itself on delivering. I thank principal Ian Morris, teacher representatives and the parents and citizens association for their advocacy of this upgrade.

But there are further and urgent needs when it comes to education facilities in my electorate and, whilst I acknowledge the investments by the Department of Education I have just referenced, I ask the Minister to listen carefully to this next request. Cambewarra Public School students and parents recently received a note from their school advising that three demountable classrooms, a staffroom, library and year 2 classrooms had been severely impacted by mould. Whilst the library and the staffroom have been closed, cleaning has allowed teaching to resume in the demountable classrooms. This situation is unacceptable and represents the consequences of cuts made by the Labor Government to local school budgets. I urge it to reconsider those cuts. I am advised this is the third time the library has been closed in three years. It is concerning that the time frame for closures is indefinite, leaving parents, staff and students totally in the dark.

I have received reports that the mould has caused serious illness. I am concerned about the school community's exposure to mould, which can result in respiratory infections, worsening asthma and allergic reactions. I thank the concerned parents, together with their P&C, for raising these important issues with me out of sheer frustration, given that they are sick of waiting for the Department of Education to provide basic learning conditions. Approximately 40 staff and support staff currently share one small staffroom and one toilet—in fact, in the principal's office. The P&C tell me that basic needs are not being met and that this is not a healthy and inspiring learning environment for our most precious assets: our children, our future. Whilst I would have liked to talk about the need for a new school in the growth areas of my electorate like Badagarang, I am having to use the Parliament's time to demand the most basic school maintenance and conditions. It is simply not good enough. I call on the Minister to take urgent action.

Whilst I welcome the Government's copying of the Victorian and South Australian governments' policy of payroll tax relief for bulk-billing GPs, I encourage the Government to go further. Thousands of small businesses across my electorate are struggling to pay payroll tax, which should be abolished. It is a tax on jobs, on investment, and on innovation and enterprise. Whilst a fair rate of tax is necessary, the very concept of taxing someone's payroll simply is not fair at all. In fact, the range of tax increases in this budget makes this Labor Government the highest taxing government in our State's history. Whilst I am happy with the wins we have achieved in this budget, there is still much more to be done and I will continue to take up the fight every day I have the privilege to represent the great electorate of Kiama.

SREBRENICA REMEMBRANCE DAY

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (21:47): The unrest in the Balkan region of Europe upon the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s led to a wave of refugees settling in Australia. Many members of those communities have come to call Liverpool home. My electorate is home to many Australians of Serbian, Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, Macedonian and Slovenian descent. These communities have enriched Liverpool and contributed immensely to its fabric. As we celebrate and mark Refugee Week this week, I share a message from Liverpool's Bosnian community, who have asked me to speak on their behalf in this place. The twenty-ninth anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre in 1995 will take place on 11 July 2024. Each year the Australian Bosnian-Herzegovinian Cultural Association holds a remembrance event to remember this tragedy, where over 8,000 people were killed. It is ordinarily a time of deep reflection for them, but this year it takes on an even deeper meaning.

This year the community will come together on the first official International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica, after the United Nations General Assembly officially designated 11 July as such. The tragic events in Srebrenica were in many ways one of the darkest chapters of the war that erupted after the break-up of the former Yugoslavia. In July 1995 Srebrenica, previously declared a safe area by the United Nations Security Council, was overrun. Some 8,000 people were killed and it resulted in the expulsion of over 20,000 people from the town. That event has been recognised as an act of genocide by the International Court of Justice as well as the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

Almost 30 years later, there still remain victims who have not been found or identified. The motion brought to the United Nations emphasises the need to identify those victims and afford them a dignified burial. The motion of recognition at the United Nations General Assembly was designed to honour victims and support survivors, many of whom continue to bear the scars of that awful time. I note the comment of the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide:

The adoption of this Resolution constitutes an important milestone to honour and pay tribute to the victims of the Srebrenica Genocide, to the survivors and to their families.

I know that many in the Bosnian community in Liverpool were encouraged to see the Australian Government vote in favour of this resolution. The Bosnian community will continue to honour the victims from Srebrenica every year, on this now officially designated date. The motion is also about reaffirming the world's strong opposition to impunity for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes or other violations of humanitarian law. It is incumbent on states everywhere to end those atrocities when they see them and to seek sustainable peace, justice, truth and reconciliation. It is crucially important today that we remain vigilant regarding genocide around the world and that Australia calls out violations of humanitarian law when they occur. We can look at Liverpool to see reconciliation in effect.

As I mentioned earlier, the Liverpool electorate is the proud home of many Bosnians, Serbians, Croatians, Montenegrins, Macedonians and Slovenians. Despite the conflict between their nations of origin, there is a strong sense of camaraderie and friendship between all members of those communities as they navigate life in Australia. We value multiculturalism in this State and across our country. It is tempting to limit our appreciation of multiculturalism to exposure to an amazing array of diverse foods, festivals and other celebrations—to having fun. That is the easy part. Social cohesion is a precious and sometimes fragile thing, as events of this year have shown. The only path to genuine social cohesion is walking in the shoes of others, with curiosity and empathy, and consciously seeking to understand and bridge our differences. As we approach the thirtieth anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre, on behalf of the Bosnian community in my electorate I ask members to remember and reflect, so that we learn from the past and prevent such atrocities in the future.

COASTLINE GREATER PORT MACQUARIE BUSINESS AWARDS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (21:52): I am pleased to announce the winners of the 2024 Coastline Greater Port Macquarie Business Awards. The awards ceremony was held on Saturday 18 May at Panthers Port Macquarie, where guests came together for all the glitz and glamour of the popular event. The theme for the seventeenth annual Greater Port Macquarie Business Awards was "Bring your Bling". Business and community leaders alike from across the Hastings converged on the Panthers club to celebrate the achievements, innovations and initiatives of our local business stars.

Nominations were again extremely competitive, building on the previous year with over 270 nominations registered and 183 entries contesting across 35 award categories. Altogether, 7,701 votes were cast by the community, supporting their favourite business in the Hastings. Retail, health care, construction, financial services, food and catering, child care, education and training businesses competed for the highly esteemed title of Business of the Year. I was once again proud to be able to join in the celebrations and presentations for this

night of nights as part of a packed-out auditorium. Everyone applauded loudly as our local champions in business were recognised for their achievements.

I congratulate President Alex Glen-Holmes, the executive and the organising committee from Business Port Macquarie on another successful evening. The annual event continues to go from strength to strength, with record numbers this year and 14 new businesses entering the various categories. The highest accolade of the night, the prestigious Business of the Year Award, was presented to Port Medical Aesthetics Clinic, with owner Dr Kristy Kostalas jubilant about her team's success. Port Medical Aesthetics Clinic claimed a total of four awards on the night, including the Health and Wellbeing, Employer of Choice and Excellence in Sustainability awards. It is a well-deserved accomplishment from a leading expert in cosmetic and aesthetic treatments on the Mid North Coast.

The Accommodation Award went to Beachscape Holiday Rentals, Susan de Jonge and her team. The Automotive Services Award was presented to Get Detailed By Joseph, owned by Joseph and Bianca Geihe. Winning the Childcare, Education and Training category was Port Macquarie Performing Arts, with Stacey Morgan also accepting the Excellence in Small Business Award on the night. The Cleaning and Property Maintenance Services Award was taken out by Wonder Woman Cleaning Services, operated by Amy Walker. I was pleased to present the award for that category on behalf of *Focus* magazine. The Community and Social Services Award was awarded to Omnicare Alliance Ltd, accepted by chief executive officer Andrea Caldwell on behalf of its board. In the Construction category, the award winner was Hotondo Homes Mid North Coast, accepted by Andrew, Fiona, Julianne and Dean Petterson.

The Creative Services and Communications Award was won by Lucy Humphries Photography. The Financial Services Award was presented to Rebecca Farnsworth from Farnsworth Financial. The winner of the Food Production and Catering Award was Soul Sister Grazing, with an ecstatic Rebecca Stockwell also presented with the coveted Woman in Business Award. The Hair and Beauty Services Award went to Lux Laser & Aesthetics, presented to Kym and Reuben Falzon and their team. The prestigious Hotels, Clubs and Bars Award was claimed by Panthers Port Macquarie. Congratulations to John Fearnley and his team of dedicated board members and employees. In the Industry, Manufacturing and Engineering category, On Time Blinds was successful, with Guy and Nikki Dein accepting the award.

The New Business Award was presented to Florence Jones. I congratulate Bronwyn and Suzanne, and wish them every success as their business continues to grow. The Professional and Business Services (five or less employees) Award went to Belle Property Port Macquarie. Well done to Sue, who adds yet another trophy to her growing list of accolades. The Professional and Business Services (six or more employees) Award went to Ben Waters and his team at PC Pitstop in Port Macquarie. In the Restaurants and Cafes category, the owners of Round & Round, Jess Davidson and Andy Hoffman, were the deserving winners. The Retail (five or less employees) Award went to the ever-successful Touchwood Flowers. I congratulate Ashley Sargeson and her dedicated team.

The Retail (six or more employees) Award, went to John and Elizabeth Davidson representing Coast 2 Coast Sports, who were also successful in the Excellence in Innovation category. In the Tourism and Attractions category, the honours went to the very popular attraction WildNets Adventures. I congratulate Marius Gaynard and his team. The Community Impact Award was presented to the team at Tender Funerals Mid North Coast. Outstanding Employee of the Year was awarded to Sarah James and the Outstanding Young Business Leader Award went to Laura Mayes. Catherine Shaw won the highly-commended Outstanding Business Leader Award. The Employer of Choice (over 20 employees) Award was won by Just Better Care Mid North Coast, presented to Leah Kelly and her hardworking team. Leah was away on the night, attending the Just Better Care Australia Awards, where the Mid North Coast team were successful in not just one but two categories: Franchise of the Year and People and Culture. I congratulate them.

The Outstanding Community Organisation Award was claimed by the Nurtured Village Hampers Port Macquarie and presented to Casey Whitehouse, Ellie Hughes and Chloe De Vries. The Excellence in Micro Business Award was presented to Maddie Wilson from Any Occasion Cakes and Party Food. The Excellence in Large Business Award was taken out by Eire Constructions Pty Ltd, a family business owned and operated by Tom, Tadhg and Eamon Kelliher. Last, but by no means least, the Wayne Jackson Outstanding Community Service Award was presented to Irene Mifsud. Irene is the founder and co-ordinator of Hastings Little Wishes, a charity that makes possible the dreams of children who are suffering incurable diseases. I congratulate all the nominees and award recipients, and extend special thanks to the many event and category sponsors who contributed to make the night such a resounding success.

KANDOS MUSEUM

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (21:57): It is an honour to acknowledge the hard work of everyone associated with the Kandos Museum. The museum has a band of dedicated volunteers who are the driving force behind this well-known local tourist attraction. The team is capably led by the museum's president, Buzz Sanderson, who shows unwavering commitment. There is no doubt that one of the highlights in the ever-evolving history of the museum was a visit on Tuesday 18 June by His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley, AC, CVO, DSC, retired Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, and Her Excellency Mrs Hurley to officially unveil the Kandos Museum Masterplan, a vitally important document that will cement the museum's future in the region. The community came out in force to welcome Mr and Mrs Hurley with open arms. Volunteers from a number of community organisations, including the Country Women's Association, Rotary International and VRA Rescue NSW, were in attendance for this special occasion, as were Councillor Peter Shelley, representatives from Kandos Returned Services Community Club and local residents.

Ironically, Mr and Mrs Hurley previously visited Kandos for the centenary celebrations of the founding of the town of Kandos. On that occasion 10 years ago, His Excellency was the newly invested Governor of New South Wales. The visit, which was to officially reopen the museum, was the first time he unveiled a vice-regal brass plaque in his honour. Ten years later the Hurleys have come back to the township of Kandos. It is their last official engagement before His Excellency retires next Friday. They have come full circle. I note that the Kandos Museum committee received \$68,200 in funding from the former Government through the Creative Capital program to develop a master plan that would encompass the collection, preservation and future expansion of the museum. It puts in place a vision for the future of the museum in that particular area. The master plan addresses the cultural policy and place making, audience engagement, infrastructure, and museum collection and curation policy and practices. It is great news for the facility, which also doubles as the town's tourist information centre.

It is well documented that Kandos is the home of cement. The products of this small village helped build other towns across the State. Now the Kandos Museum is preserving the town's industrial and social history. The Kandos cement works were responsible for providing cement for the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge a number of years ago. The master plan will bring the museum's policies and procedures into the modern day and comply with best practice to make it an even better place to visit for all, and allow for planning into the future. There is a clear plan in place for the Kandos Museum, which has been a labour of love for all its volunteers as they construct and maintain the facility and the collection. But this is just the start. There are big plans ahead because this is just the beginning for the Kandos Museum. In recent times it has been my pleasure to support the Kandos Museum, which has seen a new addition to the museum building. Two 40-foot containers have been perched on top of each other to create more space, with an upstairs cafe and viewing area.

The former Government made funding of more than \$36,000 available to allow the expansion plans to become a reality. The finishing touches are now being put on the cafe, which also features air conditioning, seating, benches and work surfaces, refrigeration, electrical and plumbing works, and appliances. We really have to hand it to Buzz Sanderson and his team of volunteers for what they have been able to achieve through sheer hard work and dedication. It is important to give these venues every chance to succeed in making small improvements that can have big impacts on the experience for visitors and volunteers in the region. The Kandos Museum is a community-based, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the preservation and celebration of the industrial, social, economic and political history of Kandos, a unique twentieth-century town. I commend all those who work tirelessly at the museum, and I wish Mr and Mrs Hurley all the best in their retirement.

NON-MEDICAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (22:02): Support services, such as administration, trades and hospitality, which include cleaning and food services, play a vital role in the NSW Health service. While doctors and nurses are at the forefront of patient care, the support staff ensure that hospitals run smoothly and efficiently. I particularly thank, and acknowledge the work of, the non-professional staff within my electorate and the Southern NSW Local Health District, who attend to the day-to-day operations of our hospitals with the utmost professionalism. They are trained to undertake their duties with diligence and respect—work that often goes unnoticed when we are discussing the needs of our healthcare service moving forward.

Hospital administrators, trade and hospitality staff are the linchpin of the healthcare system, meticulously managing patient records, orchestrating schedules and ensuring strict compliance with regulations. Their conscientious attention to detail is pivotal for the smooth running of the hospital. Furthermore, they play a crucial role in facilitating the work of medical professionals by ensuring the availability of medical supplies. That invaluable support enables doctors and nurses to devote their time to doing what they do best: saving lives.

Support services in hospitals also play a crucial role in enhancing the overall patient experience. From the moment a patient enters the hospital to the time they leave, administrative, trade and hospitality staff are there to provide assistance, guidance and support. They help to create a welcoming and organised environment that is vital to the overall wellbeing of patients and their families. Let us not forget the service of those dedicated employees when we look back in time, specifically the pivotal role they played during the COVID pandemic.

In a 2023 statement, the Premier advised that the New South Wales Government is "repaying the debt we owe to our frontline workers as we introduce enforceable minimum safe staffing levels in our public hospitals". While we have acknowledged the dedication and hard work of our health service doctors and nurses, we must not forget the key role that support staff provided. In conclusion, I reiterate to the House and to the community the importance of support services such as administration, trades and hospitality in hospitals. They are the unsung heroes who keep hospitals running smoothly and ensure that patients receive the care and support they need. If we want to have one of the nation's best healthcare services, we must ensure that our support services are appreciated, recognised and valued for the invaluable contribution they make.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 22:06 until
Thursday 20 June 2024 at 10:00.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

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

JIM SCHACHT, CSM

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Petty Officer Jim Schacht of Caringbah South on the receipt of the Conspicuous Service Medal in this year's King's Birthday Honours. His citation reads: "Petty Officer Schacht demonstrated meritorious achievement through his inspirational leadership and dedication. His personal commitment to the training of Junior Sailors within the Fleet Support Unit in completing trade journals and the continuous improvement of the operating procedures within Fleet Support Unit have been above and beyond the requirements of his position. Petty Officer Schacht has delivered exceptional training and instruction to new sailors, whilst continuously delivering high quality products to the Fleet." In his role with Fleet Support Unit South East he devised new systems of training skilled fabricators within the Royal Australian Navy. These new systems resulted in qualifications being completed 40% faster – a significant help to the Navy which was facing a shortage of such qualifications. The services delivered by Petty Officer Schacht's programs have ensured the Navy is always improving its training, and that they have access to sailors with the necessary trades.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION UNDER 18 GIRLS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate the Sutherland Shire Softball Association's under 18 girls' team on winning the NSW State Championship. The Sutherland side battled through nine games over two days at a chilly Blacktown International Sports Park - after the championships were postponed twice because of bad weather and the team was forced to train indoors for three weeks because of the wet grounds. Sutherland suffered heavy losses in the round matches to Cumberland and Manly, but did enough to make it through to the finals. In the semifinal they turned the tables on Cumberland in a hard-fought extra innings win, before digging deep to reverse the round result against Manly to win a nail-biting grand final 5-4 in extra time. Congratulations to the team on Sutherland's first under 18 title in 10 years: captain Chloe Lutke, vice captain Kate Luyten, Maya Gillies, Charlize Aplitt, Maddy Kirgan, Sofia Piovesan, Lauren Miller, Piper Goyen, Isabella Phillips, Andie Jones, Addison O'Connor, Verity Haslam, Ellie Hart. The team was well supported by head coach Barry Rumsey, assistant coaches William Lutke and Garry Luyten, scorer Chris Mackay, and team managers Heidi Luyten and Tina Lutke.

KAL GLANZNIG AND JOEL BRYANT - RISING UP

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—For World Ocean Day I was delighted to attend a Cronulla screening of 'Rising Up', a film by 2023 Sutherland Shire Environmental Citizen of the Year Kal Glanznig and produced and edited by Cronulla local cinematographer Joel Bryant. The sold-out film centres on the effects of climate change and plastic pollution, especially across Australia and our neighbours. In Australia three quarters of the rubbish along our coastline is plastic. Globally, millions of tonnes of plastic are dumped into the ocean each year. Kal and Joel explore innovative solutions to extraordinarily complex issues. The film particularly highlights how the actions of individuals can go further than many would expect. Although the film recognises that many young Australians have a pessimistic outlook on climate change, the actions of people like Kal and Joel can invigorate us to find solutions for the future. The film has been shown at multiple screenings across the country. As one viewer from the March premiere noted, "always believe any one person can make a change". We must all work to secure a better environment; as Kal says, "hope lies in action, and it all starts with the first step".

NSW FIRE AND RESCUE OPEN DAY AT PICTON AND WARRAGAMBA

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—I was delighted to be warmly welcomed to both Picton and Warragamba fire stations for the NSW Fire and Rescue annual open day on Saturday 11th May, 2024. Despite the challenging wet conditions, it was heartening to see such a great turnout at both stations. The success of the open day, with its multitude of activities and interest for all visitors, is a testament to the community spirit of the Picton and Warragamba teams. The open day was filled with enthusiastic children who enjoyed the cardboard fire truck activity. It was a joy to see them push the truck along a water jet created by the firefighting hose apparatus, displaying great skill and enthusiasm as they pretended to be firefighters. At Warragamba visitors were invited to leave their mark on a handprint wall, symbolising the impact and connectedness of these important first responders with the individuals that make up our community. I appreciate the hard work and dedication of the skilled and selfless members of Fire and Rescue across all of Wollondilly and thank you for keeping our homes, businesses and communities safe during fire and rescue emergencies.

WOLLONDILLY JUNIOR AND SENIOR AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE CLUBS AWARDED GRANTS

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—The sport of Australian Rules football in Wollondilly has received a welcome boost under the NSW Local Sport Grants Program 2023/24, with our local Junior and Senior clubs both awarded grants. The Wollondilly Junior AFL Club has been successful in securing a grant of \$5960 under this program for young player uniforms and club support. It is inspiring to see the youth of Wollondilly building their individual skills and capacities as well as working as a team to achieve their sporting goals. Wollondilly Knights Senior Australian Football League Club has been successful in securing a grant under the NSW Local Sport Grants Program 2023/24. This funding of \$3300 will assist in building the profile of AFL in the Wollondilly area and support access to the sport during increased cost of living, through increased visibility and improved access. It was a pleasure to watch the Wollondilly Knights WD3 play the Newtown Breakaways WD3 at Hannaford Oval on Saturday, 4 May 2024. Ball skills, passion and immense dedication from both players and fans alike was on show. Wishing all the players best of luck for the upcoming AFL season.

PICTON JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB INC. AWARDED GRANT

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Picton Junior Rugby League Football Club Incorporated has been awarded a \$5000 grant in the NSW Local Sport Grants Program 2023/24. The club is thriving, with approximately 340 enrolments and growing each year. I was so pleased to be able to watch the mighty Picton Junior Rugby League Football Club play the Narellan Jets on the 4th May at Picton Oval. This game was part of Round 3, which had the theme 'Words Have Power'. Round 3 was all about raising awareness of the impact of positive and negative comments on and off the playing field. Clubs were encouraging players to make pledges to acknowledge the power they have as individuals to embody the values of respect and inclusiveness, and a commitment to bring those values to the field and beyond. Well done to all the players, coaches, and officials this weekend. Picton Junior Rugby League Football Club Inc. is leading the way in building supportive sports environments for people to grow and thrive as individuals and as a community.

BIRTHDAY MESSAGE - CHRIS GREENWOOD

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in wishing Chris Greenwood a joyous 70th birthday! His in-law, Jennifer, asked me to share these heartfelt words in the Parliament: "Best wishes and congratulations on this milestone birthday." 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 Chris'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 Chris!

INDONESIAN WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating the Indonesian Welfare Association Inc. on their nomination for the 2024 Ryde Group Volunteer of the Year. Since 2009, their dedicated volunteers have significantly enriched the lives of seniors in West Ryde. They have fostered a vibrant and engaging environment through various group activities such as exercising, singing, dancing, and playing traditional music like the angklung. Their commitment extends to organising educational excursions, arts and crafts sessions, morning teas, lunches, and cultural celebrations, all contributing to participants' community and belonging. Moreover, their fundraising efforts, including Let's Dance Celebrations, golf days, and food fairs, have supported their valuable programs. The association's emphasis on conducting information sessions on physical and mental health, safety, aged-care, and community services has been particularly impactful. These sessions have empowered seniors with knowledge and resources, enabling them to lead healthier and more informed lives. The Indonesian Welfare Association has provided meaningful activities, strengthened relationships, and fostered a

sense of connection among the community's seniors. Their tireless work exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism, and we are grateful for their unwavering dedication. Thank you for your invaluable contributions to Ryde.

MEADOWBANK MANDARIN GRANDPARENT'S SUPPORT GROUP

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating the Meadowbank Mandarin Grandparent's Support Group for their nomination as 2024 Ryde Group Volunteer of the Year. Since 2016, this dedicated group has tirelessly worked to improve the quality of life for seniors within Ryde. By organising and participating in regular social and cultural activities, they have significantly contributed to the community's vibrancy and inclusivity. The volunteers span multiple generations and have played a crucial role in promoting multicultural integration and social cohesion. Their efforts have been particularly impactful given that the group primarily consists of Mandarin-speaking members for whom English is a second language. Through their work, they have provided invaluable informational support and facilitated access to community services, ensuring all community members can thrive. The Meadowbank Mandarin Grandparent's Support Group exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism that enriches our community. Their dedication and commitment have enhanced seniors' lives and fostered a more connected and supportive community in Ryde. Thank you to the Meadowbank Mandarin Grandparent's Support Group for your remarkable service and for making Ryde a better place for all its residents.

KERRY KATZ, OAM

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—The 2024 Kings Birthday Honours provides the people of Australia the opportunity to recognise and say 'thank you' to outstanding citizens whose efforts make our communities and our nation a better place. Within my own electorate several outstanding citizens were recognised. I recognise and commend Kerry Katz OAM. Kerry is the Club Secretary and Head Junior Coach of the Budokan Judo Club, Castle Hill. Kerry received a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) General Division for service to the sport of judo as a coach and as an athlete. Within the Castle Hill Electorate, Kerry has served as the Head Junior Coach of the Budokan Judo Club since 1999. Kerry is also the current Club Secretary. Kerry established the Dino Kids Program in 2018. Kerry has held many roles with Judo Australia, Judo New South Wales, and Judo Victoria. Kerry has competed in many competitions including representing Australia at the Inaugural Female Judo Competition, Seoul Olympic Games, 1988. I extend my congratulations to Kerry on receiving the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) General Division.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL BENJAMIN LYTTON WATSON

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—The 2024 Australia Day Awards provided the opportunity to recognise and say 'thank you' to outstanding citizens whose efforts make our communities and our nation a better place. Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin Lytton Watson of the Australian Army, Class of 1999, was raised in Kenthurst and is also a long-standing member of Kenthurst Rural Fire Brigade. He was honoured on Australia Day this year with the Conspicuous Service Cross (CSC). The Australian Conspicuous Service Cross is awarded for outstanding devotion to duty or outstanding achievement in the application of exceptional skills, judgment, or dedication. Lieutenant Colonel Watson's outstanding contributions as an Operational Planner for the Indo-Pacific Integrated Operations Team and as the lead planner at Headquarters Joint Operations Command led to this prestigious recognition. He crafted a pivotal Australian Defence Force operational contingency plan, delivering significant results across various planning endeavours. His efforts not only bolstered relationships with Australia's allies but also drove strategic priorities, crucially influencing the nation's future operational strategies and readiness. Congratulations Lieutenant Colonel Watson on your receipt of the Conspicuous Service Cross (CSC).

STRONGER TOGETHER FOUNDATION

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—On 12 June 2024 the Stronger Together Foundation (formerly Fit Kidz Foundation) hosted the official opening of their new premises in Castle Hill. The opening also launched the new name, 'Stronger Together Foundation'. The Hills Shire Council Mayor and many Councillors were in attendance. Stronger Together Foundation offers supports and services for local children who have development delays, disability or who are neurodivergent, their families and the wider community. These vital supports and services include individual therapy offered in the community, group therapy, parent connection groups, sibling programs, hosting family events, hosting an annual conference for parents and carers and providing a roaming sensory breakout tent for community events. The new premises will enable Stronger Together Foundation the scope to expand and provide more supports to this significantly vulnerable group of children and families. CEO Ellen Witzlsperger is an Educational and Developmental Psychologist with over 16 years' experience in the sector and was awarded 2024 Citizen of the Year for the Hills Shire Council. I congratulate Ellen Witzlsperger and all persons who made the dream of the new premises a reality including Melissa Scaife (Co-founder; owner Fit Kidz Early Learning Centres) and Ramsay Zreikat (current Director).

HOMEGROWN PARKES

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I rise to recognise and commend the contributions of Homegrown Parkes to our community. This initiative, driven by Central West Lachlan Landcare in collaboration with Parkes Community Arts and Parkes Shire Council, has revitalised local engagement and sustainability through its vibrant markets. Homegrown Parkes offers an array of locally grown produce, showcasing how easy it is to grow your own food. By supporting local farmers and artisans, these markets ensure funds remain within our community, fostering economic growth and sustainability. The markets also reduce the carbon footprint associated with long-distance food transportation. A standout feature of Homegrown Parkes is its commitment to accessibility; the markets are provided for free, making them inclusive for community members. This initiative encourages residents to reconnect with their gardens, promoting healthier lifestyles and a greater appreciation for homegrown produce. The upcoming event on Saturday, 12 October 2024, at Cooke Park promises to be another exciting opportunity for the community to come together, share knowledge, and celebrate local produce. Homegrown Parkes exemplifies community spirit, sustainability, and local resilience. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved in this remarkable initiative. Your dedication to improving our community's well-being and sustainability is truly inspirational.

JUDE KEOGH

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the career of Orange newspaper photographer Jude Keogh, who has spent more than a quarter of a century recording our community's day-to-day life for local masthead The Central Western Daily. A well-known figure at social, sporting and news events, Jude has witnessed enormous change during her more than 25 years behind the lens. This includes the move from film to digital cameras in the early 2000s, the production of video footage to accompany stories and more recently, the battles country news outlets face against the onslaught of social media. During her career, Jude has adapted, embracing technology to enable the best possible coverage to keep people informed about what is going on in their patch. She takes care in framing images to help convey the story, covering everything from the visit of a prime minister to a charity morning tea. Flying in a helicopter to capture a water-bomber bushfire fighting plan was also a highlight. Jude continued her growth as a photographer when she held an exhibition of photographs taken using a home-made pin-hole camera, demonstrating her commitment to her craft. I thank Jude for her commitment to keeping us informed.

PARKES ST VINCENT DE PAUL LADIES

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr Speaker, the work of volunteers is an essential part of rural and regional communities, but with the cost-of-living battle we are facing, they are more important than ever. With that in mind, I wish to convey my gratitude to four outstanding women involved in keeping the Parkes St Vincent de Paul outlet thriving. Between them Betty Ackroyd, Pat Byrne, Lorraine Carty and Deborah Nelson have completed an outstanding 95 years of service to the charity with Pat at 40 years and Betty, with 35 years, leading the way. The service these ladies provide, and others involved with 'Vinnies' outlets across my electorate, can't be quantified and can never be discounted. It helps people in need but also gives volunteers themselves an opportunity to enjoy the satisfaction that comes with giving back to their community. The bonus is the friendships and connections created for volunteers and clients alike. Mr Speaker, busy lives with financial and work stresses have led to volunteers dwindling in numbers in recent years and I thank Betty, Pat, Lorraine and Deborah and the Parkes Vinnies team for the selfless work they conduct for their community.

CELEBRATING TEMORA'S SPORTING COMMUNITY

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—The Temora and District Sports Council is the driving force behind an annual event to highlight the sporting achievements of the sporting community. The council plays a crucial role in organising the event, from selecting the award categories to coordinating with the local sports groups for nominations. This year, a significant milestone—the 40th anniversary of this event was recently celebrated. It was a momentous occasion, with around 150 attendees joining in the celebrations, reflecting the enduring spirit of our community. Congratulations to the Temora Athletics Club, whose three competitors were recognised for their outstanding achievements. Hammer thrower Damien Wells, a consistent performer at a high level in national competitions, was rightfully awarded Senior Sportsperson of the Year. Athlete Grace Krause was awarded the Intermediate Sportsperson of the Year. Grace has shown her dedication in the field through various broken records at all levels and is now up for a chance to qualify for the upcoming Commonwealth Games. And fellow athlete Grace McCrone, who has been a standout performer in junior competitions, was awarded Junior Sportsperson of the Year. Congratulations to all the nominees and category winners across the various sections for their achievements.

COMBINED EMERGENCY SERVICES DAY

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—The weather didn't dampen the spirits or smiles of our emergency personnel, families, and the community of Narrandera on Saturday, 11 May, for the combined emergency services day, which I was incredibly proud to attend. The combined strength and unity of Narrandera's emergency services, including the SES, the Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA), Fire and Rescue NSW, the Rural Fire Service (RFS), NSW Police Force, and the Rapid Relief Team, was a reassuring sight on the day. Over 400 people gathered at Marie Bashir Park to not only witness live demonstrations and displays showcasing the incredible work our emergency service teams do daily, but also to gain valuable insights into how they can plan, prepare, and protect themselves and their families. These kinds of events are not only informative and a great way for families to learn about the crucial role of our emergency services, but they're also an excellent opportunity for us to say "thank you" for the vital roles these individuals play in keeping our towns and villages safe places to live. I extend my heartfelt thanks to each emergency service personnel for their incredible work to protect our communities.

GUNDAGAI'S DEBUTANTES

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—Gundagai recently celebrated its annual debutante ball, showcasing 14 debutantes who made their formal societal debut. This traditional event, held at the Gundagai District Services Club, is a highlight of the local social calendar, bringing together families and community members to celebrate the young participants. The girls and their partners gathered at the Lodge Room for a photo shoot before the debutantes were taken by bus to the District Services Club where over 350 guests were waiting for them. The debutantes, dressed in elegant white gowns, were introduced to the community during a formal presentation ceremony, embodying a time-honoured tradition that marks the transition of young women into adulthood and societal participation. With the proceeds of the ball raising much needed funds for local charities in the Gundagai community. Each debutante was paired with a partner for the evening, and they performed a series of traditional dances, including the waltz. The night also included music and entertainment, making it a memorable experience for the attendees. The debutante ball not only serves as a rite of passage for the young women but also reinforces community bonds and celebrates the continuity of local customs and traditions.

JOEL FLEMING

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise the achievements of Forster swimmer, Joel Fleming and his coach, Peter Sanders. Joel and Peter have been named in the NSW team to contest the Junior Pan Pacific Championships, taking place in Canberra from August 21 to 24. Joel recently won the Australian under 17, 50 metre freestyle title at the national championships on the Gold Coast. Additionally, he was a member of the victorious NSW 16-17 years 4 x 100 metre relay team and placed sixth in the under 17 100m freestyle final. Impressively, Joel has only been competing for two years. The Junior Pan Pacific Championships, held every two years, are being hosted in Australia for the first time. This event, which began in 2005, traditionally sees participation from Australia, USA, Canada, and Japan, Singapore, New Zealand and other countries. Congratulations Joel and Peter on your exceptional accomplishments. I wish you the best of luck at the upcoming championships.

LANSDOWNE ART SHOW COMMITTEE

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise the Lansdowne Art Show Committee, who held its fifth annual art show at Lansdowne Community Hall, a much-anticipated event that brought together artworks from the Manning, Great Lakes, and Hastings areas. Over the past year, the Art Show Committee has dedicated significant effort to preparing for this event, resulting in a spectacular display that filled the hall with over 200 paintings. The community turnout was impressive, with many visitors returning on Sunday for another look at the exceptional art pieces. The show also encouraged new artists to display their work, contributing to a vibrant and inclusive artistic community. Fourteen paintings were sold over the weekend, marking a successful event both culturally and financially. This art show serves as a major fundraiser for the hall trustees, aiding in the maintenance and operation of the hall, which is also available for hire. The committee's efforts have not only raised funds but have also highlighted the hall as a valuable community asset. Congratulations to all the section winners and to the Art Show Committee for the organisation and execution of this wonderful annual event.

MIKAYLA WORBOYS

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise Mikayla Worboys, a member of the Old Bar Barbarians, for her achievements and contributions to football and our community. Despite being sidelined from playing due to a series of concussions, Mikayla has transitioned into coaching and administration roles. Last month, Mikayla was honoured as one of the 25 recipients of the Northern NSW Football scholarships in the Women's Leadership Program. This program empowers female leaders within the football community by

providing education and support to create strong, positive influences at all levels of the game. In her role as a coach, Mikayla has made significant contributions, particularly with the Old Bar Barbarians' under sevens side, and the club's Mini Tillies program. Her efforts have increased female participation in the club by 36 percent, providing a strong foundation for the future of women's football in our community. Mikayla is also a youth homelessness case worker. She is looking to leverage her experiences and skills gained from the leadership program to develop initiatives that support children in our area, such as a homelessness football program. Congratulations Mikayla, I look forward to witnessing your continued contributions to both football and our community.

SHELLEY HANCOCK OAM

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises former Speaker, former NSW Minister for Local Government and former Member for South Coast, The Honourable Shelley Hancock OAM who was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her distinguished service to the people and Parliament of New South Wales. As the first female Speaker in the history of the Parliament of NSW, Shell broke through the glass ceiling and importantly she also inspired many other women into politics and into this Parliament. As Speaker, she also did great things for the Parliament to make it a better and friendlier workplace. Shelley was a transformative Minister for Local Government and a terrific Member for South Coast in her 20 years as a local MP and 17 years as a local Shoalhaven Councillor. She is also a terrific wife to Ossie, mother, grandmother and friend. I know you never sought it Shelley – but you have earned it and thoroughly deserve this recognition for a lifetime of service to the South Coast region, the people and the Parliament of New South Wales. A huge well done and congratulations to Shelley Hancock OAM!

IAN HUGHES OAM

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Mr Ian Hughes OAM who has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia as part of the King's Birthday Honours List which was officially announced on Monday 10th June 2024 by the Governor General of Australia. Mr Hughes received a Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] in the General Division for service to the community of the Shoalhaven region. Ian's pivotal role with the Bomaderry Nowra Lions Club is just one of the many things that stands out on his list of achievements. Mr Hughes connection with the Lions Club stems some 64 years. He had long association with the Bomaderry Nowra Lions Club, formerly Lions Club of Nowra, which included being president from 1981-1982. For the Lions District 201N2, which covers a wide range of areas, he was District Governor from 2002-2003 and Vice District Governor from 2001-2002. Mr Hughes was also President of the Illaroo Soccer Club from 1980-1982, a member of the NSW Retail Association from 1975-2005 and a former member of the Nowra Chamber of Commerce. A huge congratulations and well done to Mr Ian Hughes OAM!

CRAIG HANDLEY

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises local Berry artist Craig Handley who was one of only 57 selected finalists in this year's Archibald prize which is Australia's most iconic portraiture art competition. Mr Handley's art in recent years has a distinct soft colour palette and an ongoing subtle Australian element, but despite having a clear correlation to his style, he said the process making Timequake was very different to his other work. Craig began the piece barely two months after losing his father and while dealing with the grief and loss, the artwork became a catalyst in his healing, as well as a connection formed with subject and actor Anthony LaPaglia. At the time, Mr LaPaglia had landed the lead role of Willy Loman in Death of a Salesman, a play about personal conflicts, loss and tragedy. It wasn't until he saw Mr LaPaglia in the Death of a Salesman that he knew the artwork needed a double portrait, showing both sides of his subject. Each item in the artwork is an intentional addition, from the tears on the blue armchair representing age. Congratulations and well done to Berry artist Craig Handley.

GENEROUS BLOOD DONORS IN MAITLAND

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Some superheroes are hidden in plain sight, and they are donating blood. Neil Barron, Mathew Ekert, Nigel Hayes, John Hogno and Clifford Mosby are superheroes in Maitland having donated their blood more than 200 times. Together these men have saved more than 3600 lives, collectively donating more than 1200 times. The men have recently each received a certificate from Lifeblood for 200 donations, and John Hogno also received a certificate for donating his blood 300 times. Each of the men heard stories about how beneficial their donations have been to people at the recent National Blood Donor week event at the Maitland Donor Centre. These stories are about people they have never met but whose lives have been saved thanks to their blood donations. Rebecca shared with them that she has undergone three transplants, which requires a lot of transfusions, platelets and medicine made from blood products. The experience inspired her to become a nurse, and Rebecca thanks the men for saving her

life with their donations. One in three people will need some form of blood product over their lifetime, these donors are truly making a difference in the world, thank you.

MAITLAND SUPPORTS BEANIES FOR BRAIN CANCER

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Congratulations Maitland for once again supporting the Mark Hughes Foundation's Beanies for Brain Cancer Campaign. Each year as the weather cools, the people of Maitland generously showcase their warm hearts by donating to the Foundation and buying a beanie. The Maitland Junior Football club held their annual beanies for brain cancer round last weekend, raising over \$25,000 through sponsorship, beanie sales and donations. This is a cause close to the club's heart. Each year they raise vital funds to support the Foundation's brain cancer care coordinators support services and medical research. Congratulations to Evelyn Stonham, Jennifer Beale, Vince Cooper and Holly Moore and all the hard-working committee for all their efforts. Local business Lovey's IGA at Gillieston Heights also held a launch at the beginning of the month and once again welcomed Mark himself to thank the staff and customers. Beanies are on sale across Maitland at IGAs in Gillieston Heights, East Maitland and Telarah, and Lowes at Green Hills and Maitland. Thank you, Maitland, for helping to tackle brain cancer.

UNDER 15S NETBALL STATE CHAMPIONS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—The Under 15s Netball Maitland team, have been scoring points for Maitland, having been crowned State Division 2 Champions at the recent NSW Senior Netball Titles. Maitland also had success with the Open team finishing third in the Champions Division, alongside the Under 17s who only just missed out on a top 10 finish in Division 2. Over the King's Birthday long weekend the Maitland girls Under 15s team won the Division 2 title, finishing equal on 25 points with Barellan and District, with both sides claiming 12 wins and a draw. During the weekend Barellan beat Maitland 19-17 in the final game of the Sunday, but on Monday the Maitland girls won all four of the games, including a pivotal game against Bathurst. Their final day results consisted of wins against Macleay, Gosford, and Blue Mountains. The Maitland Open team who finished in third place, beat Illawarra, drew with Sutherland and had an upsetting loss to Penrith and an extra 3 wins over Lismore, Eastwood, and Ku-ring Gai. The Under 17s team finished 11th with seven wins and a draw. Congratulations to our netball girls.

LACHLAN RAE

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Lachlan Rae for being awarded 2023/24 Junior Lifesaver of the Year at Swansea-Belmont Surf Life Saving Club. During the 2023/24 season, Lachlan dedicated a remarkable 58 and a half hours to patrol duties at Swansea-Belmont SLSC, skilfully operating the Inflatable Rescue Boats and assisting in search and rescue missions. Lachlan further placed second at the 2024 Aussies Competition in U/19 double ski, demonstrating exceptional commitment to training, and expertise on the water. Therefore, at this year's ceremony, Lachlan was awarded Junior Lifesaver of the Year along with his Bronze Medallion, Silver Medallion in Breach Management and Aquatic Rescue, as well as qualifications in Inflatable Rescue Boat Crew and Drivers. This array of awards exemplifies Lachlan's incredible volunteerism and dedication to the club. Congratulations Lachlan, you are a credit to your club and community. Thank you for taking the time to make our beautiful Swansea waterways safer.

LASZLO PHEDEY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Laszlo Phedey on his fifty years of service as a New South Wales Justice of the Peace. The role of a Justice of the Peace was first created in 1787 and aimed to serve the community in a quasi-judicial capacity. As such, the position demands integrity, honesty and an impeccable character from individuals who fulfil duties of a Justice of the Peace. This is true for Laszlo and his service as a Justice of the Peace. On behalf of the Department of Communities and Justice and the Attorney General, Hon. Michael Daley MP, Laszlo was awarded a certificate thanking him for his fifty years' service. Laszlo was presented with the award at a lovely afternoon tea along with the other recipients in the Swansea Electorate. Fifty years of service is of course an impressive feat, and I would therefore like to offer my gratitude on behalf of the Swansea Electorate to Laszlo for his dedication to our community.

PETER MCLEOD

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Peter McLeod on his fifty years of service as a New South Wales Justice of the Peace. The role of a Justice of the Peace was first created in 1787 and aimed to serve the community in a quasi-judicial capacity. As such, the position demands integrity, honesty and an impeccable character from individuals who fulfil duties of a Justice of the Peace. This is true for Peter and his service as a Justice of the

Peace. On behalf of the Department of Communities and Justice and the Attorney General, Hon. Michael Daley MP, Peter was awarded a certificate thanking him for his fifty years' service. Peter was presented with the award at a lovely afternoon tea along with the other recipients in the Swansea Electorate. Fifty years of service is of course an impressive feat, and I would therefore like to offer my gratitude on behalf of the Swansea Electorate to Peter for his dedication to our community.

WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden)—Friday the 14th of June was World Blood Donor Day a day to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products and to thank blood donors for donating blood and saving lives in the process. Blood donors are true heroes, giving the gift of life to strangers in need, without expectation of reward or recognition. Their commitment to this cause not only supports our healthcare system, supporting some of our most vulnerable when they need it. Blood donors are in short supply and there is a need for more regular blood donors. Giving blood quick and rewarding. I would encourage everyone who is able to donate blood to do so. Thank you to all blood donors for your unwavering commitment and dedication.

AUSTRALIAN OBSERVANCE OF THE UN DAY VESAK

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—I had the great privilege of attending the 2024 Australian Observance of the UN Day of Vesak on the 4th of May 2024, organised at Thien An Temple, a Temple in Canley Vale, where many of my constituents attend. To Buddhists, Vesak Day is one of the most sacred days of the year, the day that commemorates the three major events in the life of The Lord Buddha—the Birth, Enlightenment, and Death. In 1999, the UN General Assembly recognised the Day of Vesak internationally to pay homage to the Buddha for his timeless teachings while acknowledging the contribution of Buddhism to the spirituality of humanity over two and a half millennia. The 2024 UN Day of Vesak at Thien An Temple was a memorable event, filled with beautiful chanting by Monks and vibrant ceremonies and processions of Buddhist rituals and traditions. I extend my wholehearted gratitude to the Senior Venerable Thich Phuoc Tan and all the Venerable monks at Thien An Temple for their kind invitation. May the auspicious occasion bring everyone joy, peace, and happiness.

FALL OF SAIGON 49TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—I had the great honour of attending the wreath-laying ceremony and commemoration service marking the 49th Anniversary of the fall of Saigon held on 27 April 2024 on Anzac Parade Canberra. Known as Black April, the Fall of Saigon signified the capture of Saigon by the North Vietnamese Army on 30 April 1975. This historical event marked the end of the Vietnam War and the end of the South Vietnamese Government, which led to the start of the refugee wave from Vietnamese people seeking asylum in many free countries around the world including in Australia. Each year in April, commemorative ceremonies are held to pay tribute to the shared valour of soldiers of the Republic of Vietnam and the Australian Armed Forces, alongside the sacrifices of civilians, in the Vietnam War in defence of freedom and democracy. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Vietnamese Community in Australia and its President Mr Cong Le for the kind invitation. Special appreciation goes to all involved in organising this meaningful event and I look forward to participating in future commemorations.

VESAK BUDDHA CELEBRATION FREEDOM PLAZA 2024

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—I had the great honour of representing the Minister for Multiculturalism, the Hon Steve Kamper, Minister for Multiculturalism to attend the Vesak Buddha Celebration Ceremony, hosted by the Australian Chinese Buddhist Society (ACBS), at Freedom Plaza, in my electorate of Cabramatta on the 4th of May 2024. Vesak Day, also known as the Buddha's Birthday in some Buddhist traditions, is significant to the Buddhist community in my electorate. The event commemorates the Buddha and his timeless teachings, featuring a host of Buddhist rituals, with the Buddha Bathing Ceremony being the highlight of the event. This is a symbolic act to cleanse our body, actions and thoughts, purifying the mind and eradicating anger, greed, and ignorance while cultivating merits and wisdom. I extend my heartfelt thanks to ACBS Chairman, Mr James Chan and the President Mr Vincent Kong for their kind invitation. I also would like to thank everyone involved for their dedication in organising this meaningful event, and especially all the wonderful members and volunteers.

GLENN PINCOTT

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—Congratulations to Glenn Pincott from Blue Haven for receiving Distinguished Long Service Awards at the 2024 NSW Community Sports Awards on June 19. The awards night was held at CommBank Stadium by Sport NSW, to recognise outstanding achievements and contributions to community sport in NSW which is largely carried out by a volunteer workforce. Mr Pincott was amongst 21 recipients including John Turnbull from Erina and Maree Kirby from Doyalson who received awards from NSW Sports Minister Steve Kamper. Pincott has been an active

Motorsport official since 1988, servicing the community in a range of roles from community grassroots motorsport up to the top tiers of the sport. He quickly moved into senior roles and obtained his Gold Scrutiny Licence with Log Book Endorsement and went on to hold senior roles including technical commissioner for a national category. Pincott has held positions as Chief Scrutineer at the Australian Grand Prix, Amaroo Park, Bathurst, and Sydney Motorsport Park. He was the 2023 Series Steward for the Toyota Gazoo Australia 86 Series and also officiates as a Steward at Supercars events as well as State Championship Circuit Racing events.

JAI MCEWEN

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—Young person Jai McEwen from Hamlyn Terrace has been shortlisted amongst 50 candidates for the NSW Youth Advisory Council. This year more than 300 young people located across NSW aged 12 to 24 applied through the program. The recruitment event will be held on the 28th of June in NSW Parliament House to result in 12 finalists. The NSW Youth Advisory Council meets regularly over their term throughout the year to provide advice to the Minister Hon. Rose Jackson, for Youth and the Advocate for Children and Young People on issues, policies and laws that affect children and young people in NSW. Membership of the YAC provides an opportunity for children and young people to contribute to the work of the NSW Government. Good luck to Jai McEwen in being assessed at the recruitment event.

JADE CLERKE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—Congratulations to Jade Clerke from Toukley Police Station who has been recognised as the May Champion of the Month. Superintendent Chad Gillies presented Senior Constable Clerke the challenge coin at a training day surrounded by her colleagues to acknowledge her efforts. Showing her skills as a reliable and positive leader amongst everyone in the workplace and assisting through shifts. Ms Clerke is a good worker and still goes out of her way to assist in the operations and running of command. Well done on Ms Clerke's achievements and positive impact during her time at Toukley Police Station.

ZAC ZAMMIT

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the wonderful achievement of Zac Zammit, from Shell Cove Public School, for successfully auditioning for the Southern Stars Performing Company this year. Zac will be featuring in the orchestra at this event. Southern Stars is an annual arena spectacular held in Wollongong at the WIN Entertainment Centre for public schools. It is open to all public schools across NSW and is an exciting showcase of dance, drama and music performed to a live orchestra by students from Year 2 to 12. Since its inception in 2001, more than 50,000 public school students have been given the unforgettable opportunity to experience performing in the event. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our congratulations to Zac and wish him well performing in Southern Stars this year.

DAPTO BAKERS DELIGHT

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the wonderful achievement of Bakers Delight in Dapto for their contribution to the Breast Cancer Network Australia's (BCNA) Pink Bun campaign. The goal for Dapto's Bakers Delight was to sell 3500 fun buns, with 100 per cent of the sales going to BCNA. At Bakers Delight Dapto customers supported the Pink Bun campaign by buying a fun bun and they were able to write on a pink lady displayed in the store. The BCNA has partnered with Bakers Delight since 2000 and has raised \$25 million for BCNA in that time. The Pink Bun campaign at Dapto Bakers Delight ran until May 29. On behalf of the Shellharbour community, I congratulate Dapto Bakers Delight for supporting such an important initiative.

LENNIX SMITH

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the wonderful achievement of Lennix Smith, from Barrack Point, on receiving \$1000 from Shellharbour City Council to attend the International Surfing Associations - World Junior Surfing Titles in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. Previous competitors in this competition include two-time WSL champion, Tyler Wright and eight-time WSL champion, Stephanie Gilmore. I am looking forward to seeing Lennix compete in next year's ISA World Junior Surfing Competition. His surfing talents are a testament to his hard work, consistency, and determination in sport. On behalf of the Shellharbour Electorate, I congratulate Lennix and wish him all the best in Brazil.

SIXTY YEARS FIRE SERVICE

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate two special gentlemen from Coreen NSW Rural Fire Service Southern Border Team, Jim Sandral and Peter Carroll, for their extraordinary six decades of service. The pair have been pillars of strength and dedication, protecting and serving the community with unwavering commitment. Jim Sandral was honored with his RFS Long Service Medal at the Corowa Nursing Home on Wednesday, May 22, surrounded by family and friends. He joined the Coreen Bridge at the age of 16, serving as an Operational Firefighter, before transitioning into an invaluable Operational support role until 2024. Peter "Candles" Carroll received his well-deserved medal at home, with family and friends in attendance. Peter started his service around 1960 in Coreen, holding the rank of Operational Firefighter until 2020, before transitioning to an Operational Reserve role through until 2024. His dedication was further acknowledged with the awarding of his 60-year-long service medal with clasps. Congratulations, Jim and Peter, on these monumental accomplishments! Your outstanding achievements exemplify your dedication, commitment, and spirit of community in protecting your friends and neighbours. Your legacies will inspire future generations of firefighters.

KINGS BIRTHDAY HONOURS 2024

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate Lance Boswell OAM and Malcolm Skewis PSM after their inclusion in the 2024 King's Birthday Honours List, for exceptional service and dedication to our community. Lance Boswell has been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia, for his significant service to the communities of Albury and Howlong. A football star in Howlong in 1959, Lance then served lengthy stints as Howlong Golf Club President and Treasurer from 1964 to 2006, as well as being an active committee member. Additionally, Lance has volunteered with the Rotary Club of Albury West for 30 years supporting Meals on Wheels. His tireless efforts and commitment have made a lasting impact on many lives in our communities. Malcolm Skewis has been awarded the Public Service Medal for his outstanding service to the survivors of the Stolen Generations. The Albury resident has been a cornerstone of the Stolen Generations Reparations Unit since 2016 and is a highly respected mentor and leader at Aboriginal Affairs NSW. Well done, Lance and Malcolm. Thank you for all your remarkable contributions. Your service and leadership in our community are greatly admired.

YOUNG DRESSAGE STAR ZALI MILLS HEADS TO GERMANY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to extend my congratulations to remarkable 14 year old Corowa teen Zali Mills, who will be representing Australia in the world of Equestrian Dressage at the prestigious Future Champions event in Hagen, Germany this month. Zali, a dedicated student at Corowa High School, began riding and showcasing her talents at the tender age of three. Her love, dedication, and commitment to the sport are attributed to her strong bond with her horses and the countless hours she spends training after school under the expert guidance of coach, Jessica Dertell. Zali's deep understanding and responsiveness to her animals are credited to her success. Competing in Europe offers Zali a wonderful opportunity to measure her skills against other riders from around the world, as well as being an incredible growth opportunity for her in the sport of Dressage. Congratulations, Zali! The entire Corowa community is incredibly proud of you and wishes you the very best in your upcoming competition.

TURRAMURRA NORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS AND CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Sunday 16 June 2024, I attended the Turramurra North Public School on Bobbin Head Road in North Turramurra. The school's local Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) undertook a working bee that focused on a native wildlife corridor. I commend their passion towards preserving our local environment and promoting volunteering. On the day, I proudly announced that the P&C will receive a \$15,000 grant from the NSW Government's Community Building Partnership (CBP) program to help upgrade their playground and create an even greater learning environment. This exciting project will further help current and future students. Thank you to the P&C for taking the time to apply for this grant. I recognise P&C President Lirize Loots and the dedicated members of the executive committee for all their efforts to Turramurra North Public School. I look forward to visiting again the school community again in the near future.

AUSTRALIA MY COUNTRY 2024

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On 15 June 2024, I attended the "Australia My Country" competition awards. Held annually for students in years 3 to 6 from schools on Sydney's north shore and northern beaches, it is organised by Forestville RSL Sub Branch. The 2024 theme was, "Going On An 'Adventure' – Australia in August 1914". There were three categories to enter. I congratulate the 2024 winners: Written (year 3 & 4): first place Avery Skeers, second place Huxley Geerson, third place Megan Opperman; Written (year 5 & 6): first place Indiana Quin, second place Annabella Ko, third place Nathan Giddy; Poetry (year 3 & 4): first place Lydia Xu, second place Sebastian Hoskins, third place Charlotte Seeto; Poetry (years 5 & 6): first place Oliver Gandia,

second place Nathan Keyes, third place Harry Cassidy; Art (years 3 & 4): first Charlotte Seeto, second place Jacob Slater, third place Lachlan Chatman; Art (years 5 & 6): first place Hamish Stock, second place Maya Moulds, third place Grace Heanemann; Special Commendation Art: Jialu (Alice) Tian, Poppy McDonald and Harry Cassidy. Congratulations to all enteries. The standard was of a very high standard. I recognise Forestville RSL Sub Branch for organising. Lest We Forget.

TARA RIGNEY – 2024 WORLD ROWING CUP II

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—The World Rowing Cup II was held in Lucerne Switzerland in May 2024. Three-time Australian national champion and Davidson electorate constituent, Tara Rigney, finished second in the Women's Single Sculls. Upon her representative debut in 2019, Tara has won several Australian titles culminating in being crowned Australian Champion in 2021, the first of her three Single Scull National Titles. She competed in the 2021 Tokyo Olympics, being placed seventh overall in double-sculls. Following her bronze medal in the 2023 World Rowing Championships, Tara was elevated to third in the world rankings and qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics. I recognise and congratulate Tara on her achievements. I look forward to following her progress at the Paris Olympics and beyond. Our local community is cheering her on!

DONALD ALEXANDER

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Doctor Donald Alexander certainly is one of Bathurst's quiet achievers. He is the current president of Bathurst Meals on Wheels and volunteers his time to several organisations to give back to the local community he has called home since moving here from New Zealand almost 15 years ago. This includes serving on the committee of management of the Bathurst Seymour Centre and being an on-air broadcaster with community radio 2MCE-FM. A retired senior lecturer in communication at Charles Sturt University, Doctor Alexander also holds a law degree from the University of Otago New Zealand, a Masters in organisational communications and Doctor of Philosophy from Charles Sturt University. However, it's his drive and enthusiasm at the helm of Bathurst Meals on Wheels that really drives Doctor Alexander because of the vital role it plays across the wider local community and indeed across New South Wales. It provides more than 400,000 meals to multiple service providers across the state every year and locally produces more than 40,000 meals for delivery across the Bathurst and Oberon region in what is a mammoth organisational effort. Congratulations Doctor Donald Alexander, your community extends you a vote of thanks.

SENIOR CONSTABLE LISA ANDERSON

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—I would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of a long-serving police officer in the Chifley Police District. Senior Constable Lisa Anderson has been recognised with one of the District's highest honours after recently being presented with the Paul Quinn Award. The honour was bestowed on Sen Const Anderson at the annual Chifley Police District Awards Ceremony held in Bathurst. The award is named after Sergeant Paul Quinn, who was fatally wounded in the line of duty at Perthville on Mach 30, 1986 and presented to an outstanding officer in the local police district. Sen Const Anderson has been serving communities in the Central West for almost 25 years and for the last three years has been the Children Protection Registry officer for the area. In this role she has been described as putting in a "tireless effort" while her dedication to the role "could not be faulted". Sen Const Anderson's efforts and leadership have not only mitigated critical risks to the community and the NSW Police Force, but they have also brought to heel a number of very dangerous felons. Thank you for your dedication to the community and commitment to service.

NINITA LOPEZ-WEEKES

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—I would like to congratulate Mrs Nenita Lopez-Weekes for her ongoing and unwavering commitment to the Filipiniana Friends Group of Bathurst and Central West. Nenita has a key role as a member of the organising committee of this organisation and this has been highlighted by the recent celebration in Bathurst of the 126th anniversary of the Declaration of Philippine Independence on June 1, 2024. The Filipiniana Friends Group of Bathurst and Central West in co-operation with the Philippine Consulate Sydney, Bathurst Regional Council and the Lions Club of Bathurst marked this important occasion with a flag raising ceremony followed by lunch and afternoon of celebration, culture and entertainment at the St Michael and St John Cathedral Parish Hall. It is my pleasure to be able to thank Nenita for her efforts in helping bring the local community together for this celebration and also be able to highlight the contribution the Philippine community makes to many small and large communities across the Central West region. Nenita and the entire organising committee from the Filipiniana Friends Group of Bathurst and Central West need to take a bow for organising this special event.

BRENDAN RYLAND TRANSPLANT FOOTBALL WORLD CUP

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—It is my great pleasure to congratulate Murrumbidgee local Brendan Ryland on being selected to represent Australia at this year's Transplant Football

World Cup in Italy in September. 2024 marks 45 years of the Transplant Football World Cup working to improve the lives of transplant patients by encouraging participation in this Olympic-style football tournament held every two years. Following a long battle with cardiomyopathy, Brendan was the recipient of a heart transplant nine years ago, giving him a second chance at life and reigniting his passion for sports. Twelve nations are lined up to send teams of sixteen to participate in the weeklong seven-a-side tournament to promote organ donation and show that transplant recipients can achieve anything they set out to do, including going back to or achieving a spot in representative level sport. Congratulations Brendan on this incredible opportunity to represent Australia. We wish you luck on your journey to Italy and in every step of this amazing competition!

MS BARBARA RAMJAN OAM

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—I wish to recognise and congratulate Ms Barbara Ramjan OAM of Summer Hill on her Award in the King's Birthday 2024 Honours List. Barbara has been recognised for service to rowing, and to the law. Barbara has made an immense contribution to rowing over decades: from local community clubs, to Rowing NSW and the Union of Oarswomen. Barbara has been a State Level Umpire and Boat Race Official since 1998. She has also been on the Executive Committee of the NSW Union of Rowers since 2009, and held the presidency from 2011-2013. Barbara currently coaches the Balmain Para Program Inc. for Balmain Rowing Club, a role she has selflessly undertaken for over 23 years. She is also the current President and Coach of the Community Rowing Club Sydney. But her recognition is not limited to rowing! Barbara has been a senior office bearer in the NSW Department of Communities and Justice since 2002, as well as having held positions in the Legal Aid Commission of NSW, Children's Court Advisory Committee of NSW, Guardianship Tribunal of NSW and the Immigration Review Tribunal. Congratulations Barbara on this well-deserved honour!

PLUMTREE PRESCHOOL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—Trusted by the community for over 30 years, Plumtree Preschool in Marrickville is a much loved, not-for-profit, community-based organisation that helps families thrive. Plumtree Preschool provides therapies and support for children aged from birth to 8 years with a disability or developmental delay and their families. At Plumtree Preschool, free online and centre-based playgroups and parent educational programs support all families and allow children of all abilities and cultural backgrounds to learn together and begin to understand the value of inclusive communities. Plumtree's passionate, culturally diverse team of specialists work from the heart in a caring environment to ensure children of all abilities and their families feel respected and informed and are always supported. Congratulations to Board Chair Nick Walter, Chief Executive Officer Sylvana Mahmic, all the team and families at Plumtree on delivering such an amazing place to support families not just locally, but across Australia and around the world.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE AUNTY PRISCILLA WIGHTMAN

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I offer my deep condolences and sympathies to the family and friends of Aunty Priscilla Wightman, a tireless Indigenous rights campaigner and Stolen Generations survivor, who recently passed aged 66. A Gamilaroi woman who lived on Bundjalung country, Aunty Priscilla was perhaps best known as one of the Lismore Grandmothers Against Removals (GMAR). GMAR is a volunteer-run national network of groups working to address the systemic issues driving the high rate of child removals from First Nations families. The Grandmothers advocate for culturally informed and community-based care. Priscilla was a great woman and never stopped serving her community. I was privileged to know her and work with her. Her daughter Em Gala wrote on Facebook: "It still doesn't feel like reality for us. Mummy was a staunch powerhouse of a woman who fought up against the system until her last breath for our rights and to bring our Jarjums back home to country and with their families where they belong." Among many other tributes, Aunty Priscilla was described as a 'Christian woman, who loved God and God loved her' and 'a Stolen Generations child who transformed her trauma into healing'.

FARMERS' NIGHT OUT FLOOD RECOVERY EVENT

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—It was my pleasure to attend the Farmers' Night Out flood recovery event at Numulgi Community Hall on Friday night, June 7. Farmers from Numulgi, Bexhill, Boatharbour, Clunes, Corndale, Eltham and other nearby localities were invited to this free event organised by Lismore City Council's Community Recovery Officer Nikki Treanor. I attended in my capacity as NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Disaster Recovery and as Member for Lismore. Speakers included representatives from The Red Cross, The Recovery Me Program, and Local Land Services covering soil management and decontamination post-floods. Rose Wright, from Regionality, also discussed farm diversification, mental health and wellbeing support. There was live music from Mandy Hawkes and Christina Webster and a free dinner from Junkyard BBQ. It was a great night for catching up with each other to discuss issues affecting local farmers. Numulgi Hall was built in 1919 as a building for the community to connect and grow together. Like so many community halls across the Lismore

Electorate, Numulgi Hall has a lovely, welcoming vibe but it needs major renovations to ensure its longevity. I'm working with committee members to explore opportunities to help with that over time.

SUPERINTENDENT SCOTT TANNER APM AND DETECTIVE SERGEANT MICHAEL SMITH APM

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I wish to congratulate two long-serving police officers attached to the Richmond Police District being awarded the Australian Police Medal in the King's Birthday Honours List. Richmond Police District Commander Superintendent Scott Tanner APM is a proud 'country cop' who has always devoted himself to being a strong part of the fabric of the rural and regional towns he has worked and lived in. I know from my regular contact with Superintendent Tanner that he is a decisive and thoughtful leader within the NSW Police Force and enjoys the respect of all serving officers. These qualities came very much to the fore as the Emergency Operations Controller during the humanitarian disaster wreaked on Lismore and the Northern Rivers by the 2022 floods. Superintendent Tanner went on to assist Deputy Commissioner Mal Lanyon APM overseeing the flood recovery. Detective Sergeant Michael Smith APM has had a distinguished policing career, receiving numerous citations and recognition for his leadership and brave actions. He personally conducted many rescues of vulnerable people during the 2022 floods. His blend of experience, dedication, leadership and integrity exemplifies the very essence of the Force's values and mission.

TAJ ELLIOTT

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I commend Port Macquarie TAFE student Taj Elliott for becoming the worthy recipient of the 2024 VERTO - Country Education Foundation Indigenous Scholarship. Taj Elliott is a local electrician undertaking a Certificate 3 in electrotechnology at TAFE NSW Port Macquarie. He was recently awarded a \$2,000 Indigenous Scholarship through VERTO and the Country Education Foundation (CEF) to purchase tools and equipment for his course and trade. To generate some income, Taj has opened his own garden maintenance business, which employs five of his friends and operates on weekends whilst he is undertaking his apprenticeship. VERTO is a rural and regional based registered charity, founded in 1983. It is one of the largest employment and training service providers in Australia, with more than 65 locations in NSW, supporting community needs from vocational training, employment, apprenticeships, specialist programs with people living with a disability and Aboriginal communities. Taj has displayed a strong commitment and dedication towards his studies and has deservedly been awarded a scholarship through VERTO and the CEF. Gratitude is also extended to Taj's TAFE teacher Mark O'Brien who has been supporting him through his educational journey. Congratulations Taj and best wishes for the future.

DAVID BIGENI – FINALIST 2024 RESCA

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today, I acknowledge the 2024 Rotary Districts of NSW Emergency Services Community Awards (RESCA) finalist David Bigeni from Marine Rescue Port Macquarie. David Bigeni is a longstanding volunteer for Marine Rescue Port Macquarie. As the skipper, David is responsible for managing the fleets maintenance schedule and training new and existing volunteers in bar crossings, towing, first aid and emergency drills. Described as an invaluable member of the team who has saved countless lives at sea and in our local waterways, David has completed literally hundreds of rescues including his instrumental involvement in the 2021 floods in Port Macquarie. During this time, David worked 15 days straight performing flood rescues and even helped people rebuild their homes after the event. Rotary International members live by the organisation's mission of "Service Above Self". David certainly displays this attribute in everyday life, in the way he selflessly serves his community, especially during times of danger and distress. Outside of Marine Rescue, David assists the Lions Club, Ironman Australia and the Port Macquarie Rowing Club's 3 River Run. A role model in our community, I thank David for his extraordinary efforts in service to our community.

TASHA EIMER

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise a unique kindness and wellness initiative as part of the Pride Month celebrations across the Port Macquarie electorate. Tasha Eimer has created the "Hearts of Pride" Project through the simple design of handcrafted rainbow hearts to celebrate LGBTQIA+ communities on the Mid North Coast. This all came about her personal struggles with anxiety and the outlet she found through a colourful ball of yarn and a crochet hook. The project goal is to create 178 rainbow hearts to leave at popular landmarks and community spaces in Port Macquarie by Saturday, June 1 to celebrate Pride Month. As Tasha explains it is all about raising awareness and promoting queer acceptance, equality and inclusion. The crocheted hearts will symbolise the first gay and lesbian march for equality in 1978. To achieve Tasha's goal, local organisation 'Out Loud and Proud' and MakerSpace at the Port Macquarie Community College have joined forces to help with the production. Attached to each crochet heart is the uplifting comment: "take me with you on your way if you need some extra love today!" I wish the LGBTQIA+ community a wonderful celebration for Pride Month 2024.

JOSEPH CRAMP

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise Joseph Cramp and his skills in metal work. Joseph's introduction to metalwork was early, with his father being a mechanic and Joseph commencing steelwork whilst at school leading him to venture into construction steel work, specialising in welding. Joseph will travel to France in September as part of the Australian Worldskills team, known as the Skillaroos, where they will test their skills against competitors from more than seventy-five other countries. The Worldskills International Championships have been held since 1950 and have attracted and collectively brought together vocational apprentices and trainees from around the world to compete in their respective disciplines. Competitions are designed by industry and skills experts who assess an individual's knowledge, practical competence, and employability skills against a set of strict criteria. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Joseph on being selected to represent Australia and wish him every success in France.

65 ROSES CHARITY DINNER

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise the Cystic Fibrosis - Goulburn District's 65 Roses Charity Dinner. Cystic fibrosis most commonly affects the lungs and digestive system, due to a malfunction in the exocrine system, which is responsible for the production of saliva, sweat, tears and mucus. Whilst there is no known cure, ongoing advances in treatment and care assist and support those living with CF. CF Goulburn and District Committee host an annual dinner to fundraise for those living with CF and their families and carers in the region - providing financial aid towards treatment and equipment. The annual fundraising night is a cornerstone event in Goulburn, drawing widespread support across the region. For many decades the small group of dedicated volunteers, including President Ms. Sylvana Aliffi, have played this indispensable role in the community. Congratulations to the committee for the successful event in 2024. I recognise their work and devotion to the support of the community - such impactful gatherings as the 65 Roses Charity Dinner wouldn't be achievable without their dedicated efforts.

SOUTH GRAFTON CENOTAPH - CENTENARY CELEBRATION

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to acknowledge the Anzac Day ceremony that took place this year, at the South Grafton Cenotaph, in Through Street, commemorating the 100th Anniversary of its opening. The granite monument stands as a symbol of remembrance and bears the names of the fallen from the local and surrounding areas. The Cenotaph is regarded as a significant historical site, within the community, as it was erected as a tribute to those who bravely served our Country and made the ultimate sacrifice in World War I. We will remember their service to our Country, and we honour them. Lest we forget.

MARCIA HUNTER 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to offer a very warm congratulations to Marcia Hunter who has recorded an astonishing 50 years of serving the community at the Iluka branch of the CWA. During this time Marcia has committed over 20 years to leading the Iluka branch as their much-respected President. The scope of Marcia's dedication has not been limited to the CWA over the last 50 years. Marcia has also been responsible for pioneering initiatives like the Tuckshop at Iluka Public School and has contributed to the expansion of groups such as the Tennis Group, Youth Group, Scouts Auxiliary, Golf Club Kitchen and the Iluka History Group. Marcia's community spirit has also led to her volunteering her time to support charity organisations like the Red Nose and Salvation Army/Red Cross appeals. Thank you Marcia for your outstanding contributions to the local community, I commend you on your remarkable half-century of selfless enthusiasm.

KEVIN ELLEM 50 YEARS AT CRFC

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to recognise Kevin Ellem for the significant milestone of 50 years working for the Clarence River Fisherman's Co-Operative. The Co-Op plays an important role in supporting the fishing industry and contributes to the livelihoods of hundreds of local families. Kevin's commitment to the business has seen him become a valuable asset to the team and a wealth of knowledge. I was impressed to hear that the compressor units that Kevin dismantled and rebuilt many years ago are still operating today. Kevin started working at the Co-Op back in the 70's when he was just a teenager and over the last 50 years has seen plenty of change in the business and the fishing industry itself. His many years of service are to be commended and I am sure the Co-Op is very thankful for his expertise and experience. I congratulate Kevin on his dedication and loyalty and wish him all the best for the future.

BALMORAL SEAHORSE RELEASE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker Balmoral Beach has become the new home of more than two-hundred endangered White's Seahorses after they were successfully released by the team at the Sydney Institute of Marine Science. The White's Seahorse is the second species globally to be listed as endangered, and

over the last decade there has been a vast decline in their population due to loss of critical habitat from sedimentation, mooring pollution and the general urbanisation of Sydney's shoreline. Thanks to the ingenious designs with the seahorse hotel, the team at SIMS have been working to re-establish and repopulate the endangered species. After a successful release last year in Chowder Bay it is hoped that this second release at Balmoral will be just as successful in establishing a stable population. I want to extend my congratulations to the entire team at SIMS for this successful release and all the incredible work that they do for marine conservation.

LANCE MILLER 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker I want to recognise Lance Miller for 50 years of volunteer work at Marine Rescue Middle Harbour. Over the past half-century, Lance has dedicated so much of his time and effort to protecting our community. Earlier this month, Lance was awarded a Marine Rescue NSW Commissioner's Commendation for Service in recognition of his significant and meritorious contribution to vessel operations and training at the Marine Rescue Middle Harbour Unit. Lance forms an integral part of the Marine Rescue community, shaping the direction of the Middle Harbour base in so many positive ways. He has shown dedication and strong leadership through his ongoing mentorship of volunteers. I wish to thank Lance for an incredible 50 years of service and for your unwavering and admirable commitment to saving lives on the water.

NORTH SHORE KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker I want to acknowledge the recipients of the 2024 King's Birthday Honours across my local community. Congratulations to those who were appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia, Dr Diana Semmonds, for service to ophthalmology, to regulatory bodies, and to professional organisations, the Hon. Jillian Skinner, for service to the people and Parliament of NSW, and to community health, and Mrs Lynn Kraus, for service to business and commerce, to gender equality and to the community. Congratulations to those who received a Medal of the Order of Australia, Mrs Inga Eckerstrom Fancelli, for service to the arts as an entertainer and to the community, Dr Penny Browne, for service to medicine as a general practitioner, and Mrs Susan Ferguson, for service to community health. And finally, congratulations to those who received a Public Service Medal and Emergency Service Medal respectively, Associate Professor Elizabeth Murphy, for outstanding public service to child and family health programs in NSW. And Mr Anthony Whybrow, for his dedicated service to Marine Rescue NSW. Congratulations to all our local recipients who have made our community proud for their outstanding contributions.

SOUTH HURSTVILLE KINDERGATEN

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I wish to congratulate and acknowledge the wonderful work of South Hurstville Kindergarten who recently received an 'excellent' rating from KindiCare. The KindiCare rating system is based on feedback from families who have children enrolled in kindergarten. Astonishingly, only 12 per cent of kindergartens across the state have received an 'excellent' or higher rating. South Hurstville Kindergarten has been serving our local community for over 60 years. This incredible achievement can only be attributed to the pre-schools' dedicated team of educators who work tirelessly to provide our kids with the best education possible. Receiving an 'excellent' from local families is not just a recognition but a testament to the kindergarten's unwavering commitment to excellence in childcare. I would like to give special mention to all the staff at the pre-school for the time and effort they put in to ensure our children have the best possible start in life. On behalf of the St George community, I want to thank South Hurstville Kindergarten and congratulate them on this wonderful recognition of their professionalism, hard work and dedication.

SUPERINTENDENT PAUL DUNSTAN

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to congratulate and recognise St George's new Police Area Commander, Detective Superintendent Paul Dunstan. Mr Dunstan has been helping protect the people of New South Wales for over 30 years. Paul started his career patrolling the streets of Liverpool and Macquarie before moving to Surry Hills in 2000, where he began work in the detective's branch. Since his appointment to the St George Area Command in May 2024, Superintendent Dunstan has been working tirelessly to mitigate crime and promote safety amongst our local community. In his first opening statements as Commander, Mr Dunstan made it clear that addressing domestic violence is his number one priority. Having already met with multicultural and religious leaders, Mr Dunstan is working tirelessly to provide peace of mind to our community and address this issue. Beyond this, Superintendent Dunstan is also focused on reaching out and supporting newly established multicultural communities such as the Nepalese, Mongolian and Ukrainian communities. On behalf of the St George community, I want to congratulate Mr Dunstan on his much-deserved promotion and express my deepest appreciation for the work he and the St George Local Area Command do to keep us safe.

ANDREA NESS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to congratulate and recognise Calvary Health Care Kogarah's new General Manager, Andrea Ness. Calvary Hospital specialises in palliative care, rehabilitation and general support services for patients in our local community. Ms Ness studied to become a clinical nurse specialist and nurse practitioner in cardiology and cardiothoracic care. Becoming a nurse was a natural step for Ms Ness, who has always had an unwavering passion and desire to help those in need. Throughout her extensive career, she has worked as a frontline nurse all over the world, often in times of crisis and desperation. Ms Ness leads Calvary Hospital in its quest to provide the highest quality of care to patients. As the State Member for Kogarah, I understand the invaluable contribution nurses make to our community – doing everything they can to improve patient outcomes and provide a sense of comfort in our time of need. On behalf of the St George community, I congratulate Ms Ness on her new appointment and express my deepest appreciation for the work she and the team at Calvary undertake every day to look after the people of this community.

CORPUS CHRISTI WALK

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—On the 30 May 2024, over 3000 members of our community participated in the annual Corpus Christi procession from St John The Beloved in Greenacre to St Jerome's and St Charbel's in Punchbowl supported by a marching band. The Corpus Christi procession is a traditional Catholic practice that involves carrying the Blessed Sacrament through the streets in a solemn procession. It commemorates the presence of Christ in the Eucharist and is traditionally observed on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. This year's Corpus Christi Walk was a display of the spirit and faith of our local Catholic community. The atmosphere was described as intimate and very holy, filled with beautiful incense, hymns, and prayer. I would like to acknowledge Mr Norm Bejjani for organising a beautiful night that allowed the Melkite, Roman and Maronite Catholic community to come together and proudly display their faith at the Corpus Christi Procession. The months of planning and coordinating with the council, traffic control and the police as well as the three parishes involved is a testament to the dedication you have to your faith and your goal to create an experience of peace and love in the community.

OFFICEWORKS CHARITY

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—Officeworks' 'Make a Difference Appeal' aims to make a positive difference and help change the lives of children in our local communities across Australia. I would like to acknowledge Officeworks for supporting organisations that promote inclusion that enables children to learn, create and connect for a sustainable future. This year, Officeworks Greenacre and Punchbowl have chosen to support the Creating Chances charity who promotes positive youth development through sports. The funds raised will support the weekly programs that help young people pursue vocational training through school-based traineeships. These programs are structured and progressive programs that are designed to build confident, capable and future-ready young people. The Punchbowl and Greenacre Officeworks teams are inviting customers to make a difference by donating to support the youth development charity 'Creating Chances'. It is heartwarming to see members within our community embrace these programs that help others to make a difference in society. I applaud the tremendous work of the Officeworks team members and residents of the Punchbowl and Greenacre areas as they work together to make a positive difference and help change the lives of children in our local community.

TALAL YASSINE, OAM, APPOINTED A MEMBER OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA (AM)

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Talal Yassine OAM on his well-deserved appointment as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM). This prestigious recognition not only celebrates Mr. Yassine's AM outstanding contributions but also acknowledges his commitment and dedication to serving our community. Mr. Yassine's dedication as a business leader, academic, philanthropist and keynote speaker exemplify the values that define the Order of Australia. Through his tireless efforts, he has made significant strides in promoting diversity, inclusivity, and opportunity for all. His leadership and vision have left an indelible mark on our community, inspiring others to reach their goals and to make a positive difference in the world. As a respected leader, advocate, and role model, Mr. Yassine AM has touched countless lives and continues to inspire others. We are immensely proud to recognise Mr. Talal Yassine AM, and we extend our gratitude for his outstanding service and dedication to making our society a better place for everyone. Congratulations, Mr. Yassine AM, on this well-deserved honour and thank you for your service to the community.

XS ESPRESSO GREEN VALLEY

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—Everytime I've popped into XS Espresso in The Valley Plaza in Green Valley, the place has been buzzing! So it's no surprise that the Green Valley XS team was recently awarded "Outstanding Cafe" at the 2024 Liverpool City Local Business Awards. It was fourth time lucky for the wonderful team at Green Valley XS, who finally took home the award having been nominated for the previous three years. I cannot overstate the significance of this award. Liverpool residents love our coffee, and thus the bar is high and the award most coveted. We expect the very best quality roast and the highest skills from our baristas. It seems that the community agrees: XS Espresso doesn't just meet the standard, it exceeds it. I congratulate the team at XS Espresso and look forward to dropping by soon to Liverpool's Most Outstanding Cafe.

SYDNEY COMMUNITY VOICE RENTERS FORUM

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I wish to acknowledge the Sydney Community Voice Renters Forum, held by the NSW Rental Commissioner, in partnership with the Tenants' Union of NSW and the Sydney Alliance. This community forum allowed decision makers to hear from renters directly, to listen to their experiences, understand the problems they face and propose solutions to issues relating to climate resilience, cost of living pressures, and energy standards in rental homes. The forum gave renters an opportunity to share their experience and consider solutions directly with the NSW Rental Commissioner and key decision makers, modelling a new participatory and inclusive approach to facilitating renters' engagement with elected officials and public policy makers. It was amazing to see! I particularly want to thank Zuzia from the Tenants Union and Diana from the Sydney Alliance – and give a huge congratulations to the local team behind preparations, logistics and key facilitation on night. This included passionate renters like co-chairs Matthew and Sandra, and small group leaders like Amity, Murray and Alastair. Thank you for bringing this forum together and sharing your expertise with us.

BAY BUDDIES

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge the Bay Buddies Love Your Place volunteers for their recent achievement at the City of Canada Bay Council Business and Sustainability Awards, and for being recognised in the Environmental Community Organisation category. The award recognises their tireless efforts keeping our community and our surrounding environment and foreshore clean. The Bay Buddies are committed to weekly cleaning and preservation of both Halliday Park, Five Dock and the Hen and Chicken Bay foreshore. They are a proud example of the spirit of our community. We are so privileged to live in such a beautiful place and it is always fantastic to see the community working together to preserve the natural beauty of our area. I sincerely thank the Bay Buddies for their commitment and dedication to our community. They make our area a better place each day. I wish the Bay Buddies all the very best.

LUIGI DE LUCA

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge the recent achievement of local community member Luigi De Luca. Mr. De Luca was recently Knighted by the Italian Republic for his dedication to promoting Italian food and culture in Australia. Mr. De Luca began working in his father's gelato factory in the 1960s and has brought their craft to Australia continuing his family's legacy internationally. Luigi demonstrates a keen passion for the industry and dedication to sharing his love of the craft with the community. Beyond operating his business, Luigi has spread his passion for the industry through training the next generation of gelato experts. In 1991, Luigi introduced the first TAFE accredited artisan gelato course which is now recognised on the official list of trades in Australia. The De Luca family have a strong and proud tradition of sharing their delicious gelato with our community, and as a family in small business, this well deserved award is a recognition of their values and hard work. I thank and congratulate Luigi for his dedication to sharing the Italian culture in our community and wish him all the very best.

LINDSAY CLAIRE DAVIS OAM

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—I wish to acknowledge an outstanding member of the electorate of Manly, Lindsay Davis, who was recently awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia as part of the King's Birthday honours. A member of Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club since 1985, this achievement is a testament to the many years of commitment and service that Lindsay has contributed to her Club. Throughout her time at Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club, Lindsay has held a number of significant roles, including Club Captain, First Aid Officer, Club Coach and most recently Chief Instructor and Director of Education. I congratulate Lindsay on this terrific and well-deserved honour and thank her for her ongoing commitment to keeping our beaches safe and for paving the way for future generations of surf lifesavers in our community.

ANITA BLANCHE KEELAN AM

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to Anita Keelan who is a resident of my electorate of Manly. Anita was recently honoured as a Member of the Order of Australia in recognition of her incredible commitment to Australian Netball. Anita has a long and impressive list of accolades and titles which all form part of what has been, and continues to be, a truly impressive career. Her appointments have ranged from Head Coach of Netball NSW Waratahs, Head Coach of the Australian National League, NSW Swifts Assistant Coach and most recently, Pathway Head Coach for Netball Australia. Anita has dedicated her working life to helping other Netballers improve their game and excel. In doing so, she has improved the quality of Netball being played across this country not only for individuals, but also collectively, on a national scale. I congratulate Anita on this fantastic and well-deserved achievement and wish her every success in her continued service to the great sport of Netball.

WILLIAM CLIFFORD GEE OAM

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, today I wish to recognise the impressive achievement of a constituent of the Manly Electorate, Mr William Gee. William recently received the esteemed award of the Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to surf lifesaving, and to the community. William boasts an impressive career of service to surf lifesaving in my electorate, being a member of Dee Why Surf Life Saving Club since 1951, and a Life Member since 1991. William's roles at the Club have ranged from Patrolling Member and Instructor to Power Boat Captain. He is also the Inaugural President of the Warringah Lions Club. I congratulate William on his years of dedication and service and thank him for everything he has done for our local community.

CENTRAL COAST MODEL UNITED NATIONS ASSEMBLY

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I recently had the pleasure of attending the Central Coast Rotary Clubs Model United Nations Assembly (MUNA) event held at Erina last month. Held annually, MUNA is as part of Rotary's ongoing commitment to youth development. The event aims to nurture goodwill and boost young people's understanding of global issues by holding debates modelled on the United Nations' General Assembly and Security Council. 15 teams from High schools across the Coast battled it out in debating UN resolutions, and presentations on behalf of their designated country. Congratulations to the winner, Central Coast Steiner School representing France. This team will now have the fantastic opportunity to represent the Coast in Canberra, at the National MUNA event, in August. Well done to all the students who participated with such enthusiasm, your research and commitment to representing your country and debating on topical worldwide issues was strong and clear. To the Central Coast Rotary Groups and volunteers, congratulations on conducting another successful MUNA event and for continuing to provide this wonderful opportunity for students here on the Central Coast.

MARGARET SANDS

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Madam/Mister Speaker, Today I would like to recognise and celebrate the outstanding contributions of Margaret Sands, a respected member of the Leeton community. Margaret was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for her dedicated service to the community, particularly through her pivotal role at the Roxy Theatre. Margaret's involvement with the Roxy spans decades, where her leadership and passion have been instrumental in preserving this cultural icon. Her profound love for the theatre is evident in her book, "Up in Lights: 80 Years of Leeton's Roxy Community Theatre," which chronicles its rich history and significance to the town. Beyond her role at the Roxy, Margaret has been a cornerstone of various community, church, and school initiatives, embodying the spirit of volunteering and civic duty. Her humility and dedication serve as an inspiration to us all, reminding us of the profound impact one individual can have on their community's cultural fabric and collective spirit.

ILLAWONG RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge the incredible members of the Illawong Rural Fire Brigade who play an instrumental role in protecting our community. For 67 years, the selfless volunteers of the Illawong Rural Fire Brigade have diligently protected our local community. These community-minded individuals have been instrumental in protecting life and property through some of the State's toughest bushfire seasons and weather events. In the last twelve months the Brigade responded to 87 incident calls across 6 local government areas, the most call outs since its formation. The outstanding efforts of members through the 2023/2024 season were highlighted at the brigade's annual general meeting on 13 June 2024. I recognise the Illawong Brigade's exceptional leadership team who were elected on the evening including Captain Simon Delander, Senior Deputy Captain Mark Pryor, President Peter Moore, Vice President Adam Smith, Secretary Peter Ross, Treasurer and Deputy Captain Greg Last, Community Engagement Coordinator and Deputy Captain Dom Bondar, Training Coordinator and Deputy Captain Chris Lynch, RFS Delegate James Gallagher and Deputy Captains Matt Angus,

Jenny Dolden, Nick Field, George Kouroulis, Scott Lepre and Paul Reynolds. I thank all members of the Illawong Rural Fire Brigade for their continued service to our community.

OYSTER BAY REJUVENATION COMMITTEE

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I recognise the incredible efforts of the Oyster Bay Rejuvenation Committee ("the Committee") in advocating for the rehabilitation of our beloved Oyster Bay. The Committee is comprised of dedicated volunteers committed to improving and restoring Oyster Bay to its former glory. Every day, Oyster Bay is much-loved and used by hire boats, rowers, water-skiers, kayakers, and recreational fishers. However, over the years as sediment has built up the bay has suffered and it is now nearly impossible for boats to navigate at low tide, recreational swimming is a thing of the past and drains are becoming blocked. In recognition of this, the Committee successfully advocated for Sutherland Shire Council to conduct a feasibility study on the restoration of Oyster Bay. I take this opportunity to recognise the extraordinary efforts of the Oyster Bay Rejuvenation Committee. I recognise committee members Travis Read, Lyn Tainton, Graeme Peck and Alfred Croucher as well as the over 650 supporters for their contribution to this very important local cause. I thank the members of the Oyster Bay Rejuvenation Committee for their efforts and look forward to continuing to work with them to improve Oyster Bay.

THE SHIRE VINTAGE COLLECTABLES FAIR

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I recognise the amazing efforts of the Rotary Club of Sutherland in hosting the 2024 Shire Vintage and Collectables Fair. This Shire Vintage and Collectables Fair was held on 9 June 2024 and saw over 2,000 people visit the Sutherland Basketball Stadium to browse through forty stalls of rare and vintage collectables. Run by Rotary Club of Sutherland volunteers, the event saw more than 120 valuations carried out on a range of collectables including Australian pottery, gold, diamonds and antique tapestry. Proceeds from the fair will be directed to Rotary projects including participation in Sutherland Shire Council's Australia Day festivities, Breakfast for Shire Kids and the End Polio now campaign. Of course, none of this is possible without the hard work and dedication of the Rotary Club of Sutherland executive committee. I recognise President Nouri Nader, Secretary David Melville, Treasurer Steve Hooper, President-Elect Alan Heighway and Club Directors John Barker, Harden Erskine and Warwick Parnell for their efforts in organising this important community event. I congratulate the Sutherland Rotary Club on hosting another successful Shire Vintage and Collectable Fair.

JEANINE KIMM

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—Jeanine Kimm has set the very first world record for Women's 8-hour merino ewe World Shearing record. Jeanine sheared 358 ewes in 8 hours, and after judgement of the ewes, was announced the world record holder. This is the first record set for the Women's merino Shearing world record in the 41 years the world shearing record society has been in operation and Jeanine is also believed to be the first Australian woman to attempt and hold a record in any category. Congratulations Jeanine on setting the world record. What a great achievement.

SHARE CELEBRATES 40 YEARS SERVICE

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport)—I would like to acknowledge and celebrate SHARE on their 40 years of caring for our community. SHARE are a wonderful organisation who provide a number of services within our community including, exercise classes for people over 50, people with disabilities, people with anxiety, depression and mental health issues. SHARE focuses on preventive health and aims to help keep people healthy and socially connected. We know how important exercise and social interactions are, not just for our physical health, but our mental health too and SHARE has been able to adapt their programs to continue to support our community through virtual programs. Social isolation is a serious problem, especially within our multicultural communities. SHARE plays an important role within these communities, not only providing health and wellbeing programs but supporting and providing people with social connections. It is wonderful to see services like SHARE continuing their important work, especially for our older and more vulnerable community members. Thank you to Barbara Ward, Adrian Prakash and the rest of the team at SHARE for all your hard work and service to our community and I wish to congratulate you on reaching 40 years of service.

DRUMMOYNE DISTRICT RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I acknowledge the 150th anniversary of the Drummoyne District Rugby Football Club. With the motto 'Play Rugby in Sydney. Play Rugby with The Dirty Reds. Deeper than blood,' this club has created a strong spirit of family and community. The Dirty Reds have been a cornerstone of our sporting community in Drummoyne since establishment in 1874, and now stands as one of eight division one teams in New South Wales. The Dirty Reds quickly established themselves in local sporting competitions taking out the 1st Grade Premiership title in 1875, just one year after founding. Since then, the club

has produced some of the greatest names in rugby union including future NSW Waratahs and Australian Wallabies players. I want to acknowledge and commend the Dirty Reds for its commitment to women's rugby. The club currently fields games in the NSW Suburban Rugby competition encouraging players of all ages and abilities to get involved. I want to sincerely congratulate Drummoyne Rugby Club on this extraordinary achievement and wish them all the very best on their sesquicentenary celebrations. I congratulate the hardworking Board both past and present, members, volunteers, players and all involved in this community club.

ANTHONY BROWN

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker, I would like to acknowledge Anthony Brown for his selection in the NSW All Abilities Blues Squad. "Brownie" is a name synonymous with bowls. He is the Bowls Manager at Club Dubbo and renowned on the bowls circuit. He is an exceptionally skilled and talented bowler evidenced by his impressive performances on numerous occasions, including the recent 2023-24 Men's Pennant Division 2 where his team were runners up and the 2023-24 State Championships held in Dubbo earlier this year. With his selection in the team, Anthony will proudly represent not only his home club, Club Dubbo, but the entire Dubbo region. From this squad, the KENO NSW All Abilities side will be selected for the Test Series against Victoria in August. Congratulations Anthony, you certainly are well deserving of a place in this squad. I wish you and your team mates much success. Go the blues!

MAX RABBETT

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker, I would like to congratulate Dubbo's Max Rabbett on being named VET Trainer/Teacher of the Year at the Western NSW Regional Training Awards. A passionate and experienced educator, Max is the Training Facilitator at Sureway Skills and Training for NSW and ACT. With a background in hotel management, Max was the youngest person to be appointed to a position of manager at a large hotel chain when he was just 21, where he trained over 150 staff members. Now, leveraging his extensive experience in managing large luxury hotels, he skilfully utilises his organisational, collaboration and customer service expertise to develop and implement comprehensive training programs. Having grown up in the Central West, Max is passionate about keeping local people within the region, securing local jobs, and providing them with the tools to succeed. Max himself is a VET sector success story, having completed numerous courses himself. Max credits the skills and learnings obtained from vocational education with providing him the opportunity to go onto university. Congratulations Max, your combination of passion and value for education is truly inspiring!

ELIZABETH SCHOLES-WALKER

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker, I would like to acknowledge Elizabeth Scholes-Walker who was recently named Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year at the Western NSW Training Awards. Elizabeth is a 23 year old Wiradjuri women working for Joblink Plus in Dubbo. She made a significant achievement by becoming the first in her family to pursue business studies, successfully completing a Certificate IV in Business through her workplace in 2023. A self confessed shy school student, she initially didn't think she would be suited to a job working with people. However, now employed as an Administration Assistant and aiming to become an Administration Manager, she is thriving and has become a role model for others. Through her role at Joblink Plus, she is involved in administering programs that help young people enter training. Congratulations on not only your award Elizabeth but your career success so far. I am positive you have a very bright future ahead of you. Keep up the great work!

GEORGES RIVER LIFE CARE CENTRE VISIT

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to tour Georges River Life Care Centre in Peakhurst with the Member for Holsworthy and my colleague, Tina Ayyad MP. I believe they truly do integral work within our communities. We had the opportunity to tour the site and discover the work that goes into providing support and emergency relief for vulnerable individuals. It was certainly an eye-opening experience. Georges River Life Care Centre offers family violence support, emergency relief support and disability care to the community. With the rising cost of living impacting everyone, more people than ever before are turning to Georges River Life Care for help. Both Tina and I were astounded by some of the stories we heard. They truly go above and beyond for their clients, providing emotional support and direction, as well as connecting them to other important services. I would like to recognise CEO Karen Power, the rest of the board and the entire team of staff who make a real difference in the lives of those who need it most. I look forward to my next visit, hopefully very soon!

KINGS BIRTHDAY HONOURS - ANNETTE RUHOTAS

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I would like to congratulate Oatley resident, Annette Ruhotas, who was recently made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to her community. Annette has contributed to so many organisations over the years, including the Australian Red Cross, Lifeblood,

both Playgroup Australia and Playgroup NSW and on several health regulation and advisory roles in numerous medical organisations. Whilst there are many volunteers in the St George area, Annette has truly gone above and beyond in her service to our community. The Member of the Order of Australia is a prestigious award and I am incredibly pleased that she is now receiving the recognition that she deserves. Annette is truly a community leader and an inspiration to those around her. She is proof of the change you can make through hard work and dedication and I would like to congratulate her on all she has achieved. I look forward to seeing everything Annette accomplishes over the next few years. She is very deserving of this honour.

KINGS BIRTHDAY HONOURS - AUNTY BERYL VAN OPLOO

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I would like to congratulate South Hurstville Resident, Aunty Beryl Van Oploo, who was recently awarded with a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her significant service to the Sydney Indigenous community and hospitality industry. As a business owner, educator, cook and volunteer, Aunty Beryl's resume is certainly impressive. Throughout her professional career, she has trained almost 4,000 young people in the hospitality field. Specifically, she has worked with young Indigenous Australians, assisting them in the hospitality field. Her main goal is to train up the next generation, offering them opportunities that they may not have otherwise had. Aunty Beryl has dedicated countless hours to these initiatives, always with the aim of uplifting those around her. This honour highlights not just her individual achievements but also the role that community leaders play in making our area a better place to live, work and raise a family. It is fitting that Aunty Beryl's remarkable contributions have been recognised with the Medal of the Order of Australia. I would like to congratulate her once again and wish her the very best.

2KF ESPRESSO

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I pay tribute to 2kf Espresso, Mona Vale, a wonderful family business owned by Kristy and Daniel Rempt, and worked in by their amazing children, Holly and Harry. Both of whom work 30 hours a week while studying full time. 2kf is unique and the only place you can grab a coffee at 4.40am in the morning. It's been a stand alone feature in this regard for over two decades. It is adored by the Mona Vale and wider community for those who need an early morning caffeine boost or a great coffee during the day. Like so many small businesses, 2kf Espresso faces its fair share of challenges. From COVID-19, finding staff, managing the pressures of inflation and cost of living, and facing challenges from the local Council. The perseverance and positivity with which the Rempt family face these challenges is inspiring. Please know, Kristy, Daniel, Holly and Harry, that your community always has your back, and we wish you every success. I am pleased that acknowledgement of 2kf Espresso and the Rempt family is now preserved for all time in the records of the oldest parliament in our nation.

THE ALBERT (ELEA) NAMATJIRA ROOM

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I pay tribute to indigenous Australian artist Albert (Elea) Namatjira and the Mona Vale Bowling Club. Albert Namatjira is a renowned artist, born in 1902 and dying in 1959. Albert was a trailblazer amongst our indigenous Australians. Despite the challenges he faced, he flourished as an artist and indigenous leader. Recently, the Mona Vale Bowling Club officially opened their renovated Albert Namatjira room, naming it "Alberts" Cocktail Bar. The room has honoured Albert for over 50 years and this renovation is the next step in acknowledging Albert's contribution as an indigenous Australian. The room features an historic wall mural by Albert and is also home to various indigenous artifacts and historical items. It was an honour to join with the Bowling Club and Uncle Neil Evers to officially open "Alberts" with a didgeridoo welcome, a smoking ceremony, welcome to country, and a ribbon cutting. Thank you to Mark Bennett, Peter Ward and all the team for their immense efforts in this amazing project. I am pleased that acknowledgement of "Alberts" and the Mona Vale Bowling Club is now preserved for all time in the records of the oldest parliament in our nation.

AVALON PUBLIC SCHOOL P&C

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—Officially opened in May 1951, Avalon Public School is over 75 years old. Nestled in the heart of Avalon Beach, whilst much has changed in the school and its surrounds, the community spirit of local residents remains just as strong today as in 1951. This spirit is personified by the school's P&C. It was wonderful to recently meet with members of the Avalon P&C – President Amy Kenny, Vice Presidents Morgan Webster and Jess Boomer, Treasurer Hendrik Van Senden. It was a privilege to spend time with the P&C and hear about the incredible opportunities that are available to Avalon Public School and its P&C. The school has amazing teachers, led by inspirational Principal, Andy Rankin, and its students are equally talented. Over the times ahead, I look forward to working with the P&C and school community to ensure that our local public school is provided with the best facilities and resources so that our kids can be the best they can be. I am pleased that acknowledgement of the Avalon Public School and its P&C is now preserved for all time in the records of the oldest parliament in our nation.

TVH BUGGY

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—The generosity and community spirit of the Tweed is on full display at the new Tweed Valley Hospital. The Lions Club of Kingscliff and the Australian Lions Foundation have donated a new six-seater buggy to help outpatients and visitors get around the new hospital. The buggy is operated by Tweed Valley Hospital volunteers, called the Healthcare Helpers, who generously give their time to help at the new hospital. I understand there is a waitlist to become a Healthcare Helper at the new hospital, a perfect example of the amazing community spirit in the Tweed. I would also like to thank the volunteers from the North Coast branch of the United Hospital Auxiliaries who fundraise through the gift shop and kiosk at the new hospital, making a wonderful contribution to supporting patients and staff. These supporters and volunteers bring so much heart to the new hospital and enhance the experience for those who visit. Thank you to the Lions Club of Kingscliff, the Australian Lions Foundation, the Tweed Valley Hospital Healthcare Helpers and the North Coast branch of the United Hospital Auxiliary for all that you do in supporting the new hospital. It wouldn't be the same without you.

TWEED CBP

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—Tweed is home to many wonderful community and sporting organisations and seven were recently successful in receiving funding totalling \$300,000 through the Community Building Partnerships Program. Bilambil Terranora Junior Jets Rugby League Football Club Ltd received funding for grandstand and viewing improvements, Sunnyfield received funding for kitchen renovations, Kingscliff Tennis Club was successful in gaining funding for court resurfacing, Tweed Coast Youth Service now has funding to purchase a vehicle to support delivering local youth programs, Tweed Coast Outriggers has received funding to refurbish their storage shed, PCYC Tweed Heads received funding to upgrade their reception area and Burringbar Community Preschool received funding for their solar system. Congratulations to all these organisations on gaining funding through this program and I look forward to seeing how these projects make a real difference for community and sporting groups in the Tweed Electorate.

JEFF DUNNE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—Green and gold Olympic fever is buzzing in the Tweed Electorate, with 16-year-old Tweed break-dancer Jeff Dunne preparing for his life-changing debut at the Paris Olympics in a little over two months. Jeff is currently ranked number one in Australia and seventh in the world and he will be bringing his immense talent to the world stage when breaking makes its first appearance in an Olympic Games. It's the only new sport at this year's summer Olympics. Regardless of the outcome in Paris, Jeff is already an excellent role model for the next generation of sports stars. He recently took time out of his training and schooling schedule to visit Kingscliff Public School to share his story and perform some of his incredible breaking moves. Jeff is inspiring in his abilities and in his commitment to his sport and I know a lot of young aspiring athletes from the Tweed will be watching and supporting Jeff, wishing him all the best. I wish Jeff every success at the 2024 Paris Olympics and I will be joining in with the rest of the Tweed loudly cheering him on.

PENRITH LAKES PARK RUN

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney)—I would like to recognise and congratulate Ms Shelley Cootes and the Penrith Lakes Parkrun team on their happy 10th anniversary. Shelley Cootes, one of the original event team members, has played a crucial role in the Parkrun over the past decade. The Penrith Lakes Parkrun has been instrumental in providing an inclusive space for the community, fostering a particularly special relationship with the deaf community. To celebrate this milestone, participants dressed up as superheroes, this year's theme. Over the past 10 years, 49,433 people have completed the course, achieving a total of 8,181 personal bests. Once again, I extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Shelley and the entire Penrith Lakes Parkrun team on their 10th anniversary.

BRUCE MCGARRITY AND VOLUNTEERS FROM ST MARYS RSL SUB-BRANCH

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney)—Bruce McGarrity and volunteers from the St Marys RSL Sub-Branch have been busy packing care packages for Australian Defence Force personnel deployed overseas. The incredible efforts of Bruce and the volunteers ensure that Service men and women receive a slice of home. These care packages include a range of goodies for our soldiers, such as drinks, lollies and biscuits. On behalf of the community, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Bruce and the volunteers at the St Marys RSL Sub-Branch for their dedication to bringing joy to our hardworking defence personnel. Your work is truly appreciated and makes a significant difference in the lives of those serving abroad.

SYDNEY DRAGWAY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Saturday 18th May 2024, I was excited to join in the official opening ceremony for the Gulf Western Oil Nitro Champs, held at the Sydney Dragway, Eastern Creek, in our local Electorate of Prospect. It was amazing to witness the 11,000 horsepower, fire-breathing drag racers headline the biggest nitro party in Nitro Champs history, with these impressive vehicles surpassing astonishing speeds of 500km/h. As the penultimate event on the annual National Drag Racing Championship calendar, this event also marked the 20th anniversary celebrations for Sydney Dragway. It was also a pleasure to meet Graeme Cowin, Australian Motor Sport Hall of Fame inductee. Graeme has been one of the most influential and inspirational figures in drag racing in Australia and globally, recognised for his contribution to the sport for more than five decades. It was great to be joined by my fellow drag racing enthusiast, Stephen Bali MP, Member for Blacktown to enjoy the racing rounds up close and celebrate the occasion. My thanks go out to Graeme Cowin, and to all the organisers across NDRC and Sydney Dragway on an amazing weekend of events – I look forward to the upcoming drag racing season.

MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL - SETTE GIUGNO

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Saturday 2nd June 2024, our local Maltese community celebrated Sette Giugno, which remembers the victims of the uprising against the British on 7th June 1919. This Maltese national holiday commemorates the period of civil unrest which led to British troops firing into the crowd gathered in Palace Square, Valletta, wounding hundreds of protestors and martyring four – Lorenzo Dyer, Giuseppe Bajada, Emmanuele Attard and Carmelo Abela. Sette Giugno led to increased resistance to the colonial government, and became an important precursor to Maltese independence from the United Kingdom, which was finally achieved in 1964. Maltese-Australians have been an integral part of our Western Sydney community spanning many decades, and New South Wales is home to more than 78,000 people with Maltese ancestry living across our State. Maltese-Australians continue to maintain an historic and vibrant local presence our local Prospect Electorate. Organised by the Maltese Community Council of NSW, this year's commemorations included speeches and musical segments from the Maltese Concert Band. Congratulations to President Miriam Friggieri, Secretary Annemarie Thind, all Committee members of the Maltese Community Council, and all our Maltese-Australian volunteers on organising this important event.

CATHERINE MCAULEY, WESTMEAD-PARRAMATTA WOMEN'S SHELTER

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Catherine McAuley Catholic College on their successful fundraising efforts to support the Parramatta Women's Shelter. Catherine McAuley is a Mercy school, teaching young women to actively participate as autonomous lifelong learners. Students, leaders, house patrons, and the school community collaborated to offer creative fundraising events. This included a Mother's Day stall, bake sale, trivia, and a lip sync battle to raise funds and awareness. The College raised \$5,295 and organised a Goods Drive, donating essentials like linen, laundry detergent and food to support families at the Parramatta Women's Shelter. These students are following the footsteps of Sister Catherine McAuley, 'by doing the ordinary, extraordinarily well' to make a difference. The Parramatta Women's Shelter assists women and children escaping domestic and family violence and gender-based discrimination. Their services give our community access to crisis support, education, employment, legal assistance and essentials like food and a safe night's stay. Congratulations to Catherine McAuley for your generous community spirit. Thank you to Parramatta Women's Shelter for continuing to support for women and children seeking new beginnings. I applaud the school and shelter for this compassionate example of how our community cares for one another.

ORCHARD HILLS VETERINARY HOSPITAL AND RSPCA OUTREACH TEAM

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I thank and commend Orchard Hills Veterinary Hospital and RSPCA Outreach Team for their initiative of launching successful vaccination programs aimed at reducing the incidence of Parvovirus. Referred to as 'Healthy Pet Days', this provision of accessible pet care has been particularly beneficial for pension and healthcare cardholders, allowing them to access essential animal health care services for free. The Orchard Hills Veterinary Hospital and RSPCA Outreach Team showed great passion and dedication to extend the 'Healthy Pet Days' by travelling to assist those in rural regions, such as Tenterfield, Glen Innes and Tamworth. The road trip achieved great outcomes, with 153 dogs vaccinated, 41 dogs microchipped, 48 cats health checked, 22 cats microchipped and 99 desexing bookings. On behalf of the Badgerys Creek electorate, I thank and commend the Orchard Hills Veterinary Hospital and RSPCA Outreach Team for their extraordinary work.

STATE OF ORIGIN

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I wish the NSW State of Origin team the very best as they approach Game 2 of this year's State of Origin series. I have no doubt that they are capable of victory, particularly

after their strong and resilient performance in Game 1, in which they showed great determination despite being one player down for most of the match. It brings me great joy that rugby league players from Western Sydney continue to excel and be chosen to represent their state and country. They wear their jerseys with pride and I'm sure the NSW representatives will do us proud in Game 2. I look forward to cheering them on towards victory and having the series sent to a decider.

ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE NSW

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I thank and commend the charitable organisation Animal Welfare League and their Kemps Creek shelter for the important work they do in improving the lives of companion animals and their vision of ensuring that all companion animals have a safe and loving home. The Animal Welfare League provides expert care to surrendered, neglected and abandoned animals across NSW. They strive to accomplish this through their work in rescue, rehoming, public education and desexing programs. After finding a home, companion animals are much loved by the families which they belong to. It is wonderful that through the generosity and efforts of individuals, the community and partnerships, the interest of these animals are protected and those without a home are assisted in finding their 'forever home'. On behalf of the Badgerys Creek electorate, I thank all involved in the Animal Welfare League NSW, including the Kemps Creek shelter, for their great work.

CLUBS AND COMMUNITY AWARDS NIGHT

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—Our local clubs make a fantastic contribution to our communities across NSW. To celebrate our clubs, I was delighted to be a guest of the Clubs & Community Awards Night Dinner on Thursday 6 June at the Sydney ICC. I was very proud to see two clubs in my Willoughby community, Norths Cammeray and the Neutral Bay Club on the finalist nominations. I would like to congratulate the CEO of Norths Cammeray, Luke Simmons, and his team for their club being 'Highly Commended' in the Social Inclusion Award. This was a much-deserved accolade for North's partnership with Assistance Dogs Australia which does such wonderful work for those in need. It was a great night to catchup with many friends, both old and new, and I thank Chris O'Keefe for the great job he did in MCing the night. I thank everyone who works hard to make our local clubs so welcoming, generous and positive for all in our community.

S'MORE BISTRO, CASTLECRAG

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—My community of Willoughby is home to so many fantastic restaurants and on Saturday 8 June, my wife and I were treated to a delicious dinner at S'More Bistro in Castlecrag. This bistro was opened by 'Big' Sam Young and Grace Chen who earlier specialised in preparing lockdown meal kits during the pandemic. Sam and Grace pride themselves on cooking meals of the finest quality. S'More is all about producing high quality, innovative food served in a casual, relaxed setting. Guests can come and savour some outstanding dishes including the best steak and seafood with many impressive wines and more. Sam, Grace and their team of friendly, professional and attentive staff strive to provide their guests with an exceptional dining experience and they do! S'More fills a special place in the dining scene of the Willoughby community and I'm proud it is part of our community. I commend Sam and Grace for their venture and wish S'More every continued success.

LOVE YOUR LOCALS NAREMBURN

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—Local businesses are the lifeblood of our community, and I have been delighted by the efforts of Naremburn locals in my community to rally behind their businesses. They have done this through a 'Love Your Locals' campaign, an initiative encouraging locals to support Naremburn businesses by shopping locally during the street works. Under this initiative, customers can pick up a loyalty card at participating businesses and collect three stamps. They can then enter the draw to win a weekly prize of \$50 to spend locally. The participating businesses include coffee shops, bakeries, takeaways, pet groomers, barbers and hairdressers. I would like to commend the Naremburn Chamber of Commerce, the Naremburn Progress Association, and Willoughby City Council for all their support behind this initiative. It will no doubt increase the patronage of these Naremburn businesses through a trying time during the street works. When local businesses thrive, the whole community benefits, and I know these Naremburn businesses are grateful for the extra support from the 'Love Your Locals' campaign. It was a joy to help with the draw the other week too!

CLOVER BRADLEY OAM

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby)—I was very pleased to learn that Clover Bradley, a lovely Hornsby resident, that I know very well, was recognized in the 2024 Australia Day awards with an Order of Australia Medal for her "service to the community through a range of organizations". Passionate about orchids Clover has been enthusiastically connected with various Orchid Societies, including serving as President of the Berowra Orchid Society since 2022 and Secretary of the North Shore Orchid Society since 2016. Clover is also a member of the Ukulele Friends and a long-time volunteer with Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT. Together with her late

husband, Bill Bradley OAM, she was also very involved with Hornsby Connect which they helped establish in 2016. Hornsby Connect is an amazing organisation which provides low cost or free groceries for people doing it tough in the Hornsby area. Over the years, Clover Bradley has received many awards for her tireless work in the Hornsby community. It is my pleasure to congratulate Clover Bradley for being awarded her OAM. She is a beautiful Hornsby resident and highly deserving of this award for her significant contribution to our community over many decades.

FRANCIS BOLSTER

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby)—I have known Francis Bolster for a number of years, but I still find his effervescent personality inspiring every time we speak. Soon after finishing at St Aloysius College, Francis commenced work in my electorate office. The manner and the speed in which he picked up the nuances of the Hornsby electorate's issues and the positive way he established relationships with my constituents, was very impressive, especially for someone so young. As time went on, I found myself loading Francis up with more responsibility, all of which he handled with the skill of a seasoned professional. Always willing to share his opinion, Francis took to policy work like a natural. Francis Bolster was very impressive as he managed the complicated campaign for my successful re-election in 2023. As is the case with talented staff, Francis Bolster has progressed his career to work in the office of Senator Maria Kovacic and has continued to thrive with his new role in Canberra. I am certain that Francis Bolster has a bright future in front of him and I expect we will see him progress to becoming a talented representative of the people in one form or another.

EUAN GILMORE

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby)—Euan Gilmore is a local constituent, mentor and dear friend. Euan has been like a second father to me over the years, taking me under his wing when I first joined the Liberal party as a teenager. A proud Scotsman, Euan worked all around the world as an electrical engineer. A chance encounter in a pub brought him to Australia in 1974, where he established a distinguished career. He became chief engineer of the Federal Airports Corporation and designed the baggage collection systems still used today. Euan immersed himself in community activity serving both the Berowra Rotary Club and Glenhaven Rotary Club for many years. He also had a passion for the Liberal Party and served it with distinction for over 30 years including as President of both the Berowra and Galston branches. He also served as the long-term President of the Hornsby SEC. On a personal note, his belief in me was unwavering and the support he provided was instrumental in developing me into the public servant I am today. Thank you to Euan Gilmore for a lifetime of service to our community. I am truly grateful to you and your wife Eleanor, for our remarkable friendship.

OCEAN VOICES

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I commend Ocean Voices for the amazing work that they do with young people. Ocean voices empowers Northern Rivers youth to be heard and hopeful about their future. I would like to recognise the organisation's youth leader Monet Shortland. Monet is an inspirational young leader in both her school and her community. She commits her time to causes and projects she is passionate about and uses her confident voice to inspire others. Monet is a great example of what young people can achieve if listened to and presented with opportunities. I congratulate her on her important work protecting and conserving our precious marine ecosystems.

DRAINAGE RESET

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I congratulate the NSW Cane growers particularly the Richmond River Cane Growers, Lower Richmond River Cane Harvesting Co-operative and Clarence Cane Growers Association on the successful commencement of the Northern Rivers drainage and reset program. The canegrowers have been advocating for years for more streamlined processes that would assist clearing the hundreds of drains that are impacting the health of the Richmond River and our farmers. The 2022 floods caused the canegrowers untold trauma with a lot of their properties and farms being overrun by debris exacerbating their ongoing challenge with the unblocked drains. I commend the cane growers for their persistence, patience, and constant engagement with all public offices to ensure that they receive the support they need. I particularly want to recognise Ross Farlow, Chairman NSW Canegrowers Association, Patrick O'Connor and Michael O'Connor of the Lower Richmond River Cane Harvesting Co-operative for their tireless efforts in initiating this program.

BALLINA LIGHTHOUSE AND LISMORE SURF LIFESAVING CLUB

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I recognise the superb contribution to the community made by the Ballina Lighthouse and Lismore Surf Lifesaving Club on the occasion of its 90th Anniversary and accompanying Awards night celebrations. Ever since the club started operating in September, 1933, with maroon and blue as its colours and a membership fee of 2/6d per annum, it has been an integral part of both the beach-loving and sporting community and Ballina as a whole. The fact that people came to the coast from Lismore to

join the club indicate its appeal right from the start. The club's presence has made Lighthouse Beach into a safe destination for locals and visitors to enjoy, as well as providing a home for an untold number of young people's fitness and ocean education training. Having the disciplined and knowledgeable life savers in place extended the beach beyond a popular spot for surfers into a recreational setting that the whole family could enjoy in safety. As its name indicates, the "Lighthouse" club is an absolute beacon of health and safety in the community, and I wish them well for many decades to come.

FIGTREE RESERVE

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—Figtree Reserve is now officially open after a multi-million-dollar upgrade. Despite the rain, I was honoured to join my colleague Stephen Bail MP, Hunters Hill Councillors, Council Staff and the community for the ribbon cutting this past Saturday. This project is the culmination of years of hard work, and I want to recognise all those who worked tirelessly to realise this project. Specifically, Mayor Zac Miles, Councillor Tatyana Virgara, Councillor Julia Prieston, Councillor Elizabeth Krassoi, Hunters Hill General Manager Mitchell Murphy, former Hunters Hill Councillor Ben Collins, and former Hunters Hill General Manager Lisa Miscamble.

LANE COVE COUNCIL

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—I would like to congratulate Lane Cove Council who were recognised recently for their exceptional work at Wadangari Park, having recently been awarded 2024 Park of the Year. Celebrating vibrant, successfully, well-designed, and innovative open space, Wadangari could be no finer example. I would like to congratulate all the Staff and Councillors at Lane Cove Council for their tireless work in bringing this project to fruition. Specifically, Mayor Scott Bennison, Councillor David Brooks-Horn, Councillor Kathy Mort, Councillor Andrew Zbik, Councillor David Roenfeldt, General Manager Craig Wrightson and Director for Open Space and Infrastructure Martin Terescenko.

SYDNEY COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—I would like to acknowledge the fantastic work of Sydney Community Services. A not-for-profit organisation based in Lane Cove that strives to ensure our seniors and vulnerable community members live a quality and independent life. I would like to acknowledge their CEO, Branka Ivkovic, for her determined leadership of the Organisation, and the countless volunteers who selfless donate so much of their valuable time. I had the pleasure of awarding the organisation \$32,642 through the Community Building Partnerships Program for equipment upgrades, it's a pleasure to support an organisation that does so much for our community.

ANGUS MCINNES

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst)—Today I recognise Angus McInnes, a student at St Augustine's College - Sydney, for his most admirable fundraising for the 'Cut for a Cure' campaign to raise awareness and funds for brain cancer research at the Children's Cancer Institute. Angus' older brother Isaac was diagnosed with an inoperable, rare and aggressive brain cancer in 2017 and passed away 10 months later at the age of 13, with Angus just 12 at the time. In the wake of such an unimaginable tragedy, Isaac's family set up a fund in his name to enable research at the Children's Cancer Institute into a cure for aggressive brain cancers. Now years later, Angus' efforts in the 'Cut for a Cure' campaign have meant the fundraising goal of \$50,000 has already been reached and continues to climb! Students who participated in the campaign at St Augustine's can get a mullet, shave or dye their hair on the 24th June during school lunch. To Angus, his family and school community, I say thank you for your phenomenal fundraising efforts for the Children's Cancer Institute. We are so proud of Angus McInnes and his mates at St Augustine's - Sydney. You boys rock!

HAIR KRONIX

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—When you look around Miller Central you may notice that it is home to the some of the best dye jobs and haircuts around. That is in no small part because of Hair Kronix. It has been a meteoric rise for the team at Hair Kronix, who only opened their doors in December last year – but have already snagged their first major award at this year's Liverpool City Local Business Awards! Hair Kronix delivers services to people across 2168, with barbers on site for anyone who prefers a fade or shave too! They provide the highest standard in all hair services, specialising in hair colouring, extensions, keratin and nanoplasty. I congratulate the Hair Kronix team for this amazing achievement in such a short period of time. Starting a new business is not easy, especially in the current climate where many people are tightening their belts. I want to acknowledge the work of the Hair Kronix team in having such a successful first year! I also remind all Liverpool residents to make sure you book in soon. Word is getting around and I'm sure Hair Kronix will be dealing with a big set of new clients after this award.

THE LOADED DOG

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise The Loaded Dog. The Loaded Dog is in Tarago, firstly established in 1848 and named after the Henry Lawsons famous story. Tim and Alannah Long took up the licence in 2020 and have been long term supporters of raising money for Legacy alongside many other community groups such as the Tarago Men's Shed and the CWA. Donations in the Legacy tin hat was decreasing, with most people now having no coins or notes on hand to slip into the tin. After some thought, they knew that their Karma-que nights would be the perfect activity to raise funds. Through raffles, Two-up and a silent auction, a total of \$3607.80 was raised for Goulburn Legacy. Funds will support widows in the Goulburn district. I take this time to thank Tim and Alannah, recognising their community-centred spirited roles they have embraced within the Tarago community.
