

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 16 October 2024

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Bills

WATER MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT (WATER ACCESS LICENCE REGISTER REFORM) BILL 2024

Returned

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

AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER 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.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: BILLS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (10:02): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended at this and any other sitting of the House to:

- (1) Permit all stages of the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023 in the carriage of the member for Sydney to be considered during the time set aside for Government business.
- (2) Provide that during consideration in detail of the bill, on any one question the member for Sydney to have an unspecified number of speaking periods limited to 15 minutes each.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (10:02): It is very disappointing that the Leader of the House has moved to suspend standing orders this morning. The Opposition has had no notification of the suspension of standing orders, which is incredibly disappointing. It is not the way we normally conduct business in this Chamber. It is disappointing that the leader of Opposition business has taken this position. No legislative duty or courtesy has been given to the Opposition and, sadly, no reasonable notice. It is basically an ambush by the Government to bring on this particular bill. I note that the Opposition has not even been provided with the amendments. They have not been shared and are still quite unknown to the Opposition, as far as I am aware. It is almost as though there is a secret copy of the bill that has been passed around to Government members.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. The Opposition Whip will be heard in silence.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: Again, it is very disappointing that the amendments have not been provided to the Opposition but have been provided to the Government. It is emblematic of this Government effectively keeping the people of New South Wales and the Opposition in the dark. We have the leader of Opposition business effectively trying to ram through the legislation—

Ms Trish Doyle: Opposition?

Mr ADAM CROUCH: —without any courtesy to the Opposition or due diligence. I note the interjection by the member for Blue Mountains. At the end of the day, we try to run on common courtesy in this place, as difficult as that can be for some. But what we are seeing here is a complete lack of that courtesy. There should be due respect shown to all members in this place, including the Opposition, and it is unfortunate that we see the situation arising where the leader of Opposition business effectively—

Ms Trish Doyle: Government business.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: It is actually not Government business.

The SPEAKER: The member for Blue Mountains will come to order.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I note the interjection by the member for Blue Mountains, who does not even realise that it actually is not Government business. It is a crossbench bill. Obviously, it is Government business now because the Government has been provided with information, but not the Opposition. I thank the member for Blue Mountains for the incorrect interjection highlighting that this is a Government bill, which says everything really—the fact that it is a Government bill. No courtesy has been shown to the Opposition, which is really disappointing.

The SPEAKER: All members will come to order. The member for Riverstone will come to order.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: We have a situation where we have literally had no notification of suspension of standing orders, which is a very disrespectful show of lack of faith and lack of common courtesy. There are members in the Chamber who have not been provided with—

Ms Trish Doyle: Common courtesy? There's no conscience vote.

The SPEAKER: The member for Goulburn will come to order. The member for Bathurst will come to order.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: The member for Blue Mountains does not get a conscience vote because, under her system, she does not have a say.

Ms Trish Doyle: Yes, we do.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: They all just toddle along and do as they are told because they do not have a conscience vote. The interjections by the member for Blue Mountains are very interesting.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: Members opposite are not provided a conscience vote.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: You don't get a conscience vote either.

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

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I am hearing interesting interjections from members on the other side, who are not allowed a conscience vote on this issue. They should be embarrassed. The member for Blue Mountains is basically now saying it is a Government bill, not a crossbench bill. We have total lack of respect shown to the Opposition.

Mr Warren Kirby: Point of order: A couple of times the leader of Opposition business has mischaracterised the bill as a Government bill.

The SPEAKER: The member for Riverstone will resume his seat. The criticism by the member for Terrigal is not unexpected. Whether they agree with it or not, Government members are being overly sensitive.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: We are seeing a government that has wrong priorities. Families are facing a cost-of-living crisis and the Government is trying to ram through a bill which has not been shown to the Opposition. The Government is giving the bill priority because it has no vision of its own and has such a light agenda. It is incapable of doing Government business, although according to the member for Blue Mountains this is Government business anyway. The Opposition does not support the suspension of standing orders because it is a gross misuse of the suspension of standing orders in this place.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (10:08): In reply: The bill has been before this House for a year. For a year, the member for Sydney has been consulting all members, including the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order. The Leader of the House will be heard in silence.

Mr RON HOENIG: The Opposition is hardly being ambushed. Didn't the shadow Cabinet consider the bill and the amendments after speaking to the member for Sydney? Didn't the shadow Attorney General spend time on radio this morning indicating his considerable knowledge of various amendments to the bill? Hasn't the Opposition been tearing itself apart over this particular bill?

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

Mr RON HOENIG: Aren't they a divided rabble? As the moderates—

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. I indicated to Government members that they were perhaps being overly sensitive during the contribution of the member for Terrigal. Opposition members should expect this response from the Leader of the House. They will have to wear it or leave the Chamber.

Mr RON HOENIG: Isn't the Opposition tearing itself apart? The moderates and extreme right wing are basically strangling each other. Does the member for North Shore, who is going to cross the floor, know nothing about what is in the bill or what is in the amendments? I cannot believe Opposition members would send somebody into the Chamber like the Opposition Whip and tell him to say that they were ambushed and knew nothing about this particular matter. At the end of the day, I am sure that their candidate in Pittwater knows all about the provisions of the bill. I am sure that members of the Opposition have been not just arguing about the provisions of the bill but fighting themselves to a standstill. They have even been arguing about whether to give themselves a conscience vote on the bill.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: My point of order is relevance. The member's comments are not germane to this debate.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Leader of the House is straying too far from the subject matter of the motion.

Mr RON HOENIG: I do not know how I can be straying too far from the subject matter of the bill.

The SPEAKER: You strayed all the way to Pittwater. The Leader of the House will come back to the motion. The member for Manly will cease interjecting. The member for Kiama is far too excited. The Leader of the House has the call.

Mr RON HOENIG: Opposition members are asserting that they were ambushed. What an extraordinary assertion to make. In fact, it is sad. Imagine how the former member for Wakehurst feels upon seeing the performance of some members of the Opposition in debate on a bill of this nature. What about the Leader of the Opposition? What is his view in respect of those issues or the subject matter that is left in the bill? Do I have to remind the House that the bill has been on the table for 12 months? It was proposed by the member for Sydney. The member for Sydney and various stakeholders have been negotiating on it for over 12 months. He has been speaking about the subject matter of the bill to the Opposition—the various members of the Liberal Party and The Nationals.

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Bathurst that if he continues to behave in a disorderly manner he may be the first member placed on a call to order today.

Mr RON HOENIG: It may well be appropriate for the member for Sydney to be given leave to indicate to this House every single member of the Opposition he has spoken to and the subject matter of those discussions before those opposite have the audacity to come into this Chamber and say what the Opposition Whip has said.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr RON HOENIG: It is one thing to play politics; it is another thing to seriously mislead the House and put matters before the House that are untrue.

The SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the House. I wonder whether other members are finding that the five-minute speeches this morning seem more like 10-minute speeches.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (10:13): By leave: I speak on behalf of The Greens in debate on the suspension of standing orders motion. While The Greens will not oppose the motion because we have been waiting a number of decades over successive governments to see those reforms introduced—and now there seem to be fights over who can claim the credit for it—it is critical to acknowledge the fact that this is not good democracy. This morning members received an email telling us the schedule of business for today, which is a great courtesy from the minority Government. Separate to that, we started hearing rumours that we would debate the equality bill, and I was able to confirm that with the member for Sydney. How that would happen was completely unclear.

Mr Speaker, with you being unable to make a contribution because you are in the chair, and in the unique situation where the member for Sydney is working with the Government on this bill, I feel that I need to say what, as one of the longer serving crossbench members, I have learnt during this minority Government from both Mr Speaker and the member for Sydney. At different times in similar discussions, the crossbench has been completely left out of the loop. While it is absolutely true that the bill and its subject matter have been open to broad consultation for a very long time, a whole lot of people who have been part of the reform for decades will not be afforded the opportunity to be in Parliament for this momentous occasion because of the decision to rush it through in this way.

We need to remember that the people who are negotiating on a piece of legislative change never do so in isolation from the hundreds of other people who have a personal connection to the reforms and may not have been afforded the privilege of being in that room at that particular time. As representatives of the community as a whole, members have a responsibility to bring those people into Parliament and allow them to participate in historic reform. The member for Sydney and others in this Chamber know full well that when we have done that, we have brought the community with us. We show the change. When we apologised to the 78ers for the actions of the New South Wales Government, the gallery was full of people and the community saw that the Parliament as a whole showed leadership.

When we are dealing with these issues, we must not shy away from being loud and proud about the reforms that we are making because of the fact that transphobes, homophobes and bigots out there have different views. That means that we should make sure that the galleries are open, the rainbow flags are flying and everyone can be in Parliament to watch this change. If the numbers are so sensitive that we need to suspend standing orders at the last minute to bring on the debate, then we have failed, in a sense, to convince our communities of the importance of equality and we must do more.

I am not saying that The Greens will oppose the suspension motion. As I said, we recognise that this is where we are at. But leadership is not just about changing laws; leadership is also about bringing the community on board and standing strong in a public and united way on a position about reform for equality. I hope that we will be able to do that in the future in what will no doubt be an ongoing debate, given that a lot of the reforms are not included in this equality bill. On a final note, I ask the Leader of the House if he could clarify paragraph (2) of the motion to suspend standing orders, which provides that the member for Sydney has unspecified speaking time during consideration in detail. I would appreciate clarification about whether that will limit the time available for other members to speak to amendments.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (10:18): By leave: For the LGBTIQ+ community, these reforms are a priority. I am grateful that the Government is treating the LGBT community as a priority and ensuring that we debate the legislation today. This bill has not come as a surprise to anyone. It was introduced well over a year ago. I have worked with all members of this Parliament. People watching this debate may not know the following. Crossbench members—including The Greens—and Opposition members were provided with a copy of the proposed amendments to the bill, what the bill would look like once amended and a red-line version of the bill. For the past months they have been offered any briefing they want on the legislation. Have I heard once from the shadow Attorney General with any questions, concerns or comments? Not once.

I have met with dozens of members of the Coalition who indicated support for the reforms in the bill and who felt that a conscience vote should be held. One of those members has stood up for that, and that is the member for North Shore. The member for Newtown knows very well that I have ensured that the LGBT community was given a heads-up. Members of that community are in the public gallery and will be throughout the day. The member also knows full well that in the past weeks—

Ms Jenny Leong: Point of order: If the member for Sydney wishes to provide a verbal account of our conversations or a reflection on those conversations, he should do so by way of substantive motion. Otherwise, debate should focus on the motion.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The nature of these debates is wideranging.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH: The member for Newtown knows that this is not an open mic session for members to say what they want, when they want. We have rules in this place. The member for Newtown knows also that in the past weeks I have received a series of death threats and threats to my safety because of this reform. She knows that it is important that we deal with it in a safe and considered way. I do not need the political extremes of the New South Wales Parliament playing games with the safety of the LGBT community. I urge that we now proceed with debate on the bill. I move:

That the question be now put.

The SPEAKER: I will seek advice on the question from the Clerk. The Clerk advises that a gag motion is not available to the member in debate on a motion to suspend standing and sessional orders.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I seek leave to make a contribution to the debate.

Leave not granted.

The SPEAKER: The question is that the motion of the Leader of the House be agreed to. A division has been called for. Under the standing orders, no divisions may be conducted before 10.30 a.m. Therefore, the division shall be deferred until after 10.30 a.m.

[Notices of motions given.]

The SPEAKER: It being 10.30 a.m., in accordance with standing and sessional orders, the giving of notices of motions is suspended in order to deal with the deferred vote on the motion of the Leader of the House regarding the suspension of standing and sessional orders to amend the order of business.

The question is that the motion of the Leader of the House be agreed to. The division bells will be rung for one additional minute due to a problem with the lifts.

The House divided.

Ayes52
Noes30
Majority.....22

AYES

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

Greenwich, A
Hagarty, N (teller)
Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Hoenig, R
Holland, M
Hornery, S
Kaliyanda, C
Kamper, S
Kirby, W
Leong, J
Li, J
McDermott, H
McKeown, K
Minns, C
O'Neill, M

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

NOES

Anderson, K
Ayyad, T
Clancy, J
Cooke, S
Coure, M
Crouch, A (teller)
Davies, T
Griffin, J
Hodges, M
James, T

Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D
Moylan, B
Petinos, E
Preston, R
Provest, G
Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Singh, G

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

PAIRS

Washington, K

Henskens, A

Motion agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I welcome guests in the public gallery. I acknowledge Arden, from my patch.

Bills

EQUALITY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (LGBTIQA+) BILL 2023

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 24 August 2023.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (10:49): On behalf of the Government I speak in debate on the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023. It is true to say that equality

lifts us all. Members will agree it makes us better and stronger as individuals and as a society. Despite the considerable progress we have made to date, for some people equality remains an unfulfilled ambition. We still live in a world where inequality silences voices and denies people's rights. Our Government knows that we must confront inequality and build inclusive communities that celebrate diversity and foster empathy and social cohesion. This bill makes important changes that bring us closer to equality for those in our LGBTIQ+ community. It rights some wrongs, brings us in line with other jurisdictions in Australia, removes discrimination and outdated language embedded in some of our legislation, and strengthens protections for LGBTIQ+ people.

In March this year, almost seven months ago to the day, I introduced to this House our Government's Conversion Practices Ban Bill 2024. On that day I said that bill was so much more than just ticking a box on a promise made and a promise delivered. It was a recognition that LGBTIQ+ people are not broken, do not need fixing and do not need saving from their identities. I said then, and say again, that we love them just the way they are. Today I am proud to stand in this Chamber on behalf of our Government to support this bill, which will make further important changes that better recognise, respect and protect members of our LGBTIQ+ community. It is the next step.

I thank the member for Sydney for leading this landmark piece of legislation in his usual respectful, collaborative way. I am sure that I speak for many Ministers and members in this place when I thank the member for the way he has engaged with our Government at each and every stage of the progression of this bill. "Principled", "pragmatic" and "patient" are other descriptors that come to mind. For over a year now the member for Sydney has worked painstakingly to craft the best possible bill, which I hope will pass this Parliament. If it does, I know it will meaningfully make the lives of some New South Wales citizens better—and in a way, therefore, the lives of all New South Wales citizens. I also understand that the member for Sydney will move a number of amendments to his bill that omit some parts and change others. We are grateful to the member for Sydney for his collaborative approach on those amendments.

Ultimately, if those anticipated amendments are agreed to, we understand that the bill will make changes to nine pieces of legislation on our statute books. Those changes will remove the requirement that a person undergo surgery before they can change their sex on their birth certificate and instead create an administrative process for this to occur, including a pathway for people over 18, and a pathway for people under 18, but only with the consent of their parents and with an avenue through the courts if a dispute between parents arises. The amendments will also create a pathway for parentage orders to be made for children born of international commercial surrogacy arrangements when in the best interests of the child, with appropriate safeguards.

The amended bill will provide that an example of harassment, which is a form of intimidation under the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007, may be outing or threatening to out a person in relation to things like their sexual orientation, variation of sex characteristics, that they live with HIV, or that they are or were a sex worker. This has implications for things like the making of apprehended violence orders. The amended bill will also remove an outdated offence that prevents a person engaged in sex work from financially supporting others, such as their children or elderly parents, with their earnings, and update outdated language in certain Acts.

The amended bill will change existing principles to be considered when making decisions about a child or young person's care to include gender identity and variation of sex characteristics, and make a change to minimise duplication in the court system. The amended bill will amend the Mental Health Act 2007 to clarify that a person's gender identity and expression of that identity alone do not indicate a mental illness or disorder. It will clarify that it is an aggravating factor in sentencing before the courts that a crime was motivated by hatred for or prejudice against people on the basis of their gender identity or variations in sex characteristics.

We expect that some aspects of the bill will be omitted as a result of amendments to be moved by the member for Sydney, principally those amendments the bill proposes to the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977. As I have said before, such fundamental and significant changes to that Act would be best considered through the NSW Law Reform Commission review of the Act, which is currently underway. Amendments proposed to section 93Z of the Crimes Act 1900, which is the offence for publicly threatening or inciting violence on grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex or HIV and AIDS status, will also appropriately be omitted, noting that sex work as a protected attribute is also connected to the Law Reform Commission review into the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977.

Schedules 5, 7, 9, 15 and 17 to the bill, which propose amendments to a number of Acts to provide for alternative arrangements for the search of transgender and intersex people, will also be omitted. This is appropriate, as there are operational implications that require further consideration and consultation with impacted agencies. Amendments proposed to the Government Sector Employment Act 2013 also will not proceed as they are not legally necessary, and amendments proposed to the Interpretation Act 1987 are not proceeding at this stage as they will benefit from further careful consideration, particularly in relation to transitional provisions and their potential impact right across the statute book.

Other aspects of the bill that we understand will be omitted will continue to be subject to review or consideration by the New South Wales Government, including further provisions of the Summary Offences Act 1988 relating to what it terms as "prostitution", which will be the subject of a review to be conducted by the Department of Communities and Justice. We also understand that the member for Sydney will seek to amend the bill to provide that it commences by proclamation or on 1 July 2025, whichever occurs earlier, which will allow for important arrangements to support implementation of the measures in the bill to take place.

In light of some public commentary today, I make it clear that this bill does not change anything in relation to how organisations already appropriately regulate people's involvement in sport. It does not change anything in relation to how schools or correctional centres operate. For the benefit of Opposition members, particularly the shadow Attorney, I make clear that the bill does not allow children to make applications without parental support to change their birth certificates. It does not legalise commercial surrogacy or allow parentage orders to be made without appropriate safeguards in place.

What this bill does do is make appropriate updates and improvements to our legislation that strike a balance between supporting our LGBTIQ+ community and respecting the diverse beliefs that exist across our New South Wales community in general. The proposals that will proceed in this bill are overdue. Some of the changes it makes simply bring our State into line with other jurisdictions in Australia, particularly regarding birth certificates, in relation to which New South Wales is unfortunately the last Australian jurisdiction to act. The changes that will progress in this bill will make New South Wales a safer, gentler and more inclusive place. I commend the bill to the House.

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.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: We have quite a number of guests who have joined us today. I welcome all guests in the gallery who have come along to see the operation of representative democracy in Australia's oldest Parliament. There is nothing better you could do today, I assure you. Welcome to everybody. But a particularly warm welcome to guests of the member for Lake Macquarie, the Cardiff Probus Club. I also welcome to the Chamber guests of the member for Drummoyne, the Breakfast Point Probus Club. Probus is well represented in the gallery today. I welcome guests of the member for Wollondilly, students and teachers from Oxley College, Wollondilly. I acknowledge a guest of the member for Prospect, Jordan Farrelly.

I also acknowledge guests of the member for Wyong, who shall remain nameless other than that they are Bendigo Bank junior directors. I welcome a guest of the member for Newcastle, Arden Cassie from Hunter Gender Alliance. I acknowledge a guest of the member for Blacktown, Patrick Dako. I welcome students from Penola College and Oxley College in Bowral. Finally, I welcome a guest of the member for Camden, Ainsley Southern, who is doing work experience. As the member for Kellyville said, apologies in advance if he plays up. The member for Kellyville should be on his best behaviour.

Question Time

PUBLIC PROTESTS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (11:05): My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. In response to repeat protesters draining police resources, the Premier said, "It is my view that police should be able to deny a request for a march due to stretched police resourcing." When will the Minister be introducing a bill to put that beyond doubt?

Mr Chris Minns: They can do that now. They can do that right now.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: My question was to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, not the Premier. He is coaching the Minister.

The SPEAKER: As the Leader of the Opposition knows, the Premier can choose to answer any question. It is the very start of question time. We have plenty of time left. The Minister has the call. The member for Dubbo will resume his seat.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (11:06): It is going to be a rowdy day by the sounds of things, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: I hope not.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: As I said yesterday—and I am happy to say it again—public safety is the top priority for New South Wales police, and they do it the best in the world. We know there is a huge strain on New South Wales police, and most of it, as I have said before, can be attributed to the fact that those opposite while they were in government did not have a plan for recruitment, did not have a plan for retention and, most importantly, sent police wages backwards. The Leader of the Opposition was at the Cabinet table doing exactly that—not sticking up for the cops in New South Wales. That is their legacy, and that is the legacy they are going to wear around their necks for the next five years. I will not be lectured by those opposite when it comes to police. They had 12 long years and all they did—

Mr Paul Toole: Point of order—

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: There's a visitor to the House!

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume her seat. The member for Bathurst rises on a point of order.

Mr Paul Toole: I refer to Standing Order 129, relevance. The Minister needs to explain why over the past 12 months nearly 1,500 police officers have left on her watch and walked out the door.

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

Mr Paul Toole: Police morale is at an all-time low. It is the lowest it has ever been.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Bathurst to order for the second time. The member for Bathurst will resume his seat. He has achieved what he was after. He is now on two calls to order. There is no point of order. The Minister will continue her answer.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: The member for Bathurst has more front than David Jones. He did not even turn up to this place yesterday, so he should not come here and lecture us on what we are doing with police. Protesting is legal in this country, as long as it is peaceful. That is not just my view. In fact, I will give a quotation, and I want all members to listen. "The Government supports—

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Bathurst that he is on two calls to order.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

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

Mr Mark Speakman: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, direct relevance. Just like yesterday, the Minister is not answering the question. Yesterday the question was about charging and today the question is about resourcing. We are almost at the end of the three minutes and we have not heard an answer that is directly relevant.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. Today's question is, "When will the Minister be introducing a bill to legislate this change?" I understand from the answer that the Minister possibly cannot answer in the terms that the Opposition would like. I do not uphold the point of order. The Minister will continue.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Who said, "The Government supports the rights of all individuals to participate in lawful protest. Freedom of assembly and speech have long been recognised by Australian courts as important rights that are integral to the democratic system of government"?

Mr Jihad Dib: Tell me.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I will tell you: The Leader of the Opposition. So he should not come to this House and be a hypocrite.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. I call the member for the South Coast. She will be heard in silence.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (11:10): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the Government's work to create a safer New South Wales with increased support for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence, and tougher penalties for perpetrators?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:11): I thank the member for South Coast for her question. As we have spoken about quite a few times in the House, the prevalence and rates of domestic violence in New South Wales are far too high. Any incident of domestic violence in the State is a tragedy and everything must be done to stop it. The incidence of domestic violence in New South Wales is higher, more pervasive and

more of a scourge than in similar jurisdictions around Australia, including Victoria and Queensland. It is one of the reasons that the New South Wales Government has allocated over \$5 billion for a social housing program in the State. Some 50 per cent of that new housing will go to victim-survivors of domestic violence in New South Wales.

We have also increased funding for programs like Staying Home Leaving Violence, invested \$20 million in the women's domestic violence court, and invested \$40 million in the implementation of a primary prevention strategy. But a key element of any government's reform plan when it comes to dealing with the rates and the prevalence of domestic violence must be law reform. The Attorney General has moved legislation to make it tougher for those charged with serious domestic violence offences to get bail in New South Wales. That show cause change has meant that more people will be in remand. Domestic violence campaigners, researchers and academics have identified that as a key vulnerable period when a woman's life, particularly, is most in danger—after someone has been charged with an offence and prior to the criminal trial taking place.

For those who are given bail in New South Wales, as of last Friday they will now be subject to 24-hours-a-day electronic monitoring. That is a major change for New South Wales, but it is too important to ignore. As a result of that change, Corrective Services NSW can track alleged offenders to see whether they go near a residential address, school or work location, or suburbs or areas within a city that risks a person in need of protection. In the case of a suspected breach, Corrective Services officers will immediately notify police so they can take action. We hope these changes will give victim-survivors of domestic and family violence greater peace of mind and support their safety while they plan for the rest of their lives, and especially in that crucial period in the run-up to a criminal trial involving the alleged offender. The other changes that the Government has made include creating a new offence covering repeated intentional breaches of apprehended domestic violence orders in New South Wales, modernising the definition of stalking to include monitoring via GPS tracking devices. *[Extension of time]*

That change to the law is due to the dynamic nature of technology and its use for nefarious means by certain individuals to track a former intimate partner. When courts decide whether to grant bail, they now have to specifically consider particular red flags that are indicative of future violent actions between an individual and their intimate partner, for example abusing an animal or a pet within the household. For domestic violence offences against intimate partners, bail decision-makers must now take into consideration the views of any victim or their family members. Crucially, judges and magistrates will make those important decisions, rather than registrars. This is about ensuring we do everything possible to make women in particular safe from the threat of intimate partner violence and to reduce the scourge of domestic violence in New South Wales.

MCPHILLAMYS GOLD PROJECT

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (11:15): My question is directed to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty. What discussions regarding McPhillamys goldmine near Blayney did the Minister have with the Minister for the Environment before she replied to the Commonwealth on his behalf on 18 December?

Mr Paul Toole: Blayney is about half an hour from Bathurst.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Bathurst for the geography lesson. I warn the member that he will be on another call to order soon. He is currently on two. Members will come to order. The Minister will be heard in silence.

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) (11:16): I thank the member for Bathurst for his geography lesson. I do, however, travel extensively through New South Wales, and I have been to Blayney. In fact, I did a Cabinet meeting from the main street of Blayney a couple of weeks ago. I know exactly where it is. The pub is very nice and my wife enjoyed it. I am well aware of Blayney and the geography of New South Wales. I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for his question. Since taking office, the Minister for the Environment and I have been speaking extensively, particularly on Aboriginal cultural heritage. We discuss a range of issues, and we have been working at both a departmental level and a ministerial level, through our staff, looking at these types of issues. We had some discussions around the goldmine. I was confident, through advice, that the process followed by the New South Wales Government in approving the mine was correct. We stand by that advice.

STUDENT WELFARE

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (11:17): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Education and Early Learning. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the work of the Minns Labor Government to support student welfare and address antisocial behaviour such as bullying?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:17): I thank the member for Camden for this important question. I hope that this issue concerns all members. As a former teacher and a parent, the member for Camden understands this concern. Mr Speaker has pointed this out, but the member for Penrith also alerted me to the presence of students from Penola Catholic College in the gallery. They are from Emu Plains, which is a suburb close to my heart. I welcome Penola to Parliament. I hope that we all agree that bullying should never be tolerated in our schools. It is harmful, it affects student wellbeing and it impacts on student outcomes.

It is incumbent on governments to do absolutely everything in our power and pull every lever possible to make sure that every one of our students feels safe in every one of our schools. That is one of the biggest challenges of our time, made worse by the COVID pandemic. But it was not just the pandemic that brought that on. Our young people in our schools face so many challenges, and our teachers confront that every day. This Government is committed to helping to empower teachers and principals as leaders of their schools to make sure that our students are safe and feel like they belong in their school communities so they can thrive and meet their potential.

One of the biggest commitments that we took to the election was to improve school counselling services. We committed to hiring an additional 250 school counsellors. Those professionals are incredible school psychologists and school counsellors helping young children through challenging times, whether at school or outside school either at home or online and, increasingly, at night with rising levels of cyberbullying. That is a big priority of this Government. I am pleased to report to the House that we are well on the way to fulfilling that commitment. Abolishing the wages cap and giving teachers, psychologists and school counsellors a significant pay increase—lifting starting salaries from \$75,000 to \$95,000—has resulted in significantly decreased counsellor vacancies for the first time in a long time. [*Extension of time*]

Term 3 began with counsellor vacancies down by 40 per cent from the previous year. That is the biggest drop in vacancies ever for school counsellors. We can be very proud of that. We are supporting our children through their education journey and also by making sure that they are well and can thrive. One of the things we did almost immediately upon coming to government was to ban mobile phones. That has had a huge impact on student wellbeing. I thought we may not have been that popular with teenagers upon coming to government, but we have seen big results from making sure school is a place where students can learn and connect with one another and not be distracted by their phones.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: Members opposite opposed the banning of mobile phones when they were in government. The member for Hawkesbury famously called it communism. But we stand by the policy because we know it has worked. Staff at a high school in Blacktown have reported a measured extra 50 minutes of learning every day. We stand by that. We also ensured that we got rid of the disastrous behaviour policy of those opposite and put a behaviour policy in place that allows principals and teachers to deal with persistent misbehaviour. Teachers do not want to do it, but sometimes they have to suspend or, at worst, expel a student so other students in that environment can have settled classrooms and playgrounds. It is important to empower teachers and principals to maintain behaviour in their school environments so that our students have a place where they can thrive and be well and have their mental health protected.

EQUALITY LEGISLATION

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (11:23): My question is directed to the Premier. How will the New South Wales Government respond to the LGBTIQ+ equality bill?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:23): I am pleased to report to the House that the Government will support the equality bill introduced by the member for Sydney. It has been introduced to the Parliament and is likely to be debated later today. It is important for New South Wales and is long overdue. This is a commonsense solution. I completely acknowledge that the bill is not everything that the member for Sydney has asked for but, in my view and in the Government's view, its time has come. It is important that it is supported in the Parliament. We ask all members to support the legislation, which is likely to be voted on later today.

The bill contains provisions that we regard as commonsense changes. Consider the fact that every jurisdiction in the country now has a provision for an individual to change their government documents without pervasive, irreversible surgery taking place, and New South Wales is the last jurisdiction to enact that change. That mitigates in favour of changing the law, particularly when we consider that New South Wales residents can apply for Commonwealth documents to change their gender, but not State Government documents.

[*Interruption*]

There are a lot of interjections in the Chamber. Do members opposite want to say something out loud?

The SPEAKER: The member for Vacluse will be directed to leave the Chamber if she does not cease debating with the Premier. I will not tolerate it. I call the member for Port Macquarie to order for the first time. I call the member for Vacluse to order for the first time. I will have members removed from the Chamber if they continue to interject.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I make the point that there are a lot of interjections. I cannot hear what members opposite are saying. They have been very quiet about the bill. We would all like to know what their view is. It is time that this legislation is passed in the New South Wales Parliament. In relation to the issue of commercial surrogacy in the bill, some support it and others oppose it. But regardless of how we approach the issue, it is hardly the child's fault. It is perfectly reasonable that the legislation reflects that, if it is in the best interests of the child that a parenting order be issued, the courts are in a position to do that. That is in the legislation. For all the anxiety that members of the LGBTIQ community have experienced in the introduction of this legislation, I urge its passage. In relation to criticism about using Government time, the simple fact is this legislation will not pass unless the Parliament provides time for it to be debated in the House. *[Extension of time]*

Without that allocation of time today—being Government business day—the legislation would not pass. Whether members are for it or against it or whether they have a position or not, if it cannot be debated and put to a vote then nothing changes. I take at face value the repeated assertions by the member for Sydney that amendments drafted by him have been shared with both the Government and the Opposition. My understanding is that the shadow Attorney General was given those changes progressively over a number of days. To the best of my understanding, as recorded by the member for Sydney earlier today, no phone calls and no contact was entered into by the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Again, we have not heard the view of members opposite so we are happy for them to stand up and have a say. At the end of the day, we have to engage in this debate at face value and not mislead the House. I urge members of Parliament to support the equality bill of the member for Sydney. It is important for New South Wales. Members will get the opportunity to support the bill later today.

ESSENTIAL WORKERS

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (11:27): My question is addressed to the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety. Will the Minister please update the House on the Minns Labor Government's commitment to improving the pay and conditions of our State's essential workers?

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (11:28): I acknowledge the excellent advocacy of the member for Heathcote on behalf of the public sector workers in her electorate. The Minns Government values this State's essential workers. I acknowledge a number of nurses and midwives who are in the gallery. We value the work of the people who work in public service. When I say "value", I do not just mean saying thank you. That is what happened for 12 long years when members opposite were in government, including during a global pandemic when our essential, frontline workers put themselves in personal danger every single day to protect our great State. The former Government repeatedly said, "Thanks," and, "Yes," but when those same essential workers asked for a real pay rise, what did it do? It gave those workers nothing: a big fat zero. The shadow Treasurer still says that the wages cap was "a very good decision". That is what those opposite always do. It is in their DNA.

The Minns Government was elected with a mandate to scrap the 12-year unfair wages cap imposed by those opposite. We said that we would sit down with our workforce and engage in respectful, cooperative negotiations. It has been tough, but we removed the legislated wages cap once and for all and abolished the previous Government's laws completely. Now we are working constructively with each and every agency and their unions to ensure public sector workers receive fair and reasonable pay and conditions. We have a fair pay and bargaining policy, which is focused on providing better pay and improvements to working conditions, while at the same time achieving reforms to improve productivity, to improve best practice and to better the public services to the people of New South Wales.

That is what the people of New South Wales expect of this Government. Our new mutual gains bargaining policy is a significant departure from the previous Government's approach: an adversarial, draconian, legislated cap. That is a complete shift. Those opposite voted against our industrial relations changes last year. They want to bring back the wages cap. Mutual gains bargaining is getting results. I am pleased to inform the House that the Public Service Association [PSA] has reached an agreement on a multi-year pay deal for Crown employees. That has been achieved after months of complex, tough negotiations. The agreement covers more than 90,000 public sector workers—nearly a quarter of the State Government's public sector workforce. *[Extension of time]*

Those workers include—amongst many other professions—our school assistants, SafeWork inspectors, prison officers and customer service advocates. Some 90,000 of our public sector workers will benefit from this important agreement, using the Government's mutual gains bargaining framework. The PSA and the Government have agreed to work towards reducing injury rates to help minimise pressure on the State's workers compensation scheme, overhaul redeployment policies to reduce redundancy costs and encourage workers to stay rather than leave the public service, and modernise awards to remove outdated redundant allowances like the word processing allowance. The savings have allowed the Government and the PSA to agree to an increase of 11.4 per cent over three years.

The agreement follows the 4.5 per cent pay rise delivered last year, which was the highest in more than a decade. Under our policy, a typical public sector award employee is over \$5,000 better off than they were under the previous Government's wages cap. At the same time, the multi-year agreement creates budget certainty into the future. The agreement clearly demonstrates how a good, mature government can bargain to reach a deal that is good for taxpayers and good for public sector workers. In a cost-of-living crisis, we are delivering meaningful pay rises to the people who serve our State so well. The Public Service Association, led by Stewart Little, is to be congratulated on its goodwill and its constructive approach. It has been tough. The PSA's advocacy has benefited 90,000 public sector workers and the people of New South Wales. We are a government and an employer that truly values our workforce. We are delivering for the people of New South Wales.

TRANSPORT FOR NSW EVENT POLICY

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (11:33): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. Why did the Minister allow an end-of-year party involving alcohol consumption to take place on an active construction site on the Sydney Gateway project?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (11:33): I thank the member for her question. From the outset, I acknowledge that everyone has the right to be safe at work. That includes travelling to and from work as well as activities before and after work. I convey the Government's deep concerns about the activities that took place at the event in question. It was not a Government-sanctioned event. Indeed, I convey our apologies and concerns for those who were injured physically and mentally by what occurred at that event. It is not acceptable. It is being investigated, and that is the appropriate course of action.

HOUSING SUPPLY

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (11:34): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Will the Minister update the House on the Business Council of Australia's report entitled *It's time to say yes to housing* and responses to the housing crisis?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (11:34): I thank the member for Mount Druitt for his question. He is someone who understands that it is indeed time to say yes to housing. Members opposite seem to have missed the message, but the Government most certainly has not. While the report is yet to be published, earlier this week the Business Council of Australia [BCA] issued a media release with some of the key reforms that it is calling for in the planning and approval process. The council is calling for a major overhaul of the processes of State and local governments across the country to get housing supply going. Among other things, the BCA is calling for statewide council report cards to monitor the performance of local government approvals. The Minns Government has done that. We started publishing them earlier this year. We are even including our own performance, given that we are taking a greater responsibility for addressing the housing crisis in New South Wales. The BCA is also calling for State governments to be able to intervene.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Those opposite hate housing. Every time we talk about housing, they hate it. They hate every aspect of housing. They have not met a housing proposal that they have not opposed, but I will come to that later.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Important reforms are being backed in by the Business Council's request. Usually the council backs in members opposite, but it is now backing in the reforms that we are introducing. That must really stick in the craw of those opposite. We have introduced performance standards which include the issue of planning performance improvement notices for underperforming councils. If they do not improve, then the planning administrator can be appointed. The Business Council wants more projects of significance to have a State government assessment process. We are doing exactly that, not only in our Transport Oriented Development program's accelerated precincts but also for affordable housing, not to mention the two new State rezoning

pathways that we have recently introduced. The Business Council also wants a State government concierge service. We are doing that too.

When it comes to increasing housing supply, we are not stopping there. We are investing in social housing, because that is an important part of housing supply. We are investing in key worker housing. We are investing in Landcom to make sure that it can deliver more homes. We are introducing artificial intelligence—something that probably would be best at home in the tactics committee of members opposite—into the planning system to speed up processes and increase the quality of proposals. We also have an international design competition for a pattern book of low- and mid-rise housing designs. *[Extension of time]*

We are doing all these planning reforms because they are very much Labor reforms. It is very much about making sure that working men and women and their children can get into a home, either to rent or to buy. Our efforts stand in stark contrast to that of members opposite—or, in fact, would-be members opposite. On the afternoon of 9 October I was listening to Chris O'Keefe on 2GB. Members should do themselves a favour, as Molly Meldrum used to say, and give it a listen. It is a good show. The Liberal candidate for Pittwater was on the show, and she claimed that housing affordability was a huge issue for her. That is good. She went on to say that she did not "want to just see a Pittwater where all our families are having to move not just out of Pittwater but out of Sydney because of the cost-of-living crisis and that they are not able to afford to live in Pittwater". That is really solid stuff. But it was just after that that the real Liberal values came out.

She then went on to say, regarding housing, "I think it would be inappropriate to have anything more in Pittwater because of its unique character and heritage." Once again, "We need more housing, just in the right place—anywhere but near me". It has all the echoes of the member for Vacluse, who said that her community should not be punished by having more housing. It is the same old Liberal approach of welcoming housing anywhere except near them. The aspiring Liberal member for Pittwater is just another Liberal from central casting who is right at home in a party room that is opposed to housing in New South Wales. It is even on their how-to-vote card. They should say that the Liberals want higher house prices, higher rents, less opportunity and a worse future for their kids.

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: Was that the member for Oatley? If it was not the member for Oatley, it was the member for Tweed. I call the member for Tweed to order for the first time.

MCPHILLAMYS GOLD PROJECT

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (11:40): My question is directed to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty. Given that the Minister said earlier that he spoke with the New South Wales environment Minister about McPhillamys goldmine and her letter to the Commonwealth regarding it, why was her letter "not sufficient to cover all relevant matters", as the Cabinet Office later stated?

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast) (11:40): The Government remains disappointed at the Federal Government's decision to issue a section 10 declaration over McPhillamys mine. We have said that publicly on many occasions. The letters released under Standing Order 52 from Minister Sharpe and Minister Scully made it clear to Minister Plibersek that the Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment of the McPhillamys project did consider the cultural value of Aboriginal objects and places, and that they could be appropriately managed under the consent conditions applied to the project. We have said all along that protecting heritage and progressing key mining projects should not be a zero-sum proposition.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question is around McPhillamys goldmine and the Cabinet Office advice that said that the letter was insufficient to cover all of the matters that were at stake, including Indigenous affairs. If the Premier wants to jump up and have a chat, he can do so.

The SPEAKER: The member for Dubbo will not make a substantive speech about a simple point of order. I found the question somewhat obscure, but the Minister appears to have an answer. I do not uphold the point of order. The Minister has the call.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: Given that the McPhillamys project had been through rigorous environmental and heritage approvals by the Independent Planning Commission, the New South Wales Government expected the project to go ahead. Metals mining plays an important role in New South Wales as a leading regional employer, particularly in the State's Central West.

The SPEAKER: All members will come to order. Being quarrelsome is a breach of the standing orders.

SYDNEY METRO WEST

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (11:43): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport. Will the Minister please update the House on the Minns Labor Government's work to deliver city-shaping transport like the Sydney Metro West project?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (11:44): I thank the member for Parramatta for her absolute commitment to great public transport, particularly in Parramatta and the surrounding suburbs like Sydney Olympic Park. We all know Sydney Olympic Park is a place of big wins. Over the October long weekend there was a big win for the Panthers—I know the member for Londonderry and the member for Penrith are pretty happy about that—but there are other big winners at Sydney Olympic Park. This week the Premier, the planning Minister and I announced the delivery of 300 homes above our brand-new metro station at Sydney Olympic Park. Members on this side of the Chamber understand that the best place to build well-designed, dense housing is on top of or next to public transport. We are using our investment—the investment of New South Wales taxpayer dollars—to make sure that when we build world-class public transport, we marry it with the housing that people across our State desperately need.

It is not just at Sydney Olympic Park. Along the entire corridor of Sydney Metro West, we are working hard to maximise housing for future commuters, who will have a 20-minute journey from Parramatta and Westmead into the heart of our CBD. It will absolutely transform the way our city moves. Sydney Olympic Park showcases big winners—big superstars—and there are some transport superstars as well. They are named Beatrice and Daphne, and they are our tunnel boring machines. They have dug for 18 months. They have tunnelled 11 kilometres from The Bays, via Five Dock, Burwood and North Strathfield, all the way to Sydney Olympic Park to help us create a third Sydney Metro line. They are 165 metres long—as long as two A380s stuck together—and they each weigh 1,300 tonnes. They work around the clock, 24/7, below the ground, with 15 people per shift, digging 180 metres a week.

They have finished those journeys to Sydney Olympic Park, but they are not the only tunnel boring machines that are helping us deliver Sydney Metro West. In fact, right now there are four more tunnel boring machines helping us to deliver those 24-kilometre tunnels that will connect Hunter Street to Westmead. Recently, I launched Ruby, another one of our fantastic tunnel boring machines. She is about to make her journey from The Bays via Pyrmont to Hunter Street in the CBD. [*Extension of time*]

Ruby is a powerful and impressive machine, specifically designed to deal with the highly pressurised conditions under Sydney Harbour and to deliver a tunnel right underneath the Anzac Bridge. Just as the Anzac Bridge transformed how we travel above that part of our harbour, the tunnel will transform how we travel beneath it. Sydney Metro West is Australia's largest public transport project. It will transform how we move around the city. It will double the rail capacity between Parramatta and the CBD, and future residents of Sydney Olympic Park will have 15-minute journeys to the city and five-minute journeys to Parramatta.

Our Government understands that transport and housing are not separate issues. We have to bring together and marry those two issues, which have historically been separate. Unfortunately, those opposite missed the opportunity to do that. Sydney Metro North West is a fantastic public transport service, but it was not delivered alongside the housing that our city and State desperately need: dense housing next to transport hubs. Unfortunately, it seems that the only thing those on the other side of the House can agree on is that they do not want or support housing, particularly in their own backyards. It is probably the only thing they can agree on.

At the moment members on the opposite side of the House are a total rabble. They do not have a position on rental reform. They do not have a position on Rosehill, where we want to deliver more housing. They do not have a position on whether they oppose nuclear power. They claim to support LGBTIQ+ people, but apparently do not support the equality bill. They do not have a position on private health insurer bed rorts. They have no idea and no vision. Members on this side of the House will deliver the transport and housing that future generations in New South Wales will need.

The SPEAKER: Government members will come to order.

BUILDING INDUSTRY

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (11:49): My question is directed to the Minister for Building. With building approvals for new dwellings at a 12-year low, what immediate actions is he taking to address—

Mr Paul Scully: There are 72,000 under construction.

Mr TIM JAMES: I will start the question again because I was rudely interrupted.

The SPEAKER: The member for Willoughby will resume his seat. All members will come to order. I remind the member for Willoughby that the Presiding Officer decides whether members may restate a question. The interjection from the member for Wollongong was disorderly and unhelpful. The member for Willoughby will return to the table and repeat his question. The member will be heard in silence.

Mr TIM JAMES: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

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

Mr TIM JAMES: My question is directed to the Minister for Building. With building approvals for new dwellings at a 12-year low, what immediate actions is he taking to address this decline?

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) (11:50): I thank the member for Willoughby, and shadow Minister for his question around housing and building approvals, because we on this side of the Chamber are implementing reform to get more housing onto the market. My question to the shadow Minister and the Opposition is: Will they support all the housing reforms that we are doing?

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

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: Will they support Rosehill? That is up to 20,000 dwellings onto the housing market to help support people to get housing. We are all aware of the challenges in the construction industry at the moment. We are all aware of the significant macro factors that are impeding the construction of homes—whether it is interest rates, the cost of materials or the competition for labour. We all know that. But one of the best ways we can help get building approvals done and get housing onto the market is through our building reforms to ensure that we lift the standards of the quality of buildings and ensure that consumers have trust and confidence in the sector when they are making the most significant investment of their lifetime: to buy a house for themselves and for their family and to build their lives around a community.

Lifting building standards and ensuring that we have strong compliance means that the building industry does not need to do the same job twice. That means that there will be more builders able to complete jobs quicker, there will be greater productivity in completion of buildings and it will free up labour to continue to ensure that building and housing approvals happen. But the biggest impediment to the building industry and to building approvals is none of those factors. It is Opposition members. Their answer to housing is "No". They do not support housing. They introduced legislation in the other place to prevent housing from happening in and around public transport infrastructure. How can they have building approvals when they do not even support the building industry and development applications at all?

Mr Tim James: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat. The member for Willoughby rises on a point of order.

Mr Tim James: The question expressly asked about "immediate actions". I have not heard a word about immediate action.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Willoughby. The Minister does not have to use those exact words. The Minister has been directly relevant.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: Whilst Opposition members continue to say no to housing to prevent the next generation of younger Australians from owning their own homes, there are currently 72,000 dwellings under construction. Only the Minns Labor Government is getting housing onto the market and helping the next generation of Australians own their own homes. Members on the other side of the Chamber just say no, no and no.

RURAL AND REGIONAL ROADS

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (11:54): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on the Minns Labor Government's work to increase safety on our State's regional and rural roads?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (11:54): I am so keen to be back. Sorry I missed last week. I did get a lot of messages from those opposite saying how much they wanted me to be in the Chamber to talk to members about our great programs in regional transport and roads. Why? Because we are the party of the bush. We know that regional New South Wales makes up one-third of the New South Wales population but—this is serious—two-thirds of deaths on our roads are people who are driving on country roads. In the 18 months since the Government has been elected, we have literally worked day and night

to try to stop the deaths on our regional roads—across our entire network, in fact. As I have said in my answers to all 2,605 questions on notice from the former Minister, my number one priority in this portfolio is safety. At the Bush Summit in Orange, the Premier announced \$202 million to deliver safety improvements on the State road network. While I was away, we announced \$45 million for councils in the regions to help them fix their safety issues on roads. That is important.

We have seen some great funding in Armidale, Ballina and Cessnock—I thank the great member for Cessnock for the question. The electorate of Clarence received \$9.16 million. The Coffs Harbour electorate received funding. The Oxley electorate received over \$3 million. The Charlestown electorate received funding, as did the Upper Hunter electorate. The member for Upper Hunter and shadow Minister was so excited about that, he put it in his e-newsletter this week. It received \$5.1 million. The electorate of Port Stephens received \$1.2 million—I know the member for Port Stephens is watching at home. The Tamworth, Kiama, Goulburn and Bathurst electorates received funding. The Dubbo electorate received \$3.8 million. That is money that would not have come about if we did not undertake enforcement. But what were members opposite doing yesterday? They were voting against road safety initiatives from our Government. They have no plan of their own, not one initiative for road safety, but they voted against what we were trying to do.

Mrs Leslie Williams: That is not true. We did road safety initiatives.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I acknowledge the interjection from the member for Port Macquarie. She actually left the National Party and became a Liberal because of things like this. Their issue is that they cannot come together.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will be more relevant to the question.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: The Orange electorate received \$3.97 million and the Barwon electorate received \$9.31 million. If we add the State road funding and the council funding, that is one-quarter of a billion dollars, which is part of our record \$2.8 billion on road safety. I have already talked about the fact that The Nationals have got no alternative to this. They were cynically voting against the average speed camera trial—in fact, against their Coalition partners. They are all over the place. There have been a few times in this Parliament when the Leader of The Nationals—and I use that term loosely— [*Extension of time*]

There have been a few times in this Parliament when the Leader of The Nationals—

Mr Jihad Dib: Which one?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: The current, soon-to-not-be one. There have been a few times when he has burnt the Coalition agreement, allegedly on a matter of principle. I note last night's debate on road safety. We all talk in this place about the fact that we should not have deaths on our roads. Government members are coming to the table with funding—lots of dollars—for the electorates of members opposite as well as our electorates across the State, and they will not come on board. What have they got to say in return? What are they going to do? Nothing. That is the problem with that lot. They are confused about everything. The member for Dubbo has obviously been a little confused recently. He is trying to have another political crack. I am holding up a picture of a road he has posted. Just a hot tip—that road is in Queensland. And this one is in Alberta, Canada.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. If the Minister wishes to debate where ministerial stock images come from, bring it on!

The SPEAKER: The member for Dubbo will resume his seat.

[*Interruption*]

The member for Dubbo will resume his seat or he will be removed from the Chamber.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: The member for Dubbo likes to have a crack, but his former Minister did not know that we have yellow lines on New South Wales roads—that is a real problem. The problem is that the member was trying to criticise an event to give their Majesties an opportunity to experience a taste of what regional New South Wales has to offer. Now, all of a sudden, he is hating on the Royal Agricultural Society and the Sydney show. He was happy to support it in March but he cannot support it now. I am a survivor of cancer, and I would be very upset if the member had done that—he is a disgrace!

BALLINA ELECTORATE HEALTH SERVICES

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (12:00): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. I am worried about the safety of my community and my paramedics when our stations close. Last week Mullumbimby closed due to rosters not being backfilled. Ballina and Byron paramedics were required to cover those locations as well

as their own. What is the Minister doing to ensure that rosters are filled, the health care of my community is protected, and the work health and safety of my paramedics is ensured?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (12:01): That is a very good question from the member for Ballina. She has a deep interest in and advocates strongly for health services in her community. Opposition members could take a leaf out of her book every now and then.

Mrs Leslie Williams: So could you.

Mr RYAN PARK: Well, hang on!

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

Mr RYAN PARK: I acknowledge members of the Nurses and Midwives' Association who are in the gallery today. It is interesting that, if the Opposition had been returned to government, 1,112 nurses would have gone by 1 July this year. Opposition members should listen to the member for Ballina and the way she advocates for health services. I will stand corrected on the date, but earlier this month on around 10 October there was a situation in the northern New South Wales network when eight sick days were taken at short notice by paramedics. That happened very quickly and suddenly. We mobilised the workforce by rostering an additional two paramedics; they were rostered on overtime. But we were short in that area. Paramedics from Mullumbimby helped to service the entire region. We ensured that a 24-hour on-call paramedic provided that coverage in and around the Mullumbimby area. That was a challenge.

For those of us who come from regional areas but, more specifically, for those who live in rural areas, that is one of the challenges we face in terms of our workforce. I have been very explicit about that. Staffing is a challenge in nursing, allied health care, paramedicine and among our doctors and clinicians. But we are putting in place a range of different measures. One of the things we are doing at the moment, which the member for Ballina might be aware of—I will make sure that NSW Ambulance reaches out to the member this week to discuss it—is we are in the final stages of implementing a new roster for that area. In northern New South Wales an additional 24 paramedics have come on board as part of the 2,500 we are rolling out. That has required a change in rostering, which is a good thing. I will ensure that NSW Ambulance engages with the member on that. Importantly, members of the House will know that we are also rolling out 500 paramedics dedicated to regional, rural and remote areas. *[Extension of time]*

That is, without a doubt, the largest investment we have made specifically in that workforce when it comes to rural and regional health care. We did that because of some of the issues the member for Ballina raised and that I heard during my time as shadow Minister for Health as I crisscrossed New South Wales on the regional and rural health inquiry—including that the availability of paramedics in rural, regional and remote areas was a challenge. You do not have to be Einstein to realise that they often travel long distances. When paramedics go to an event or incident, areas around their station may lose coverage. That is why we wanted to have a dedicated force going directly into those rural, regional and remote areas. That is part of our investment.

In terms of helping with the pipeline of paramedics, I am pleased to announce that about 260 paramedicine students are now benefiting from our study subsidy that we are providing across the board. Some 12,000 students across healthcare degrees and sectors will be supported by up to \$12,000 for new students and up to \$8,000 for existing students who are continuing with their degrees and studies. We have workforce challenges that specifically concern rural, regional and remote areas. But we are doing everything we can to make sure that, when it comes to paramedics, nurses, clinicians and allied health workers, we are providing them with every means to meet those challenges. We will continue to focus on those needs. I am very interested to see the way in which the new roster will operate in the Ballina electorate. I will make sure NSW Ambulance gives the member for Ballina a full briefing on that. That should improve coverage and services. But, as always, the Government is open to looking at different ways to improve rural and regional health care across New South Wales.

RURAL AND REGIONAL CRIME

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:06): My question is addressed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. Will the Minister please update the House on what the Minns Labor Government is doing to address crime in regional and rural New South Wales?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (12:06): I thank the member for Shellharbour for her ongoing advocacy for her local police and for sticking up for them—good for her! We want to see more of that. The member is a shining example. The New South Wales Government is laser focused on the concerns of regional and rural communities. Members might ask why. It is because we are the party of the bush. In the past year and a half I have been all over the State

talking to police and communities. In fact, I have visited dozens of regional communities in my time as police Minister. I have even visited some communities multiple times. The member for Oxley welcomed me into his community, and I thank him for that. I was in the member for Tamworth's neck of the woods, including to speak at the Gunnedah crime prevention forum. I thank the member for his welcome. I have been to Dubbo twice in the past month.

Mr Dugald Saunders: I didn't get an invite.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: You were standing next to me. You need to get your memory back.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will direct her comments through the Chair.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I look forward to spending time in Dareton with the member for Murray. I know we will have a good time. I welcome back the part-time member for Bathurst. It is good to see him on a rare visit to this place. I have driven through Bathurst a few times too. On those travels I have heard firsthand from local MPs, mayors and community organisations about the struggles that many of those communities experience when it comes to community safety. Most importantly, I have listened to our local police. They are the experts; they are whom I listen to. They are combating worrying trends in youth crime, policing our roads to ensure safe driving, fighting domestic violence, ensuring public safety at major events like the Bathurst 100—the Bathurst 1000!—and seizing millions of dollars worth of illegal drugs from our community.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. The member for Coffs Harbour will come to order. The member for Hawkesbury will come to order. Interjections are unnecessary. The Minister misspoke; it is not a big deal. Members are being disorderly. Let us move on with some decorum.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: We would expect these futile interjections from the rabble on the other side, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Minister, you can talk to me; we get on fine.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I was talking to you, Mr Speaker. Our regional cops are doing it all. I am so tired of those opposite trying to blame our police for every social problem we have in our community.

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

Ms Anna Watson: I seek further information.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will act with decorum in the Chamber. The member for Shellharbour has requested an extension of time. An additional two minutes is granted.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I am so tired of members opposite trying to blame police for the entrenched social problems we have in our society.

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

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: They did nothing about those entrenched social problems for 12 years. They should not lecture us.

The SPEAKER: The member for Badgerys Creek will come to order. She has been so good today.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: What we have heard loud and clear is we need to do more as a government to break the cycle of crime, through prevention, diversion and disruption. That is exactly what the police are doing.

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

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: In just the past month, New South Wales and Queensland police seized 25 kilograms of cocaine and five kilograms of MDMA, with an estimated combined street value of \$9.2 million, on our streets. Local cops policed the Bathurst 1000, ensuring a successful and enjoyable event for all. Just say thank you. Police issued more than 500 speeding infringements during major school holiday traffic operations. Operation Border to Border was such a success. Police in the western region ran Operation Surge, a three-day high-visibility operation targeting alleged offenders across Moree, Tamworth and Boggabilla. Four were charged, three knives were seized and a stolen \$15,000 dirt bike was recovered. I have said time and again that we do not have enough cops in our regional towns and cities. It is no secret. That is not to mention that members opposite left us thousands of cops short and sent their wages backwards. They all sat at the table when the former Minister for Police had the opportunity to stick up for cops. What did he do? He never once supported their wage claim. What they did instead was send cops backwards. What they should do is support the cops and stop bagging them.

The SPEAKER: It is great to end with a crescendo. I advise members that the lifts have been repaired and we have technicians on stand-by for the rest of the week.

*Documents***UNPROCLAIMED LEGISLATION**

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 117, I table a list detailing all legislation unproclaimed 90 calendar days after assent as at 16 October 2024.

*Business of the House***SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS**

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

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide:

- (1) That on Tuesday 22 October 2024 the routine of business will be:
 - (a) at 3.00 p.m., the Speaker shall take the chair;
 - (b) giving of general business notices of motion (general notices) for up to 15 minutes;
 - (c) Government business;
 - (d) at 5.00 p.m., public interest debate;
 - (e) Government business (if required);
 - (f) community recognition statements; and
 - (g) private members' statements, after which the House to adjourn without motion moved until the next sitting day.
- (2) That on Wednesday 23 October 2024 the House follow the routine of business for sitting Tuesdays as provided in Standing Order 97.

Because of the royal visit on Tuesday, a number of Ministers of the Crown will be occupied with royal duties and will not be able to attend the House for most of the day, if at all. However, the Government has a number of bills it needs to have considered by the House within the limited time available next week, which are part of the Government's mandate and due for debate next week, particularly the bills relating to no-grounds evictions. So Government business is required. I did not want the House to deal only with Government business and take away the time for private members, who require time for private members' business, so I have added that as well.

The Opposition has requested question time next Tuesday. I have declined to take up that invitation, mainly because there is just not enough time to fit everything in on the Tuesday with a late start. I am moving Tuesday to Wednesday because both the Government and the Opposition, and also some minor parties, have party meetings in the morning. I cannot fit them in with a royal visit every day, so I have come up with that particular solution, which may not be acceptable to all, but it is the only practical way in which the Government can get its business through the House next week. Much of that legislation has already been given notice of, and some has already been subject to second reading speeches this week.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (12:15): I move:

That the motion be amended by omitting paragraph (1) (a) and inserting instead:

- (a) at 3.00 p.m., the Speaker shall take the chair and question time shall commence forthwith.

I am a constitutional monarchist. I am delighted the King is in New South Wales and, indeed, in Australia next week. I recognise that there is a need to facilitate the meeting of the King with various members of the House. However, our system of parliamentary democracy is the Westminster system of parliamentary democracy, and part of that system is that the Executive sits in the Parliament and is held accountable by the Parliament in question time each day. So it would be an affront to King Charles for his visit to be used for an abomination on the Westminster system of government by taking away question time on Tuesday. So my amendment reintroduces question time at 3.00 p.m. when we come back on Tuesday.

It is rather curious that all of those republicans on the other side of the Chamber want to fawn over the King but do not want to do their job and actually answer questions to Parliament and the people of New South Wales during question time, which is why they get paid the big bucks. All the white limousines will be going out to Parramatta so that they can bow and scrape to the King as republicans, and then they will all come back into Parliament for a three o'clock start on Tuesday, but they do not want to do their job and actually answer questions asked on behalf of the people of New South Wales. It is a complete and utter disgrace. I cannot believe all these republicans not willing to do their job and actually participate in question time.

I encourage all republicans on the crossbench and all of the other members of this House to support my amendment, which will reintroduce Westminster parliamentary conduct in this House next Tuesday and ensure that there is a question time. The motion allows for question time next Wednesday. My amendment is a small but

important change of principle. We ought to have proper parliamentary democracy in this House, which involves question time. The republicans on the other side of the House cannot use their hypocrisy to try to change that. They should support this change so that the Parliament operates as it should.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (12:18): By leave: I contribute to debate for two reasons. The first is to say that The Greens once again, in the absence of any other crossbench members being present, acknowledge that we are once again dealing with a suspension motion without prior notice to the crossbench. Under the previous Government, the crossbench raised this issue on a number of occasions. It is impossible to participate in a debate on a suspension of standing orders if we do not know a motion is coming.

The Greens are in the Chamber. We are generally supportive of motions for the suspension of standing orders moved by the Government, but we believe that question time is important. There is no reason we cannot have question time and start later. Therefore, we support the Opposition amendment to the motion to allow question time to take place. It does not change the time that members need to be here. It allows all members to attend to their various business. I personally am a republican and do not believe we need to be doing what we are doing, but I appreciate that those who are going have a role to play. We do not oppose starting the business of the day at 3.00 p.m., but we do not believe there is any reason we cannot have question time as well. Therefore, we support the Opposition amendment.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:20): In reply: The rank hypocrisy of the shadow Attorney General is on display. When the royal invitations were sent to the Opposition to choose members to attend, the first person to put up their hand was the member for Wahroonga. He is going to race out to Parramatta. He is going to doff his cap and tug his forelock to the monarchy. He will be the first person there. I have seen the member for Lane Cove come into Parliament every sitting day over the years and say, "God save the Queen" and "God save the King." He is in the naughty corner on the backbench. Opposition members cannot help themselves. At the end of the day, if they really assert that the Government of New South Wales should not support a royal visit and that the government of the day is full of ardent monarchists, they should at least advocate that position. Really, it is nonsense.

As I indicated to the House previously, we cannot fit everything in on the Tuesday. On other occasions, the House may not have even sat on that day. On other occasions, the Parliament would have been prorogued and the visiting sovereign would have sat all day for ceremonial purposes and then reopened Parliament. As I said, the Government has a legislative program. I cannot afford for the House to not sit on Tuesday because there are important bills that need to be considered. The member for Newtown will not want to delay the no-grounds evictions bill for which she has advocated for years. The fact of the matter is that we cannot do everything. There is no government that is more accountable than this minority Government. We have six weeks of budget estimates every year.

I concede that the member for Wahroonga is right about one thing: Most of the Ministers of the Crown are members of this House and accountable to this House, not the other place. There is some small merit to that particular argument. But the Government progressing its bills for major reform, in accordance with the mandate with which it was elected, and making time for those bills to be considered by the people's House, is the very fabric of the Westminster system. I also did not want the House to return to deal with only Government business on the Tuesday. Private members have very limited opportunities to raise matters on behalf of their constituents.

Mr Matt Cross: Like question time.

Mr RON HOENIG: The member for Davidson interjects about question time. You get smashed every question time. You walk out of this Chamber looking like a fool. Every question you ask of the Government makes you look like an imbecile. Do you ever look at yourself on the video of question time?

Mrs Tanya Davies: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House will direct his comments through the Chair. If he had done so, we would not be in this situation. I will hear from the member for Badgerys Creek on a point of order.

Mrs Tanya Davies: I echo your call for the Leader of the House to direct his comments through the Chair. He should also honour the advice that you have sent to all members about how we should conduct ourselves in the House with our language and tone.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the House is normally pretty good. He got a bit excited.

Mr RON HOENIG: I can use whatever tone I like. There is nothing in the standing orders about tone, and I would have thought a former Minister would know that. The reality is that no-one is more accountable than members of this Government. We cannot do everything. No-one is more transparent than members of this Government. We are far more transparent than Opposition members were when they were in government. The

alternative is for the House to sit on the Friday. Opposition members whinge like stuffed chooks at the thought of sitting on Fridays. The House is sitting this Friday. Do they want to sit next Friday? Opposition members are full of sewage.

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

The House divided.

Ayes37
Noes49
Majority.....12

AYES

Anderson, K	James, T	Singh, G
Ayyad, T	Kemp, M	Sloane, K
Clancy, J	Lane, J	Smith, T
Cooke, S	Layzell, D	Speakman, M
Coure, M	Leong, J	Taylor, M
Cross, M	Moylan, B	Thompson, T
Crouch, A (teller)	Petinos, E	Toole, P
Davies, T	Preston, R	Tuckerman, W
Di Pasqua, S	Provest, G	Ward, G
Griffin, J	Roberts, A	Williams, R
Hannan, J	Saunders, D	Williamson, R (teller)
Henskens, A	Shetty, K	Wilson, F
Hodges, M		

NOES

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

PAIRS

Williams, L

Washington, K

Amendment negatived.

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

Motion agreed to.

Announcements

RSL LIFECARE

The SPEAKER: I remind members that RSL LifeCare is holding a Veterans' Health Week event in the Speaker's Garden, sponsored by the member for Campbelltown. I encourage members to attend and engage with

the members of RSL LifeCare, who provide a lot of important services for veterans. I appreciate the member bringing it to my attention.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

Calvary Mater Newcastle

Petition requesting that the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to include Calvary Mater Newcastle and all affiliated health organisations on the schedule for the first tranche of funding for safe staffing levels, received from **Ms Sonia Hornery**.

Disallowance

CRIMES AMENDMENT (MAJOR FACILITIES) REGULATION 2024

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (12:33): I move:

That this House disallows the Crimes Amendment (Major Facilities) Regulation 2024, which was made under the Crimes Act 1900 and published on the NSW Legislation website on 27 September 2024.

As The Greens spokesperson on democracy, I move this disallowance motion against the deeply concerning Crimes Amendment (Major Facilities) Regulation 2024. Under this new regulation vital public spaces—our new metro stations at Barangaroo, Crows Nest, Gadigal, Victoria Cross and Waterloo—would be classified as major facilities under section 214A (7) of the Crimes Act. This move has serious implications for the right to protest around these transport hubs. We cannot allow it to go unchallenged. Section 214A of the Crimes Act makes it an offence to damage or disrupt major facilities, which, if this new regulation proceeds, will include the newly opened metro stations.

It is alarming to see the New South Wales Government quietly expanding this list through regulation, particularly in the wake of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Kvelde v State of New South Wales* in December last year. That ruling exposed the unconstitutional nature of parts of these laws, yet Labor has chosen to double down rather than address the glaring legal and democratic flaws. The Kvelde case saw two Knitting Nannas take on the New South Wales Government's draconian anti-protest laws, securing a partial win. The Supreme Court ruled that section 214A (1) (c) and (d) were invalid for impermissibly burdening the Commonwealth Constitution's implied freedom of political communication. The court upheld paragraphs (a) and (b) of section 214A (1) but found they duplicated existing legislation that already prohibited conduct causing damage to major facilities and obstructing access for facility users. While the definition of "major facility" and the existing list of facilities were left standing, it is quite clear that the substance of the law has been significantly altered due to the Supreme Court case.

We are rapidly approaching 12 months since these undemocratic laws were found to be partially unconstitutional. Earlier this year the New South Wales Labor Government ran public consultation on these laws, but it has so far failed to publish a report into the results. It has also failed to amend the legislation to officially remove the provisions found to unduly burden freedom of political communication. While we have seen inaction and almost a year of delays from Labor when it comes to responding to the Supreme Court finding that these laws impinge upon freedom of political communication, suddenly there is a sense of urgency when there is an opportunity to further curtail protest rights by adding the new metro stations to the prescribed facilities list. Transport hubs have historically been popular spots for protests and gatherings. We should not be supporting attempts to bring more of those places under heavy-handed anti-protest laws.

These anti-protest laws should never have been passed in the first place. For members who need a reminder about how we got here, Labor disappointingly supported this legislation while in opposition. It allowed the laws to be rushed through Parliament in less than 72 hours, suspending the requirement for the House to have two weeks to consider new legislation, despite outcry from unions, human rights groups and the legal sector. Unions sounded alarm bells against these laws from the day they were introduced, and the laws have been widely condemned as anti-democratic by over 230 civil society and human rights groups. Labor should have committed to repealing these undemocratic laws on its first day in office, but 526 days since the first sitting of the Fifty-Eighth Parliament it is instead trying to broaden their scope. We cannot allow this to happen.

In the past month we have seen repeated attacks on the right to protest from the New South Wales Labor Government. There were attempts to block peaceful protests calling for an end to the genocide in Gaza and supporting a ceasefire in Lebanon. Then, just last week, the Premier suggested giving police the right to veto protest applications on the grounds of resourcing and cost. This regulation is the latest in a slew of protest-busting

initiatives from the New South Wales Labor Government. New South Wales already has some of the most restrictive anti-protest laws in the country. In its most recent report, entitled *Protest in Peril: Our Shrinking Democracy*, the Human Rights Law Centre highlighted that New South Wales has more anti-protest laws on the books than anywhere else in Australia, and the introduction of new anti-protest laws in this State has been increasing at an alarming rate.

The right to protest is fundamental in a functioning democracy, and every further step that the Government takes to restrict protest is bringing us another step closer to authoritarianism. Democracy is not just about the ability to vote; it is about people being able to voice their disagreement with the decisions of the government of the day. It is difficult to picture just how different a society we would live in if we did not have the ability to protest. Much of what we now take for granted was hard won by protesters in years gone by. From the suffragettes to the first event at the Mardi Gras protest to unions working hard to secure the eight-hour working day, we owe so much to successful protest movements from the past. Protest has also been integral to movements for peace, from the Vietnam moratorium marches to the protests opposing South African apartheid, and in more recent times those opposing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Every community member deserves to feel safe and empowered when exercising their democratic right to protest. Whether it is school students demanding climate action, the Knitting Nannas fighting against fossil fuels, nurses and teachers rallying for fair pay and conditions, or anti-war activists calling for peace in Gaza and Lebanon, those voices must be heard and not silenced by draconian laws. Laws already exist to deal with violence or criminal damage. It is not okay to criminalise people's right to speak out. The right to peaceful protest lies at the heart of our democracy. It is not just a right but a responsibility to hold power to account and demand justice. The undemocratic anti-protest laws must be repealed, and until that happens, we must oppose any attempts to broaden their scope. The Greens will always stand on the side of those who protest peacefully, and we will not allow this Government to continue to strip away our democratic freedoms.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (12:40): With common sense, good governance and respect for the overwhelming majority of the population who do not engage in activities that fall foul of those laws, I contribute to debate on behalf of the Government to oppose the motion to disallow the Crimes Amendment (Major Facilities) Regulation 2024. I do not want to go over old ground. I do not want to reignite old battles, but the laws do not compromise the common law right of citizens to protest. They do not impinge upon that democratic right. I remind people of what the laws are and what they are not. Section 214A of the Crimes Act 1900 states:

- (1) A person must not enter, remain on or near, climb, jump from or otherwise trespass on or block entry to any part of a major facility if that conduct—
 - (a) causes damage to the major facility, or
 - (b) seriously disrupts or obstructs persons attempting to use the major facility, or
 - (c) causes the major facility ... to be closed

We have seen over the past year people protesting in Sydney on all manner of subject matters, and they have not fallen foul of this law because they have not caused damage to major facilities, they have not seriously disrupted or obstructed persons from attempting to use a major facility and they have not caused major facilities to shut down. The democratic right and ability of citizens to protest in accordance with their common law rights in New South Wales is today, as I stand in this Chamber, alive and well. The Government cannot apologise for, and will not apologise for, having strong laws which prevent major disruptions to the community, which also, at the same time, balance citizens' freedoms.

On my recommendation, this regulation was made pursuant to section 214A (7) (a) of the Crimes Act 1900 to extend existing protections for major facilities under section 214A to the new metro stations on the Chatswood to Sydenham stage of the Sydney Metro. The existing protections were enacted in 2022 in response to individuals who blocked access to major facilities and caused major disruption to the public—things like stopping a van in the middle of the harbour tunnel and obstructing, dangerously, the passage through that tunnel, and gluing themselves to Stoney Creek Road in the middle of peak hour, and conduct like that. That is why we supported those provisions from opposition. We support them now.

As I have said, the provision seeks to prohibit and deter activities that cause damage or disruption to or closure of major facilities that the public relies on, such as railway stations, transport facilities, ports and infrastructure facilities. In 2022 all railway stations in the Sydney CBD were prescribed under the Crimes Regulation 2020 as major facilities for the purposes of section 214A. That included Central station and Martin Place, which served the Sydney Metro. Key railway stations outside the Sydney CBD, some of which service the Sydney Metro, were also prescribed as major facilities in 2022. They include stations at Chatswood, Sydenham, North Sydney and Redfern.

The Chatswood to Sydenham stage of the Sydney Metro is a critical new piece, and a very popular new piece, of public transport infrastructure that supports the free movement of the public around Sydney. Important Sydney Metro stations should be protected against closure, blockade and actions that seriously disrupt the public from accessing them, just as key railway stations are protected. I thought it would have gone without saying that that would have been a reasonable thing to do. In fact, leaving the new metro stations at Barangaroo, Crows Nest, Gadigal, Victoria Cross and Waterloo unprotected would be inconsistent with the existing protections for all other Sydney CBD railway stations and key railway stations like North Sydney and Redfern. In fact, it would be ridiculous and negligent to not include them in this protective legislation.

In *Kvelde v State of New South Wales* [2023] the Supreme Court found that section 214A (1) of the Crimes Act is constitutionally valid to the extent that it prohibits activity that causes damage to a major facility, seriously disrupts or obstructs persons entering or attempting to use the major facility, or causes the major facility to be closed. The conduct that this legislation was really directed at, conduct like shutting down ports and closing down major transport facilities, remains illegal under 214A, even in light of the Kvelde judgement. This regulation is entirely consistent with those aims.

Freedom of assembly and speech are recognised by the New South Wales Government as important rights that are integral to a democratic system of government. As I said earlier, all New South Wales citizens enjoy a common law right to peaceful assembly and an implied constitutional right of freedom of political communication. Our Government recognises that a balance must be struck between those rights and the rights of members of our community not to be unreasonably impeded in their lawful day-to-day activities.

International law, constitutional law and the common law all recognise that the right to peaceful protest and assembly can be restricted for public interest reasons, including the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. That is entirely the point of the legislation. This Government and, I believe, the overwhelming majority of members in this Parliament are committed to ensuring that the appropriate balance is maintained in New South Wales, and this modest regulation is entirely consistent with maintaining that balance.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (12:48): I contribute to debate on The Greens motion to disallow the Crimes Amendment (Major Facilities) Regulation 2024. The Opposition opposes the motion. I begin by affirming that the right to protest is fundamental to any good democracy. It is a right we value and a right that allows us to voice our concerns, challenge those in power and make our voices heard on important issues. However, that right, like any other, comes with responsibilities. There is a standard of behaviour that must be upheld and a standard that respects the rights of others, adheres to common law and ensures that while one group exercises its right to protest, it does not deny the rights of others to live, work, and move freely and safely in our community.

What we have witnessed recently, however, has been anything but responsible. Too many times we have seen protests that are not peaceful when protesters seek to be seen and heard. What we have seen too often are extreme, anarchist-style demonstrations designed to cause disruption, chaos and pain to law-abiding citizens, businesses and organisations. These protests are not simply about making a point; they are about obstruction, denying people access to essential services and facilities, and causing financial and operational harm to businesses and organisations—large and small. These protests do not respect the common rights we all share. They seek to block critical infrastructure, such as railway stations, ports and power stations—facilities that we, as citizens, depend on every day to go about our lives. We have seen this obstruction disrupt operations at Port Botany—the largest container hub in New South Wales—and other critical facilities. These tactics are not the actions of responsible citizens engaging in lawful protest; they are the actions of those seeking to wreak economic chaos and impose hardship on their fellow citizens.

Let me remind the House that these laws, which The Greens now wish to weaken, were originally introduced in 2022 by the Liberal Government in response to those extreme tactics. The laws were necessary to ensure that while the right to protest remains protected, the rights of other citizens to access essential services, to go to work and to live their lives without disruption are equally protected. The laws introduced penalties of up to \$22,000 or two years in jail for illegal protests that disrupt economic activity. They were designed not to suppress legitimate dissent but to prevent harmful and dangerous tactics. More recently, in December 2023, the Supreme Court ruled invalid two sections of the laws relating to protests forcing the redirection of people from a facility or the closure of facilities. However, the primary provisions remain intact, making it unlawful to damage facilities or seriously disrupt or obstruct their use.

Despite that ruling, the Labor Government has chosen not to appeal, which is disappointing to those of us on this side of the House. We remain firm in our belief that the laws are essential to preserving the rights of all citizens, not just those of protesters. The disallowance put forward by The Greens today seeks to undo part of those protections by opposing the inclusion of five new metro stations—Barangaroo, Crows Nest, Gadigal, Victoria Cross and Waterloo—in the list of protected facilities. That addition is logical and necessary given the importance of those stations as part of the new metro network: a project that has transformed public transport in

this State. Those stations are critical to the function of our city and economy. Protecting them from disruptive protests is vital to ensure the smooth operation of public transport and economic activity, let alone the safe movement of people.

Why The Greens would oppose such a measure is beyond comprehension. Why would they want to enable irresponsible behaviour by activists who seek to cause maximum disruption to the lives of ordinary citizens? Why would they support actions that impose costs on small businesses, workers and families, all in the name of making a political point? We on this side do not oppose the right to protest; we oppose disruption for the sake of disruption. We oppose protests that violate the rights of others, that damage public infrastructure and that deny businesses their right to operate freely. These laws are designed to protect the balance between the right to protest and the responsibility to protest peacefully. That balance is what ensures that our society functions smoothly.

The metro project is a testament to the legacy of the Coalition Government. It is the largest infrastructure project seen in New South Wales since the Harbour Bridge was opened in 1932. In so many ways now, it is the jewel in the crown of our State's public transport network: a modern marvel that surpasses the best global standards. We should be celebrating its completion, not opening it up to disruption by reckless protesters. We support the right to protest, but with that right comes the responsibility to do so in a way that respects the broader community. We stand for the rights of law-abiding citizens. We stand for the rights of businesses to operate freely. This disallowance does not serve the public good and we oppose it.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (12:53): I join with the Government and the Opposition in opposing the disallowance motion. We are probably the only western democracy that does not have in our constitutional document a foundational right to free speech. Our free speech is predicated on a number of cases, known as the free speech cases, that started with Theophanous and Stephens, Lange, and Australian Capital Television [ACTV], which came from defamation or political donations cases all the way to the High Court.

Mr Alister Henskens: Political advertising on television.

Mr GARETH WARD: The ACTV case, as the shadow Attorney General rightly references, from 1992 was the Keating Government's attempt to limit the time offered on commercial television to political parties based on their representation in the Parliament. Those cases brought our right of free speech to the fore. But it is not expressed as it is in, say, the American Constitution or other constitutional documents—there are good reasons for that—which have meant that the right to free speech is absolute.

Having said that, people should be able to say things that could make people uncomfortable, that could upset and even outrage people. The litmus test for free speech is how far a government will fetter the right for people to speak. In many respects, I understand where Greens members are coming from in what they are saying. But I draw the line when infrastructure, transport and other things that are critical to people moving around our State are interrupted unreasonably. In fact, there is an argument for the Attorney General to go further because some of the protests that are sapping police resources weekend after weekend are also frustrating many members of the public, particularly tax-paying members of the public, who are just over the amount of protests that are happening. People are concerned not just about the cost to taxpayers but also about police resources being diverted from other things, like combatting domestic violence and fighting crime, because they have to deal with protest action.

While I understand where Greens members are coming from, I cannot support their motion for disallowance. I support the arguments outlined by the member for Willoughby and the Attorney General. We should have free speech. We should allow people to demonstrate freely. We live in a time, more so than any other time, where people can express their views through social media and many other avenues. Protests that interrupt public transport, resulting in an impact on our State economy, on jobs, on people's lives, are not the sorts of protest that should be permitted. I believe that the decision of the Government, supported by the Opposition, is the right one.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (12:56): I speak briefly to add my voice in support of the disallowance motion moved by the member for Balmain. I have deep concerns that we are in a situation where members of this Chamber in opposing this disallowance motion are seeming to suggest that only non-disruptive, State-sanctioned protests are acceptable. The idea from the member for Kiama that people are "over" the protests that are disrupting people every week shows a complete failure to understand the level of trauma, grief, anger and frustration about the ongoing genocidal attacks happening in Palestine, and now the attacks on Lebanon. Those are the feelings that people are trying to express on the streets of Sydney every week.

The idea that people are "over" the protests when we do not recognise the reason that people come out to display their frustration, their anger, their solidarity and their passion about the need for governments to take a different approach is something that should not be allowed to sit on the record without being questioned. The

whole point of protest is disruption. The whole point of peaceful protest is to disrupt the status quo and express an alternative view that the powers of the day do not wish to listen to. Not everybody has the privilege of being in this Chamber and being able to express their views for others to hear. Some people have no choice but to join together on the streets in collective action to express those views to get governments to listen. The idea that we should have laws in this State that prevent that right to peaceful protest is of serious concern.

There is also no requirement for the NSW Police Force to attend in the numbers they do at every rally on the weekends and at rallies regularly held in the city. That is a choice made by the police in this State as a result of the excessive law and order agenda of successive governments that wish to see an over-the-top police presence at such events. On the weekend I attended the Palestine rally. I went from Parliament House to the rally in Hyde Park. On the way I saw somewhere in the order of 10 to 12 police officers standing around near two vans at the end of Macquarie Street. I saw another 20 officers standing at the edge of Hyde Park. As the march proceeded and we walked through the park, I saw probably another 50 officers stationed at different locations. There was no need for that level of policing. The march was completely peaceful. Yes, highway patrol must block off the road, but there was no need for that level of resourcing.

The choice to excessively resource that rally was not required. That is a choice made by the police, this Government and successive governments which desire to show a strong police presence to crack down on peaceful protest. The Greens want to see this situation disallowed. We want to see protest laws changed in this State, because we believe fundamentally in the right for people to engage in non-violent direct action and peaceful protest. Those in power will not listen to those who are not in power unless they have the ability to come out collectively and march on the streets.

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (13:01): In reply: I thank the Attorney General, the member for Willoughby, the member for Kiama and the member for Newtown for their contributions to debate. The Attorney General spoke of section 214A (1), which is about people seriously disrupting facilities or obstructing people trying to use a facility. That is a very low bar. If people are being fined excessively and given heavy penalties for obstructing a facility like a train station, one would think that it would be quite straightforward for someone to be arrested and fined or given prison time for standing in front of somebody trying to get to the metro station. That is why there have been ongoing concerns about these laws since they were passed in 2022.

While governments continue their inaction on critical issues like the environment and social justice, young people are watching their future go up in smoke. Young people, scientists and grandparents do not protest because they want to cause damage or behave recklessly; they do so because they are getting increasingly desperate for governments to listen. We know that there is a history of unions like the Maritime Union of Australia that undertake pickets. The point of those pickets is to disrupt facilities. Unions recognise that the way to get the attention of government is to disrupt. The point of protest is to disrupt. That is why unions support the repeal of these anti-protest laws.

It is contradictory to say that protest rights are protected while it is also illegal to disrupt people using a train station. It is not just the area of the station itself; it is the public space adjacent to those locations—stations like Town Hall, Martin Place and Waterloo. Those are places where people gather. Police are using these laws to take away people's right of expression. The Opposition and the Government argue that the right to protest is fundamental, but only under conditions that they are comfortable with. That seriously undermines that right. Human rights law experts agree that these laws undermine the right to protest. Arguing that they do not is simply disingenuous. I hear talk of balance, but currently there is no balance. The right to protest is increasingly being quashed and we must do all that we can to protect it. I urge all members to support the disallowance motion.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): The question is that the motion be agreed to. A division has been called for. There being fewer than five members for the question, the question is resolved in the negative. I direct that the names of those members be recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

Ayes, 3

Ms J. Leong
Ms K. Shetty
Ms T. Smith

Motion negatived.

*Bills***EQUALITY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (LGBTIQA+) BILL 2023****Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (13:11): As the shadow Attorney General, I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023. I begin with a chronology. Something extraordinary occurred today regarding debate on the bill that I think needs to be brought to the attention of not only the House but also the public. By way of introduction, I say that the former Coalition Government, in its 12 years in government, introduced many reforms and made many decisions not to change things that were already laws in New South Wales when it came to government. I will speak about some of those matters on behalf of the Opposition, but at no time was the former Coalition Government intolerant of diversity in the community.

From the outset, I make clear that the Liberal Party and The Nationals do not stand for discrimination or hatred in the community. They recognise that people are different. The Liberal Party is a champion of the individual, but there is a great diversity of individuals in the community. There are individuals who feel strongly about their sexual identity, as well as individuals who feel strongly about women's privacy and safety, and other individuals who feel strongly about their freedom to practise or not practise their cultural norms, including their religion. Politics and government are about striking the right balance on the sometimes many conflicting, individual wants on various issues so that the community interest is maximised. Opinions will legitimately differ on those matters. When people listening to the debate hear some of the issues that are covered in the bill, I think they will agree that the issues raised by the bill give rise to many reasonable positions where legitimate views may differ.

Context is everything. I start with an explanation of the process by which we are debating the bill today because it is highly relevant to the Coalition's position on the bill and why the Coalition, like the Labor Party, will not be having a conscience vote on the bill. The equality bill was introduced by the member for Sydney on 22 August 2023 when the Minns Government suspended standing orders to give it priority over other private members' bills that were before it on the *Business Paper*. Under that suspension of standing orders, the second reading speech for the bill occurred two days later, on 24 August 2023—about 14 months ago. At all times since, the member for Sydney has told the Coalition that the bill will be brought forward and debated in Parliament in a form that is likely to be very different from the 50-page bill that was introduced into Parliament 14 months ago and that the Coalition will have plenty of notice of the final form of the bill.

Effectively, the Coalition was told to put its pens down, as what was in the 50-page bill introduced in August last year would not be the form of the legislation and the member for Sydney would only advance or amend parts of the bill that were supported by the Minns Labor Government. On 29 November 2023 the member for Sydney moved a suspension of standing orders to stop the bill lapsing and to extend it until 15 March 2024. In January the Coalition was told by the member for Sydney that he was working with the Government and that the Coalition would be given plenty of time to consider changes to the bill. He said that might not happen before 15 March and there might be the need for further extensions of time to stop the bill lapsing. The clear message was "Put your pens down. What you have is not what will be brought to Parliament. You would be wasting your time considering matters that may never come before the Parliament."

On 13 March 2024 the member for Sydney moved a suspension of standing orders to extend the lapsing date of the equality bill to 16 August 2024 and refer the bill to a committee for report. On 7 May 2024 the Opposition moved for an extension of its own Bail Act reforms, and then again on 15 May 2024 moved for an extension with regard to the Government's domestic violence reforms. Both were directed towards ensuring that electronic monitoring for people charged with serious domestic violence offences would be implemented as soon as possible following the death of Molly Ticehurst. The member for Sydney and the Minns Labor Government did not support expediting either the Opposition bill or, extraordinarily, the Government's own bill. The member for Sydney was scathing in his criticism of expediting protections for victims of domestic violence. He said that expedition showed "such disrespect to stakeholders in this space" and that it was "the greatest dereliction of duty" in his 12 years in Parliament. That was when he had had for a couple of weeks the Opposition policy and the legislation upon which the Labor legislation was based.

At 12.15 p.m. today the true amendments to the bill that the member seeks to bring forward were first put on the parliamentary website and were therefore available to the Opposition for the first time. The member did not supply that document between Saturday night, when a different document was provided, and 12.15 p.m. today. Extraordinarily, the Attorney General, on behalf of the Minns Labor Government, made his contribution to the

second reading debate on a form of the bill that was not publicly available at the time he got up to speak, because he finished his speech prior to question time.

In late July of this year, the member for Sydney informed the Opposition that the Government was still looking at the equality bill and that it could draft its own bill, amend his bill or decide that it was all too difficult. He said that he wanted a respectful debate and that there would be at least five business days for the Opposition to consider the changes before we debated the bill. I hasten to identify that respect is a two-way street. On 8 August 2024 the member for Sydney moved a suspension of standing orders to extend the lapsing date for his equality bill to 31 October 2024. As is recorded in *Hansard*, the Opposition said at that time that the quicker there is agreement and circulation of the amendments available for public consultation, the better. The *Hansard* shows that the member for Sydney agreed to that.

The Leader of the House noted that there were issues between the Government and the member for Sydney with regard to the bill. It became clear from some public statements that Labor seemed to be talking about some different amendments to the ones that had been supplied to the Opposition. Contrary to the assurances that there would be adequate time for consultation and consideration of the bill in its amended form, it was not until late on Saturday night—that is, only a few days ago—that the Opposition was given a document that the member for Sydney had asked the Parliamentary Counsel's Office to draft, described as document c2024-115G. That is a notation that the Parliamentary Counsel puts on documents that have been created to record the version. The eight-page document that we were supplied late on Saturday night contained 79 amendments to the 50-page equality bill originally introduced to Parliament by the member for Sydney in August of last year.

The fact that the member for Sydney and Labor seem to have issued a press release today that indicated a different number of schedules to the final bill suggests that amendments have been made or proposed that the Opposition has never been supplied. We kept checking the parliamentary website to see if there was a different amendment document and, as I have already said, it was not until 12.15 p.m. today that a new document first became available. As far as I am aware, a copy was never emailed to the Opposition. It made substantial changes to the already substantial changes that were given to the Opposition late on Saturday night. The member for Sydney thinks it is fair and reasonable that I should speak on behalf of the Opposition in debate on a substantially different proposed bill.

I will now take the time to read onto the parliamentary record the extent of the changes that have been made to the bill so that there is a full appreciation of the appalling process that is happening here. It is not just the height of disrespect for the Opposition and parliamentary process; it is the height of disrespect for the community. Given those statements that I read out from the member for Sydney in other debates in this House, it is the height of hypocrisy. I have been in this place for almost 10 years now—

Mr Adam Crouch: It goes by fast.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Yes, it goes by very fast. The member for Terrigal and I came in here together and he knows. In almost 10 years I have never seen parliamentary process disrespected in this fashion by members not supplying amendments—particularly amendments to what the member for Sydney contends is very important legislation. When I was a barrister, I would not have been able to provide substantial amendments like that on no notice when I was about to start arguing a case. The courts would not allow it. The transparency of process is important, whether it is in our courts or in our parliaments. Indeed, I doubt that any workplace in the country would allow people to operate in that fashion and with such disrespect to their colleagues as the Minns Labor Government has, because it clearly had the amendments before they were supplied to the Opposition. The member for Sydney has performed in that fashion.

I make this very clear. The new document that was supplied to us and the public after 12.15 p.m. today has a number on it, and that new number is c2024-115V. That means that between Saturday night and today, there have been 15 further changes to the document that were never supplied to the Opposition. This is the fifteenth version. We only got what is apparently the fifteenth version when I was about to make a contribution on behalf of the Opposition, with no ability to properly address the changes that have been made.

Of course, something else is wrong about the process here, and it is not just about time. It is also about the fact that the Opposition was not given an opportunity to consult with the community and formulate a position with proper consideration. The other point is that when the original bill was introduced in August of last year, the second reading speech did not explain, word by word, all of the bill's provisions and why each of them was being proposed, as we usually hear in a second reading speech. With all of these further iterations of the bill and the amendments that seem to be coming almost by the minute, we have not had the benefit of the member for Sydney explaining to members and the public the reasons for the further changes—what is motivating them and why they are being made. There could not be a situation where a process had been more calculated to disarm proper transparency, scrutiny and debate about provisions.

A further matter that I have left out is that in accordance with ordinary parliamentary processes, the debate on the bill should have happened tomorrow, on Thursday, which is private members' bills day. Do members know when the Opposition was told that the matter would be debated today? It was told at 9.30 a.m. That was the first time anyone—the member for Sydney, the Labor Government or the Leader of the House—told the Opposition. It was the first time we were told that this debate would come on today. That is the process. The member for Sydney has now left the Chamber, but he chose to personally attack me in the media today. I will not personally attack him. I always remember that our great former Premier Gladys Berejiklian used to say, "When people go low, I always go high." I will not make this a personal debate or a personal attack; I am interested in raising matters of process and the standards that the member for Sydney has previously stated as appropriate. This process has been terrible and should not have taken place.

I am now confronted with a speech that I worked late into the night to prepare on a bill that apparently will be different to the one that Opposition members were notified of late on Saturday night. I will talk about the amendments we were supplied with on Saturday night and then I will try to deal with the extensive further amendments that were put up for the first time at 12.15 p.m. today, less than an hour ago. I was certainly only made aware of those changes literally at the time the matter to be accorded priority had finished and this matter was called on for debate. Schedule 11 to the bill as amended, with the amendments we were notified of on Saturday night, seeks to repeal sections 15A and 15 of the Summary Offences Act. The reasons for deleting those provisions were given in the second reading speech by the member for Sydney as follows:

There is an offence for knowingly living off the earnings of sex work, with adults living with a sex worker who do not have other sufficient lawful means of support specified. The offence could incriminate a sex worker's partner who becomes incapacitated, an adult child who lives at home while studying or a housemate on a low income. Exerting coercive conduct or undue influence to "cause or induce" someone to "commit an act of prostitution" or surrender any proceeds from it is an offence. The offence creates complications and risks for sex worker businesses in recruitment, sex workers talking about their work with friends and support services helping a person starting in sex work. The offence does not address sexual servitude, which is addressed in the Crimes Act.

Section 15A of the Summary Offences Act, which the member for Sydney notified us on Saturday evening he sought to repeal, has an offence for a person who causes or induces prostitution:

- (1) A person must not, by coercive conduct or undue influence, cause or induce another person to commit an act of prostitution.
- (2) A person must not, by coercive conduct or undue influence, cause or induce another person to surrender any proceeds of an act of prostitution.

The maximum penalty is imprisonment for 12 months or 50 penalty units. Coercion can be physical or psychological. It can be done by violence or threats or intimidation. Undue influence is a doctrine which started in the law of equity, which means that a person did an act under such circumstances as to show or give rise to findings that the person has not been allowed to exercise a free and deliberate choice about a matter. None of the arguments advanced by the member for Sydney in his second reading speech even approach any behaviour or circumstances that could justify the repeal of that section so as to justify persons coercing or using undue influence on another person to commit an act of prostitution or surrender the proceeds afterwards. In the second reading speech introducing the provision on 19 October 1995, the then Labor Attorney General, the Hon. Jeff Shaw, QC, said that section 15A "would include, for example, the offering of heroin to a heroin addict so that he or she engages in an act of prostitution". He added:

This provision is also capable of ensuring that the exploitation of young women in particular does not result from the recognition of brothels as legitimate commercial enterprises.

I say on behalf of the Opposition that there is never any justification for coercing or exerting undue influence on a woman to do something—like prostitution—against her will, and to profit from it. That is a disempowerment of a woman's agency to make decisions about what she does and does not do with her body. The section applies equally to men, women or trans people being coerced or unduly influenced. There is nothing in an LGBTIQ+ equality bill that would suggest that provision should be repealed, as the member for Sydney informed the Opposition on Saturday night that he intended to do.

The examples given in the second reading speech by the member for Sydney about dependent adults, or that it could criminalise casual conversations with people wanting to start in the sex industry, are nothing like the kinds of behaviour that are covered by the law of coercion or undue influence. I challenge the Government or the member for Sydney to produce a single piece of reputable legal advice to suggest that these examples could amount to coercion or undue influence as the case law understands them. I cannot believe that the Premier of this State said that he supports the amendments of the member for Sydney and would support an amendment to allow the coercion of women into prostitution by threats and intimidation without any criminal sanction, as we were notified on Saturday night was the intention of member for Sydney in the bill.

It is ironic that the Minns Government has cheered on the commencement of the operation of the former Coalition Government's coercive control legislation, which commenced on 1 July of this year, introduced by the

Crimes Legislation Amendment (Coercive Control) Act 2022. That criminalising of intimate partner coercive control involved control by an intimate partner. Why is that of a different character to the Summary Offences Act provision? Why does the Minns Government want to support the legislation, which turns a blind eye to coercion of women into prostitution by people who are in a commercial relationship with the person?

The member for Sydney seems to be similarly confused because, in item [2] of schedule 5 to the amended bill supplied to the Opposition on Saturday night, he wants to include in the definition of coercive behaviour somebody who threatens to out a person's sexual orientation. Yet, with regard to the Summary Offences Act, he wants to take away any criminal sanction for somebody coercing a person into prostitution. Those are the sorts of matters that we have been confronted with in the document that was supplied on Saturday night, and we had not been told anything different before 12.15 p.m. today. And we only got notice at 9.30 a.m. this morning that the debate would be brought on a day early. The New South Wales Government's submission to the parliamentary inquiry into the proposed changes also agreed that the repeal of sections 15 and 15A would take away protection of sex workers from exploitation. Section 15 of the Summary Offences Act, which the member for Sydney also seeks to amend, is in the following terms:

15 Living on earnings of prostitution

- (1) A person shall not knowingly live wholly or in part on the earnings of prostitution of another person.
Maximum penalty—10 penalty units or imprisonment for 12 months.
- (2) For the purposes of subsection (1), a person who is of or above the age of 18 years and who—
 - (a) lives with or is habitually in the company of, a reputed prostitute, and
 - (b) has no visible lawful means of support,
 shall be taken knowingly to live wholly or in part on the earnings of prostitution of another person unless he or she satisfies the court before which he or she is charged with an offence under that subsection that he or she has sufficient lawful means of support.

It is a kind of "unexplained wealth" provision, because the legislation recognises that it may be hard to prove coercion or that someone is actually coercing someone into prostitution. But if they have got unexplained wealth, they are obviously living off the proceeds of prostitution, which is taking advantage of very vulnerable people in the community who are engaged in prostitution. Subsection (3) states:

A person does not contravene subsection (1) by living wholly or in part on earnings derived from a brothel if the person owns, manages or is employed in the brothel.

Subsection (4) states:

For the purposes of subsection (3), premises may constitute a brothel even though used by only one prostitute for the purposes of prostitution.

Living wholly or in part on the earnings of prostitution of another person is taking some or all of the earnings at or shortly after the act of prostitution. The people who criminally do this are colloquially known as pimps and usually coerce prostitutes by various means, which are difficult to prove, into being a prostitute. Living on the earnings of prostitution has nothing to do with a prostitute voluntarily sharing their earnings with a dependent adult child or a housemate, which were the examples given by the member for Sydney in his second reading speech. In introducing subsections (3) and (4) of section 15 into law, then Labor Attorney General the Hon. Jeff Shaw, QC, said in his second reading speech on 19 October 1995:

... living off the earnings of prostitution ... requires a continuous association with the "industry" and habitual receipt of money from the earnings of prostitution.

None of the domestic relationships cited by the member for Sydney in his second reading speech constitute a continuous association with the prostitution industry. There is not a business character to the domestic relationships that he uses in his examples to justify the amendment. There is no association with the industry because the receipt of money is by reason of a voluntary payment and has no commercial character in association with the industry of prostitution. The member's analogy is like saying that my children lived off the proceeds of Parliament when they were living at home and under the age of 18. It is ludicrous. The member for Sydney does not point to one case or decision in a court of this country consistent with his rather absurd interpretation of the section and what it means to live on the proceeds of prostitution.

The way to achieve the member's stated justification would have been to create an exception to the section to cover the instances that he is concerned about but to keep the criminal protection of vulnerable people from being commercially exploited. Instead of doing that, a complete repeal of the section was proposed in the amendments supplied to the Opposition on Saturday evening. It is not justified and should not be supported. Again, the provisions protect men, women and trans people equally. It is strange to see that protections of that kind would be taken out of a so-called LGBTIQA+ equality bill. To think that the Premier and the Minns

Government are supporting the decriminalisation of exploitation of vulnerable men, women and trans people is difficult to fathom. Maybe that is why they do not want full transparency and the process has been so bad.

The next matter I go to is the question of birth certificates, which is in schedule 1 to the bill as amended by the 79 amendments supplied to us on Saturday evening. It deals with changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration [BDMR] Act and, in particular, to the sex recorded on the record of a person's birth. When in government, the Coalition did not repeal provisions protecting gender diversity or trans people and so on in the Anti-Discrimination Act and elsewhere. Indeed, we introduced provisions that recognise and protect such people.

For example, we introduced section 93Z into the Crimes Act, which created an offence of publicly threatening or inciting violence on the grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex or having HIV/AIDS status. We made it a criminal offence for a person, by a public act, to intentionally or recklessly threaten or incite violence towards another person or a group of persons on a number of grounds, which included sexual orientation and gender identity, with a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment and a fine of \$11,000. Our position on these matters is not motivated by any lack of tolerance for diversity. It is because of the matters in the second reading speech that I will raise in debate on this omnibus bill.

The version of the bill that we were given on Saturday evening had 13 schedules and amended 12 pieces of legislation and one set of government rules. Our opposition to the changes proposed is motivated by the many unanswered questions as to the implication of the rushed changes that are being put before Parliament. I raise a few matters. The existing part 5A of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act provides for a process whereby a person born in New South Wales and over the age of 18, or the parents or guardians of a child, may change the sex of a person on their birth record. They can do so after having a sex-affirming surgical procedure involving the alteration of a person's reproductive organs to help a person be considered a member of the opposite sex under sections 32A and 32B of the existing law, so long as the application is accompanied by a declaration by a registered medical practitioner under section 32C.

The version of the bill that we were supplied with on Saturday night wants to change those provisions in a manner that the Coalition finds to be too low a threshold and by procedures that it does not find adequately protect minors and families. The possible implication of those shortcomings is significant. Sex is a biological descriptor based on reproductive, hormonal, anatomical and other objective criteria. Gender is an individual's subjective sense of what sex they are and is not necessarily visible to others. The outcome of this bill will be that the meaning of somebody's legal sex under the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act will change from an objective test to a subjective test like their gender, and the two are not the same.

Revenue NSW correctly states on its website that an Australian birth certificate issued by the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages is the only acceptable document for identity, and for people born overseas the identity document is a passport. As I have already explained, currently birth certificates in New South Wales identify a person's sex, which is an objective criteria, and passports indicate gender by a subjective criteria of gender. On the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade website that is made clear. It states:

We record your preferred gender in the "Sex" field of your Australian passport. The gender options are:

- M (male)
- F (female)
- X (non-binary/indeterminate/intersex/unspecified/other).

The Premier's public statements this week that a birth certificate and a passport should not be different as to sex appears to not understand the difference between the two, and that is that one is based on sex and the other is based on gender.

The Alex Greenwich bill, which is being supported by the Minns Government, proposes a new administrative process to change the sex on a birth certificate record of people born in New South Wales without requiring any medical or surgical intervention. In addition, contrary to some recent statements in the media, people can change their name under the existing part 5 of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act without any medical or surgical intervention. It is a completely false narrative to say that surgery is required for a name change if someone is trans. It can be done without surgery under section 5. The bill introduces for the first time the possibility of registration of a sex descriptor other than male and female under the new section 32A definition that we were provided on Saturday night.

For a person aged 18 years or more and born in New South Wales, under proposed new section 32B supplied on Saturday night, the process requires an application in an approved form with a statutory declaration by the person stating that they identify as the nominated sex descriptor and live, or want to live, as another sex, with a statement in support by another adult who has known them for more than 12 months. For a person under

the age of 18 and born in New South Wales, under proposed new section 32C supplied to us on Saturday night, the sex descriptor on their record may be changed by an order of the District Court after an application by the minor alone, supported by a qualified counsellor. No statutory declaration by the minor is required. The court may, but may not if the applicant convinces it otherwise, notify and seek the views of the parents or other persons with parentage responsibility for the child about the application to change their sex.

The qualifications required by a counsellor under proposed new section 32A are not stated in the legislation and will be determined by regulation. The parents or guardians, if they are all in agreement, may apply administratively to the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages under proposed new section 32D to change the sex descriptor of the child. In that case, unlike an application by a minor under proposed new section 32C, supplied on Saturday night, a statutory declaration by the child is required under proposed new section 32D, supplied on Saturday night, when supported by the parents or guardian that the minor identifies as being of the sex descriptor. If the parents or guardians do not all agree, they must apply to the District Court to change the record of sex descriptor under proposed new section 32E, supplied on Saturday night. Similar provisions relating to Australian or internationally born persons who were not born in New South Wales to change their sex descriptor are included in new division 4 that was supplied on Saturday night.

The proposal has raised significant community concern because the practical effect is that persons with the sex of a man who identify as a woman may, without any surgical change to their bodies, legally become a woman on their birth certificate and are likely to have, therefore, greater access to female-only spaces, such as swimming pool change rooms and showers, and to play female sport, attend female refuges and female prisons and so on, in a manner that they currently do not have the legal right to do. If a trans woman has a female birth certificate under the proposed new provisions and has undergone no medical hormone treatment or surgical process, then it will become difficult, and perhaps in breach of part 3A of the Anti-Discrimination Act, to treat them as anything other than female. Legalities aside, it would be very difficult from a practical point of view to contradict a birth certificate that states that a person is a woman, which could create significant issues for single-sex schools, including boarding schools, and women's refuges. There are overseas and interstate examples where it has created major problems and risks in female prisons.

I was joined in a press conference today by an extraordinarily broad alliance of members of the community who are concerned about these issues. With all the trouble in the world today, many of the representatives of the Muslim faith, the Jewish faith, the Christian faiths, Hindus and Buddhists are concerned. Multicultural leaders are concerned. With us were representatives of lesbian groups who are concerned, including one who is a member of the Labor Party, considers herself extremely left-wing and opposes the changes. In an Orwellian twist, proposed new section 32H, which we were supplied on Saturday evening, states that any change to the sex record under that part means a person is legally of the sex that has been changed. However, a note to the section which is of no legal effect states:

Nothing in this part changes access to toilets, change rooms, sport or allocation in correctional facilities, women's refuges or any other place.

Section 35 of the New South Wales Interpretation Act specifically states that notations like that one shall not be taken to be part of the Act. Not only do the operative provisions provide to the contrary of the notation, but, interestingly, the notation does not mention specifically schools or marriage ceremonies, which are two concerns about the practical implications. One practical concern that has been raised is the impact of the bill upon religious freedom. One concern is how will churches know that they are not marrying two people who are regarded by their religion as men when, contrary to their faith, one appears as a woman, has a changed their birth certificate to state that they are a woman, but physically is a man. Indeed, it has been suggested that the marriage itself could be invalid because the civil marriage's validity depends upon a proper religious marriage. Similar considerations may apply to single-sex private religious schools.

Under Mr Greenwich's document, which was provided on Saturday night, and contrary to press statements made by him, parental consent is not required under the proposed new section 32C for minors to apply to the District Court for changes to their record of sex descriptor. They may be excluded from the decision-making process and, indeed, knowledge of the application. As a birth certificate is a person's primary identity document, there are also concerns about the manner in which the bill specifies that any changes must not indicate on a person's record any alteration to a person's sex, sex descriptor or person's name under sections 32F (5) and 32G (5), supplied to us on Saturday night. That effectively means that a new identity is created. The possible implications for law enforcement and fraud require consideration and investigation. Section 32F (5) (b) and section 32G (5) (b) do not appear to match the changes made to the original bill. This was adverted to in the New South Wales Government's submission to the parliamentary inquiry on the proposed changes. The Government submission relevantly stated:

The NSW Government has identified a number of areas in which the proposed amendments to the BDMR Act do not align with other provisions of the BDMR Act, pose operational issues or may allow for exploitation of the birth registration system.

The submission also stated that the absence of a procedure for the applicant to request a copy of a birth certificate that shows a person's previous registered sex is inconsistent with section 32F of the Act, which allows the child of a person whose sex has been altered or a person prescribed in the regulation to apply to the registrar for a birth certificate that shows the person's sex before the record was altered. I note another strange aspect of the 79 amendments that we were supplied with on the weekend. The narrative of the Premier is that he supports the bill because people's names should not be different on different identity documents. The Premier conflated, as I have already said, a birth certificate, which states a person's sex, with a passport, which states a person's gender. But the "different name" justification seems to have been undercut by the 79 amendments delivered to us on the weekend.

Originally, new part 5A of the bill allowed for a process of change of sex to also include a change of name at the same time. But part of the 79 amendments was to take out the possibility of a name change as part of the same process as a sex descriptor record change. That means that a person changing their sex record will have to go through a different process under part 5 of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act to change their name. The Premier told the public that it is all about keeping consistency of names and that people should not have to have surgery to change their names, but he actually took out the process for someone to change their name at the same time they want to change their sex descriptor—as originally provided for in the bill. When the parliamentary committee surveyed the public with regard to the changes in the bill, 13,258 people responded and over 80 per cent of respondents opposed them. The changes in the 79 amendments to the bill are unlikely to change that result.

Other curiosities suggest that these provisions had not been drafted by the member for Sydney with care. For example, under proposed new section 32B, supplied on Saturday night, a person over the age of 18 needs to sign a statutory declaration in support of a sex change. Under proposed new section 32D (2) (b), a person under the age of 18, with their parents' or guardians' support, must sign a statutory declaration if they want to identify as another sex. But, under proposed new section 32C, if a person under the age of 18 makes an application without their parents' consent, there is no statutory declaration required at all. Why would that be different if it was not the product of a rushed, ill-considered process that has produced the documents that we were supplied with on Saturday night? There is an absence of any formality in the situation when the person is most vulnerable—that is, when they are making an application without any support from their parents or guardians and are under the age of 18. That is the only situation without a statutory declaration. It does not make sense.

I now move to surrogacy. Currently it is an offence under section 8 of the Surrogacy Act 2010 to enter into a commercial surrogacy arrangement, punishable by a \$110,000 fine or two years imprisonment or both. According to the Australian Government website relating to surrogacy overseas and surrogacy in Australia, entering into an international commercial surrogacy arrangement in New South Wales is illegal and carries risks for the surrogate mother, the commissioning parents and the child. The 2018 statutory review of the Surrogacy Act 2010 did not recommend any of the changes contained within the bill proposed by the member for Sydney. The Department of Communities and Justice is currently undertaking a review of the Surrogacy Act 2010 and consulting stakeholders.

Any changes to the Surrogacy Act should sensibly await the outcome of that review and should not be a piecemeal exercise of the kind proposed by the member for Sydney in his proposed further amended bill as supplied on Saturday evening—and that is before I have even had a chance to look at the further changes. The New South Wales Government submission to the parliamentary inquiry agreed that the review process that the Department of Communities and Justice was undertaking may be the most appropriate avenue to consider amendments to the Surrogacy Act because of what it said was the complexity of the policy and operational landscape. That was the Government's own submission.

Schedule 12 to the bill as supplied to us on Saturday evening contains the proposed changes to the Surrogacy Act. In his second reading speech the member for Sydney identified that there are mixed views on commercial surrogacy. The bill proposes to remove the geographical nexus for offences and to allow for easier parenting orders but, somewhat curiously, the change to the bill amending section 26 (3) in division 4 of the current Act would allow for parenting orders with regard to people over the age of 18. Parenting orders are only made with regard to minors, not adults. Section 4 of the Surrogacy Act defines a parenting order as "an order made by the court under this Act for the transfer of the parentage of a child." So the member for Sydney wants to make parenting orders for adults when the Act actually says they only apply to children under the age of 18. In his second reading speech the member for Sydney said that the changes are to facilitate adult children being recognised for legal purposes like wills and powers of attorney. But he cannot do that through parenting orders,

which are allowed in the Act only for minors. This is another example of a rushed provision that does not make legal sense.

The proposed changes represent a major policy change in our approach to commercial surrogacy. The NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner has raised concerns about this proposal. In response to concerns raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner, the member for Sydney has suggested in the media that going forward there will be limits to prescribed jurisdictions "where commercial surrogacy is well regulated and the rights of the surrogate protected". One assumes he is talking about North American jurisdictions, but that statement is not reflected in the amendments that were served to the Opposition on Saturday evening. There seems to be an acknowledgement by the member for Sydney about the issue of slavery, but nothing was done about it in the document that was supplied to the Opposition on Saturday evening.

Before I conclude, I deal with the heavily changed amendment sheet that was provided at 12 o'clock today. That document has a completely new amendment No. 1. It has a completely new amendment No. 3, which relates to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act changes. Unless I read them into the *Hansard* on the run with reference to the bill, it is impossible for me to actually say what those changes are. So I will read the proposed amendments on sheet c2024-115V, which I assume is now the most recent version of proposed amendments to the member for Sydney's bill.

Amendment No. 10 contains changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act. Amendment No. 11 makes further changes to the proposed amendments to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act. These are all changes from the version of amendments we were supplied with on Saturday evening. Amendment No. 12 makes further changes to the amendments to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act. It is impossible for me, as the shadow Attorney General, to address those changes on the run. Amendment No. 25 makes new additions to the amendments to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act that were supplied on Saturday evening. Amendment No. 26 provides further changes to the amendments to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act that were supplied on Saturday evening.

Amendment No. 30 makes further changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act amendments that were supplied to the Opposition on Saturday evening. Amendment No. 34 makes further new additions to the amendments that were supplied on Saturday evening with regard to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act. Amendment No. 41 provides further changes to the amendments that were supplied on Saturday evening with regard to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act. Amendment No. 43 provides for a wholly amended division 5A of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act in respect of proposed new sections 32GA to 32GG. Amendment No. 44 has further changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act than those that were supplied on Saturday evening.

Amendment No. 45 has further changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act than those that were supplied to the Opposition on Saturday evening. Amendment No. 46 has further changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act amendments that were supplied on Saturday evening. I am sorry for the tedium, but it is important for the House to understand the changes to the amendments. Amendments Nos 47, 48 and 49 make further changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act amendments that were supplied on Saturday evening—and that is not all. Amendment No. 51 makes new changes to the Children's Guardian Act amendments. Amendment No. 53 makes new changes to the Crimes Act amendments that were supplied on Saturday evening.

Amendment No. 55 makes substantial changes to the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act. These are important provisions with regard to apprehended domestic violence, which members of this House saw for the first time at 12.15 p.m. today. The arrogance of the Minns Government to introduce the bill in these circumstances is absolutely incredible. I am not going to get personal, but it is important to acknowledge that the Minns Government has allowed the bill to be introduced. New amendment No. 57 makes changes to the Government Sector Employment (General) Rules. Amendment No. 58 makes new changes to the Interpretation Act beyond those amendments that were supplied on Saturday evening. Amendment No. 59 has new changes to those that were given on Saturday night with regard to the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act.

Amendment No. 61 makes changes to the Summary Offences Act that I have spoken about. That amendment would appear to repeal the criminalisation of living off the earnings of prostitution. Someone has twigged that what I said about coercion was absolutely spot-on. Proposed new section 15A has now been changed from the version we were given on Saturday evening and will not be repealed. I suppose that is good news for the people of New South Wales, particularly for vulnerable men, women and trans people in New South Wales. Amendment No. 62 makes substantial further changes to commercial surrogacy compared with the version that was supplied to us on Saturday evening. When I say "substantial", I am talking about the number of words and the number of provisions. Some of the other changes I have identified might be only to a section or to some words,

but they may have profound implications that we are not in a position to address given the way that these changes have come forward.

Amendment No. 62 makes further changes to the Surrogacy Act than those that were provided to the Opposition on Saturday evening. Amendment No. 64 makes further changes to the Surrogacy Act than those that were supplied to the Opposition on Saturday evening. Amendment No. 65 makes further changes to the Workers Compensation Act than those that were supplied on Saturday evening. Again, amendment No. 66 seems to change another provision with regard to the Workers Compensation Act from the version that was supplied on Saturday evening. I seek leave to table a quickly prepared document that demonstrates in red the matters that have been omitted from the version of amendments on sheet c2024-115G that were provided on Saturday evening, as well as the version of amendments on sheet c2024-115V that were only made available at 12.15 p.m. today.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): Standing Order 271 allows a member to seek leave to incorporate materials in *Hansard* in circumstances where that material cannot be readily explained or put on record.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I could take five hours and I have an unlimited amount of time. I do not need to incorporate, but I would prefer to seek leave to do so. I would like it to be in *Hansard* if that is possible.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): As far as I am aware, that is totally appropriate.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I seek leave to incorporate the document in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

[*The material to be incorporated was tabled and ordered to be printed by the Speaker on 17 October 2024.*]

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I will just explain again. The matters marked in red—

Mr David Mehan: *Hansard* can't wait.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: In the circumstances of the behaviour that has gone on, I do not think that is appropriate. The matters in red are omissions from the version supplied on Saturday evening. The matters in blue are new additions that have come in the version that was made available today, after 12.15, and those in green are provisions that were in the version that was provided on Saturday night but in a different position. So there are three different colours identifying three different things.

I must indicate I did not prepare this document. I have not had a chance to check its accuracy, but others have done so and I assume that it is accurate. I think it is important that it go on the parliamentary record. If there are any corrections, our colleagues in the upper House will have the opportunity to correct them. The upper House has been told this matter will be dealt with tomorrow morning. I think it will be impossible to go through line by line and double-check everything today, as I would ordinarily do as a diligent shadow Attorney General. If there are any corrections to be made, they can be made in the other place.

After the original bill lay dormant for 14 months, all of the amendments are now being moved through Parliament with inadequate notice and in an extremely rushed fashion. Last night I was troubled because the version we were supplied with on Saturday night was not yet up on the parliamentary website and had not been tabled. Even the document we were supplied with on Saturday night was not a publicly available document. It certainly had been drafted by Parliamentary Counsel, so it had a degree of verisimilitude, and it was supplied by the member for Sydney, who told us that it would be his version of changes. But it concerned me that it was not available to be seen by members of the public, and so they could not converse about it with their elected representatives.

I already have said that I consider this process disrespectful. When social policy is changed, there should be proper transparency. That is in the best interests of the public, as well as the people who are making the changes, so that the public can be confident that a proper process has taken place. That gives the provisions authenticity and authority. But when the processes have been perverted, as they have been in this case, it is important to draw attention to those matters because they have real impacts on the way that parliamentarians assess legislation and make laws. From what we have seen, the bill does not get right the balance of the issues I have raised. Accordingly, the Opposition, which at all times has been acting on the basis of the amendments supplied on Saturday evening, will oppose this bill.

I conclude by thanking the many people who have contacted Opposition members of Parliament to give their views on the bill. I think I am correct in saying that the overwhelming majority have expressed concerns about this omnibus bill, and I hope that my speech has shed some light on why they would have some concerns about it. I specifically call out some of the people who have met with me in my capacity as shadow Attorney General. This is by no means an exhaustive list.

I acknowledge and thank Melissa Skalski from the Australian Collective Rights group; Virginia Mansel Lees and Bronwyn Winter from the Coalition of Activist Lesbians; and Michael David and others from the LGB Alliance. I thank the many religious leaders who spoke to us: Sheikh Shadi Alsuleiman; Bishop Michael Stead; Surinder Jain, who is involved in the Hindu Council and is one of the co-presidents of Better Balanced Futures; and Darren Bark from the Jewish community, who is the other co-president of Better Balanced Futures. As I have said already, Muslims, Jews, Christians, Buddhists and Hindus are all united against this legislation.

I acknowledge that a number of other people came on short notice and attended a press conference I held today, some of whom expressed their concerns about the bill. They included my colleague the Hon. Susan Carter from the other place and Bronwyn Winter from Australian Feminists for Women's Rights. Bronwyn was a lesbian Labor Party member from the left faction who said that she had been unable to get any engagement from the party about her concerns with the bill. Also in attendance were Viviane Morrigan from the Coalition of Activist Lesbians; Monica Doumit, who is the director of public affairs and engagement at the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney; Surinder Jain, whom I already mentioned; Bishop Michael Stead; Reverend Emma Little from the Anglican church; and Reverend Kamal Weerakoon from the Presbyterian church. Murray Norman, the CEO of Better Balanced Futures, and Vanessa Cheng, the executive officer of the Australian Association of Christian Schools, also were in attendance. At that press conference, some attendees had the opportunity to present their concerns about the bill.

I hope that we can have a respectful debate. I was very troubled by the personal attacks against me by the member for Sydney. This is not personal. I am representing the concerns of the community. It should not be the case that if I have policy differences with another member, they personally attack me. Members of the public expect better than that from members of Parliament. I have been able to draw together a troubling chronology that I believe represents a lack of respect for the Opposition. That is not a personal attack; that is a reflection on the process, the way in which this matter has been progressed and the promises that were made to the Opposition about receiving the amendments with plenty of time. I have said everything that I can say at this point in time. I reiterate that the Opposition will be opposing this bill.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (14:30): I speak in support of the amendments to the historic Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023. The member for Wahroonga has a very, very short memory. As a co-sponsor of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021, I remember that the member opposite dropped 60 amendments on the lap of the member for Sydney and the co-sponsors just moments before debate on the bill began. I thought I would mention that. The member has obviously forgotten. A bit of convenient amnesia—what hypocrisy!

I turn now to the amendments in the bill. Newcastle has a longstanding history as a progressive and inclusive city that continues to drive for greater support for our LGBTIQA+ community. The 2017 legal marriage plebiscite indicated Newcastle's overwhelming support for the LGBTIQA+ community, with 74 per cent of Novocastrians voting in support of legalising same-sex marriage. In the recent local government elections, in a monumental moment for Newcastle, we elected Labor Ward 2 councillor Paige Johnson, the first openly transgender woman elected to public office in New South Wales, further affirming Newcastle's stance as an inclusive city for the LGBTIQA+ community. As the vice president of the Hunter Gender Alliance, Paige has been steadfast in advocating for the rights of trans and gender-diverse people in the Hunter region and is committed to continuing her advocacy work in this space.

I acknowledge the contribution of Hunter Rainbow Labor and, in particular, Paige Johnson, Declan Clausen and Steven Moore for their contribution to the consultation on these amendments. The growing voices of LGBTIQA+ advocacy groups within the Hunter in recent years emphasise the need for greater recognition and legislative change, including the amendments proposed today. ACON Hunter is a leading health organisation specialising in community health, inclusion and HIV responses for people of diverse sexualities and genders. It recognises that members of Australia's sexuality and gender-diverse communities experience health disparities when compared with the health and wellbeing outcomes of the total population. ACON Hunter works tirelessly to reduce the stigma around LGBTIQA+ health.

The amendments update the terminology in the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act to replace terms such as "HIV infection" and "suffering with AIDS" to "living with HIV/AIDS". This change will significantly help organisations such as ACON to provide support and services to our local community and those across New South Wales. Another organisation making great strides in this space is the Hunter Gender Alliance, which works to improve the health, rights and lives of transgender, gender-diverse and non-binary people within our region. Both ACON and the Hunter Gender Alliance have been steadfast in championing more inclusive laws.

The Government supports the hard work of those organisations. The Government supports amendments to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act to enable a person to change the record of their sex on their birth certificate without the need to have surgery, and to the Mental Health Act to prove that a person is not

mentally ill or mentally disorientated. It is a fitting time to make these amendments. This month in Newcastle there are many events taking place to celebrate our LGBTIQ+ community, including the Newcastle Pride Festival—which runs from 11 October to 27 October. Last weekend we had the Pride Parade, and it was great to see such a large turnout. The Pride Fair takes place this Saturday. I am very proud to open that event, which is attended by more than 5,000 people each year. These events highlight Newcastle's support for our community.

I acknowledge the large contribution of Hunter Gender Alliance and the team's advocacy and hard work on this issue. I know they have been consulting with the member for Sydney on this bill. I acknowledge the president, Arden Cassie, who is in the public gallery to witness this historic event. I acknowledge the vice-president, Paige Johnson, and the secretary, Jo Mills. Another historic political figure who I know would be very proud today is the late member of the Legislative Council the Hon. Paul O'Grady, who was the first openly gay member of the New South Wales Parliament and a dear friend to me and many others.

The growing support for LGBTIQ+ organisations in Newcastle, in addition to Paige's overwhelming Ward 2 results, emphasise Newcastle's impetus for greater policy support and inclusivity. I bring to the attention of the House correspondence I received from Dr Peter Stuart, the Anglican Bishop of Newcastle. He wrote:

I am writing to you as the Anglican Bishop of Newcastle in strong support of the Bill introduced by Alex Greenwich MP to reduce discrimination of LGBT people and others in our community.

You may have heard from people who hold conservative religious views, but you will also recognise that there is a wide diversity of views among religious leaders and the faithful.

You can be confident in your decision-making that you will receive strong support for the proposed measures people who attend churches and other faith communities.

My Diocese, some years ago, formally adopted an apology to LGBT citizens. We recognised that, with others, we have contributed to discrimination against LGBT people. More recently, Equality Australia identified over 500 laws in NSW perpetuating discrimination.

In March 2022, I was privileged to join with over 150 religious leaders from 30 countries and a range of faiths in a meeting at the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to agree a set of Six Safeguarding Principles to protect LGBT+ people from harm ... Alex Greenwich's Bill is consistent with those principles.

In nearly 35 years of ministry and 61 years of life I have been privileged to hear directly the experience of LGBT people. Their life stories have changed me. They have been diminished by institutionalised discrimination which has provided licence to others to act abusively.

To name just one example, I have been moved by the experience of transgender people who have grown up with others assuming one identity for them, based on the sex assigned at birth, who then discover a way to be fully themselves. They name the impact of being limited from changing their birth certificate unless they undergo invasive surgery.

I commend the bill for your support in the current sitting of the Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

Peter.

We are here today to ensure that the principles of empowerment, prevention, proportionality, protection, partnership and accountability are implemented into our legal framework to safeguard the lives of LGBTIQ+ people. It is our responsibility as a government to ensure that our laws support all of our community. It is for that reason that I support the bill as it will be amended today.

The private member's bill will amend 10 Acts, including the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995, the Surrogacy Act 2010, the guiding principles of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and the Children's Guardian Act 2019, the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 and the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999. The bill will amend the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985, the Workers Compensation Act 1987 and the Mental Health Act 2007. The bill will also amend the Summary Offences Act 1988 to remove an outdated offence. As the member for Newcastle I am very proud to be in this Chamber in support of the LGBTIQ+ community and speak in favour of the amendments in this most historic bill.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Kellyville) (14:40): I contribute to debate on the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQ+) Bill 2023. My contribution is certainly not based on any unequal observations that I may have of people, because I was raised by a family who instilled in me the principles of respect for everybody regardless of their race, religion, gender or the colour of their skin. It is the same way I raised my children, and hopefully it will be the way my grandchildren are raised. But the bill has certain aspects I have trouble accepting, and I join Opposition members in opposing it.

The shadow Attorney General, the member for Wahroonga, has outlined specifically the concerns that the Opposition has, not least of which is the fact that the majority of the amendments, which I have not seen, were presented to the Opposition after 12 o'clock today. That followed the notification to the Opposition at

9.30 a.m. that debate on this bill would proceed in the Chamber today, which I say would have upset many members of this House. That is certainly not the way that this Chamber and this Parliament have worked in the past. It is not the best way for democracy to be seen to be undertaken by the New South Wales Parliament.

I have an issue with one particular aspect of the bill. After the passage of this legislation, a person born with male genitalia will be able to merely request that the name on their birth certificate be changed from a male name to a female name and then assume to be identified as a female. They will then have full access to private women's areas, including private women's toilets, children's toilets, girls' toilets, private women's spas and private women's saunas. I have great difficulty accepting any aspect of legislation that opens the door to a threat against the safety and protection of women within those spaces.

To suggest that nobody would take the opportunity to change their name to give them access to those particular areas is like saying we will never have another murder or rape in this State. I am not in any way joining those two concepts together, but I am saying that there are people who will exploit this loophole. It is because of that loophole that I have great fear for the safety and protection not only of members of my family but also the women of New South Wales, who make up half the State's population. I find that aspect of this legislation absolutely repulsive. I imagine that every decent family member of New South Wales would equally find it disturbing that a man, assuming the name of a woman on their birth certificate, could access those private women's areas—and that not only would this legislation, if passed, not punish that person but it would also protect them. I have a severe problem accepting that. It is for that reason that I will be opposing the bill.

I conclude by saying that one person who was such an ardent opponent of any infringement of women's areas, like women's toilets et cetera, was my favourite Premier, Gladys Berejiklian. Whenever such an infringement of a private women's area was proposed, she stood opposed to it. She did so on behalf of herself as a lady and on behalf of the women, the young ladies and the girls of New South Wales. I stand by that principle today and am in complete opposition to this bill because of the aspect I have outlined.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (14:45): I proudly speak in support of the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023, brought forward by the member for Sydney. It is a huge testament to his tireless advocacy and steadfast commitment. Before I speak on the bill, I respond to the contribution to this debate by the member for Kellyville. He has come into this Chamber staunchly defending women's spaces and spreading misinformation about this bill. I do not remember a time I have ever had to produce my birth certificate to walk into a toilet, let alone go into the ladies' baths or any actual women's space. But when upgrades to the Parliament were being presented to this House that included women's bathrooms, the member for Kellyville opposed them on the pretext that, by upgrading those bathrooms, women would take too long and they would not get to their divisions. Let us make sure that is on the record for this lovely, great, brave man who has come in here to defend women's rights. And we are still waiting for our bathroom upgrades!

The huge amount of misinformation spread about this bill is absolutely disturbing. That misinformation is harmful and does nothing at all to help bring about equity, equality and the advancement of human rights. Those qualities are at the core of this bill, which is why the Government supports it. I make it very clear: This bill has sat with the Parliament for 12 months. It has been to a committee. It is not some eleventh-hour surprise. I believe the member for Sydney when he says that he has presented Opposition members with bill after bill, with amendments, and they have failed to engage with him. It is the Opposition that has not engaged in good faith negotiations over this, not the member for Sydney and not the Government. No-one can say that this bill has been rushed. At its core, this bill is about ensuring the rights and dignity of the LGBTIQA+ community. It is that simple. There is nothing dangerous about it and there is nothing to be afraid of in it. The bill recognises that everyone, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation, deserves the same protections, opportunities and respect under the law. That is it. There is nothing to be afraid of.

When we safeguard the rights of LGBTIQA+ people, we are affirming their humanity and challenging discrimination, ensuring that they can live authentically and safely. That commitment to equality extends beyond legal recognition. It encompasses social acceptance and the fights against their stigmas. Ultimately, it is my hope that everyone in this Chamber wants to build a society where every person is valued, respected and free from prejudice. I acknowledge the member for North Shore and her bravery, and I call on other members from the Opposition to be brave as well and stand up for their communities.

The bill seeks to amend 10 Acts to bring New South Wales into alignment with other jurisdictions across Australia, and it addresses a range of issues that impact the LGBTIQA+ community and their families. Under the bill, individuals will be able to change the record of their sex on their birth certificate without the requirement of surgery. For young people under 18, that process will involve parental consent. The amendment recognises that gender identity is a deeply personal matter and should not be subjected to invasive medical requirements. That is it. Again, I bring this note with the other things. I do not remember the last time I have had to produce any identification ever, whether it be my birth certificate, driver licence or passport, to walk into a toilet. The

misinformation being spread about this bill is dangerous and harmful, and it does nothing at all to advance the rights of the LGBTQI+ community.

The bill also addresses the legal recognition of children born through international commercial surrogacy. Commercial surrogacy is a divisive and complex topic, but children who come to Australia through that have no choice around that. It is really important that we provide a pathway for those children to be legally acknowledged as part of their families in New South Wales. That is it. It is about protecting those kids and making sure that they can then have the same rights as every other child in this country. It is a practical and compassionate change designed to give legal certainty to families. There is nothing to be afraid of.

The bill also takes important steps to enhance the legal protections available to the LGBTIQ+ people, particularly in relation to hate-motivated violence. Amendments to the Crimes Act will make it clear that prejudice or hate based on gender identity or variations in sex characteristics are aggravating factors in criminal cases. That sends a very powerful message that hate and discrimination have no place in New South Wales, and that the law will respond decisively to protect vulnerable groups. Additional changes include updating the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act and the Workers Compensation Act to remove outdated references to "HIV infection", and that aligns our language with contemporary medical understandings. It also amends the Mental Health Act to clarify that a person's gender identity or expression is not identified as a mental disorder, which was disproven a long time ago. They are commonsense changes that bring our laws into the twenty-first century and reflect modern attitudes towards health and identity.

The bill will also repeal provisions in the Summary Offences Act that criminalise individuals who have lived on the earnings of sex work, again addressing outdated laws that perpetuate stigma and do not reflect the values of this State. By supporting the bill, we are not just amending laws; we are sending a very clear message as a State that we are committed to inclusion, equality and the protection of human rights. The journey towards true equality is ongoing; this bill is an important step in that process. I commend the bill to House.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (14:54): I contribute to debate on the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQ+) Bill 2023 in strong opposition. Women's rights, safety and dignity are being eroded where this law exists in other jurisdictions. Grave concerns and fears have emerged from the real-life impact this law is having on the lives of women and children. Members in this House can be informed beforehand of the damage and harm this law is causing, and by voting against this bill we can go a long way to preventing that damage and harm from escalating in New South Wales.

In relation to sex self-ID, let us be clear that under existing policies and regulations, men who identify as women are already accessing women's spaces and places, whether they be in female-only jails, in women's sport or in women-only places. Enshrining sex self-ID into law will only exacerbate that reality. In this bill, gender and sex are conflated so that on birth certificates a person born one sex can become legally another sex descriptor of a man, woman or any other sex descriptor, through an administrative process only, without any physical bodily changes.

The bill is not only bad but also dangerous. If passed, it will only accelerate the erasure of the rights, safety and protections of women and girls in our State. The rights of women and girls to female-only spaces and services no longer exist when biological males can intrude. That is an irreconcilable collision of rights. It is unconscionable that women are being expected to sacrifice those rights in deference to the self-perceptions and preferences of biological males who seek to live as or identify as women. In order for women to live with dignity and safety, they must have privacy from men in spaces where they are vulnerable, like toilets and change rooms, and in places they cannot leave, like prisons, hospital wards, rape crisis centres, domestic violence refuges and homeless shelters.

There are myriad examples of men exploiting the opportunities created by sex self-ID laws and policies to access female-only spaces, services and sports. For example, in Victoria, a biological male rapist who self-identifies as a woman is being housed in the female Dame Phyllis Frost correctional centre. In Victoria's Tarrengower women's prison an alleged sexual assault has already taken place by a male prisoner against a female inmate. In schools there are increasing complaints arising from parents whose daughters have been forced to share female-only sporting events and bathrooms with boys. Girls are self-excluding or being withdrawn by their parents from female-only educational, social and sporting opportunities when a boy is present.

In Canada, the USA and the United Kingdom there are multiple cases where self-identifying transgender male prisoners were housed in female prisons only to sexually assault and rape female inmates. Indeed, male offenders self-identifying as women to gain access to a women's prison has become so commonplace internationally that the term "prison onset gender dysphoria" has been coined to refer to it. In Canada, sexual predators have gained entry into female refuges, and in the United Kingdom a trans-identifying male patient raped

a female patient in a single-sex female hospital ward. There are numerous examples of males self-identifying into female sports and taking places and awards from women and girls in our country and beyond.

Robert Wintemute, a professor of human rights law at King's College in London and an expert on anti-discrimination law and sexual orientation law, was one of the co-authors of *The Yogyakarta Principles* in 2006, which was a key document utilised by the trans lobby to convince governments, including in Australia, of the necessity of adopting through legislative means policies like self-identification. Wintemute now disavows the document and has said that women's rights were not considered during the meeting where the principles were written. He said that he and the other authors had failed to consider that fully intact males would seek to access female spaces. Furthermore, Ireland's independent Senator Gerard Craughwell, who has served as a senator for the Labour Panel since 2016, stated in August last year that he was horrified by the long-term effects and unintended consequences caused by the gender recognition bill he voted for.

Scotland shows that half of transgender inmates only began transitioning after they were convicted, giving rise to concerns that the system is being abused. Some of those male offenders adopt a trans identity while incarcerated and revert to their male identity upon serving their sentences, giving credence to the argument that opportunistic men will claim a female identity for the purpose of being transferred to a female prison to access women and girls. Police in Scotland have confirmed that male rapists will now not be allowed to self-identify as women. But that is not enough. Males should never be allowed to portray themselves as women and take our safe places, spaces and opportunities.

Supporters of the bill will label me as a scaremonger and a transphobic, but I am neither. I am presenting real-life cases of assault, abuse, rape and trauma. There is already a large number of cases in Australian and in New South Wales where men have abused self-identification policies to gain access to women's spaces, leading to incidents of voyeurism, assault and harassment. It is entirely reasonable to expect that cases like those will increase following the passage of the bill. An anonymous Queensland autogynephile—that is a non-homosexual male to female transexual—made a submission to the Queensland parliamentary inquiry on the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Bill 2022. His submission stated:

In fact, I do not need the wig or the dress. It seems that simply calling myself a woman or a lesbian is now enough. I can even have a beard.

Because self-ID has been "best practice" since 2013 in Australia, at least at the Federal level, I could already use many female-only spaces in Queensland with a considerable amount of freedom if I wanted to.

...

This bill will remove that last line of defence ... From then on, as far as I can tell, it will be legally impossible to remove me from women's toilets, changing rooms, lesbian bars and dating apps, domestic violence shelters and so on. After all, I will be legally female and therefore deserve to be there.

The sex self-ID law has created a chilling effect where women, and men, are now afraid or unwilling to challenge men in female-only spaces and services. They are afraid to speak publicly. Those who object face being fired, sanctioned, vilified, litigated against or criminally charged. This has already happened in New South Wales and Australia. This places women-only spaces such as change rooms, refuges and toilets at risk—forcing girls and women to share those spaces with men who identify as women.

There are many circumstances where biological sex matters—including for employment, services and entitlements—and where the subjective self-perception of gender identity must not be allowed to override the reality of biological sex. Even more importantly, deference to the subjective self-perception of an individual must not override the dignity and safety of other groups and individuals, particularly those most vulnerable—typically women, girls and children. No member of a just society should be able to unilaterally change their official identity documents based on a subjective perception. Laws that allow a person to change sex on driver licences, passports, Medicare cards et cetera are rightly controversial since these essentially reflect a legal fiction. The fact that these questionable allowances have been made does not justify further concessions.

My final contribution is in relation to the proposed changes to surrogacy. Simply saying that commercial overseas surrogacy is already happening so we need to legalise it is not an argument that we accept for what is already an illegal activity in Australia. It ignores the reasons for prohibiting commercial surrogacy in the first place, which, according to the Federal Parliament, is because "even with the best of regulatory intentions, there is still significant potential for the exploitation of surrogates and children to occur". This is even more so the case when renting the wombs of disadvantaged women from poor overseas countries. If the current laws banning overseas commercial surrogacy in New South Wales were actually followed and enforced, there would be no children left vulnerable as no children would have been created and purchased in breach of the law.

This modern-day form of human trafficking is condemned globally by women's, children's and human rights defenders as an affront to the human rights and dignity of women and children. The recent scandal

concerning a leading surrogacy clinic in Greece—from which numerous Australians have commissioned babies, and which was raided over allegations of human trafficking and fraud—provides a tragic and timely reminder of this. I reject the bill in its entirety. I call on this House to join me in rejecting the bill and protecting the rights, places, spaces and opportunities of women and girls in this State.

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (15:04): I speak to the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQIA+) Bill 2023. I acknowledge the previous speakers and thank them for their contributions to the debate. This Saturday the Pride Picnic will be held in Parramatta Park—a new location; it is usually held along the Parramatta River. This annual event is a fixture on the Western Sydney events calendar, providing members of our community from Campbelltown to Castle Hill, Wentworth Point to Wentworth Falls with an opportunity to come together and access local services, and interact and celebrate with our LGBTIQIA+ community. When speaking about the Parramatta Pride Picnic, then coordinator of the partnerships engagement unit at ACON, Gavin Prendergast, highlighted, "Western Sydney is a massive area but many LGBTIQIA+ people are not connected into a gay network". He said that this is why, "The Pride Picnic gives people an opportunity to be out in the open in a safe space and an opportunity to start a connection."

It has not always been that way. At Parramatta's 2013's Rediscover the River Festival, LGBTI youth counselling service Twenty10 was allegedly asked by a council officer to take down a banner that was deemed to contain offensive language. The banner, which advertised Twenty10's presence and purpose, read, "Support services for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, same sex attracted and gender diverse young people, their families and communities." Because of the incident, Twenty10 made the decision to abandon its presence at the festival. More than 12,000 people signed a petition, and a private letter of apology from the Lord Mayor of the day was received by Twenty10.

Ten years later, it is not just the city skyline of Parramatta that has changed dramatically. The population of Parramatta has grown by another 50,000 to exceed one-quarter of a million people. This growth reflects an incredibly rich diversity of age, ethnicity, faith, language, socio-economic status and gender. As a city grows, it also matures. So in February 2023 Parramatta proudly joined in the world's largest celebration of pride and diversity when New South Wales welcomed WorldPride to Australia. I was proud to be the Lord Mayor of City of Parramatta at that time. From our fabulous rainbow stairs in Parramatta Square, PHIVE's sparkling roof and performances at the Riverside Theatres, Parramatta was a kaleidoscope of colour. Parramatta is one of Australia's most diverse and inclusive communities, and I am proud of who we are. Our annual Pride Picnic and the international WorldPride event were some of the opportunities we had to amplify the unique and valued voices of people from our wonderful LGBTIQIA+ communities.

Everyone's story matters and everyone should have opportunities to share stories and celebrate them. Everyone's rights matter. That is why the bill is important. I acknowledge the varied views of people in my community who may find the bill challenging to accept in its original form, and even with amendments. Bills that touch on social issues to this extent will attract varied views. Some people may feel consternation, anger, hurt and frustration. They may feel like their views have been ignored. Those members of my community who have contacted me over the past year should know that their concerns have been heard and will continue to be heard. One of the challenges of governing is balancing the views and concerns of all sides and making decisions that are considered to be in the best interests of the broader community. We do not always expect to agree, but we do hope that we can continue to have mature and considered conversations about these issues.

The Australian Government Attorney-General's Department outlines that equality affirms that all human beings are born free and equal. Equality presupposes that all individuals have the same rights and deserve the same level of respect. All people have the right to be treated equally. This means that laws, policies and programs should not be discriminatory and also that public authorities should not apply or enforce laws, policies and programs in a discriminatory or arbitrary manner. As a member of Parliament elected to represent my community, I represent the interests of all, including the LGBTIQIA+ community, in all capacities. This also includes advocating for them in the legislative space. As a member of the Minns Labor Government, I believe the bill is important for New South Wales and long overdue. Our Government believes this is a commonsense solution. We believe that the provisions and the amendments negotiated in the bill are commonsense changes to extend the inclusivity of all members of our modern and multifaceted society into New South Wales legislation.

I was a member of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services that undertook an inquiry into the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQIA+) Bill 2023, along with the member for Cessnock, the member for Blue Mountains, the member for South Coast, the member for Myall Lakes, the member for North Shore and the member for Murray. During the inquiry the committee received 66 written submissions and heard from 44 witnesses over two days of public hearings. Polarising views were heard, informed by lived experience or personal belief systems. Ultimately, the deeper nature and importance of the equality bill was

highlighted. In the June 2024 committee report, it was recommended that the Parliament of New South Wales proceed to consider the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023. Finding 1 in the report stated:

There were diverse and conflicting views on the amendments proposed by the Bill and how they would operate.

Finding 2 stated:

There is a need for additional policy measures and funding to improve the safety and wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ people. These may be directed towards addressing issues like disadvantage, discrimination and poor health outcomes experienced by LGBTIQA+ people.

That is how we have arrived at the bill today. How those findings personally relate to people from the community was highlighted in the stories and submissions received in evidence by the committee. Every jurisdiction in the country, except for New South Wales, has a provision for an individual to change government documentation without having to undertake gender-affirming surgery. New South Wales is the last jurisdiction to implement that change. New South Wales residents can apply for Commonwealth documents to be changed, but not State government documents, which is unbelievably ridiculous. It is common sense to align with and mirror these pieces of legislation.

Two submissions were heard in the committee inquiry that I cannot forget. They touch on commercial surrogacy. Mr Ashley Scott, the Executive Officer of Rainbow Families, spoke about ensuring that all children are equal under the law. It was noted that, under current arrangements, surrogates and their partners are recognised as the legal parents of children born through commercial surrogacy. That puts the actual parents and children of surrogates in legal uncertainty, unless they are able to get a parentage order. That deprives children born overseas through commercial surrogacy of security and certainty of parentage.

I understand that there are very significant concerns. Many individuals and institutions do not agree with international commercial surrogacy on principle and on religious grounds, due to considered risks of women being exploited, particularly in poorer countries. However, that does not erase the reality we face as a governing body that there are children living amongst us in New South Wales who exist as a result of surrogacy. That cannot be ignored. Those children attend local childcare centres, schools and universities, and they are not treated equally under the law. During the inquiry Mr Ghassan Kassisieh, the Legal Director of Equality Australia, highlighted that uncertainty about parentage disadvantages the economic and emotional security of children born through commercial surrogacy, and that those children should not be punished for their births. [*Extension of time*]

Earlier today the Premier said that regardless of how we approach the issue of commercial surrogacy, it is not the child's fault, and that if it is in the interests of the child that a parenting order be issued, the courts are in a position to do just that. That is why it is common sense to implement this provision. The bill will amend the Surrogacy Act 2010 to enable parentage orders to be made, in certain circumstances, for children who were born from an international commercial surrogacy agreement and are part of a family in New South Wales. Commercial surrogacy, including international commercial surrogacy, will remain an offence. Interim arrangements will be provided to cover those children who became part of New South Wales families prior to the commencement of the bill.

In 2024 Australia has evolved into a modern and multifaceted society. Historically known as a culturally diverse and inclusive country, this inclusivity must now extend to all facets of society. As society evolves, so must legislation. Transgender people, surrogate children and those who identify other than male or female live amongst us. They are our friends. They are our family. They are our work colleagues. They deserve legislation that reflects full recognition of all members of our society. I acknowledge the bravery of all who have advocated for the bill. I am sure some of those members are in the Chamber today. It takes courage for anyone who feels marginalised in their own State to speak up and speak out for their own rights and the rights of others. It is so easy to turn a blind eye and listen to the loudest, established, powerful voices in a community. It is not as easy to stand up against hate, prejudice and division.

I thank the member for Sydney for introducing the bill to Parliament and for striving to achieve equality for all in New South Wales. The member for Sydney has a powerful voice, and I thank him for that. I also thank the Minns Labor Government for being willing to work with the member for Sydney and other crossbenchers for the betterment of our community as a whole. I also thank the Attorney General for all that he has done in this space. It is not just the Attorney General and the Premier but many other Ministers and members who will show their support for the bill when the time comes to vote. I thank the members of the Government and all in this place who support the bill for being open to recognising the rights of everyone in this State. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (15:18): On behalf of The Greens and on behalf of the good people of the electorate of Newtown, I contribute to debate on the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023. The people of Newtown are one of the most proudly queer and diverse groups of our inner city community. Today The Greens welcome this legislation. It is a significant step forward for the queer community

in New South Wales. This week, subject to the clear passage of the bill through both Houses, The Greens are excited to see that this reform will ensure that trans and gender diverse adults will have the ability to change their sex on their State documents without undergoing surgery, threats to out someone will be classed as coercive control, sex workers will have the ability to legally use proceeds from their work to support others, and crimes motivated by the hatred of trans people will be treated the same way as other crimes. These are truly significant reforms that will have a real impact on people's lives.

On the other hand, I cannot help but feel a sense of deep disappointment and sadness. Before we have even had the chance to begin debating the final version of this bill—and potentially see a massive swarm of support from our allies in the union movement, faith groups, legal, health and human rights organisations and a broad range of communities and activists well beyond the inner city of Sydney pushing for this reform and momentum to hold strong to its true vision as an equality bill—it is being reported that it will be gutted. That is in no way to take away from the incredible reform that will be included in the bill. But it is disappointing and a shame that the New South Wales Labor Government is not in a position to support the equality bill as originally drafted and that we find ourselves in a situation where amendments will be moved such that we can get through the other reforms.

With the numbers in the Chamber, those amendments are not needed to pass the bill. If anyone knows how to do numbers in this place and the other place, it is the member for Sydney. The member for Sydney knows full well that, with the numbers of the Labor Government—and anyone who can count can work this out—we can pass the bill with the Opposition opposing the reforms. The only thing standing in our way of delivering full equality in New South Wales, as per the vision of the member for Sydney, is the inability to get support from the New South Wales Labor Government. It means that the bill, as far as reports are concerned, will not include the provisions of anti-discrimination protections for people who are bisexual, asexual, non-binary, intersex or for sex workers and others.

It will also mean that protections for LGBTIQ+ students and staff in non-government schools will be removed. It will mean that required diversity and inclusion standards for public sector workers will no longer be in the bill. It will mean that the pathway for 16- and 17-year-olds to alter records of sex on State documents will no longer be in the bill, treating them as children, and amending the process for children to require consent of both parents, even if it is not practicable or reasonable to obtain consent of the other parent. It will mean not including an assurance of dignity for trans and gender diverse people during invasive strip searches and not including the removal of unnecessarily gendered and non-inclusive language from old laws. That to me, and to The Greens, is not full equality.

At this point we must ask whether an equality bill is an equality bill if it does not remove all forms of discrimination from our laws. State and Federal governments have consistently failed the LGBTIQ+ community when it comes to law reform. It has always been too slow, and it always has been too incremental with too many sellouts along the way. In fact, only months ago some of the faces in the gallery today—and many more that I know are watching on the live stream—were in this Parliament watching the long-overdue formal apology to those impacted by unjust laws that criminalised homosexual acts. We absolutely welcomed that apology, but to say sorry means that we do not do it again and that we address the wrongs of the past and we do not continue to perpetrate them. An apology needs to come with a commitment to do better and take more action next time.

I expect that a future New South Wales State Government will look back at the current state of our anti-discrimination laws—and, indeed, some of the changes to other laws that will sadly no longer be part of this equality bill—and will issue an apology for the harm caused as a result. It will be an apology for pandering to the homophobes and transphobes—and let us be clear that there has been no shortage of transphobic communications in this Chamber today already. New South Wales still has some of the worst laws for LGBTIQ+ people in the country. The worst of them are explicitly homophobic and transphobic, while others tacitly facilitate discriminatory attitudes within our communities. Neither is acceptable, and it is vital that the New South Wales Parliament passes all the reforms contained in the bill and then looks forward to the next steps to achieving full equality for LGBTIQ+ people.

Queer activists and community members have been organised for change for many decades. Meaningful progress towards queer liberation has never been instigated in this Chamber—and it never will be. Indeed, the changes that we deliver in this place follow longstanding community-built campaigns over decades and decades. Those struggles have occurred on our streets, in our workplaces, in our schools and in our neighbourhoods. Those conversations have happened in living rooms, in kitchens and in coffee shops, challenging how people feel about our society. The Parliament so often does not lead but follows the sentiment and change that people in the gallery and others contribute to.

New South Wales has an incredible history of social movements fighting for queer rights, including boundary-pushing activists in the Campaign Against Moral Persecution in the 1970s; unionists in the NSW Builders Labourers Foundation pursuing the so-called pink bans; and grassroots groups like the Community

Action for Rainbow Rights, formerly CAAH, which did so much of the groundwork around the marriage equality campaign before it became part of the national agenda. That history is very much ongoing. I note that just last Saturday a range of different groups from across the political spectrum joined Pride in Protest for a protest outside this very Chamber.

Earlier I expressed my disappointment that this debate has been brought on in such a way that does not allow us to fill the gallery full of all of the activists and allies who have been a part of the decades-long campaigns for these reforms. They may not have been the people directly connected to the organisations that were consulted but they have absolutely put their blood, sweat and tears into this reform. I have personally campaigned for over two decades with many of the activists and organisations who have pushed for the reforms contained in the bill and for rainbow rights in Sydney. It is only because of their tireless collective work and dedication that we have the political impetus to move now.

In the early 2000s, there was a big boost for the public campaign for marriage equality. Sadly, both major parties, led by the Howard Liberal Government, then moved on to make marriage only between a man and a woman. The member for Sydney and I also met at around that time. We had been campaigning for over two decades together on these reforms. At that time and still two decades later, The Greens have always stood for full equality, no excuses, when it comes to the rights of LGBTIQ+ people in this State and in this country. I am proud to be a Greens member in this place continuing that struggle. [*Extension of time*]

I acknowledge the role that The Greens play in social change, whether it is campaigning for marriage equality at a time when some groups heckled us for making it a priority, whether it is rental reform that 10 years ago people said was impossible to deliver, whether it is drugs harm minimisation, or whether it is Bob Brown being called a conspiracy theorist for talking about climate change. We play an important political role in pushing the Overton window. I will not go into the details of that, but anyone who does not know about it should look it up. That said, I appreciate that some people believe that we do politics through pragmatism, polite negotiation and discussion. But we must acknowledge that doing that comes with a level of privilege. Not everybody has the privilege to engage in the corridors of power and negotiate behind closed doors to get things done. When delivering law reform, we need to make sure that we bring everybody in the community on board. It is for that reason that I express dismay that we will see some of the bill gutted today.

We know that, in its original form, the equality bill removed problematic exemptions in the Anti-Discrimination Act that allowed private education institutions to discriminate against students and employees. Our communities need an Anti-Discrimination Act that does not discriminate and the foreshadowed amendment No. 2 to empty the bill of contents that would extend protection from discrimination is deeply disappointing. My heart breaks for those people who will be left behind as a result of that amendment. In addition, we know that others are not included in the Anti-Discrimination Act. The idea or suggestion that review by the Independent Law Reform Commission is the reason we are taking those out is disingenuous and hypocritical.

The Greens welcome the wholesale review of the Act. We committed to that at endless ACON forums held over multiple election cycles, as did everybody in this place. But the reality is that the Government has already changed the Anti-Discrimination Act in this term of Parliament. It introduced and passed the religious vilification bill, which made religious belief and affiliation and engagement in religious activity protected attributes under the Act. There is nothing stopping it from doing exactly the same in the interim to provide protection to those people who are currently at risk and not protected under the Anti-Discrimination Act until the review is complete. We have made changes to it. There have been referrals around section 93Z. We know that changes have been made. We know that the Government could do that right now. It is choosing not to.

The Greens want to shout-out to the Independent Education Union, which came out strongly this week urging for the changes to not be dropped. I acknowledge its statements in relation to that. Because of the scope and size of the agenda to deliver full equality, we are now in a situation where what we want to celebrate is tainted by the things that have not been achieved. People can have their analyses as to whether that was the right approach—we could go on about that forever—but we should not take away from the significant reforms that will have such an impact on people's lives as a result of the bill passing in its amended form. The bill amends the Births, Deaths and Marriages Act to remove draconian barriers that prevent trans and gender diverse people from easily having official documents reflect who they are and how they live. It is absolutely clear that that is critical.

It is also absolutely clear, as we have heard from debate so far and will no doubt hear in the other place, that there is a need to show collective, public, strong leadership—not just in law reform—and talking publicly about our pride at delivering the reforms is the way we will change society. Homophobes and transphobes exist in this building, in schools and in workplaces. We might be able to call them out in this place, but we cannot call them out in workplaces. That is why we have anti-discrimination law protections in place. The Greens give their commitment that this will be the start of a new campaign and look forward to bringing that on.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): Before I call the member for Maitland, I acknowledge the people in the gallery and congratulate them on listening patiently, quietly and respectfully. This is my third stint today in the chair. I thank them for watching carefully.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (15:33): I, too, acknowledge everyone in the gallery. I understand that it would be very difficult to listen to some of the speeches. I speak to the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill and I thank the member for Sydney for bringing it to this place. He has been a very strong campaigner for equality in our State. I am very proud to be part of a government that wants to assist him and all of the advocates and allies in getting this legislation through. The bill was introduced last year and considered by the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services, which made two main findings and they were pretty obvious: There were diverse and conflicting views on the amendments proposed and additional policy measures were required to improve the safety and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people in New South Wales. That aligns with the feedback from my community.

It is a difficult space and there are not easy answers. One of the mistakes in this space is to think that one or other party owns any moral righteousness here because I think we are all trying to get through to make the world better for everyone in our community. That is really difficult in here because there are so many cultural and long-held opinions and beliefs that people have. You can make as many laws as you like, but unless we all work together we are not going to get there. The bill proposes various legislative changes, including allowing people to change their registered sex through an administrative process without requiring surgery. It makes hatred for or prejudice against transgender, gender diverse or intersex people an aggravating factor in sentencing. It updates terminology in legislation to replace terms such as "HIV infection" and "suffering with AIDS" with "living with HIV/AIDS". It clarifies in the Mental Health Act that expressing or refusing to express a particular gender identity does not mean that someone has a mental illness. It enables a parentage order to be made for a child born through international commercial surrogacy if it is in the best interests of the child and other criteria and important safeguards are met.

The changes, particularly those to allow people to register a change of sex without surgery, are simple changes that will bring New South Wales in line with all jurisdictions across the country. They follow ongoing work by the New South Wales Government to progress reforms that ensure all members of our community feel valued, respected and equal. I thank one particular member of my community who came to speak to me on this issue directly in relation to a legal case that has been widely canvassed. Without disclosing their particular circumstances or identity, I really related to some of the concerns. I note that we all bring our lived experience to this topic. What I say next might seem a bit tangential, but I want to place it on record because it might change the view of someone on the other side of this debate.

In 2008, I was told that I had the breast cancer gene and, in order to reduce my risk of dying, I had to have all of my reproductive organs removed. That put me into surgical menopause. Then I had breast cancer. I had to have a complete bilateral mastectomy and reconstruction. Those are some of the surgeries that people who are transgender may choose to go through. The thing that really connected when I spoke to my constituent was the compelling argument that they should not have to go through surgery to say who they are. My surgery did play with my mind at the time. Was I still a woman without my reproductive parts? To put someone through that so that they can prove their identity is quite barbaric. That one piece of the legislation was compelling to me. If they are comfortable with whatever else they have going on in their life to be able to change that in their documentation, that really spoke to me. Even if you do not have a question about your own gender or sexual identity, the surgeries are very confronting. They are very physically and mentally demanding and difficult to go through. I do not think we should force people to go through a surgical intervention to prove their identity.

I have known many people from the diverse LGBTIQ+ community. I have loved them and been great friends with them. It is not an easy road. It is not a choice; it is just their life. It is who they are. I think we are up for doing whatever we can to make that easier. The safety and wellbeing measures in this legislation are necessary to ensure that we are directly addressing the disadvantage, the discrimination that no-one argues about and the poorer health outcomes that are experienced by LGBTIQ+ people.

When I hear individual stories of discrimination, and when I have lived it with my friends and other members of my community, I know that these changes are required. It is not okay in 2024 that people in our community are afraid to be who they are. We should do what we can to help them to be who they are with pride and joy, and to have the full experience of love that we all want. The changes to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act will enable a person to change the record of their sex on their birth certificate without needing to have invasive, irreversible surgery. It brings our State into alignment with other jurisdictions across Australia. It is beyond time. Currently, you can change your gender on your driver licence and your passport, and with the Australian Tax Office, but you cannot do it on your birth certificate. That is just stupid.

Think about the practical implications of that for someone who has identification documents that do not align. Every time they have to give their ID, there is a question. When I front up for something, no-one says to me, "Are you really a full woman? Because you've got no uterus nowadays." No, they do not. It is just not fair. I note the concerns raised—a bit of a scare campaign, I would say—about children under 18. But an application under this legislation may only be made if both parents consent and certain other preconditions are met, including a counsellor's statement. If one parent does not agree, the matter can go to court. I understand the concerns around privilege. That is a pervasive issue across so many aspects of our system. By the same token, we want to make sure that there are checks and balances in place and that people have protections against other people trying to undermine them or make choices for them. It is a tricky and difficult area.

Surrogacy is also a concerning issue. We have to be clear: The focus is on children. The member for Parramatta said that people should not be subjected to a particular situation because of something that is not their fault and not their parents' choice. The Department of Communities and Justice is undertaking a review of the Surrogacy Act. The Government is also undertaking a review of the Anti-Discrimination Act. I have been politically active for over 30 years, and I know that no change is right the first time. It is not like we achieve perfection immediately. Things that we thought were good and proactive 10 years ago—even five years ago—might not be the way that we want to proceed now. No matter how perfect this legislation could be from one perspective or another, no-one is going to tick the box and say, "Yes, it's all great. Fantastic. We fixed that problem for everyone." We will come back to it in future years, and I welcome the opportunity to work as an ally with people who want to advocate for change.

It is also important that people from the LGBTIQ+ community have the ability to come out in their own time and do not have that taken away from them. We all have stories of people—for some of us, ourselves or our dearest friends—who have been through awful situations where somebody has taken that away from them. The psychological harm of that is so strong. I commend the part of the bill that addresses that. It is not just harm to the person; it is harm to their relationships, often irreparable harm. That is not fair.

The bill also changes the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act to put it beyond doubt that an offence being motivated by hate or prejudice is an aggravating factor that must be taken into account. I will not go on about the bill. This legislation will make no difference at all to the majority of people in the world, but it will make a world of difference to the people it will impact. Every time we get to a difficult situation as legislators and we are not quite sure—although Government members are today—we have to look at that. We have to ask, "For the people this is impacting, will we really make a difference?" That is what we are working towards today.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:43): I contribute to debate on the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQ+) Bill 2023. The legislation has been a long time in the making, with the member for Sydney flagging his desire to undertake the reforms for a number of years. But regardless of the length of time that we have had to consider the issues, when social policy matters come before this Parliament, they are often challenging for members to decide how to vote on. For me, the decision to support the bill was an easy one, but the need to vote against the rest of my colleagues in the Liberal Party is a very hard one.

I have been a member of the Liberal Party for the majority of my adult life. When I came into this place, I did so with the support of many hundreds of Liberals who stood beside me in my election. But I was elected to this place by tens of thousands of voters in my electorate of North Shore. I made the promise to them that I would always put my community first. I am a Liberal, with strong Liberal values. In my vote on the bill today, I can comfortably reconcile the values of my community and my Liberal values. This week marks 80 years since the Liberal Party of Australia was founded. Our party has a proud record of driving not only Australia's economic progress but also its social progress. The founder of our party, the great Sir Robert Menzies, said:

We took the name "Liberal" because we were determined to be a progressive party, willing to make experiments, in no sense reactionary but believing in the individual, his rights, and his enterprise ...

In 2024 Menzies may have used some different pronouns, but the spirit remains the same. For me, the decision to support the bill in its amended form is a fundamental question in the great tradition of liberalism. John Stuart Mill defined the harm principle as a central tenet of liberal philosophy. At its core, liberalism is a test of how and when governments should make decisions, with the view that personal liberty is paramount and should be restricted through the imposition of government intervention only when there is a significant threat or actual harm to somebody. The bill will not harm any person in New South Wales. In fact, as many members have said, it will affect very few people across New South Wales. But, for those it does affect, it will respond to and seek to rectify great harms that they experience. I heard that message loud and clear from my community and from other people it will affect during my time on the committee inquiry into the bill.

Most of the decisions we make in this Parliament are for the many, and most of our votes are for things that we have a personal knowledge or experience of. Today's vote is about a minority, and a minority with which

I have no personal experience. I am not lesbian, gay, bi or trans. I was not born through surrogacy; nor did I use surrogacy to birth my own babies. I am not a sex worker. I am not living with HIV. The only people affected by the bill are the people it seeks to protect.

There are those who will argue that there is a slippery slope or a moral hazard and that we should protect the majority from the outcomes of the bill. But those claims do not ring true. Allowing an individual to change their sex on their birth certificate is deeply personal and impactful to that person but to no-one else. Those who claim it will create risk for women are fearmongering. Women are too often unsafe in our society and even more so in our own homes. But in all my life as a woman, I have never been asked to show my birth certificate to enter a bathroom or a sports change room. I have also stood shoulder to shoulder with women and fought for women's rights throughout my life. Where individuals would threaten, intimidate or harm others, including in places like bathrooms and change rooms, existing laws work to prevent and, if necessary, to punish that horrific behaviour.

That brings me to the detail of the bill. Our society grapples with how to enshrine our fundamental Australian values of individual rights, human rights and freedom when it comes to policy settings for transgender people. I recognise it is a complex policy area, but the decision that any individual feels that they need to make to change their gender, with the support of their family and medical practitioners, is even more complex. As a Liberal, I do not believe that I have a say in anyone else's gender and, as a society, we have enshrined that. Should we require an individual—as we do today in New South Wales—to undertake major, life-altering surgery in order to change their birth certificate? As a Liberal, I say that medical decisions are a matter only for the individual, with informed medical advice.

This House should not be imposing medical requirements on any person. It is also an inconsistent approach to identity documents. Individuals have been able to change their sex on their passport for over a decade without requiring surgical changes. The passport guidelines commenced in 2013 and operated unchanged throughout both the Abbott and Morrison Liberal governments. The bill will only bring New South Wales ID documents in line with every other jurisdiction in Australia. There is a simple and compassionate reason for the change—everyone deserves to be recognised for who they are. The bill will simplify the process for transgender individuals to update their gender on official documents, rather than requiring them to undergo major surgery. It is a matter of dignity, autonomy and individual rights.

I will share the story of Bodhi Boele, who sadly passed away earlier this year from an unknown genetic degenerative condition. After years of being known as a tomboy, Bodhi transitioned to male in 2020 and underwent hormone treatment and a double mastectomy. His name was changed on his birth certificate but not his gender, meaning his death certificate will also not reflect his gender. It was Bodhi's dying wish that his gender—his identity—be recognised on his birth certificate. I acknowledge Bodhi's mother, Heike, who is in the gallery. I met with Heike this morning. I thank her for her advocacy on behalf of Bodhi and every other trans person. No-one should have to live through what Bodhi lived through and what Heike is living through. Bodhi's story is a tragic reminder that for trans and gender diverse people, their birth certificate is much more than a simple piece of paper: It is about their right to exist and be seen for who they are. Hopefully today we can ensure that Bodhi's story is not repeated across our State in the future.

I am a member of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services, which undertook an inquiry into the bill. The committee received evidence from a range of stakeholders, organisations and individuals. We heard stories about lived experience and why the bill would be a positive force for good in communities across New South Wales. In considering the bill, both as a member of Parliament and as a member of that inquiry, I have heard many such stories, and I could not do anything but support those people. I turn now to the changes on commercial surrogacy. Every child deserves the economic and emotional security that comes with legal recognition of their parents. The bill aims to provide parentage rights for children born in overseas commercial surrogacy arrangements where the court is satisfied that it is in the best interests of the child to make that parentage order. The bill will retain the geographical nexus for offences of engaging in commercial surrogacy and will only allow a parentage order to be granted through a court process if it is in the best interests of the child.

I will share a story from a couple who in 2009 decided they wanted to start a family. Ashley and his husband tried to adopt through a fostering agency in New South Wales but were told that it was illegal for a same-sex couple to adopt or foster in New South Wales at that time. They then spent some time exploring co-parenting options and domestic surrogacy, but they were unable to start their family that way. That left them with international surrogacy, which they commenced before changes to the laws in New South Wales were made. They have shared with me the stress, concern and fear they had navigating that process, all because the law in their home State had changed and would not recognise their child as legally theirs. The effect of the ban on commercial surrogacy has been damaging, resulting in children—like their child, Stella—born through overseas commercial surrogacy being deprived of the security and certainty of legal parentage. As a result, only one of

Stella's parents is listed on her legal documentation. Her birth certificate has Stella's birth parent and surrogate listed. Her citizenship application only has one parent listed. In his letter to me, Ashley said:

I have sleepless nights worrying about what would could happen if I were to die—how would my husband navigate the legal documentation often required of parents when there is no record of him.

The bill maintains the requirement for a surrogacy arrangement to be altruistic but makes a minimal change to the Surrogacy Act 2010 by enlarging the Supreme Court's residual discretion to depart from this requirement and still make a parentage order if it would be in the best interests of the child. These minimal changes prevent a child from being punished for the circumstances in which they were conceived where a court is convinced that it would be in the best interests of that child to recognise the reality of their family. With the increasing challenges that we see with fertility, we may need to revisit surrogacy policy. I acknowledge that the Act is currently being reviewed. Under the bill, international commercial surrogacy will remain against the law. However, the bill addresses what to do with children who are already here but do not have the necessary legal rights and protections. It also provides that parents are able to have the same legal rights and protections that other parents have in our community. As a Liberal, I want to see strong families providing safe foundations for our children. [*Extension of time*]

I now turn to the provisions of the bill that delete the summary offences that seek to prevent people from living off the earnings of a sex worker and inducing someone to engage in sex work. Sex work is not the profession all of us would choose. But in New South Wales it is legal, legitimate and regulated, and sex workers have a right to determine how they work and spend their income, in the same way we do. I will share Giselle's story. For three years she supported her life partner, his mother and their two children with her earnings as a sex worker—a story that many of us can relate to, but with a different source of income. Giselle's partner was struggling financially, and his business was decimated due to COVID. His mother was living overseas and unable to work, so she also needed financial support.

As Giselle was able to work and earn a legitimate living through sex work, she supported the five of them through a very difficult time, paying for two mortgages, insurance, tax, medical bills, food, clothing and the other necessities of life. Her job kept them afloat, without outside assistance. Giselle told me that she should be able to be proud of that, not criminalised for it. We should support women and their agency over what they do with their bodies and income. We should empower women to make the right decisions for themselves, without paternalistic judgement about those decisions.

The bill will also make changes when it comes to addressing those with HIV in this State. Over many decades, education campaigns have significantly reduced the stigma of HIV and AIDS. However, misconceptions and prejudices against those living with HIV still linger. The bill will update terminology to replace terms such as "HIV infection" and "suffering with AIDS" to "living with HIV/AIDS", which is an important change for those individuals. The bill addresses challenges regarding domestic violence. Everyone deserves to live in safety and free from violence. The bill will provide equal protections to members of the LGBTIQ+ community by ensuring that crimes motivated by hatred or prejudice towards transgender and intersex people are treated in the same way as hate crimes towards people of a particular religion, race, ethnic origin, language, sexual orientation, age or disability.

Too often LGBTIQ+ people in our communities are threatened to be outed or to have their personal information disclosed without consent. The bill ensures that threats made about a person's sexual orientation, gender history, HIV status or variation of sex characteristics, or the fact that they are sex workers, are a potential form of violence for the purpose of making an apprehended violence order or apprehended personal violence order. The recent tragedy in which Jesse Baird and Luke Davies lost their lives is a timely reminder that domestic violence happens in all communities across New South Wales. There are alarming statistics of domestic violence in same-sex and transgender relationships.

In considering the bill, I acknowledge and recognise the contribution of the member for Sydney, who has worked incredibly hard to bring the issues of these minority interests to this Parliament to ensure that we vote on them and try to resolve them for those individuals. I know he would like to see the changes go a lot further. Knowing the member for Sydney, he will work to ensure they do. In closing, I acknowledge the breadth of views on the bill. I know that some will be disappointed by my decision to support it. But I remain confident that my conscience is in line with that of my community. In previous debates on matters of social conscience, I have referred to my Christian upbringing and my grandparents. I particularly welcome the comments from the Newcastle diocese of the Anglican Church, where I was born and raised—we can blame them!—and in particular the comments of strong support from Anglican Bishop Peter Stuart.

The Christianity with which I was raised was founded in compassion and non-judgement, and those are the values by which I choose to live my life and which inform my approach as a member of this Parliament. I recognise that the Liberal Party will vote against the bill. I say to those who vote Liberal across New South

Wales that this is the only party in this Parliament where I could take this step and remain part of the team. Our philosophy as a party ensures that I can vote with my conscience. I thank my Liberal colleagues in this place for demonstrating their profound respect and kindness to me as I make this decision. My liberalism naturally extends to respecting their right to disagree with me on the bill.

Once again, I thank my community for entrusting me with this decision. I have now voted in this way on three occasions. That is a precious commodity, which is hard fought for around the world. I know the bill will not affect most members. Our community is compassionate, respectful and stands up for people's rights. I thank those people who have reached out to me, particularly over the past 24 hours. I am proud to be their MP too. I know that I am working in their name and as their voice. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (15:58): I begin by thanking the member for North Shore for her courageous, well-considered and articulate contribution to debate on the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023. I thank her for mentioning Bodhi, because he lived on the South Coast. It is wonderful that his mum, Heike, is in the gallery, and hopefully his dad, Richard, is watching the debate online. I was honoured, as was the member for North Shore, to sit on the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services' inquiry into the bill. We asked ourselves what equality is and how we as a society have a common and shared view of the concept of equality. I think that, unless you are part of the LGBTIQA+ community, you cannot actually comment on that. The committee wanted to know how equality in law is achievable for everyone. I believe that this bill achieves that, and I am pleased to make this short contribution to the debate.

During the inquiry, the committee received 66 written submissions and heard from 44 witnesses during two days of public hearings. The committee made two findings: the views put to the inquiry were diverse and conflicting; and the Parliament should proceed to consider the bill. For me, there was one overriding factor: the need for additional policy measures to improve the safety and wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ people and to advance equality for all people in New South Wales. As we all know, the bill has been in draft for over a year. I thank the member for Sydney for his work to have this bill before us today and for the way in which he has worked with the community and all members of this place. Government and Opposition members have been given opportunities to knock on his door to ask questions and to request or suggest amendments to the bill.

I believe the amendments will address the concerns of some parts of the community while still ensuring we provide the legislation that the LGBTIQA+ community needs. Today in question time, the Premier said that the bill before us today is a commonsense solution. He said:

I completely acknowledge that the bill is not everything that the member for Sydney has asked for but, in my view and in the Government's view, its time has come.

I received an email today from Jenny from Mollymook, and I believe she summed this up perfectly. She said:

Dear Liza, 40 years ago homosexuality was decriminalised in New South Wales. This year Premier Chris Minns delivered a heartfelt apology to our community, beginning a new chapter in New South Wales' history. And, while New South Wales also banned conversion practices this year, unfair laws continue to disadvantage our community. You can help fix this. I urge you to support the New South Wales LGBTIQA+ equality bill and reform New South Wales' laws.

I am pleased to be standing here and doing just that today. There are many aspects to the bill. I will not address everything, but I do want to discuss some important inclusions. The first is about birth certificates.

The bill will amend the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995 to enable a person to change the record of their sex on their birth certificate without needing to have surgery. For children under 18, an application can be made only if both parents consent and certain other preconditions, including obtaining a counsellor's statement, are met. If one parent does not agree, the matter can be determined by the District Court, with procedures also in place if a child has only one parent or other guardianship arrangements. People under 18 years old will not be able to make applications on their own. That was a major concern for some people in our community. I think this amendment will address that concern.

Not only that, but this change will also bring New South Wales into line with all other States in Australia and will align with Federal documents such as passports. Having mismatched identification or a birth certificate that does not align with one's gender risks outing trans people and puts them at risk of harassment and violence when they must provide their ID or prove their identity. This is particularly important for young people, for whom a birth certificate may be the only piece of identification they have access to. In Bodhi's case, it was extremely important. Unfortunately, Bodhi's death certificate will always say that he was female.

The bill will also address the Surrogacy Act 2010 to enable parenting orders to be made in certain circumstances for children who were born from an international commercial surrogacy agreement and are part of a family in New South Wales. Commercial surrogacy, including international commercial surrogacy, will remain an offence. Regardless of anyone's views around commercial surrogacy, these children exist and are living in New South Wales through no fault of their own and must be protected under the law. The bill will provide for

interim arrangements to cover those children who became part of a family in New South Wales prior to the commencement of the law. I reiterate that commercial surrogacy will remain an offence.

I thank the families, individuals, organisations and the wider community of the South Coast who have met with me over the past year for sharing their views on this issue. I believe we now have a balanced and well-considered bill before us today. I have listened to those who have tagged me in posts today on Instagram and who have messaged me. I thank them for reaching out, but the views of the young constituents of the South Coast are what really resonated with me. They do not discriminate. They accept others for who they are and they want equality for all. I thank Adam and the Milton Ulladulla Community Kindness group, known as MUCK Up, for their advocacy and community education in this space. I thank the member for Sydney again for his work on this equality bill. I thank him for getting these amendments through, for briefing all members on the changes and for discussing any concerns we have. It is now time that this important piece of legislation is passed in the New South Wales Parliament. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (16:06): I am proud to contribute to debate on the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTQIA+) Bill 2023. I give a big shout-out to any LGBTQIA+ people in the gallery today, to the rainbow community in the Ballina electorate and the Northern Rivers and to all LGBTQIA+ people across the country. It is so wonderful to take part in this debate and be part of historic progress for rainbow communities in this State. I give a big shout-out also to the LGBTQIA+ members of The Greens and their allies who for many decades have championed true equality under the law, the respect and dignity that everyone deserves, and recognition by our society that nobody is less because of their sexual or gender identity. I thank our Greens NSW spokesperson, Dr Amanda Cohn, MLC, in the other place, for her advocacy and work in this space. We are debating this bill today only because the member for Sydney used his political capital to advance the rights of LGBTQIA+ people and brought the bill before the House. Will it achieve everything we would like? It will not today. Will it embed significant reforms in the law and redress discrimination across a raft of vital areas of the law? Yes, it will.

Today I am choosing to celebrate what we have because I know there are so many advocates in my community and in communities across New South Wales who really want us to mark this occasion and this progress, and it is a Labor government supporting that process, albeit in minority government. As our education spokesperson, I lament that there are so many things we need to still fix, and I will allude to those, but I do not see any value in spending time on that here today because I want, on behalf of my community, to thank the member for Sydney for his tireless advocacy. I thank also his team and all of those advocates who have worked behind the scenes for many years for the significant gains in law before us.

Many speakers, including the member for Sydney, have spoken at length and provided very extensive analysis on what is in the bill. I want to focus on the top lines. The bill before us, which I believe will pass, ensures that trans and gender diverse people are able to update their birth certificates without surgery. To put that in perspective—and I certainly have not experienced it personally—New South Wales is Australia's last jurisdiction to require reproductive organ surgery before a person can alter their record of sex. That leaves most trans people without accurate documentation. We know that is incredibly difficult and painful. It forces trans people to reveal deeply private and personal information to validate their identity, for instance when showing a birth certificate to apply for a job, loan or course, or to access services. That is just horrendous.

This is a massive reform to bring us in line with other jurisdictions in this country—yay! The options for sex descriptors will now include non-binary. That is incredibly welcome. I vaguely listened to some very ill-informed arguments from Opposition members on that issue today. I cannot even go there. The support for that change is very welcome, as is the extra time to register a birth. I know this issue is deeply personal to members in this place. The bill extends the time to register a birth from 60 days to 180 days if variations of sex characteristics make it difficult to determine sex. That is a very welcome reform. Under the bill, family members will be able to alter the record of the sex of a trans or gender-diverse child, parent or sibling who appears on their own birth certificate.

There are also provisions that deal with living off the earnings of sex workers. That is not my area of expertise, but The Greens absolutely welcome these reforms. The bill requires that decisions about where to accommodate a child under State protection have to consider an appropriate placement for their gender identity or variations in sex characteristics. As someone who worked with children and young people for most of my career, that is so welcome. It is a huge change and provides a very different lens for placing children. It is incredibly overdue, but it will make such a difference to those children, who will be able to live without shame and express their true selves. I really hope the system can deliver that change. The bill provides that requirement in law.

Children under the age of 16 who have received gender-affirming care or any other specialist medical treatment approved by the Family Court will no longer have to go to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal

for approval. I cannot believe that has been the status quo. NSW Health will still be able to issue guidelines for specific treatments and procedures, and parents will still be able to challenge treatments in the Federal Family Court. However, denying timely access to gender-affirming treatment presents enormous risks, as we know, to the health and welfare of young people, in particular. We need to remove the barriers that prevent health care so young trans people can embrace education and all of life's opportunities.

Under the bill, threats to out a person's LGBTIQ+ status or sex-work history will be an offence. The importance of that change cannot be overestimated, in my view. Currently, there is no protection against that under the law. That is a terrifying area of discrimination. Aggravated sentencing for crimes motivated by hate for a group will be extended to hate for gender identity and being intersex. It makes it explicit. The bill updates outdated and stigmatising language used to describe people living with HIV or AIDS. It also updates the Mental Health Act to make it clear that gender identity and gender expression are not mental illnesses or reasons to detain someone. The fact that we need to make that explicit in the law is a terrible indictment on our society. It upsets me very much to think we have to make that explicit in the law.

It would be remiss of me not to mention, on behalf of thousands of teachers, students and staff of private schools across the State, that the Government has not supported amendments to address the discrimination of LGBTIQ+ people in those workplaces. That system green lights homophobia in those schools under the banner of religious freedom. It is unacceptable and The Greens will continue to champion change. It is a two-tiered system and the definition of inequality. Over the course of my teaching career and in my role as the member for Ballina, many teachers and students have reached out to me to express how hurtful that is. It not only hurts their employment or enrolment and determines whether they can be hired, fired, enrolled or expelled and discriminated against based on their sexuality or gender identity, but also sends a terrible message to everyone inside and outside those school communities that they are not the same. It is absolutely unacceptable. The Greens will continue that work.

The removal of that amendment is not on the head of the member for Sydney; it is on all our heads. The Australian Law Reform Commission has done excellent work in this area. We do not need any more inquiries. The sky will not fall. The issue must be fixed. I certainly hope that in the time I have remaining in this place we will make that change. I look forward to working with the member for Sydney, allies and LGBTIQ+ people to ensure that change is delivered. I mark the historic reforms being made and look forward to the bill passing today. I thank the member for Sydney.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (16:16): I acknowledge that the Equality Legislation Amendment Bill (LGBTIQ+) Bill 2023 evokes strong views in the community and thank all the Summer Hill constituents who have written to me to express their views, either in support of or in opposition to the bill. Despite the breadth of views from across the community, it is important to understand that this bill does two things: It makes very important, transformative changes for the few people it directly impacts; and it sends a strong message that everyone in our community, including our LGBTIQ+ communities, is valued, respected and cared for. I am very proud to support the bill.

The equality bill makes substantive changes that address discrimination faced by LGBTIQ+ people in New South Wales. It amends the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act to allow for a person to change their sex on a birth certificate without needing to have irreversible surgery. It amends the Surrogacy Act 2010 to ensure that parentage orders can be made in certain circumstances for parents who have accessed international commercial surrogacy in order to form their families. It establishes a new coercive control offence for a person who outs or threatens to out another person. It removes outdated offences related to circumstances where a person knowingly lived wholly or partly on the proceeds of sex work.

The bill amends the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 to clarify that the existing aggravating factor applies when an offence is motivated by hatred against a group of people of a particular gender identity or with variations of sex characteristics. In short, crimes motivated by hatred of trans and intersex people will now be treated the same as other hate crimes. The bill addresses language that is stigmatising for people living with HIV and AIDS, updating both the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985 and the Workers Compensation Act 1987. Importantly, the bill amends the Mental Health Act 2007 to provide that a person is not mentally ill or mentally disordered merely because the person expresses or refuses to express a particular gender identity or gender expression.

Following amendments foreshadowed by the member for Sydney, there are several reforms contained within the first print of the bill that will be considered at a later time. Whether or not LGBTIQ+ students and teachers are protected from being expelled or fired from religious and private schools will be considered as part of the Government's landmark review of the Anti-Discrimination Act, which is currently underway. Following advice, provisions in the bill that clarify consent requirements for young people seeking to access gender-affirming care have been withdrawn from consideration. Good progress has been made by the Minister for Health and

NSW Health to support those young people and their families. As Equality Australia has noted, "The Australian Medical Association and community advocates believe these changes are unnecessary and unhelpful. Removing this provision will have no impact on young people and their families accessing gender-affirming care." Finally, consideration of provisions around street-based sex work offences can occur under the statutory review of the Summary Offences Act.

While the bill has evolved, today members have before them a real opportunity to make pragmatic, progressive and concrete change for LGBTIQ+ communities. It is an opportunity we must not miss. New South Wales is the last State that still requires transgender and gender diverse people to undergo invasive, irreversible surgical interventions before being able to change the record of their sex on their birth certificate. Frankly, this arrangement is outdated, nonsensical and cruel. I have met with several trans and gender diverse people from my electorate who have detailed the impact of this practice. A young trans person who is looking to find a job has been hampered in their efforts because their birth certificate does not align with their gender identity. An older trans woman experienced bureaucratic delays in accessing housing support because of the discrepancies between their State-issued documentation and their gender identity.

A justice of the peace [JP] attended a local medical centre for half a day to ensure they could witness the signatures of two separate doctors confirming that a constituent had undergone gender-affirming surgery, a statement they could make only after undertaking an invasive medical examination. This was not only humiliating for the trans person undergoing the examinations, as well as the doctors and the JP, but was also utterly unnecessary. Equality Australia notes that a 2021 survey of 153 trans and gender diverse people born in New South Wales found only 14.9 per cent of people had been able to update their gender under existing laws. It is well past time that we make this change, get this right and get it done.

The bill also creates a pathway to obtain parentage orders for children born and families formed through international commercial surrogacy provisions. Under current law, commercial surrogacy is illegal. Consequently, surrogacy parentage orders cannot be made in circumstances where a child is born through a commercial surrogacy arrangement. It means that children in New South Wales who are raised in loving families—both same-sex parented and opposite-sex parented families, mind you—are not recognised legally as the children of their parents under a range of laws, including superannuation and inheritance laws. That causes undue concern and distress to families and fails to recognise the many ways families are formed. One Marrickville resident wrote to me to share their story. After exploring options for local fostering and adoption, as well as domestic altruistic surrogacy arrangements, he and his partner chose to form their family through overseas surrogacy. Years later the family still lives in legal limbo and fear. He states:

In NSW families through surrogacy can apply for a parentage order to transfer legal parentage from the surrogate and her partner to the intended parents.

However, my husband and I have not done this as we are still fearful of being charged with engaging in commercial surrogacy if we go before the court and admit to having our children through commercial surrogacy.

This leaves my family and thousands of others in legal limbo.

My husband is not recorded on any legal document as my daughter's parent. Her birth certificate has me and her surrogate listed. Her citizenship application only has me as her parent. Because of this, when I apply for a passport for my daughter I do this as a single parent.

I have sleepless nights worrying about what could happen if I were to die—how would my husband navigate the legal documentation often required of parents when there is no record of him?

When I was recently filling out the NDIS application for my daughter there was a question asking if I am the legal parent of the child I am applying for NDIS for.

I had to question again if it is not me—who is her parent? Not the wonderful, generous person who gave birth to her 12 years ago.

A person who she has no connection to.

A person who has not changed her nappy, wiped her nose, picked her up from school when she is sick, or kissed her goodnight.

This is just one example of the impact and legal limbo families like mine are facing.

All children should be equal before the law regardless of the circumstances of their conception.

This family is not alone. There are so many stories like this one in my electorate and across the State. Those families need this bill. The bill as it stands delivers a pathway for families in those circumstances to have the certainty of parentage orders. While I appreciate some in the community will want a clearer outcome that addresses the illegality of commercial surrogacy itself, I note that a review of the Surrogacy Act is currently underway and there will be opportunities to assess whether the current laws are fit for purpose. Many other members have done so during this debate, but I put on record that the member for Sydney is an honest, principled and incredibly hardworking member of this place. He has worked tirelessly and persistently to improve the lives

of LGBTQIA+ people in New South Wales. I appreciate that it has been a long road to get this bill to this point, and I pay tribute to him and all the incredible people in his office.

Today is also a day to thank the many advocates from key community groups, including Equality Australia, Rainbow Families, members of the union movement, ACON and others. I also acknowledge the leadership of the Hon. Penny Sharpe and advocates from our party. Rainbow Labor has played a powerful role in advocating for LGBTQIA+ members of the Labor Party and their allies. Because the leaders of Rainbow Labor have strong, longstanding ties to other community organisations, they have been able to navigate the complexities of this bill and work closely with members across the Parliament. Today is a truly historic day that delivers real, pragmatic and progressive change for the LGBTQIA+ community in New South Wales. Today is the result of persistence and patient advocacy. It is a big step in the right direction. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (16:27): I make a short contribution in support of the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTQIA+) Bill 2023 introduced by the member for Sydney. I will not retread the ground covered by other members in their eloquent and articulate contributions detailing the contents of the bill. Instead, I am compelled to contribute today because I truly believe the proposed amendments to the bill before the House are clearly targeted towards meaningful improvement to the lives of members of the LGBTQIA+ community. They are changes that provide people with basic human rights and instil the dignity that most in the community take for granted. At the same time, I believe the bill before us will not affect the rights or religious freedoms of people from the faith community, or indeed the rights of anyone else who is not part of the rainbow community.

Particularly, I note the work and approach undertaken by the member for Sydney and commend him for his advocacy in this matter. His determined and collaborative approach goes to the heart of good policymaking. I am a new member of this place, and the legislative process is something I am still learning. Nonetheless, the member for Sydney afforded me the courtesy of coming to my office in Riverstone to discuss the bill and what it entails in detail. He took the time to answer my questions about the bill and allay my concerns about the effect it might have on the rights of others, particularly the concerns raised with me by members of the faith community. The member has gone out of his way to continue those conversations here in Parliament. In order to try to stop debate today, Opposition members have said they have not been consulted on this bill and suggested they have not had time to consider its contents. The temerity is frankly ludicrous. As the Premier pointed out in today's question time, irrespective of members' position on the bill, it needs to come before this House to be debated for change to be implemented.

When it comes to the content of the bill, I believe the proposed amendments to be sound, reasonable changes that align our State's provisions with other jurisdictions in the country. I acknowledge the correspondence my office has received in opposition to and in support of the bill. Much of that correspondence is based on outdated information and earlier versions of the bill, and they do not accurately reflect the bill we are debating today. I reiterate that the proposed changes will not affect the rights of the wider community or the religious freedoms afforded to the faith community. Most importantly, the bill provides very basic measures for members of our rainbow community to live their lives in a dignified way and be afforded equitable treatment under New South Wales law.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (16:30): I speak in favour of the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTQIA+) Bill 2023, introduced by the member for Sydney. I will not use all the time that I can under the standing orders because, to be honest, I want the bill to pass through the Parliament as quickly as possible. The member for Sydney is a tireless and effective advocate for his electorate and for the LGBTQIA+ community. He understands well the power of working across this House for a greater good. I commend the member for Sydney on his effort and his commitment to collaboration, which has resulted in a bill that enables support from across the benches. I also acknowledge the member for North Shore for her support for the bill. The issues it addresses are fundamentally human, and I thank her for her humanity in helping to bring our laws in those spaces into the modern era.

Trans people are already using public bathrooms, and transwomen are already accessing women's spaces. As the Minister for Women, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, I know that women and children are most often at risk of violence at the hands of a man they already know. That includes transwomen. Trans people should feel welcome and safe in our community, and the support for the bill demonstrates our shared commitment to doing that. At its heart, the bill is about allowing people to be who they are and to have that recognised in law.

To that end, one of the most significant legislative changes is to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995 to give people the right to have their birth certificate amended to accurately reflect their sex. The proposed change will enable a person's sex to align with the sex by which they identify on arguably the

most important identity document they have. It allows that to happen without requiring a person to undergo major surgery that they might not want to have or that may not be accessible to them. Particularly for children and young people up to 18 years of age, who can only change their record with their parents' consent, I believe the ability to amend their birth certificate will have significant positive outcomes, regardless of the choices they make in relation to their bodies. The amendment is not radical—New South Wales is the last jurisdiction in Australia to allow a person to have the sex on their birth certificate changed without undergoing surgery.

I am also pleased to support amendments to the Crime (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act that will classify outing or threatening to out someone as behaviour that amounts to domestic abuse. LGBTIQ+ people experience distinct forms of domestic and family violence, especially violence referred to as identity-based abuse. That includes threatening to out a person's gender, sexuality, HIV status or intersex status, or exiling a person from a family due to their sexuality or gender. The bill recognises that threats to out someone are a powerful form of control and appropriately classifies them as abuse. That is especially true in rural and regional areas, where people are more isolated and may be deterred from seeking help due to the fear of stigma and shame.

The amendments strengthen protections for LGBTIQ+ people who experience domestic and family violence. Those and other amendments in the equality bill represent important steps forward in ensuring that transgender and intersex persons enjoy equal rights and protections under the law in New South Wales. The bill brings our laws into the twenty-first century and better meets wider community expectations. As I said at the outset, I am very pleased to support the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education) (16:34): I support the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023 with amendments. The process of considering the bill has gone on for a very long time. I acknowledge the efforts of the member for Sydney and the other people who have advocated for the bill. I represent a rural community with a city at the heart of it, Queanbeyan. I am a 60-year-old straight, white bloke, so I do not pretend to understand all the issues people are going through. But I come into this debate—as I did in 2003, when I voted for the age of consent to be standardised—with a philosophy that people should be able to make their own choices about their own lives. They should be able to determine what gender they wish to be, and they should be able to make decisions that do not affect other people. By the same token, other people's beliefs should not be able to be imposed on those people.

In my circle of family and friends, I have seen three young people begin to identify as trans, and they found that a very difficult process to varying degrees. They all lived in communities that were not major cities. A couple of them now live in a major city because that is a more comfortable community for them to be in, with more acceptance. It is sad for rural communities when that happens. I certainly see this legislation as making that very difficult process a bit easier and more accepting, and it is important that trans people can undertake that. I also observed the parents of those young people go through difficult times in how they dealt with that. In some cases there was resistance. In some cases there was a willingness to try to understand and help. I encourage people to take the latter approach if they feel they are able to.

Over the past year or two, my office has received quite a few emails about the issue. I read what they said. To those who opposed the bill in its original form, or elements of it, a lot of the amendments today deal with some of the things they raised with me. To the people who would have liked to see the bill go further, I understand their position, but I think the bill is a very practical way to address the really important issue of people being recognised and will make their transitions easier and smoother. Frankly, to be the last State to do so is a bit of an embarrassment. Many of us, particularly on this side of the House, would like to think we are on the progressive side of politics.

I was not able to listen to all of the debate because I was in meetings, but I did hear some of the contributions from the Opposition. I was a bit astounded that the shadow Attorney General spent about 40 minutes complaining about the process and apparently not knowing what was happening, despite the fact that the bill has been in a very open process of discussion for a long time. I was disappointed to hear a member of the Opposition suggesting that the bill would cause problems in prisons. It has been made very clear to the Labor party room that there is no change to the way that decisions are made about prisoners and where they are housed. There are no changes to the way that toilets operate or the way that schools operate. Some of the things that were raised legitimately to me by my constituents when the bill was being discussed have been adequately dealt with through this process.

As I said at the start, I have a philosophy that people should be able to make their own decisions. People should not impose their moral views on others. I stand by that as a person who represents a rural electorate. It might surprise people to know that we have people of all gender identifications in those electorates. I am aware from hearing over many decades stories from people of how they feel, particularly from a good—now deceased—friend who was a gay man growing up in a country town in the '50s and '60s. He told me how awful that was. I am pleased that our society has moved on so substantially. This is another step along the way to being a society that

recognises people's ability to make their own decisions about their own futures. I commend the bill with the foreshadowed amendments to the House.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:40): The Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023 considers commonsense changes to ensure that New South Wales will be a safer and more inclusive place for our LGBTIQA+ community. These changes have been a long time coming and ensure that equality, respect and dignity exist for everyone in our community. I acknowledge the incredible work of my fantastic colleague the member for Sydney. He has been transparent in the delivery of information and generous in sharing the journey of the bill with the whole Parliament. It upsets me a little to see the ways in which some Opposition members have acted today.

I also acknowledge those in the gallery. They are fantastic. I thank them for their patience with us and for their advocacy. This is an important part of the journey, though it has been challenging. Solutions to the parts of the bill that will be removed by foreshadowed amendments will be found in other legislation as we move forward. It is important that the amended bill be passed today. As the member for Monaro said, it is disappointing that we are the last State in Australia to bring forth such a bill. The bill was considered, with significant stakeholder input, by the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services, which reported in June 2024. While the committee acknowledged the diverse and sometimes conflicting views regarding the proposed amendments in the bill, it also acknowledged that additional policy measures are needed to address the disadvantage, discrimination and poor health outcomes experienced by LGBTIQA+ community members. As such, the committee moved that the Parliament proceed to consider the bill.

It is beyond time that we make the changes that will align New South Wales with every other jurisdiction in Australia by amending the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act to allow people to change the record of their sex on their birth certificate without the prerequisite of surgery. This change is not merely procedural but recognises the fundamental rights of individuals to define their own identity, removing unnecessary barriers that have historically marginalised and discriminated against those who do not conform to traditional gender norms. Important safeguards will be in place for children under 18, including parental consent of both parents and counsellors' statements. Children under the age of 18 will not be able to make an application on their own.

Further, the bill provides a vital avenue for children who have become part of New South Wales families through international commercial surrogacy arrangements to have parentage orders made. This is a significant move that acknowledges the complexities of modern family structures and ensures that these children are afforded the same rights and protections as their peers. Importantly, commercial surrogacy remains an offence. Critically, amendments to the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 explicitly clarify the existing aggravating factors that apply when an offence is motivated by hatred for or prejudice against a group of people who the offender believes the victim belongs to, including people of a particular gender identity or with particular variations of sex characteristics.

The bill amends the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act, taking a strong stance against harassment, particularly pertaining to the act of outing individuals—a violation that can have devastating effects on a person's life. This amendment acknowledges that this action is an example of conduct that may amount to harassment of a person, a type of intimidation under the Act. The bill also seeks to modernise outdated language in various Acts, including the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act and the Workers Compensation Act, which will help remove stigma and ensure that our laws reflect current understandings of health and identity. The bill provides us with the opportunity to affirm our commitment to equality and inclusion across our State. The bill is a fundamental move towards affirming the rights, dignity and identities of LGBTIQA+ community members.

I thank all the people who have contacted my office about the bill, from one side of the debate to the other. There has been a lot of communication. I appreciate their input. I listened to and met with a lot of people who have expressed their concerns. I celebrate the mother of a bright young 12-year-old girl who, as the law stands today, could not update her gender marker on her New South Wales birth certificate, though she can legally do so on her passport. This has caused difficulties for the family who are travelling to Canada. It is frustrating that this is the case and it is nice to know that change is in the wind and that action will be possible in the future. I also acknowledge Linda Telisman and the group of people I met, along with Linda, who opposed a lot of components of the bill as originally drafted that will be removed.

Not everyone is happy with all parts of the bill, but it has been a big process. The Minns Labor Government and the Premier have done an incredible job. I also acknowledge Minister Kamper, who has worked with faith groups to ensure we got to a place where all were comfortable so that the bill passes through the House. Again, I thank the member for Sydney, and I congratulate the team involved in fighting for this change. As far as I am concerned, it is a celebration of our rainbow community. Together we can build a New South Wales that truly embodies the values of equality and respect for all.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (16:45): I speak in support of the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023, to which amendments will be moved by the member for Sydney. It is always good to follow someone such as the member for Gosford, who articulates the issues so well, as have some of the other more progressive speakers today, and I think they have moved many people. The bill was brought before the House in recognition that LGBTIQA+ people, like all of us, deserve to be afforded the same dignity as every other member of our community. They deserve to thrive as the person they are, not as a person others wished they were. This requires that the legal framework governing their daily lives and decisions protects and supports them. Yet, the current framework does not protect and support them as it should. The bill presents us with an opportunity to strengthen our laws for the benefit of LGBTIQA+ people and to address the discrimination and intolerance embedded in our State laws.

I add my voice to support for amendments to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act. In particular, I support those amendments that would mean that trans and gender diverse people no longer need to undergo invasive and expensive surgery in order to update their birth certificates to reflect their gender identity. New South Wales is the only jurisdiction in which surgery is a precondition for a trans or gender diverse person to update their birth certificate. Some people cannot afford the surgery, while others might not wish to undergo it for personal reasons, including because it involves sterilisation. That surgery is only required today in New South Wales, but not in other Australian jurisdictions. That demonstrates the need for a change to this Act.

Proposed amendments to the bill will make clear that the alteration of records to reflect a person's gender identity would not change access to toilets, change rooms, sport, allocation in correctional facilities, women's refuges or any other place. This added clarity—which I did not think should be necessary—may help alleviate some concerns around the amendment of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act. I also support changing the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act in relation to outing a person's sexual orientation, gender history, variation of sex characteristics, HIV diagnosis or sex work. Provisions in the bill regarding outing a person apply to domestic settings. However, the proposed amendments of the member for Sydney would bring outing a person within the offence of intimidation under the Act, meaning that people would also have legal protection from being outed in other settings, such as the workplace. Everyone deserves to earn a living free from harassment. This should include those who, for personal reasons, do not wish to disclose their sexual orientation or history.

The bill also makes a number of other commonsense changes, for example, by modernising some legislation to update language describing people living with HIV or AIDS so that it is more respectful than the stigmatising terms currently included; by providing extra time to register a birth if variations of sex characteristics make it difficult to determine the sex of the child, from 60 days to 180 days; and by removing the summary offence of living off the earnings of a sex worker, which ignores the reality that people can do both sex work and support loved ones who are over 18. The continued presence of this offence on the statute book is outdated and simply unjust. The bill is an important step in entrenching equality in New South Wales laws.

To that end, I note that the NSW Law Reform Commission is currently reviewing the Anti-Discrimination Act. I look forward to the commission's findings and hope that they will act as a platform for further reform. As society evolves, legislation too must evolve to reflect contemporary community standards. The bill is an effort to help the law keep pace with our society, which is now far more accepting of LGBTIQA+ people than when the outdated provisions the bill seeks to amend were drafted. It does not make sense to retain unfair or obsolete laws or overlook LGBTIQA+ people by failing to recognise, support and protect them in law. For the marginalised minority that the bill affects, it will be a stride forward and no doubt a great relief. For those not directly impacted, it will invariably become part of the social fabric shaping our society with no harm done to them.

Finally, I commend the member for Sydney and his team, particularly Tammie Nardone and all those who have worked with him, and supporters of the LGBTIQA+ community. The member for Sydney has done a fantastic job bringing the bill forward. As we know, it has been a struggle to make some of these big social changes. We did it for the decriminalisation of abortion and for voluntary assisted dying, and now we are going to do it for the LGBTIQA+ community.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:51): I make a brief contribution to debate on the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023. Today is about equality, respect and dignity. The detail of the bill has been covered by many members, so I will not go through it again. I acknowledge the Premier and the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council, who have said today that, as a government, we have been committed to equality for a long time and supporting the bill is our latest step in ensuring that every citizen in New South Wales is valued.

I am a member of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services, which undertook an inquiry into the bill to listen to people's views about equality. We discussed whether, as a society, we have a common and shared view around the concept of equality and whether equality in law was achievable. This bill is

a huge step towards that. I quote from my friend the good member Sydney. In 2024 he said, "All residents in New South Wales should be treated with dignity and respect", but he sadly hears a number of stories from the LGBTIQ+ community from across the State about lawful discrimination that impacts on their health and wellbeing. This bill presents a clear pathway to improving the safety and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people in ensuring that they can live their best lives.

I acknowledge Rainbow Labor, particularly Mits Delisle, who spent some time talking with me in the final days of us pushing to ensure that this debate went ahead today. I thank them for sharing personal and very powerful stories. I was contacted, like many members in this place, by a range of people over many months who had polarised views. I assure my community that I read and listened to all of those views. But we cannot stand in this place and debate and pass legislation that is not grounded in respect and dignity. That is why I am speaking today. Finally, I acknowledge one of the many people who wrote to me. Glenda from Blaxland in the Blue Mountains said:

Again, I thank you for your support of the LGBTIQ+ people in our community. I know you will strongly support the upcoming NSW LGBTIQ+ Equality Bill.

Earlier this year, my child ... came out publicly. Her transition has been very smooth, with lots of support from all around her. We're happy that she's been accepted as who she is throughout the community.

I am looking forward to my daughter being able to have her ID changed ... without gender modification surgery that is not necessary for many transitional people to be who they are.

We love you, we see you and I commend the bill to the House.

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (16:55): The Greens welcome the significant reforms the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQ+) Bill 2023 will bring. So many in my community in the Balmain electorate welcome these positive changes. I acknowledge the members of the LGBTIQ+ community, who have pushed so hard over so many decades. I commend the member for Sydney for bringing the bill before the House and for all of his work. I also commend my colleagues for their push for equality in New South Wales. I must acknowledge my disappointment that Labor was unable to support the full bill introduced by the member for Sydney. The bill was intended to ensure that LGBTIQ+ people in New South Wales are recognised and protected in law against discrimination.

The member for Sydney in his second reading speech outlined a vision where the LGBTQIA+ community in New South Wales was not only protected but also able to thrive. That is the sort of transformational change that the LGBTQIA+ community, advocates and others deserve to see. The original bill that was introduced would have provided significantly improved protections for LGBTQIA+ people in New South Wales. A great deal of proposed protections have been removed from the bill. In acknowledging the positive change the bill will bring, it is very disappointing that Labor has watered it down, and the changes are significant.

First, the amendments will remove anti-discrimination protections for people who are bisexual, asexual, non-binary and intersex. They will remove anti-discrimination provisions to protect sex workers and others. The bill will back away from protections for LGBTQIA+ students and staff in non-government schools and remove the pathway for 16- and 17-year-olds to alter records of sex on State documents. The amendments will remove protections that would have ensured dignity for trans and gender diverse people during invasive strip searches. The bill will also fail to remove unnecessarily gendered and non-inclusive language from old laws. These are not minor alterations. These changes will have a significant impact on vulnerable communities. The bill will effectively maintain the status quo whereby teachers in private schools will remain without the protections from discrimination afforded to their public school counterparts.

The queer community in New South Wales deserves equality without exception. They deserve reforms that do not leave people behind. The decision of NSW Labor to let this opportunity pass is disappointing, and we must not lose sight of the work ahead. My Greens colleagues and I firmly believe that the queer community in New South Wales deserves equality without exception. They deserve protection from discrimination and they deserve a government willing to take steps to ensure that everyone in our community is able to thrive. While I remain disappointed, I commend the member for Sydney for providing important reforms that will protect sections of the LGBTQIA+ community. I do not want to lose sight of the fact that the protections to be afforded under the bill will provide meaningful improvements in many people's lives. I have heard from many LGBTQIA+ residents in my electorate of Balmain who want to see these reforms passed and who need to see these protections enshrined in law. While the bill could go further, I recognise how important these reforms are.

Among other things, the bill will finally remove the need for trans and gender diverse adults to undergo risky and invasive surgery in order to change their sex on their State documents. It has been disappointing to see some of the arguments raised today, which have suggested that outdated requirements should be kept in order to protect women. Arguments like that are dangerous, and they do not have a place in our Parliament or in our

community. LGBTQIA+ people are not dangerous, they are not a risk to women and children, and they should not be forced to undergo invasive procedures just to have their State documents correctly identify their gender. I welcome the changes the bill will make to ensure it is easier and safer for people in our community to self-identify sex on official documents. These changes are long overdue.

I commend the member for Sydney and his team for ensuring that these much-needed changes and protections will be enshrined in legislation. We still have a long way to go, and I remain committed to working with my community in the Balmain electorate, with LGBTQIA+ advocates and with my Greens colleagues to ensure that we have equality without exception and that no-one is left behind. Today's bill is a step in the right direction, and we will keep pushing for better protections for all.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (16:59): In reply: I note that there is one minute until the public interest debate is due to commence, so I apologise to those present in the gallery who have waited for me to speak in reply on the second reading of the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023. I thank all members who contributed to debate on the bill. I have a lot to say in my speech in reply because there is a lot of misinformation that I need to correct. Let me say at the outset that the equality bill has been more than a piece of legislation. It has been a catalyst for positive LGBTIQA+ reforms across the New South Wales Government. Many of the reforms have already been delivered, like prohibition on conversion practices or the delivery of a framework for gender-affirming care in New South Wales. The reforms that will not be dealt with today have guaranteed pathways to progress and my determined commitment to achieve them in this Parliament.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): It being 5.00 p.m., pursuant to standing and sessional orders, 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

GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (17:00): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that after 18 months families in New South Wales are worse off under the Minns Labor Government.
- (2) Notes that since taking office NSW Labor has:
 - (a) allowed union chaos to cripple businesses and public services;
 - (b) diverted \$9.5 billion from essential services to appease its union paymasters;
 - (c) facilitated CFMEU corruption by rejecting calls for a royal commission and failing to return tainted donations or demand affiliated MPs resign;
 - (d) worsened hospital performance with longer emergency department treatment times and ambulance transfers; and
 - (e) slashed health and education spending in real terms in two consecutive budgets.
- (3) Condemns the Minns Labor Government for prioritising union appeasement over essential services, leading to worsening outcomes across health, education and infrastructure.
- (4) Condemns the Minns Labor Government for cutting regional projects and dismantling and downsizing departments that serve regional communities.

The Liberal-Nationals Coalition has a proven track record of strong economic management, which secured New South Wales two triple-A credit ratings. At the end of 2018-19, before the once-in-a-lifetime COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of unprecedented natural disasters, New South Wales had a \$4.2 billion surplus, and our net debt was in the black at \$11.2 billion. Before the last election, the budget was on track to return to surplus by 2024-25, with a projected surplus of \$328 million. The independent Treasury secretary confirmed our budget, including the forecast return to surplus.

In June, the New South Wales Labor Government handed down a budget that revealed the State will be \$14 billion worse off over the next four years. Labor promised to improve overall living conditions for families in New South Wales. What we have seen are soaring energy prices and interest rates, and rising weekly grocery bills. The NSW Council of Social Service reported that, to counteract rising living costs, people are increasingly going without essentials such as food, prescribed medication and hygiene items to make ends meet, using last-resort measures to cover costs. The figure is up by around 33 per cent compared to 2022.

There has also been a notable increase in the number of low-income households experiencing housing stress. That is most obvious for renters, one-third of whom are now in extreme housing stress, with more than half of their income consumed by rental costs. People who were keeping their head above water now report that they

are struggling to pay their bills. Participation in social activities is declining and people are becoming socially isolated due to the rising costs of leaving their home.

It has been reported that it is not only the cost of attending leisure and entertainment activities or eating out that families cannot afford; they also cannot afford the travel costs involved in leaving the house because of the price of petrol and public transport. Regional New South Wales has also been disproportionately impacted by travel costs, leaving people unable to afford travel for essential reasons, including work, education and health care. Across New South Wales, cost-of-living impacts are worsening, and the stress and anxiety associated with those pressures are having a substantial impact on people's mental wellbeing. Many families are reporting that the pressure is also having an impact on their relationships.

Last year, 2023, was the year of the union. Union bosses, hand in hand with the Minns Labor Government, spruiked victory for New South Wales under a Labor government. Fast-forward to 2024 and many of those promises made by the Minns Labor Government have been broken. Union protesters are crippling the streets and the economy of businesses due to the failures and broken promises of the Minns Government. Business owners in New South Wales are already having to grapple with soaring electricity costs and increased wholesale prices, and surgery and health outcomes are being delayed because of broken promises by Labor. And Labor's answer to that is a diversion of \$9.5 billion from essential State government services to appease the Government's union paymasters—a decision that lies directly at the feet of the Premier.

Before being elected, the Premier said that union wage deals would not cost the people of New South Wales a cent—not a cent. The Premier claimed that his wage deals would all be funded by productivity offsets. Where are they? If productivity offsets were costed in to the promises, then surely the Liberal initiatives that Labor had slashed—Active Kids, Creative Kids, First Lap, seniors travel cards—could have remained, if such productivity gains were forthcoming. That was absolutely a critical promise at the core of budget management, but the Premier has betrayed the people of New South Wales who have elected Labor. He has broken his promise, and the unions are not happy. The Premier has handed the keys to the Treasury over to his union masters. I do not know if a single cent in productivity has been identified. What I find incredible, though, is not the fact that Labor has accepted some pay deals, because it was voted in to do just that, but the fact that Labor has picked and chosen which pay deals to support and who would be left behind. Those unions left behind are not happy.

[Government members interjected.]

Mr Assistant Speaker, are those opposite allowed to do that? Clearly not. It is evident that after two years of Labor's real cuts to the health budget, people in New South Wales are struggling. Our health systems are stretched, and the Premier would rather fight striking nurses than focus on improving health outcomes for the community. But Labor has not stopped at cutting funding to hospitals. It is also slashing public school budgets by \$150 million, despite promising union deals would not impact classrooms. That decision has blindsided principals, and it will leave students across New South Wales worse off. We are in chaos in New South Wales. Whichever way we look, the Premier has broken his promises. Those broken promises mean less money for our schools and hospitals.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:07): Who put the member for Goulburn up to this? Members opposite are in absolute turmoil this week. They are on the precipice of losing at least one more seat, and it is difficult week for them, but who on earth put her up to this? Come off it. There is a lot in this debate topic, and I thank the member for the wonderful gift that she has presented to us today. What this public interest debate demonstrates more than anything is that the Opposition wants to return to wage suppression and putting on the wages cap. It is so incredibly clear that those opposite do not want to pay our essential and key workers what they deserve and what is fair for them. When we came into government, we made a commitment that we would absolutely abolish the wages cap and pay our key essential workers what they deserve.

Those opposite do not want to talk about this. They want to suppress public sector wages because when they suppress public sector wages they suppress the wages paid by everyone that they are beholden to—the fat cat corporates. That is who those opposite are beholden to. When you lift public sector wages, you lift everyone's wages. Everyone benefits. They are beholden to corporate fat cats who want to suppress wages in the private sector. Since we came to government, we have abolished the wages cap.

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

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: We have delivered a 4.5 per cent wage increase and have offered a 10.5 per cent base pay increase over the next three years. The reality is that wages were suppressed by the wages cap, and those opposite, who are beholden to their private sector mates, did that. As demonstrated in this motion, if they ever get back into power—and good luck this weekend; I am looking forward to it—we know that is exactly what they want to do. They are on record saying that they want to suppress everyone's wages again. We are going

to play a little game: Guess this quote. Who said, "Labor was so beholden to its union paymasters that Labor members did not have the stomach to introduce a wages cap"?

Mr Jihad Dib: Was that Tudehope?

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: No, it was my dear constituent the member for Vacluse. Who said, "So not even four months into government, once again they are bowing to the unions and dismantling the wages cap"? We are doing that—and proudly doing that—because we want to make sure that public sector people are paid the wages that they deserve. Who said that quote?

Mr Clayton Barr: Henskens?

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: No, wrong. My dear constituent the member for Vacluse said that. What about, "No-one begrudges teachers a pay rise. But when you get a pay rise, you normally need to do a bit more"? Who said that?

Mr Jihad Dib: It obviously wasn't a teacher.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: It obviously was not a teacher. It was the honourable member in the other place, Bronnie Taylor, in 2023. What about "It's really disappointing to see that their first call to action is to scrap the wages cap"? Who said that? Let's guess it.

Ms Charishma Kaliyanda: Tudehope?

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: No, we are not there yet.

Mr Jihad Dib: Can you give us some hints?

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: It is a woman. There are not many of them.

Mr Jihad Dib: Your constituent?

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: Not my constituent.

Ms Charishma Kaliyanda: Is it Goulburn?

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: No.

Mr Clayton Barr: What about Hawkesbury?

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: No, it isn't.

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Point of order: I ask that the member for Coogee be asked to direct her comments through the Chair, not to her own party.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: Mr Assistant Speaker, who do you think gave that quote?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): It would not be appropriate for me to answer. I uphold the point of order.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: It was a member from the other place, the Hon. Natalie Ward. Even the leadership team wants to do it. What about this one? This is the last one:

I have said this before, but if you rule out asset recycling and move to abolish the wages cap, the State will never pay for huge infrastructure projects like the Coalition did over the past 12 years in government.

Who said that?

Mr Clayton Barr: Upper House?

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: Upper House.

Mr Jihad Dib: That's got to be Tudehope.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: Ka-ching! You have got a point.

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Point of order: The member for Coogee is clearly flouting your ruling.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): There is no point of order. The member's time has expired.

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence) (17:13): I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the public interest debate. It is in the public interest indeed. The cost of living is worse than ever. People in regional New South Wales are calling this 18 long months. I feel a bit sorry for members opposite having to defend the indefensible. If anyone says that we are better off after these 18 months, they are kidding themselves. Nobody is

emailing me or my office saying that things are better under Minns. Not one person is saying that things are better under Minns. Nobody is saying it is easier to pay their mortgage. Nobody is saying that it is easy to pay their bills, particularly their power bills. Not one email. Not one phone call. Do members know what people in my electorate say about "NSW"? We know what members opposite think what "NSW" stands for.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Newcastle.

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON: Newcastle is one. What would be "S"?

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Sydney.

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON: What about "W"?

Mr Dugald Saunders: Wollongong.

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON: Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong. The regions are worse off than ever. The regional seniors travel card was cut. Shame. That has gone out the door. But what was it replaced with? A 4¢ a litre shopper docket voucher that can only be used at United service stations.

Mr Adam Crouch: I have got one, and that's it.

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON: You have got one. I have got two. But if you lived in Evans Head you would have to drive 106 kilometres to use it. That should work out: You drive a 106-kilometre round trip to save 4¢ a litre. That is handy. It makes a lot of sense to me. The regional seniors travel card has been taken from the bush to fund toll relief in Sydney. What about kids playing sport? Talk to any sporting club in the bush. How are they doing? Active Kids vouchers are gone. Money has been ripped out of mums' and dads' pockets—gone.

Let's talk about small businesses. Nobody in small business is ringing me and saying, "You know what? The Government is helping me keep the doors open and making it easier to make a quid in regional New South Wales." Under this Government, there will not be a small business left in regional New South Wales if we keep going without support. Throw them a lifeline. They need a bit of support in regional New South Wales. Let's not forget mums and dads when Christmas is over. The kids are going back to school, the credit card bills are coming in and they think, "We just need a bit of a hand." What used to happen? I was not here then, but there was something.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Back to School vouchers.

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON: Yes, I remember Back to School vouchers being provided at a time when mums and dads needed a bit of support after Christmas. That is a good idea. Members opposite could rebrand the Back to School vouchers and put a bit of red at the top or something. Let us not forget the Ulmarra ferry in my community. It started in 1890, and it took this Government 16 months to cut it. In a cost-of-living crisis, people now have to drive an extra 47 kilometres to make the same journey. It is gone. The XPT to Brisbane—that little suburb north of Sydney—in the past two weeks did not make it to Brisbane. It did not even run. I think there would have been a few people from Cessnock affected. What about Norco Milk? Farmers are recovering from floods, and Norco Milk is cut from hospitals in New South Wales at a time when farmers need support.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (17:18): I am going to start with a quote from John Cougar Mellencamp.

Mr Richie Williamson: Is it *Jack & Diane*?

Mr CLAYTON BARR: No, not *Jack & Diane*. He had a song called *You've Got to Stand for Something*. The line goes, "You've got to stand for something or you're gonna fall for anything." That is the point that the Premier has been making to members opposite all week: They stand for nothing and they keep falling for tricks that do not have any substance. I listened to the speech by the mover of the motion. She argued all sides of the argument. She said, "Costs are going up, but we want you to suppress wages. We're angry because you're not suppressing wages but putting people into a possibly better position to pay for things that are going up." I am not quite sure where the logic is. Do members opposite want people to have money in their pocket to be better able to cope with the increased cost of living, or do they want to suppress their wages so that the increased cost of living hurts more? Which of those do they prefer?

I know that is a bit complicated for them. I will simplify it a little. If they believe in returning the wages cap, that is terrific—at least they believe in something. I encourage them to visit all of their nurses, teachers and paramedics and say to them, "You know what? We've got to get rid of this Labor Government because they're paying you too much. Get rid of them. Join us. Sign our petition to say they've got to go. We want to bring back the old policy to suppress your wages at 2.5 per cent because that's what we believe in." If those opposite move a

public interest debate motion in this place attacking unions who are fighting for increased pay for their workers, then they are arguing against a pay increase.

I do not understand members opposite. Only about 12.5 per cent of the workforce is unionised at the moment. Why are they so scared of unions that they need to constantly demonise them? Unions are fighting for their workers. When those opposite demonise a union, they are demonising a local nurse, teacher and paramedic. They are demonising the person who works at their local Service NSW centre. They are demonising all of them when they make the claim in the motion that NSW Labor has "allowed union chaos to cripple businesses and public services". By all means, I will help Opposition members to letterbox the brochure that says voters have to get rid of this Government so that the Opposition can bring their wages back down. I will go to any of their electorates. In fact, I will co-fund the brochure for them to letterbox that tells people, "You hate these increases in wages. You insist that the Government bring them down—and make sure that you leave your union who does so much to fight for you." Those opposite should not worry about it; I will participate in that because it will guarantee the Minns Labor Government is in office for the next 28 years.

The Government is arguing with our union groups and our public sector workers about wages. I am incredibly proud of that because we got rid of the authoritarian regime that legislated the wages cap, we reintroduced the Industrial Relations Commission and we empowered our public sector workers to come to the Government and make their claim. That is what Labor governments stand for. I am proud to be part of that conversation. Members opposite should be embarrassed to be part of the conversation to suppress wages growth at 2.5 per cent. Many of them have spoken about that. We can read quote after quote. The member for Coogee just read out a handful of them. The logic of this motion is that Opposition members support the wages cap. If they cannot see that, then they should not have moved it. We reject this public interest debate motion outright. It is not worth trying to amend because it is absolute rubbish.

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (17:23): Eighteen months ago, after the New South Wales election, all of us, particularly members on the other side of the Chamber, had great hopes of good governance. When we think about good government, we think about the following things. The first would be that you keep your election commitments and you deliver them on time. The second would be that you have a reform agenda. The third would be that you manage the economy by making sure that you are living within your means. Based on those three criteria, I am happy to support the motion moved by the member for Goulburn, which notes that after 18 months families in New South Wales are worse off under the Minns Labor Government.

It is completely true. It gets even worse. All members have heard of the TV show *Seinfeld*. It is a show about nothing, and the Minns Labor Government is a government about nothing. So, in fact, it is the Labor "Seinfeld" Government—a government about absolutely nothing. That is demonstrated because the member for Coogee and the member for Cessnock could not even defend its record. It has no record. They did not talk about reform, the economy or their election commitments. That says a lot. I return to the first point that good government is all about keeping your election commitments. An article by somebody called Alexandra Smith in *The Sydney Morning Herald* entitled "Can someone fix the diabolical rental mess before I evict my kids?" contains some interesting commentary about the Labor Government and its election commitments. It says:

Now Labor's tardiness is turning into voter frustration. A survey for the Herald asked voters if they thought the government has done enough for renters. The answer was a resounding no.

Members opposite went to the election with a commitment on rental policy. The bill has not even passed Parliament. As Alexandra Smith says, they have been tardy. The article continues:

Minns re-announced his party's rental changes at the NSW Labor state conference in July. He had no choice. Party faithful would have slammed the premier if he was not seen to be delivering on an election promise. But some senior members of his team—

who are probably in the Chamber—

were quietly embarrassed. Instead of re-announcing it, just do it ...

There is complete tardiness. The second thing I mentioned was that good government involves economic reform. Government has to make some tough decisions. You need economic reform.

I get serious leaks every so often from the Government. There is nothing quite like a document falling off the back of a truck. There are certainly secret documents about what the Government's reform agenda is. For those studying the HSC, there are always pages that say, "This page is intentionally left blank." This Government has absolutely no reform agenda. Its members know that because they could not explain during the public interest debate what reform agenda they are undertaking. I am happy to give them some free advice. Why don't they look at reducing unnecessary red tape, boosting productivity and creating a fairer tax, levies and charges system? That is some free advice. Why don't they start undertaking a reform agenda?

The final thing about good government is managing the economy, because you need a government that lives within its means. Labor has completely lost control of the budget. I note debt figures. In 2018-19, the year before the pandemic started, there was zero government debt. In fact, there was \$10 billion of negative debt. As the member for Goulburn pointed out—members opposite forget this—there was a thing called the one-in-100-years pandemic. All members of the House would agree that we needed to make sure that people stayed in jobs and that there continued to be economic growth, so of course the budget went into some debt. The debt at the end of the pandemic was \$55 billion. What is government debt predicted to be under Labor in the next four years? Is it \$60 billion or \$80 billion? It is \$139 billion by 2028. It will be the largest in history.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (17:28): I advise the member for Davidson not to bring question time tactics into the public interest debate next time. He should leave his blank pages at home. It is obviously true that his notes are blank pages, because the only thing he quoted was *The Sydney Morning Herald*. He cannot quote anything from question time. In fact, I do not recall any member on the other side of the Chamber asking us one question about rental reform in the past 18 months, but his whole speech was dedicated to it. I am sure the Liberal Party appreciates the member's help in that matter.

Opposition members spoke about what children need. The reality is that children do need help from government. They need teachers and nurses. Under the former Government, there were 1,855 teacher resignations in 2022, which outstripped retirements by 1,177. Under the former Government, for the first time ever, more teachers were leaving than retiring. Schools had no teachers. At one stage Birrong Boys High School had two teachers. Classes were run from the hall. That happened under the former Government. The Opposition has introduced a nothing public interest debate that contains universal statements, but without teachers and nurses our children suffer. The former Government's wages cap devastated the number of nurses and teachers. For Opposition members to accuse the Government of working for our union bosses, as though we are 12-year-olds being pushed around, is a disgrace. The reality is that we want teachers in our schools. Opposition members should ask specific questions in question time about the supposed \$9.5 billion that they say was redirected.

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Point of order: We would love to ask questions in question time, but the Government has cancelled it on Tuesday.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): What is the member's point of order?

Mr Gurmesh Singh: I don't know—Standing Order 129?

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

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ: If anything is indicative of the attitude of those opposite towards our children, it is the point of order taken by the member for Coffs Harbour. But this is not just about what our children need; it is about what our mums and dads need. The mums and dads of New South Wales are the teachers, nurses and police officers who are no longer under a wage cap and finally have a decent wage deal.

Mr Dugald Saunders: The police are leaving because of you. They are still leaving!

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ: Don't talk to me about police numbers.

Mr Dugald Saunders: I will!

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ: The former Government promised 1,500 police officers but did not get them. That is a disgrace. Opposition members have said that \$9.5 billion was taken out of essential services. I can only assume they are talking about the \$9.8 billion the Government has put into schools and TAFE, because that is the only \$9.8 billion that has gone anywhere. That money has gone into building the schools the former Government failed to build. Let us look at the record of those opposite when they were in Government. The first things they did when they came into government in 2011 were to take out Bulahdelah's medical officer and close Bulahdelah hospital. That is how much respect they have for rural and regional areas.

Opposition members have come to the debate with absolutely no information. They left government with the highest ever gross debt, totalling \$188 billion. Even in the 2022 budget the former Government was billions of dollars in debt, yet they have spoken in debate about the surpluses! The former Government's debt was \$11.3 billion in 2022. Opposition members have misled the Chamber by saying there was no debt. That is an absolute disgrace. The former Government did not budget for 1, 200 nurses; this Government had to find the money for that. The former Government had a wages cap; this Government has delivered a 4.5 per cent wage increase. We have agreed to a 10.5 per cent baseline pay increase across the board for the public sector. That is what the children and parents of New South Wales need.

Mr JIHAD DIB: I seek leave to make a contribution to the debate.

Leave not granted.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (17:34): In reply: I thank members representing the electorates of Coogee, Clarence, Cessnock, Davidson and Auburn for their contributions to debate on the motion. We have heard the blame put on the former Government. That is the easy line, but the people of New South Wales are getting a bit sick of that after two years. We heard the blame put on Canberra. Of course, the Government has even tried to blame international events. But Chris Minns and Daniel Mookhey can call off the search. The people of New South Wales already know that the blame lies with Labor. Poor financial management, bad decisions and broken promises from the Minns Government have added more than \$11.5 billion in deficits over the next four years—the highest debt ever.

Mr Matt Cross: Ever!

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: Ever! The Government has more than doubled our interest payments to \$8.6 billion a year. The cost of Labor's union deals is clearly spelt out in the budget, with employee expenses set to blow out to at least 45.5 per cent of budget expenditure by 2026-27. Some say it may go even higher as negotiations with the unions continue. This is the highest debt ever, ladies and gentlemen. The bottom line is that the people of New South Wales are worse off under "Minnsflation". People have less money in their pockets. Labor failed to nominate candidates in the by-elections because Mr Minns' ego prevented it. He does not want to be judged for failing the people of New South Wales. He does not want to be judged for failing to keep his promises.

Ms Lynda Voltz: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129—relevance to the motion before the House. The member for Goulburn has spoken about by-elections and other matters. She should at least try to stick to one or two facts before the House, such as the deficit numbers.

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

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: That's right—Mr Minns does not want to be judged by the people of New South Wales. He does not want to be judged for failing to keep his promises to the people of New South Wales. He does not want to face the unions because of his broken promises.

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order—

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

Mr Jihad Dib: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Talk about taking a lecture from the party that could not even nominate people for local council elections! What does that say about the Opposition? The Liberals could not even put in its nominations for the local government elections. Those opposite did not want people judging the Liberals, so they should not lecture the Government about that. Opposition members should get their own house in order.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): There is no point of order. The time for debate has expired. The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes33
Noes51
Majority.....18

AYES

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

James, T
Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D
Moylan, B
Petinos, E
Preston, R
Provest, G
Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Singh, G

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

NOES

Aitchison, J
Atalla, E

Greenwich, A
Hagarty, N (teller)

O'Neill, M
Park, R

NOES

Bali, S	Hannan, J	Piper, G
Barr, C	Harris, D	Quinnell, S
Butler, L	Harrison, J	Saffin, J (teller)
Butler, R	Haylen, J	Saliba, D
Car, P	Hoening, R	Scully, P
Catley, Y	Holland, M	Shetty, K
Chanthivong, A	Hornery, S	Smith, T
Cotsis, S	Kaliyanda, C	Stuart, M
Crakanthorp, T	Kamper, S	Tesch, L
Daley, M	Kirby, W	Vo, T
Davis, D	Leong, J	Voltz, L
Dib, J	McDermott, H	Warren, G
Donato, P	McKeown, K	Watson, A
Doyle, T	Mehan, D	Whan, S
Finn, J	Minns, C	Wilkinson, K

PAIRS

Coure, M

Washington, K

Motion negatived.*Bills***REGIONAL COMMUNITIES (CONSULTATION STANDARDS) BILL 2024****Returned**

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill with an amendment.

Consideration in Detail**Consideration of the Legislative Council amendment.**

Schedule of amendment referred to in message of 15 October 2024

No. 1 **GRNS No. 1 [c2024-184A]**

Page 2, proposed clause 4(1)(a), line 14. Insert "environmental," after "cultural,".

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (17:44): I move:

That the Legislative Council amendment be agreed to.

I thank everyone. The bipartisan support shows that everyone has an appreciation of the issue. Consultation in regional areas is different due to connectivity, distance and technical literacy. That acknowledgement was reflected in the fact that the bill went through on the voices in the Legislative Assembly Chamber and in the Legislative Council Chamber. The other point is that everyone should have equitable access to participate in their State Parliament and decisions of government. I think that has been recognised through the support for this bill. The contributions in both Houses and on the amendments are appreciated. I thank Minister Moriarty in the other place for having carriage of the bill in the Legislative Council.

I will quickly address some concerns raised in the other place. One concern was around the culture within government departments. I am a simple bloke, but let me see whether I can work through this. The way I understand it is that first we change the law. That then changes people's behaviour. That behaviour then should become normal practice and, when we change behaviour, we have achieved a change in culture. I hope that clears it up for anyone in the other place who was not sure.

Mr David Harris: That is the theory.

Mr ROY BUTLER: It is a great theory. I look forward to working with the Premier's team in consulting about the regional communities guide. That will be an important piece of work. This legislation is incredibly important to regional, rural and remote New South Wales and will have a lasting benefit. It is a great day for the bush. Well done and thank you.

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education) (17:46): The Government agrees with the amendment carried by the upper House and thanks the member for Barwon for the bill and Minister Moriarty's office, in particular, for the work on it.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:47): The Opposition also supports the amendment from the upper House.

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

Motion agreed to.

REVENUE LEGISLATION FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL 2024

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (17:48): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Revenue Legislation Further Amendment Bill 2024 will amend various Acts to enhance the integrity of the revenue system, strengthen compliance, increase the efficient administration of the revenue system and otherwise ensure that revenue legislation remains effective and up to date. The reforms in this bill largely fall into four categories: first, amendments to State taxation legislation to enhance revenue integrity, ensure exemptions operate as intended, address anomalies and reduce red tape; second, amendments to State debt legislation to streamline the allocation of recovered amounts, improve overall administration and clarify the law; third, amendments to fines legislation to clarify where postal addresses for service may be sourced from; and, fourth, minor amendments to revenue legislation and the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 to update the name of an Act and various government departments.

I address each category of amendments in turn. First, I address amendments to State taxation legislation. The bill amends the Duties Act 1997, the Land Tax Management Act 1956, the Payroll Tax Act 2007 and the Taxation Administration Act 1996. I address the duties amendments in schedule 1 to the bill. The Duties Act 1997 amendments involve changes to the duty exemptions related to family farm transfers and relationship breakdowns to make them fairer; broadening the definition of qualified investor for landholder duty; clarifying the tax treatment of corporate collective investment vehicles; and several other minor amendments. The Duties Act 1997 currently provides a duty exemption for a family farm transfer—that is, a transfer of primary production land between family members in certain circumstances. This exemption can apply to transfers between entities directed by a family member, reflecting how modern family businesses may be structured using, for example, companies or trusts.

This includes a bare trust, where the trustee holds the property on behalf of the family member and acts solely on their instructions. However, while the transfer of property to a bare trust may be exempt from duty, the making of the bare trust itself over the property is currently subject to ad valorem duty. This is at odds with the intent of the exemption to support the transfer and continuation of family farm businesses. The first amendment addresses this by exempting from duty the making of a bare trust over property, where the transfer of that property is exempt as a family farm transfer. This change reduces red tape and costs for family farm businesses. The second amendment relates to the duty exemption for a transfer of relationship property arising from the breakdown of a marriage, or a de facto or domestic relationship.

Currently, the exemption applies where property is transferred to a party to the relationship or to their child. However, there may be unfortunate circumstances whereby a party or their child has died, and the property is to be transferred to their legal personal representative. Currently, the duty exemption does not extend to the legal representative. The amendment addresses this by extending the exemption to the legal representative of the party or child that has died. The next duty amendment relates to landholder duty and the definition of qualified investor. Landholder duty applies when shares in a company or units in a unit trust owning land are acquired above a certain threshold. Earlier this year, the acquisition threshold for triggering landholder duty on private unit trusts was lowered from 50 per cent to 20 per cent, except for wholesale unit trusts and imminent wholesale unit trusts.

Unlike private unit trusts, which are generally used for asset protection or income tax minimisation and set up to benefit a small number of investors, wholesale unit trusts are set up and managed by a funds manager for wholesale investors such as complying superannuation funds and State-owned investment companies. Retaining the 50 per cent threshold for wholesale unit trusts supports their use as vehicles for genuine long-term investment

by larger numbers of investors. To be a wholesale unit trust or imminent wholesale unit trust, certain conditions must be met, including that at least 80 per cent of the units be held by qualified investors. Since the changes commenced, it has become apparent through the transactions assessed by Revenue NSW and stakeholder feedback that the definition of qualified investor is overly restrictive and not in line with modern business practices by not including wholly owned subsidiaries or trusts of most entities that qualify.

Further, although a qualified investor currently includes the Crown and statutory bodies representing the Crown, there may be instances where it is unclear whether a body represents the Crown. These issues can hinder decision-making about investment in New South Wales. The bill addresses this in two ways: first, by broadening the definition of qualified investor to include a wholly owned subsidiary or trust of a qualified investor; and, second, by enabling statutory bodies to be specified as a qualified investor by regulation. These changes will improve the operation of the reforms introduced earlier this year and provide certainty and clarity for investors.

The bill also clarifies the tax treatment of corporate collective investment vehicles in New South Wales. CCIVs are a new type of Australian company, limited by shares and made up of sub-funds, which are used for funds management. In 2022 the Commonwealth passed legislation to register and regulate CCIVs, and to tax them as separate unit trusts. The bill will align State taxation provisions with the Commonwealth's approach by deeming each CCIV sub-fund as a separate unit trust. In doing so, the CCIV is deemed the trustee; the business, assets and liabilities of the sub-fund are the trust property; and the sub-fund members are the beneficiaries. As a CCIV can have a custodian or sub-custodian holding its property, the bill also extends the concessional duty arrangements for managed investment schemes to CCIVs. This allows for transfers of property between the CCIV and the custodian and from the sub-custodian to only be subject to concessional duty, enabling efficient and flexible holding of the CCIV property.

Finally, the bill makes minor updates to the Act by clarifying that a dutiable transaction may be affected by electronic, digital or other means, not just paper; and removing a redundant reference to Regional Aboriginal Land Councils, which were abolished several years ago. I now turn to the land tax amendments in schedule 4. Like the duties amendment, this bill amends the Land Tax Management Act 1956 to deem each sub-fund of a CCIV to be a separate unit trust. In addition, the land tax amendments will make clear that a sub-fund, deemed as a unit trust, is to be a special trust for land tax purposes.

Additionally, the bill addresses two further matters. Currently, land owned by the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and local Aboriginal land councils is exempt from land tax. A duty exemption also applies to the transfer of such land. In 2023, the duty exemption was extended to land owned by registered native title bodies corporate. These are bodies established under the Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993 to represent native title holders once native title has been determined. The bill will amend the land tax exemption to extend it to registered native title bodies corporate to align with the duties exemption.

Similar to the Duties Act amendments, a redundant reference to Regional Aboriginal Land Councils is removed. The second amendment addresses an inconsistency between the principal place of residence exemption and the mixed-use land concession for land used as a principal place of residence. The principal place of residence exemption does not apply where the landowner is a company or trustee, including a trustee of a special trust. The mixed-use land concession similarly excludes companies or trusts but does not exclude a trustee of a special trust. This omission was a drafting oversight, and the amendment corrects this.

The next set of amendments provide for payroll tax changes in schedule 6 to the bill. The amendments to the Payroll Tax Act 2007 largely address three matters. The first is "phoenixing". Phoenix activity is where a company incurs substantial debts, including tax debts, and then transfers its assets to a new entity controlled by the same people. The company then liquidates without paying its debts, while the new entity carries on the business, having avoided its debt obligations. In 2023, the payroll tax grouping provisions were amended to address phoenixing by enabling a former entity and a successor entity to be grouped together, making the successor jointly and severally liable for the payroll tax debts of the former entity.

The bill strengthens these provisions by specifying that a former entity includes a company that has entered into a deed of company arrangement and that a successor entity can be held liable for the debts of such a company. A deed of company arrangement is a binding agreement entered into by a company in voluntary administration with its creditors to attempt to continue the company's business or provide a better return to the creditors. Revenue NSW, as an unsecured creditor for any payroll tax liabilities, is bound by a deed of company agreement even if it voted against it. The bill also replaces references to "former corporation" with "former entity". Although the provisions were broadened last year to apply to non-corporate structures, some references were inadvertently missed. These changes ensure the provisions operate as intended and that payroll tax owed to the State cannot be avoided through phoenixing.

The second set of amendments relates to the Bulk Billing Support Initiative for medical centres introduced in the 2024-25 budget. As part of this initiative, a payroll tax rebate is available to medical centres in respect of wages paid or payable to contractor general practitioners from 4 September 2024 if the medical centre meets a certain bulk-billing threshold. This bill amends the rebate by allowing GP services covered by the Department of Veterans' Affairs to be counted towards the threshold. Those services are similar to bulk-billed Medicare services in that no gap or out-of-pocket fee is charged to the patient. These amendments ensure that medical centres providing GP services to the veterans community are not inadvertently disadvantaged when determining whether they are eligible for the payroll tax rebate.

The third set of payroll tax amendments follows on from the duties and land tax amendments dealing with corporate collective investment vehicles. These amendments provide that any fees paid or payable by a CCIV to its corporate director are not wages. This is intended to align with how management fees retained by a responsible entity of a managed investment trust are not subject to payroll tax. Finally, there are the taxation administration amendments in schedule 8. The bill introduces a significant enhancement to the measures available to deter tax avoidance schemes. Currently, under the Taxation Administration Act 1996 a person may be held liable for tax that they have avoided as a result of entering into a tax avoidance scheme. Although penalty tax and interest may apply, this is the case for any failure to pay tax and there is no specific additional penalty for the actual avoidance of tax resulting from entering into the scheme. By comparison, a person who promotes a tax avoidance scheme may be subject to significant penalties for such behaviour.

The bill introduces a new statutory penalty for entering into a tax avoidance scheme. The chief commissioner will have the discretion to impose the penalty and determine the amount of the penalty, which may be up to 100 per cent of the amount of tax avoided. In exercising this discretion, the chief commissioner will have regard to prescribed factors, including the seriousness of the tax avoidance, the period over which it took place and the deterrent effect of any penalty. This new penalty sends a strong message that there is little to be gained from entering a tax avoidance scheme and will complement the existing penalties for scheme promoters.

The bill also makes a minor amendment relating to the conversion of foreign currency amounts. When calculating tax, a foreign currency amount must be converted into Australian dollars using the rate last reported by the Reserve Bank before the tax liability arose. The amendment will also enable the use of a rate determined by the chief commissioner, with the intent that this will allow the rates used by the Australian Taxation Office to be used. This will make it easier for taxpayers who already use the ATO rates for Commonwealth tax purposes. This concludes the State taxation legislation amendments.

I now turn to the State debt amendments at schedule 7 to the bill. The amendments to the State Debt Recovery Act 2018 are primarily to improve administration. Firstly, the bill clarifies that a "referable debt" includes any debt defined as a referable debt under other legislation. Currently a fee, charge or other amount is a referable debt if declared so by order of the chief commissioner. Although the legislation providing for the fee, charge or other amount may already provide that it is a referable debt, it is unclear whether an order by the chief commissioner is also still needed. The amendment clarifies this, thus reducing red tape. Secondly, the bill clarifies how recovered amounts may be allocated towards a State debt. A debtor may have more than one State debt under a debt recovery order, and more than one debt recovery order.

Each State debt can also have limitation periods in which to collect the debt before it is extinguished. Generally, a payment on a debt recovery order is applied to the debt with the earliest referral date. However, this may not be the debt with the earliest expiring limitation period. This bill will improve administration of the legislation by providing that the limitation period for a debt is to be considered when prioritising the allocation of a recovered amount and that recovered amounts can be allocated to debts under any debt recovery order of the debtor, if they have more than one. There is also uncertainty as to the interaction between the Limitation Act 1969 and the State Debt Recovery Act 2018. The former provides the limitation periods in which action may be taken to recover debt. Sometimes those periods are reset, such as when judgment is awarded to a creditor. There has been confusion as to whether a debt's limitation period resets when it is referred to Revenue NSW under the State Debt Recovery Act 2018. This bill clarifies that it does not.

The next amendment closes the loop on the life cycle of a State debt. When a debt is referred by an agency to Revenue NSW, the agency's functions in relation to the debt become limited as Revenue NSW is empowered to recover it on its behalf. In some cases, Revenue NSW has exhausted the actions available to recover the debt and there is a need to refer the debt back to the agency—for example, to write off the debt or to consider its recovery options outside of the State Debt Recovery Act 2018. Currently the only mechanism for a debt to be returned to the agency is to revoke the referral of the debt. However, this would have the effect of reversing any debt recovery action, which may result in any paid or recovered money needing to be refunded to the debtor. The bill will allow a referral to be revoked, returning the debt to the agency, without requiring any paid or recovered money to be refunded.

Finally, the bill removes a requirement for a debt recovery order to include the date of birth of the debtor, if known. Such information is typically not collected by agencies. If a date of birth is known, the inclusion of it on the debt recovery order unnecessarily creates a privacy risk for the debtor. The final amendment is to the Fines Act 1996 at schedule 2 to the bill. The Fines Act provides that notices be served to a postal address and, in certain circumstances, deemed as served even if returned to the sender. Currently the postal address for service must be sourced from the driver licensing and vehicle records of Transport for NSW. However, for interstate driver licences and vehicle registrations the address would be sourced from the National Exchange of Vehicle Driver Information System [NEVDIS].

For example, a driver with a Victorian driver licence is caught speeding in New South Wales. To issue the fine, NEVDIS is used to check the Victorian driver licence and associated postal address. Similarly, a driver using a vehicle registered in Queensland is caught by a speed camera in New South Wales and issued with a fine. Again, NEVDIS would be used to check the Queensland registration to identify the vehicle owner and their postal address for service of the fine. As NEVDIS is not a record of Transport for NSW, this amendment clarifies that postal addresses from NEVDIS, in addition to the records of Transport for NSW, may be used for the service of fines. Finally, the bill also makes minor amendments of a statute law revision nature to the various revenue Acts already mentioned, and the Land Tax Act 1956 and Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002.

The amendments, firstly, update the name of the first home owner legislation to the First Home Owner Grant and Shared Equity Act 2000, secondly, update the names of government departments which have changed and, thirdly, repeal references to schemes that have now concluded. This bill intends to strengthen and modernise a range of revenue laws to ensure they are effective and current—and all members will be tested on it. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

EQUALITY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (LGBTIQA+) BILL 2023

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (18:10): I continue my speech in reply and thank all members who contributed to the debate and who worked with me to progress the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023 and make New South Wales a safer and fairer place for LGBTIQA+ people. The members who spoke in support of the bill were the Attorney General, the Minister for Transport, the Minister for Women, the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, the Speaker, the member for Newcastle, the member for Blue Mountains, the member for Gosford, the member for Riverstone, the member for Parramatta, the member for South Coast, the member for Coogee, the member for Newtown, the member for Ballina and the member for Balmain. I hope I got everyone.

I also note that there were contributions from the member for Wahroonga, the member for Kellyville and the member for Badgerys Creek. I pay special tribute to the member for North Shore, Felicity Wilson, who has put her community and her values above the Liberal Party's stubborn opposition to this bill. I thank her for always being a champion for the LGBTIQA+ community and for always voting according to her values and the values of her community. The New South Wales Legislative Assembly is a better place with Felicity Wilson in it and the Liberal Party is better because of Felicity Wilson.

At the outset, let me also stress that we would not be here today without Rainbow Labor. When the bill was stuck, I reached out to Savanna Peake and Mits Delisle from Rainbow Labor and asked them to partner with me to advance this bill through the Labor caucus. Their determination and advocacy helped us secure the significant agreement on the reforms that we are passing today. I know what a powerhouse grassroots body Rainbow Labor is from my work on the marriage equality campaign, which is also a reform that would not have been achieved without Rainbow Labor. In fact, I wrote a chapter about it in my book if anyone is interested. The library has a copy; members do not have to buy it.

When this bill is passed, we are achieving more LGBTIQA+ law reform in one go than ever before in New South Wales. The reforms that we will succeed in passing, should the bill be voted through, are as follows. Trans and gender diverse people will be able to update their birth certificate through an administrative process, including those under the age of 18. People will be able to record their sex as non-binary. The time to register a birth if variations of sex characteristics make it difficult to determine an infant's sex will be extended from 60 days to 180 days. Family members will be able to alter the record of sex of a trans or gender diverse child, parent or sibling as it appears on their own birth certificate. Offences for living off the earnings of a sex worker will be repealed, enabling sex workers to care for adult family members, which is the first major sex worker reform in this place since the '90s.

Decisions about where to accommodate a child under State protection will have to consider an appropriate placement for their gender identity or variations in sex characteristics as currently is the case with sexuality and religion. Children who have had their gender-affirming care or any other special medical treatment approved by the Family Court will not also have to go through the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] for approval. Threats to out a person's LGBTIQ+ status or sex work history will be a new form of abuse. Outing will be an offence in New South Wales. We are leading the nation with that reform. Aggravated sentencing for crimes motivated by hate will be extended to hate for trans and intersex people. Outdated and stigmatising language used to describe people living with HIV or AIDS will no longer appear in the statute book.

The Mental Health Act will make it clear that gender identity and gender expression are not a mental illness and are not reasons to detain someone. Importantly, there will also be a pathway for children born from overseas commercial surrogacy arrangements to have their parents recognised. For the benefit of members, my speech will be around half an hour, following which I will move my amendments. I will seek to move the amendments in globo. Should members not wish the amendments to be moved in globo, I am happy to move from No. 1 through to No. 66 and debate and vote on each of them or group of them however members wish.

In 2022 I announced a bill to remove legislated stigma and discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people in response to the NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy 2022-2027. The strategy identified that LGBTIQ+ people experience poorer mental health and higher rates of suicidality, self-harm, drug and alcohol problems, abuse, neglect and assault, and domestic and family violence. The strategy attributes those outcomes to stigma and discrimination. Status quo is not an option, and I am glad that the Minns Labor Government shares that view with me. LGBTIQ+ people are struggling because of cruel and discriminatory laws. New South Wales has fallen behind other States and Territories, and now has the worst protections for LGBTIQ+ people, until today.

The equality legislation bill is about moving us forward. It is about giving LGBTIQ+ people the opportunity to live their best lives. It is not radical. It largely brings New South Wales into line with other States and Territories. The bill has been on the table for over a year. There has been a committee inquiry into its provisions that gave stakeholders in the wider community the opportunity to present their views to Parliament, and I acknowledge the great work of the community services committee, chaired by the member for Cessnock, in conducting the inquiry. I have consulted with colleagues across the Parliament and stakeholders across the State.

At a later stage, I will move amendments, which I will now take the House through. Firstly, my amendments will delete all proposed changes to the Anti-Discrimination Act. Anti-discrimination laws need urgent reform, particularly for LGBTIQ+ people. Trans kids can still be expelled and lesbian teachers can still be fired from private schools. There are no protections for people who are bi or non-binary or who work in the sex work industry. I am taking those provisions out of my bill because the Government has initiated a review into the Act by the NSW Law Reform Commission.

The commission is also assessing hate crime laws, and I will also address that with other provisions amended in the bill. The review provides an opportunity for the Parliament to work together to modernise and strengthen anti-discrimination protections for LGBTIQ+ people and others. Community outrage, including from unions, over the removal of those provisions shows that this is an issue the New South Wales Parliament cannot hide from anymore. We have to deal with the matter when the commission reports, and I will work with unions, stakeholders and all parliamentary colleagues to get the reforms done.

My amendments will also remove provisions to legislate Gillick competence. When I drafted the equality bill, young people in this State were struggling to get the gender-affirming care they needed. There were inconsistent approaches to consent among medical professionals, with trans kids treated differently to their peers when it came to medical care. A *Four Corners* report from Patricia Karvelas found life-saving care was being denied to young people, based on prejudice and ideology. Since then, I have worked with the health Minister to improve access. NSW Health has issued guidelines for gender-affirming care. The guidelines have at their core parental support and access to a multidisciplinary team throughout a transition journey. NSW Health and the Australian Medical Association have asked me not to legislate in this space, and I will remove these provisions.

I am disappointed we will not complete the complete decriminalisation of sex work through the bill. Decriminalisation keeps sex workers safe and prevents corruption and intimidation. It was a strong recommendation from the Wood royal commission into police corruption in the 1990s. However, the removal of the offence for living off the earnings of a sex worker, new offences against "outing" a sex worker and a commitment to review the Summary Offences Act—with consultation with groups like the Sex Worker Outreach Project and Scarlet Alliance—shows there is goodwill from this Government towards further reform. I say to sex workers that we will keep on working to stop the criminalisation of your lives and your employment. Sex work is legal as a profession in New South Wales, and it deserves respect and protection.

I now move to how the bill enables a person to alter their record of sex on their birth certificate without having to have a sex organ surgically removed. The process for adults of making an application to the registrar with a statutory declaration and a statement from an adult who has known them for 12 months affirming their identity will stay the same. However, a note will be included to make it clear that there are severe penalties for providing false information, including five years imprisonment for making a false statutory declaration, and 100 penalty units or two years imprisonment or both for giving the registrar false information.

The minimum age for applying directly to the registrar as an adult will move from 16 years to 18 years. Anyone under 18 will need the consent of either both of their parents to go to the registrar or, if only one parent gives the support, there will be a process through the District Court. That is another change that my amendment will make. Children and parents who are not the sole parent for a child will need to make an application to the District Court, not the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. This reflects the preference of the Government, which raised concerns that the NCAT may not have the qualifications and experience needed. My amendment also removes the provisions that would have enabled one parent who is not the sole parent of a child to apply directly to the registrar if it was not reasonable or practical to obtain consent of the other parent. The provision was included to cover extraordinary circumstances, like an estranged parent or a parent in an overseas prison. I accept the concern of the Government that the provision requires the registrar to make subjective decisions. I will remove it.

The bill will continue to require all children making an application to alter their record of sex to provide a statement from a counsellor that a change is in their best interests, but amendments will allow regulations to set out the qualifications of the counsellor. Wording will clarify that the statement from the counsellor must support the application. Importantly, my amendment will remove the ability for someone to change their name through the same process as altering their sex record if concurrent applications are made. A harmonised process was adopted because it is common for trans and gender diverse people to change their name to one that better suits their identity. But name changes carry greater risks for fraud than altered sex, therefore all name changes will continue to go through the existing process.

My amendment will remove the registrar's discretion in accepting sex descriptors. A sex descriptor will need to be male, female, non-binary or non-specified, and there will be regulation-making powers to further extend the list. When the bill passes, New South Wales will become one of the only States to legislate non-binary as a sex descriptor. I pay tribute to City of Sydney Labor councillor Mitch Wilson, who is the city's first non-binary trans councillor. Regulations will still need to comply with prohibited sex descriptors, which amendments will harmonise with existing prohibited name provisions. Amendments will also adopt the same provisions that restrict certain persons such as inmates from applying for a name change without the approval of their supervising authority.

My amendments will remove provisions to enable the registrar to issue an amended marriage certificate to reflect an altered record of sex. I know that having a marriage certificate that reflects the true gender of both spouses is important to the trans and gender diverse community, and it is something that I will continue to work on. However, constitutional issues have been raised. I will also move an amendment to provide a note to make it clear that changes to part 5A will not impact access to any places. Anti-discrimination laws already prohibit discrimination against trans people, regardless of whether they have had surgery or whether they have an accurate birth certificate. Trans and gender diverse people already have accurate passports, which have had no impact on spaces they or anyone else access. Corrective Services NSW and Domestic Violence NSW have confirmed a birth certificate is irrelevant to how they manage trans and gender diverse inmates or transgender women seeking refuge. The bill poses no threat to safety, only improvements to it.

My amendment will reinstate the geographical nexus for offences for engaging in commercial surrogacy. A review of the Surrogacy Act is underway and members are having a broader discussion about how the State regulates access to overseas commercial surrogacy, as well as important discussions about compensated surrogacy here in New South Wales. The bill will continue to deal with the reality that loving and supportive families are being born out of commercial surrogacy arrangements in regulated overseas jurisdictions. Between 250 and 300 Australian families, 60 per cent of whom are heterosexual, access commercial surrogacies overseas every year. The children in these families have no legal parentage, leaving them vulnerable in, for example, medical emergencies or if a parent dies, as outlined in the contribution of the transport Minister. The situation is untenable. It punishes children for the circumstances of their birth.

Under the amended bill, the court will still be able to issue a parentage order for children born out of overseas commercial surrogacy arrangements, if it is in the child's best interests. The mandatory precondition that surrogacy is altruistic will change to non-mandatory in the case of overseas commercial surrogacy. For children born from overseas commercial surrogacy arrangements on or before 30 June 2025, a new best interests of the child test will apply to all non-mandatory preconditions, recognising that parents may not have complied with the

other non-mandatory preconditions in the knowledge that they could not get a parentage order anyway. Going forward, for children born from overseas commercial surrogacy arrangements after 30 June 2025, courts will be able to waive the non-mandatory precondition for altruistic surrogacy, if it is in the best interests of the child. However, the court will only be able to waive non-mandatory preconditions if the exceptional circumstances test is met.

These provisions, including as amended, make it clear that the Parliament of New South Wales is making a clear statement that loving families who have children through overseas commercial surrogacy exist in New South Wales, are part of the fabric of our State and should be protected by law via legal pathways to parentage orders. Parents should have comfort in making an application for a parentage order—despite the retention of the geographical nexus offence—because, as a witness to proceedings for a surrogacy parentage order, they are able to seek a section 128 certificate under the Evidence Act 1995. The certificate gives them the same protection as a witness, such that the evidence they give, and any information, document or thing obtained as a direct or indirect consequence of having that evidence, generally cannot be used against them in other proceedings in New South Wales. This should give parents some level of comfort that they can give truthful evidence in a proceeding for a parentage order in respect of their child and that evidence generally cannot be used against them under other surrogacy offences if a certificate is granted.

An amendment will provide clarification where the stigmatising terms "HIV infected", "HIV infection" and "suffering with AIDS" are replaced with the terms "living with HIV/AIDS" or "HIV/AIDS" in the Workers Compensation Act 1987 to ensure that the language change does not affect eligibility for compensation. The amendments will delete a number of provisions in the bill, because current Government review processes are underway. Provisions to protect the dignity of trans and gender diverse people during invasive strip searches, unfortunately, are being removed from the bill. Trans and gender diverse people have unique sensitivities during strip searches that require different approaches to protect their dignity and reduce potential trauma. However, through working with the police Minister, the NSW Police Force has now undertaken a review and made updates to its *Person Search Manual* to better uphold the privacy, dignity and respect of trans and gender diverse people during strip searches. I understand that the NSW Police Force is committed to further engagement to ensure it meets the needs of the trans and gender diverse community.

Interpretation principles inserted into the Interpretation Act 1987 to ensure gendered terms that refer to relationships and body attributes or capacities are inclusive of all relevant relationships and people, regardless of gender, would pre-empt work already underway to update the statute with modern and inclusive language. As such, those provisions will also be removed. The obligation of the Public Service Commissioner to establish a minimum diversity and inclusion standard for the public sector will be deleted, along with updated definitions for "workplace diversity". The Public Service Commissioner is currently collecting workforce diversity data which will feed into a new workforce diversity and inclusion program, including for LGBTIQ+ people.

Once amended, the following provisions will be in the bill. Trans and gender diverse people will have access to State documentation that reflects who they are. They have been calling for that reform since before I was elected. Incorrect documents force trans people to out their transition journey every time they apply for work, education or services. Because trans and gender diverse people have been able to update their sex on their passport for over a decade, many have inconsistent documents. That makes it difficult to open a bank account or access superannuation. As the member for Sydney, I apologise to the trans people who witnessed some really cruel stuff today from some members of the Coalition, denying their existence and not treating them with the respect and dignity that they deserve. They exist and they are loved.

In circumstances where children born with variations of sex characteristics that do not allow for an easy assignment of sex, extra time will be available to register the birth—180 days instead of 60 days. Children whose gender affirming care has already been approved by the Family Court will not need to get additional approval from the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal if the treatment can be considered special medical treatment. While the bill will not end the remaining criminalisation of sex work, members have recognised the absurdity of the offence of living off the earnings of a sex worker and the bill will finally withdraw it. Sex workers will be able to look after elderly parents, adult children and unemployed partners, and hire a security guard without any risk of incrimination.

As I stated before, the Supreme Court will be able to issue parentage orders for children born out of commercial surrogacy arrangements overseas, giving them the same parental protections that other children have. The reason for different provisions for children born before or after 30 June 2025 is to provide, effectively, an amnesty for families born out of past overseas surrogacy arrangements and so that, moving forward, there is a more regulated pathway for parentage. The bill will recognise as a form of intimidation the unique type of domestic and family violence that LGBTIQ+ people experience by somebody making threats to out them to work colleagues or family, for example, which is an offence. The court can consider crimes motivated by hatred

or prejudice for sex workers or trans people when sentencing, as they do with crimes based on religious, racial and sexual orientation prejudices.

Sex workers will be protected by criminal anti-vilification offences for hate speech that incites violence against them. I make the point that, with the new intimidation offence, this is the first time in New South Wales law that sex work as a profession will be a protected attribute. I hope that sets an important precedent for other parts of New South Wales law. In recognition of the unique vulnerabilities, decisions about children and young people's care and protection will take into consideration their LGBTQIA+ status. Children who have had their gender affirming care approved by the Family Court do not need to go back to the tribunal for further approval, as I have said.

Through the Mental Health Act, New South Wales law will make it clear that gender identity and gender expression is not a mental illness. That is especially important given the long history of prejudice, misinformation and misunderstanding of the trans experience. It is in line with widely accepted views that being transgender is not a mental illness recognised in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* and the World Health Organization's *International Classification of Diseases*. While the bill as amended will not achieve all of the reforms that I hoped it would, it provides a significant advancement for LGBTQIA+ people in New South Wales. The legislation has already delivered significant progress. That progress was introduced with the ban on conversion practices, which has already passed. We have also secured improvements in access to gender affirming care. I am committed to seeing the other reforms delivered in this bill through this term of Parliament.

I have a lot of people to thank. This bill, as I said, has been more than a piece of legislation. It has been a catalyst for LGBTI-positive legislation throughout New South Wales. At the outset, I thank Equality Australia for its leadership in auditing all of the laws and getting the work done to prepare the bill, and for its stakeholder engagement and work with my office. In particular, I thank Anna Brown and Ghassan Kassisieh. Ghassan is in the gallery. He has left Equality Australia, but I still called on him a couple of times in the past couple of days and I am grateful for his support. I thank Oliver, Emily, Naureen, Tara and the whole team at Equality Australia. Anna should be so proud of what she has done with Equality Australia and the positive impact she has created across the country, particularly for the birth certificate reforms today. Equality Australia has played a key part in making sure that this year we have it done that in every State and Territory in the country. Congratulations.

I thank those who have been so generous in sharing their personal stories. I pay tribute to Heike Fabig, who is in the gallery today. When we were dealing with the apology to the LGBTIQ community for the criminalisation of homosexual acts, I wanted to make the point that we had more work to do. No-one could more powerfully express that than Heike through sharing the story of her late son Bodhi, whose dying wish was to have an accurate birth certificate. That story shared with the Premier led to the action that we are seeing today and opened the hearts and minds of colleagues across the Parliament. I know she is so proud of Bodhi, but today Bodhi is so proud of her.

I thank Ashley Scott for so generously sharing the story of his commercial surrogacy and for his constant advocacy through the work of Rainbow Families; Eloise Brook from the Gender Centre and now AusPATH; the indefatigable Teddy Cook, who is always leading the way on important trans law reform; the amazing team at Twenty10; and the Hunter Gender Alliance. I also thank religious leaders. We know that some religious leaders lined up with some opponents of the bill but, at the beginning of the week, a number of religious leaders lined up with me in support of the bill. They included Bishop Peter Stuart, the Anglican Bishop of Newcastle; Reverend Bill Crews; and Pastor Jon Owen of the Wayside Chapel. They are people who see the impacts of the discrimination that we are dealing with firsthand every day in their services. I acknowledge Reverend Jo Inkipin, who is a proud trans Christian.

I thank the Sex Workers Outreach Program, including Joanna Megan and Soss and everybody who did an amazing job of letter writing. I thank all the unions for working with me, including the Public Service Association, the Health Services Union, the Australian Services Union, the Nurses and Midwives' Association, the Teachers Federation and Unions NSW. I thank the Parents for Transgender Youth Equity, Rainbow Families and Rainbow Labor. I am so grateful for their constant leadership. I thank Ian Thorpe, who made it clear to the Premier recently that he does not like to come last, which helped to motivate the action we are taking today. I am also thankful for the support of the Scarlet Alliance, Twenty10, ACON, the Inner City Legal Centre, BlaQ, Amnesty International, Intersex Human Rights Australia, Positive Life, and the Hunter Gender Alliance.

So many MPs have spoken passionately today about the reforms, and I particularly call out the Hunter MPs for their leadership. I know that the Hunter Gender Alliance has led the way in bringing them all together. I thank the Justice and Equity Centre, the NSW Council for Civil Liberties, the HIV/AIDS Legal Centre and all the organisations that made submissions about the bill. I obviously thank Domestic Violence NSW, the Australian Medical Association and the Women's Electoral Lobby. I thank all the members who have met with me one on one over the past months and who have met with me along with Savanna and Mits. I appreciated those discussions.

I am grateful for the trip that I made to the Riverstone electorate. It was my first time. I did not work that closely with the former member, but I am grateful to work with the current member for Riverstone.

I thank my team in the Sydney electorate office. I pay tribute to the amazing Tammie Nardone. Tammie has worked tirelessly not only for the past 48 to 72 hours but also for the past two years, working with my predecessor on legislation for same-sex adoption through to abortion decriminalisation, voluntary assisted dying and a number of other bills, including getting this legislation done. After we passed the voluntary assisted dying bill, I said, "Tammie, I want to draft legislation to amend 20 Acts," and there is no-one who does it better. I am so grateful to Tammie, and the LGBT community is so grateful to her also.

I also particularly call out Brianna Skinner, who is a temporary relief worker in my office. About this time 10 years ago Brianna met with me about the importance of birth certificate reform, and now we are getting it done. It is great to have her in my office, and I am grateful for her advocacy. I thank the rest of my team—Donna, Annie, Stanley, Zander and Ivan—as well as my former staff Leanne and Roy. During the advocacy for this bill our office has copped a lot and their support has been critical. I also thank Nick Stewart from Dowson Turco, who has given important advice throughout this process.

The Premier has been amazing throughout this process, and his office has been fantastic. Sachin will be relieved that, hopefully, after tomorrow I will not need to call him any more about this bill. I also acknowledge the amazing work of Alice Crawford. I am so grateful to the Attorney General and his team. I particularly call out Larisa Michalko, who worked tirelessly with Tammie before going on leave and again since her return from leave, and the rest of the Attorney General's team—Dylan, Phil and everybody in his office. I thank the Minister for Health and particularly Rosie Rand in his office for their strong engagement with the issues.

I pay particular tribute to the Hon. Penny Sharpe, the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council. Penny is a fierce and determined champion of our community. I hope that she will have carriage of the bill in the Legislative Council. It is important for our community to have not only an openly lesbian woman in one of the highest offices in this State but also someone who is so committed to delivering for our community. We are grateful for the work that Penny and her team, including Harry, have done on this bill. There are a lot of people to thank because this legislation has been a team effort. I know that we are not getting everything done. But let us consider that the LGBTIQ+ equality bill is more than a bill; it is a call to action. It is a catalyst for action. It has already delivered reforms, and it will keep on delivering them. With this bill, we are achieving more LGBTIQ+ law reform in one go than has ever occurred in New South Wales. Let us pass this bill.

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 Mr Alex Greenwich.

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 to 20 be agreed to.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (18:45): By leave: I move my amendments Nos 1 to 66 on sheet c2024-115V in globo:

No. 1 Commencement—consequential amendment

Page 2, clause 2, lines 5–7. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

This Act commences on the earlier of the following—

- (a) a day or days to be appointed by proclamation,
- (b) 1 July 2025.

No. 2 Omission of proposed amendments to Anti-Discrimination Act 1977

Pages 3–17, Schedule 1, line 1 on page 3 to line 25 on page 17. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 3 Omission of proposed amendment regarding single application for altering record of sex and name: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 18, Schedule 2[4], lines 17–26, proposed section 29D. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 4 Prohibited sex descriptor and definition of "qualified counsellor": Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 19, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32A, line 1. Omit "reason.". Insert instead—

reason, or

- (c) includes or resembles an official title or rank, or
- (d) is contrary to the public interest for some other reason.

qualified counsellor means a person who has the qualifications prescribed by the regulations.

No. 5 Sex descriptor: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 19, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32A, lines 9–13. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

sex descriptor means the following—

- (a) female,
- (b) male,
- (c) non-binary,
- (d) non-specified,
- (e) any descriptor prescribed by the regulations.

No. 6 Adults may apply to Registrar for alteration of record of person's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 19, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32B, line 16. Omit "16". Insert instead "18".

No. 7 Adults may apply to Registrar for alteration of record of person's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 19, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32B(1)(a), line 20. Omit "16". Insert instead "18".

No. 8 Consequences for false statutory declaration or giving Registrar false information

Page 19, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32B(2). Insert after line 34—

Note—See the *Oaths Act 1900*, sections 25 and 25A, which provide for penalties for making a false statutory declaration, and this Act, section 57, which provides for penalties for giving the Registrar false information.

No. 9 Application to Registrar about alteration of record of person's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 19, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32B(3), lines 35–38. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

- (3) The applicant must nominate a sex descriptor in the application.

No. 10 Omission of provision about application to NCAT by person under 16 years of age about alteration of record of person's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Pages 19–21, Schedule 2[5], proposed sections 32C and 32CA, line 39 on page 19 to line 12 on page 21. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 11 Parents of child may apply to Registrar for alteration of record of child's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 21, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32D(1), line 18. Omit "16". Insert instead "18".

No. 12 Amendment of proposed amendment to Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995 about applications by sole parents

Page 21, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32D(1)(e) and (f), lines 26–30. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

- (e) an order of a court authorises the applicant to register a change of sex in relation to the child.

No. 13 Counselling: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Pages 21 and 22, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32D(2)(c), line 44 on page 21 to line 5 on page 22. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

- (c) accompanied by a statement from a qualified counsellor who has provided counselling to the child that the child has undertaken counselling in relation to—
 - (i) whether or not the application ought to be made, and
 - (ii) the implications of the alteration of the record of the child's sex, and
- (c1) accompanied by a statement from the qualified counsellor referred to in paragraph (c) that the counsellor supports the application, and

No. 14 Application by parent of child about alteration of record of child's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 22, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32D(3), lines 8–11. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

- (3) The applicant must nominate a sex descriptor in the application.

No. 15 **Application to District Court**

Page 22, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32E, line 12. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "**District Court**".

No. 16 **Parents of child may apply for alteration of record of child's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 22, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32E(1)(a), line 15. Omit "16". Insert instead "18".

No. 17 **Application to District Court**

Page 22, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32E(2), line 20. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "the District Court".

No. 18 **Counselling: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 22, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32E(3)(b), lines 24–31. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 19 **Application to District Court**

Page 22, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32E(3)(c), line 32. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "the District Court".

No. 20 **Application by parent of child about alteration of record of child's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 22, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32E(4), lines 34–37. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

- (4) The applicant must nominate a sex descriptor in the application.

No. 21 **Application for registration of acknowledgment of sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 22, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EA(1)(a), line 43. Omit "16". Insert instead "18".

No. 22 **Consequences for false statutory declaration or giving Registrar false information: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 23, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EA(2). Insert after line 19—

Note—See the *Oaths Act 1900*, sections 25 and 25A, which provide for penalties for making a false statutory declaration, and this Act, section 57, which provides for penalties for giving the Registrar false information.

No. 23 **Application to Registrar for registration of acknowledgement of sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 23, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EA(3), lines 20–24. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

- (3) The applicant must nominate a sex descriptor in the application.

No. 24 **Parents of child may apply to Registrar for registration of acknowledgement of child's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 23, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EB(1)(a), line 28. Omit "16". Insert instead "18".

No. 25 **Application to Registrar by parent of child about registration of acknowledgment of child's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 23, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EB(2)(e) and (f), lines 42–46. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

- (e) an order of a court authorises the applicant to register a change of sex in relation to the child.

No. 26 **Counselling: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 24, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EB(3)(c), lines 14–22. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

- (c) accompanied by a statement from a qualified counsellor who has provided counselling to the child that the child has undertaken counselling in relation to—
- (i) whether or not the application ought to be made, and
- (ii) the implications of the registration of the acknowledgement of the child's sex, and
- (c1) accompanied by a statement from the qualified counsellor referred to in paragraph (c) that the counsellor supports the application, and

No. 27 **Application to Registrar by parent about registration of acknowledgement of child's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 24, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EB(4), lines 25–29. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

- (4) The applicant must nominate a sex descriptor in the application.

No. 28 **Application to District Court**

Page 24, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EBA, line 30. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "**District Court**".

No. 29 **Parents of child may apply for registration of acknowledgement of child's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 24, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EBA(1)(a)(i), line 36. Omit "16". Insert instead "18".

No. 30 **Application to District Court**

Page 24, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EBA(2), line 46. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "the District Court".

No. 31 **Counselling: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 25, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EBA(3)(b), lines 3–10. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 32 **Application to District Court: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 25, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EBA(3)(c), line 11. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "the District Court".

No. 33 **Application by parent about registration of acknowledgement of child's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 25, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32EBA(4), lines 13–17. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

- (4) The applicant must nominate a sex descriptor in the application.

No. 34 **Omission of provision for persons under 18 years of age to apply for registration of acknowledgement of person's sex: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Pages 25 and 26, Schedule 2[5], proposed sections 32ECA and 32ED, line 18 on page 25 to line 40 on page 26. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 35 **Application to District Court: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 27, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32G, line 31. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "District Court".

No. 36 **Application to District Court: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 27, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32G(1), line 32. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "the District Court".

No. 37 **Application to District Court: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 27, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32G(1), line 34. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "the District Court".

No. 38 **Application to District Court: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 27, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32G(2), line 43. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "The District Court".

No. 39 **Application to District Court: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 27, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32G(2), line 44. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "the District Court".

No. 40 **Application to District Court: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 27, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32G(3), line 47. Omit "NCAT may regard". Insert instead "the District Court may have regard".

No. 41 **Application to District Court: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 28, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32G(3)(a), line 1. Omit all words on the line.

No. 42 **Application to District Court: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 28, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32G(4), line 6. Omit "NCAT". Insert instead "The District Court".

No. 43 **Restrictions on change of sex for certain persons: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 28, Schedule 2[5]. Insert after line 13—

Division 5A Change of sex restrictions for certain persons

32GA Application and interpretation of division

- (1) The requirements and restrictions contained in this division are in addition to any other requirements and restrictions contained in this part.
- (2) A term used in this division and Part 5, Division 3 has the same meaning in this division as it has in Part 5, Division 3.

32GB Restricted persons

- (1) In this division, a *restricted person*—
 - (a) means any of the following persons—
 - (i) an inmate,
 - (ii) a person on remand,
 - (iii) a parolee,
 - (iv) a periodic detainee,
 - (v) a person who is subject to a supervision order,

- (vi) a forensic patient,
- (vii) a correctional patient,
- (viii) a person of a class included by the regulations under subsection (2), but
- (b) despite paragraph (a), does not include a person of a class prescribed by the regulations as not being a class of restricted persons.
- (2) For subsection (1)(a)(viii), the regulations may include as a restricted person a person of a class that consists of the whole or part of the following classes—
 - (a) persons in lawful custody,
 - (b) persons the subject of an order made under an Act authorising a form of supervision or conditional release of the person in connection with the commission, or alleged commission, of an offence.

32GC Applications for change of sex by or on behalf of restricted person

- (1) A restricted person must not do the following without the written approval of the supervising authority—
 - (a) apply to the Registrar to register a change of the restricted person's sex under this Act,
 - (b) apply to a registering authority to register a change of the restricted person's sex under a corresponding law.

Maximum penalty—5 penalty units.
- (2) A person must not, on behalf of a restricted person, do the following without the written approval of the supervising authority—
 - (a) apply to the Registrar to register a change of the restricted person's sex under this Act,
 - (b) apply to a registering authority to register a change of the restricted person's sex under a corresponding law.

Maximum penalty—5 penalty units.

32GD Approval by supervising authority

- (1) The supervising authority may approve the making of an application to the Registrar or a registering authority for registration of a change of sex of a restricted person only if the supervising authority is satisfied the change of sex is necessary or reasonable.
- (2) The supervising authority must not approve the making of an application to the Registrar or a registering authority for the registration of a change of sex of a restricted person if the supervising authority is satisfied—
 - (a) the change of sex would, if registered, be reasonably likely to—
 - (i) adversely affect the security, discipline or good order of premises or a facility at which the restricted person is held or accommodated, or
 - (ii) jeopardise the restricted person's or another person's health or safety, or
 - (iii) be used to further an unlawful activity or purpose, or
 - (iv) be used to evade or hinder the supervision of the restricted person, or
 - (b) the proposed change of sex would be reasonably likely to be regarded as offensive by a victim of crime or an appreciable sector of the community.
- (3) The supervising authority for a restricted person who is a forensic patient and a person referred to in section 32GB(1), definition of *restricted person*, paragraph (a)(i)–(v) must not approve the making of an application to the Registrar or a registering authority for the registration of a change of the person's sex unless—
 - (a) the supervising authority has consulted with the Commissioner of Corrective Services, and
 - (b) the Commissioner has given concurrence.

Note—The supervising authority for all forensic patients is the Mental Health Review Tribunal.
- (4) Subsections (1) and (2) apply to a determination of the Commissioner of Corrective Services about whether to give concurrence in the same way as the subsections apply to a determination of a supervising authority about whether to give approval.
- (5) If the supervising authority approves the making of an application to the Registrar or a registering authority for the registration of a change of sex of a restricted person, the supervising authority must—
 - (a) as soon as practicable, give written notice of the approval to the person who intends to make the application, and

- (b) give a copy of the written notice of approval to the Registrar or registering authority.

32GE Additional requirements for registration of change of sex of restricted persons

- (1) The Registrar must not register a change of sex of a restricted person unless the Registrar has received a copy of the notice of approval of the supervising authority to the application for the registration of a change of sex.
- (2) The Registrar must give written notice to the supervising authority of a decision of the Registrar to—
 - (a) register a change of sex of a restricted person, or
 - (b) refuse to register a change of sex of a restricted person.
- (3) The Registrar must give written notice to—
 - (a) the Commissioner of Corrective Services if the Registrar registers the change of sex of a person who is—
 - (i) a forensic patient, and
 - (ii) a person referred to in section 32GB(1), definition of *restricted person*, paragraph (a)(i)–(v), and
 - (b) the Commissioner of Police if the Registrar registers the change of sex of a person who is—
 - (i) a restricted person, and
 - (ii) a registrable person within the meaning of the *Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000*.

32GF Registrar may correct Register

- (1) The Registrar may correct the Register under section 45 if a change of sex of a person has been registered in contravention of this division.
- (2) This section does not limit the power of the Registrar under section 45 to correct the Register.

32GG Regulations for purposes of division

The regulations may provide for the following—

- (a) the making of applications under this division,
- (b) the giving of approvals and concurrences under this division,
- (c) consultation requirements for supervising authorities,
- (d) exemptions from the requirements of the provisions of this division,
- (e) the modification of the application of the provisions of this division in specified circumstances.

No. 44 Effect of alteration of record to be subject to other Acts: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 28, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32H. Insert after line 22—

- (4) This section is subject to any other Act.

No. 45 Effect of alteration of record: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 28, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32H. Insert before line 23—

Note— Nothing in this part changes access to toilets, change rooms, sport or allocation in correctional facilities, women's refuges or any other place.

No. 46 Amendment of proposed provision in Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995 about who may apply for certificates

Page 28, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32I(2), lines 29 and 30. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

issue—

- (a) for an alteration of a person's sex referred to in subsection (1)(a)—a birth certificate certifying particulars by reference to the altered sex, or
- (b) for a registration of an acknowledgment of a person's sex and name referred to in subsection (1)(b)—a certificate certifying particulars in an entry in the Register in relation to the acknowledgment of the person's sex and name.

No. 47 Certificates: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 28, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32I(3), line 33. Omit all words on the line.

No. 48 Certificates: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995

Page 28, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32I(3), line 34. Omit "16". Insert instead "18".

No. 49 **Certificates: Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995**

Page 28, Schedule 2[5], proposed section 32I(3), line 36. Omit "16". Insert instead "18".

No. 50 **Amendment of Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998**

Page 29, Schedule 3[2], lines 5–21. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 51 **Omission of proposed amendment to Children's Guardian Act 2019**

Page 30, Schedule 4, lines 1–4. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 52 **Omission of proposed amendments to Court Security Act 2005**

Pages 31 and 32, Schedule 5, line 1 on page 31 to line 3 on page 32. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 53 **Omission of proposed amendments to Crimes Act 1900**

Page 33, Schedule 6, lines 1–15. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 54 **Omission of proposed amendments to Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999**

Page 34, Schedule 7, lines 1–33. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 55 **Amendment and omission of proposed amendments to Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 in relation to threatening to out a person, apprehended domestic violence orders and mediation**

Pages 35 and 36, Schedule 8[1]–[7], line 3 on page 35 to line 10 on page 36. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

[1] **Section 7 Meaning of "intimidation"**

Insert before the note to section 7(1)(a)—

Example of conduct that may amount to harassment of a person—

- (1) Intentionally disclosing or threatening to disclose any of the following about a person without the person's consent, known as "outing"—
 - (a) the person's sexual orientation,
 - (b) the person's gender history,
 - (c) that the person has a variation of sex characteristics,
 - (d) that the person lives with HIV,
 - (e) that the person is, or has been, a sex worker.
- (2) For subsection (1)(b) of this example, *gender history* means the sex recorded at birth for the person is different to the sex the person identifies with, lives in or seeks to live in, whether or not the person's record of sex is altered under—
 - (a) the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995*, Part 5A, or
 - (b) the corresponding provisions of a law of another State or Territory or a jurisdiction outside Australia.

[2] **Section 21 Referral of matters to mediation**

Omit ", HIV/AIDS infection" from section 21(2)(d).

[3] **Section 21(2)(d1)**

Insert after section 21(2)(d)—

- (d1) the defendant has engaged in conduct amounting to harassment relating to the protected person being a person living with HIV/AIDS, or

[4] **Section 53 Discretion to refuse to issue process in apprehended personal violence order matters**

Omit ", HIV/AIDS infection or disability." from section 53(5)(c). Insert instead—

or disability,

- (d) the defendant having engaged in conduct amounting to harassment relating to the protected person being a person living with HIV/AIDS.

No. 56 **Omission of proposed amendments to Crimes (Forensic Procedures) Act 2000**

Pages 37 and 38, Schedule 9, line 1 on page 37 to line 46 on page 38. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 57 **Omission of proposed amendments to Government Sector Employment Act 2013 and Government Sector Employment (General) Rules 2014**

Pages 41 and 42, Schedules 12 and 13, line 1 on page 41 to line 6 on page 42. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 58 **Omission of proposed amendments to Interpretation Act 1987**

Page 43, Schedule 14, lines 1–35. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 59 Omission of proposed amendments to Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002

Pages 44 and 45, Schedule 15, line 1 on page 44 to line 16 on page 45. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 60 Omission of proposed amendments to Sheriff Act 2005

Page 47, Schedule 17, lines 1–36. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 61 Amendment of proposed amendments to Summary Offences Act 1988

Page 48, Schedule 18, lines 3 and 4. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

Section 15 Living on earnings of prostitution

Omit the section.

No. 62 Commercial surrogacy: Surrogacy Act 2010

Page 49, Schedule 19[1]–[3], lines 2–16. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

[1] Section 18 Making of parentage order by Court

Omit section 18(2). Insert instead—

- (2) However, the Court may make a parentage order, despite not being satisfied a precondition to the making of the order has been met, if—
 - (a) for a surrogacy arrangement that is not a commercial surrogacy arrangement—
 - (i) the precondition is not a mandatory precondition to the making of a parentage order, and
 - (ii) the Court is satisfied exceptional circumstances justify the making of the parentage order, despite the precondition not being met, or
 - (b) for a commercial surrogacy arrangement entered into outside Australia for a child born on or before 30 June 2025—
 - (i) the precondition is not a mandatory precondition to the making of a parentage order, and
 - (ii) the Court is satisfied, having regard to the circumstances of the birth parent or parents, the intended parent or parents and the surrogacy arrangement, that it is in the best interests of the child to make the parentage order, despite the precondition not being met, or
 - (c) for a commercial surrogacy entered into outside Australia for a child born on or after 1 July 2025—
 - (i) if the precondition is that the surrogacy arrangement is not a commercial surrogacy arrangement—the Court is satisfied, having regard to the circumstances of the birth parent or parents, the intended parent or parents and the surrogacy arrangement, that it is in the best interests of the child to make the parentage order, despite the precondition not being met, or
 - (ii) if the precondition is any other precondition that is not a mandatory precondition to the making of a parentage order—the Court is satisfied exceptional circumstances justify the making of the parentage order, despite the precondition not being met.

No. 63 Altruistic surrogacy: Surrogacy Act 2010

Page 49, Schedule 19[4], line 18. Omit all words on the line. Insert instead—

Omit section 23(2). Insert instead—

- (2) This precondition is only a mandatory precondition to the making of a parentage order in relation to a surrogacy arrangement entered into in Australia.

No. 64 Omission of proposed amendment to Surrogacy Act 2010

Page 49, Schedule 19[5], lines 19–22. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 65 Amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987

Page 50, Schedule 20[2], line 6. Omit all words on the line. Insert instead—

Omit "HIV infection or AIDS". Insert instead "HIV/AIDS".

No. 66 Amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987

Page 50, Schedule 20. Insert after line 19—

[6A] Section 67A, note

Insert at the end of the section—

Note— The amendment of this section by the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Act 2024 to refer to "living with HIV/AIDS" is merely to modernise language and is not intended to change the application of workers compensation legislation and other applicable legislation.

As I outlined in my speech in reply, the amendments will delete the changes to the Anti-Discrimination Act and amendments to section 93Z of the Crimes Act. A NSW Law Reform Commission review into anti-discrimination laws and hate crimes is underway, and this process will provide the opportunity for change. The amendments will also remove provisions to legislate Gillick competence. NSW Health now has the guidelines for providing gender-affirming care to young people that deal with consent and support from a multidisciplinary team, and legislating in this space is not helpful nor supported by stakeholders. The amendments restore most of the sex worker offences in the Summary Offences Act except for living off the earnings of a sex worker. The Government will undertake a review into the Act, and I hope the review exposes the harm that remaining offences cause to sex workers.

The amendments include changes to the regime for altering a record of sex that will increase the minimum age to apply independently to the register from 16 to 18; require parental consent for access to birth certificates for under 18-year-olds and provide a court process to resolve access issues where only one parent supports that application; provide for minimum qualifications for the person giving counselling to under-18s; remove the ability to change the name on a birth certificate through the same process as altering the record of sex; set out sex descriptors and provide for new sex descriptors to be included by regulation; require oversight for applications by people detained by the State; make the penalties for falsifying a statutory declaration and giving false information to the register clear; remove the option to alter the recorded sex on a marriage certificate; and clarify that the new part does not impact on access to gendered spaces.

The amendments reinstate the geographical nexus for offences for engaging in commercial surrogacy while providing a legal pathway for children born under those arrangements to get parentage orders. The amendments change the mandatory precondition that surrogacy will be altruistic to make overseas commercial surrogacy arrangements a non-mandatory precondition. For children born from overseas commercial surrogacy arrangements on or before 30 June, the court will apply a new best interests test for the child to be able to waive all non-mandatory preconditions, recognising that parents may not have complied with all the non-mandatory preconditions knowing that they could not get a parentage order underway. Going forward, for children born from overseas commercial surrogacy arrangements after 30 June 2025, the court will be able to waive the non-mandatory precondition for altruistic surrogacy if the new best interests of the child test is met for the precondition. However, the court will only be able to waive the other non-mandatory preconditions if the existing exceptional circumstances test is met for those preconditions.

The amendments will move the domestic and personal violence protections against threats to out a person's LGBTIQA+ status or sex work history from coercive control to intimidation. Intimidation is still a form of domestic abuse, however, now those provisions will extend beyond domestic relationships, including family relationships and workplace relationships. The amendments will provide a clarification where the stigmatising terms "HIV infected", "HIV infection" and "suffering with HIV/AIDS" are replaced with the terms "living with HIV/AIDS" or just "HIV/AIDS" in the Workers Compensation Act 1987 to ensure that the language change does not affect eligibility for compensation.

Those amendments will remove provisions that would regulate invasive strip searches for people who are trans and gender diverse. The NSW Police Force has now undertaken a review and made updates to its *Person Search Manual* for trans and gender diverse people. I understand that the manual is regularly updated. My amendments delete interpretation principles to ensure that gendered terms that refer to relationships and body attributes or capacities are inclusive. Other work that is underway to update the statute with modern and inclusive language is considering those proposals. The amendments remove the minimum diversity and inclusion standard in the public sector in light of the current work that the Public Service Commissioner is already doing in that space. The amendments for extending consideration about children's guardianship decisions to include whether a child has variations of sex characteristics will be removed due to concerns about the potential impacts should such variations not be known.

As I have said a number of times, the amendments remove large parts of the bill as I introduced it. I wanted it all to come together. I wanted it all to pass this Parliament. However, if we were debating and voting on my bill holus-bolus, it would be voted down today. That is the reality. I will always choose progress over defeat. I am heartened that we have pathways to achieve all of the amended provisions, including having achieved some of them already. I urge members to support the amendments and, in doing so, support the passage of the bill through this House.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (18:51): I speak on behalf of the Government in support of the amendments moved by the member for Sydney on sheet c2024-115V. I thank the member for

Sydney for his considered and appropriate amendments to the bill, and I note his concluding remarks about always choosing progress over defeat. As we said this morning at the press conference, this is the next step. These amendments make important changes to omit certain provisions of the bill and to change others to ensure they can be appropriately and successfully implemented.

Schedule 1 to the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023 would have made significant amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, including with respect to private educational authorities and religious institutions. The Government supports the amendment to omit schedule 1 from the bill. Those are fundamental changes that are best considered through the NSW Law Reform Commission's review into the Act, which will be voluminous and far-reaching, because the Act is well and truly out of date and overdue. That reform is currently underway.

Schedule 2 to the bill makes amendments to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995 to enable a person to change their registered sex through an administrative process. Under the amendments moved by the member for Sydney, schedule 2 will now amend the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act to provide that a person aged 18 and over can change their registered sex through an administrative process without the need for surgery. Under that process, an application must be accompanied by a statutory declaration from the applicant and a supporting statement from an adult who has known the applicant for 12 months.

Parents will have the ability to change the registered sex of a child under 18. An application must be accompanied by documents that include a statement from a qualified counsellor who has provided counselling to the child. If there is a dispute between parents regarding changing a child's registered sex, a parent will be able to apply to the District Court for an order that the child's registered sex be changed, with decisions made in the best interests of the child. A child will be unable to initiate their own court application if both parents object to a change of sex application. That is consistent with the longstanding principle that persons under 18 lack legal capacity to conduct and be bound by the outcome of legal proceedings.

Applicants will be required to identify a sex descriptor of male, female, non-binary, non-specified or another descriptor prescribed by the regulations. If an applicant also seeks to change their name as well as their sex, a separate change of name application must be made and must comply with the requirements in part 5 of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act. A person will be unable to change their registered sex if they are a "restricted person", such as an inmate, a parolee, a person subject to a supervision order or a forensic patient, unless they have the written approval of a supervising authority to make the application. That will prevent inmates, parolees and other high-risk persons applying to change their sex without oversight. The Government supports schedule 2 as amended by the member for Sydney.

Schedule 3 [2] proposes amendments to the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 to provide that young people aged 16 and 17 may make a decision about medical or dental treatment as validly and effectively as an adult, and that a child under 16 may make a decision about medical or dental treatment in certain circumstances. The Government supports the amendment to omit item [2] from the bill. Schedule 4 amends the Children's Guardian Act 2019 to expand the guiding principles of the Act to require account to be taken of variations of sex characteristics of the child and, if relevant, of the person with parental responsibility. The Government supports the amendment to omit that schedule from the bill. Schedules 5, 7, 9, 15 and 17 propose to amend various Acts to provide alternative arrangements for the search of transgender and intersex people. The Government supports the amendments to omit those schedules, noting that, as drafted, the amendments raise operational concerns that require further consideration.

Schedule 6 proposes amendments to section 93Z of the Crimes Act to extend the offence for publicly threatening or inciting violence on grounds of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex or HIV/AIDS status to also include sex work as a protected attribute. The treatment of sex work as a protected attribute is linked to the amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 that are being omitted. Once again, I note that the Law Reform Commission review of that Act is underway. The Government supports the amendment to omit schedule 6 from the bill.

Currently, schedule 8 will amend the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 to insert an example into the definition of "domestic abuse" that provides that "threatening to out a person" is a form of sexually coercive conduct. That means to intentionally disclose, without the person's consent, a person's sexual orientation, gender history, variation of sex characteristics, HIV status or current or past employment as a sex worker. The Government supports the amendments to move that example to be one of harassment in the definition of "intimidation" under current section 7 (1) (a) of the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act. Including that as an example of intimidation ensures that outing a person is recognised as harmful even if the person does not have a domestic relationship with the victim. That is important.

Inclusion as part of the definition of "intimidation" also means that outing will integrate more readily into the existing legislative framework, which means the other items in that schedule are not required. That conduct would still be a part of domestic abuse, as intimidation is a form of domestic abuse under section 6A (2) (f) of the Act. Fear of such conduct will still be a ground to make an apprehended violence order [AVO] under sections 16 (1) (b) (i) and 19 (1) (b) (i) of the Act. That conduct would be prohibited under all AVOs, as intimidation is always taken statutorily to be prohibited under all AVOs under section 36 (b) of the Act. That conduct will also clearly be a form of abusive behaviour under section 54F (1) (a) of the Crimes Act, which is one of the elements needed for the coercive control offence under section 54D of the Crimes Act. That conduct would also be covered by the offence of intimidation under section 13 of the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act, which applies where such conduct is done with the intention to cause physical or mental harm.

Schedule 12 proposes amendments to the Government Sector Employment Act that expand on diversity requirements for the New South Wales public service. These amendments are not legally necessary as the definition of "workforce diversity" is already expressed to be non-exhaustive. The Government supports the amendment to omit schedule 12 from the equality bill. The Government also supports the amendment to omit schedule 13 from the equality bill, which proposes amendments to the Government Sector Employment (General) Rules 2014. Schedule 14 proposes amendments to the Interpretation Act to expand and modernise the definition of gender across all New South Wales legislation. Amendments to the Interpretation Act would have implications across the statute book, and would benefit from further careful consideration, particularly in relation to transitional provisions. The Government supports the amendment to omit schedule 14.

Schedule 18 proposes to amend the Summary Offences Act 1988 to repeal part 3, which sets out offences relating to what is termed in the Act as "prostitution". The Government supports the amendment that will have the effect of only repealing the offence under section 15 for living on the earnings of sex work. A further review will be undertaken by the Department of Communities and Justice in relation to the remaining provisions under this part. Schedule 19 proposes substantive changes to the Surrogacy Act. Under the amendments moved by the member for Sydney, the offence of entering into a commercial surrogacy agreement, including an international commercial surrogacy agreement, will be retained. Amendments will also be moved to provide that a surrogacy arrangement, being an altruistic arrangement, is no longer a mandatory precondition to obtaining a parentage order for international commercial surrogacy arrangements.

If the international commercial surrogacy arrangement is in relation to a child born on or before 30 June 2025, then all non-mandatory preconditions will be able to be waived on the best interests test. If the international commercial surrogacy arrangement is in relation to a child born after 30 June 2025, then all non-mandatory preconditions can be waived on the exceptional circumstances test, except for the now non-mandatory precondition that the surrogacy arrangement be an altruistic one. This will be subject to the best interests test. The provision relating to the rights of the birth mother will also be removed because these rights are already protected. The Government supports schedule 19 as amended.

Schedule 20 [1] and [3] to [7] amend the Workers Compensation Act to replace terms such as "HIV infection" and "suffering with AIDS" with "living with HIV/AIDS". These items are supported as drafted. Schedule 20 [2] currently seeks to omit subsection 67A (2) of the Act. This may have an unintended impact on historical claims. As such, the Government supports the amendment to item [2] of schedule 20 to retain section 67A (2) and update the language to be consistent with other provisions.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (19:02): The length of contribution of the Attorney General made with the full support of the NSW Department of Communities and Justice is testament to both the detail and substantial nature of the amendments. As I said in my contribution to the second reading debate, the first iteration of these amendments was supplied to the Opposition late on Saturday night. Another group of substantial amendments were then supplied to the Opposition after debate had commenced and after the Attorney General had made his contribution. In the very short period of time that we have had for review, the Opposition has formed the view that there are some meritorious matters included in the amendments. Overall, however, they do not substantially change our objections to the bill as a whole. The Minns Labor Government supports the amendments, so there is no point in us seeking to divide or make long contributions to the debate. We will allow the amendments to go through without division and deal with the amended bill accordingly.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (19:04): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the amendments that have been moved by the member for Sydney. I note the comment by the member, which was also acknowledged by the Attorney General, that he will always choose progress over defeat. That acknowledges where we are at in this current discussion. That said, The Greens are not in a position to support these amendments that remove parts of a bill that is designed to support full equality. There can be no excuses. Seeking to amend and remove parts of an equality bill further confirms this Parliament's support for entrenching discrimination in

our laws. It is one thing to be unable to change laws when they are already on the books, but it is another thing to choose to remove parts of a bill that we have already considered on the floor of this House.

We have chosen to not address what are clearly problematic elements of our laws in New South Wales. If the member for Sydney was not the one moving this bill and these amendments, I am certain that when we called for a division he would be on our side. I know where the member for Sydney stands on the Anti-Discrimination Act and its exceptions. I am also certain that the members of Rainbow Labor and Equality Australia watching on in the gallery today are not supportive of these amendments that remove parts of the equality bill.

I must express my deepest disappointment that, even though it is now in government, NSW Labor is not delivering on these reforms. If we cannot do this now, when can we do it? Maybe it will be next year; I really hope that it is. I remind everyone that we would not be doing this right now if the Labor Government was on board, because we would have the numbers. It is disappointing that the Labor Government did not have the courage to move these amendments itself. The incredibly difficult position we are in demonstrates the issue with the amendments being negotiated behind closed doors. If we were able to respond to some of these amendments, our ability to mobilise and hold our ground would have been greater. That being said, The Greens appreciate that this is where we are at. With full respect and recognition of the fact that we supported the member for Sydney in bringing this bill before Parliament, I hope he understands why the only thing that The Greens can do is to vote against these amendments that will pull apart the Anti-Discrimination Act.

The Attorney General is present for this debate, but he will not be there when this bill moves to the other House, so I must note the concerns we have with amendment No. 43, although I also appreciate that we supported moving the amendments in globo. Our spokesperson in the other place, Dr Amanda Cohn, will look closely at these amendments and will raise a number of concerns. We will put forward amendments to insert critical provisions back into the bill so that it delivers on being an equality bill. We will also look at the specific concerns we have with amendment No. 43, which will limit the rights of prisoners to make their own self-determination on their gender identity and status. These concerns will be looked at in more detail. I will finish by saying that we should not let where we are with this bill undermine the significant reform on birth certificates. This is going to have a real impact on people's lives. On behalf of The Greens, I join the member for Sydney in expressing disappointment at the way that some of the contributions to the debate happened. I encourage those members in the other place who speak to the bill to preface their contribution with a trigger warning where appropriate.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (19:09): I thank the Attorney General and his staff for their work with me on the amendments, which will facilitate the passage of the legislation. I thank the shadow Attorney General for his contribution on the amendments. I also thank the member for Newtown for her contribution and acknowledge The Greens' support for further reform. As we know, LGBTQIA+ reform does not stop today; it starts, and it starts again with new energy. This bill has been a catalyst for reforms, some which have already been achieved and others which will follow from this bill. The New South Wales Minns Labor Government has shown a commitment to the LGBTQIA+ community that has not existed in this place for a very long time—perhaps ever.

This is the year in which the New South Wales Parliament apologised for the criminalisation of homosexuality. This is the year that conversion practices prohibition legislation was passed in New South Wales. This is the year that the New South Wales Minns Labor Government committed to implementing all recommendations of the Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes, and this is also the year in which the Minns Labor Government is updating and improving 10 laws in the interests of the LGBTQIA+ community and sex workers. That gives me great confidence, but we are only getting started. We have a lot more to do and everybody will know that for as long as I am in this place, and hopefully well beyond when I leave.

I acknowledge that The Greens will be voting differently to me on the amendments. I think it is important that this Parliament has a sign that there are people frustrated with some of the things being removed. I share that frustration and I acknowledge and respect that they will be doing that. I thank The Greens for their work in the LGBTQIA+ space and for always pushing the boundaries and helping to deliver progress. I think it is entirely appropriate that we all work hard to put the Government, the Opposition and all stakeholders on notice that we have more to do in this space and that we are going to get it done. I go into those forthcoming challenges with new energy after today, from having listened to the contributions from a whole bunch of Government members and from engaging with a whole bunch of Government members and, indeed, members across the Parliament. I again put my thanks on the record that a negotiation process has led to an excellent outcome. We all know there is more work to be done.

Again, I pay tribute to those who have shared their stories with members throughout this time. I pay tribute to vet Kate Toyer, who has travelled far to be here today for this debate. I pay tribute to Jasmine Nightingale, the security guard who shared her story with Alex Smith in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Those stories are what has delivered change and will continue to deliver change. In wrapping up and leading into the vote on the amendments, I cannot proceed without thanking NSW Parliamentary Counsel Annette O'Callaghan for working with me and

Tammy since the instigation of this legislation, through the amendment process and beyond. The NSW Parliamentary Counsel's Office is a fundamental and important part of our democracy, and the team does an amazing job. Obviously, I will be voting for my amendments. I acknowledge and respect that The Greens will not be supporting the amendments and that is because they are acknowledging that we have a great deal more work to do. I look forward to doing that work with them and others in this place.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that amendments Nos 1 to 66 on sheet c2024-115V of the member for Sydney be agreed to. A division has been called for. There being only three members against the question, the question is resolved in the affirmative. I direct that the names of those members be recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

Noes, 3

Ms J. Leong
Ms K. Shetty
Ms T. Smith

Amendments agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 to 20 as amended be agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 to 20 as amended agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr ALEX GREENWICH: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

The House divided.

Ayes50
Noes30
Majority.....20

AYES

Aitchison, J
Atalla, E
Bali, S
Butler, L
Butler, R
Car, P
Catley, Y
Chanthivong, A
Cotsis, S
Crakanthorp, T
Daley, M
Davis, D
Dib, J
Doyle, T
Finn, J
Greenwich, A
Hagarty, N (teller)

Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Holland, M
Hornery, S
Kaliyanda, C
Kamper, S
Kirby, W
Leong, J
Li, J
McDermott, H
McKeown, K
Mehan, D
Minns, C
O'Neill, M
Park, R
Piper, G

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

NOES

Anderson, K
Ayyad, T
Clancy, J
Cooke, S
Coure, M
Cross, M
Crouch, A (teller)
Dalton, H
Davies, T

Donato, P
Hannan, J
Henskens, A
Hodges, M
James, T
Kemp, M
Layzell, D
Moylan, B
Petinos, E

Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Singh, G
Speakman, M
Taylor, M
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Ward, G
Williams, R

	NOES	
Di Pasqua, S	Preston, R	Williamson, R (teller)
	PAIRS	
Hoenig, R		Sloane, K
Washington, K		Lane, J

Motion agreed to.

WITNESS PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Yasmin Catley, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (19:27): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time. The Government is pleased to introduce the Witness Protection Amendment Bill 2024. The bill makes important amendments to modernise the Witness Protection Act 1995, which will strengthen the integrity of the New South Wales witness protection program and the ability of the NSW Police Force to protect the safety and welfare of witnesses who agree to give evidence on behalf of the Crown. In our criminal justice system, witness testimony is a crucial tool for police in investigating and prosecuting serious and organised crime. However, occasionally witnesses can be vulnerable to attempts to intimidate so that testimony is not provided or as retribution for testimony that has been provided. In this context, the New South Wales witness protection program, established under the Witness Protection Act 1995, operates to protect the safety and welfare of its participants, including through the establishment of a new identity. Other action may include relocation, accommodation, transport of property, reasonable financial assistance and counselling.

The Act was passed almost 30 years ago and requires reform to ensure that it keeps pace with modern issues that risk the safety of program participants and that it operates effectively. The program's ongoing success depends on its ability to protect the identity of participants while keeping police methodologies confidential. It is essential that witnesses can trust the program's capacity to keep them safe if they are to agree to provide evidence for the Crown in circumstances that may put their safety at risk. To achieve those outcomes, the bill enhances the Act's capacity to protect program participants from the risk of having their identities exposed because of modern technological advancements, such as the increasing collection and use of biometric information. The bill also strengthens an existing offence in the Act to require participants and others not to record and disclose certain facts or information about the program. That includes the fact that they are or were on the program and confidential information about the program.

The amendments are essential to protect the confidentiality of participants' identities and information about the program's operation and methods. The bill strengthens protections for current and former participants with new identities when they become involved in court proceedings and their identity is at issue. This is to minimise the risk of their protected identities and locations being revealed during proceedings. The bill also makes various enhancements to the operation of the program to ensure its continued effectiveness and to better assist police in keeping participants safe. The reforms have been developed by the NSW Police Force based on nearly 30 years of experience operating the program. They are also informed by consultation with key government, policing and legal stakeholders.

I now turn to the details of the bill. The bill enhances the Act's capacity to protect participants on the program from risks arising from modern threats. The bill inserts new section 4 (1) (a) (ia) into the Act to expand the definition of a "witness" to include a person who has given, or agreed to give, evidence on behalf of the Crown in proceedings relating to an application for a serious crime prevention order under the Crimes (Serious Crime Prevention Orders) Act 2016. Extending the definition will clarify that witnesses giving crucial evidence in those proceedings to prevent a person's involvement in serious and organised crime can be included in the program. The bill provides for the removal and creation of identity records for a participant on the program held by an agency to better protect program participants from potential exposure. It does this by amending section 15 of the Act, which currently enables applications to the Supreme Court to authorise the making of an entry in certain registers maintained under the Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages for a witness.

The bill inserts new section 15 (1) into the Act to enable applications to the Supreme Court for an order authorising a specified person or class of persons to remove an identity record held by an agency or to create a new identity record in the participant's new identity. Proposed new section 15 (1A) provides that the application to the Supreme Court for removal of an identity record must specify the type of identity record to be removed. Such applications can be made by the Commissioner of Police or the designated authority for a complementary witness protection law. The bill introduces a definition of "identity record", which is "a document that may assist in identifying a person, other than a document forming part of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Register". "Document" is also defined to include a biometric, educational, legal and medical record.

New section 4A introduces a definition of "agency" to which the amendments apply. It covers New South Wales government agencies and other persons or bodies prescribed by the regulations. It does not cover agencies outside New South Wales, which I will turn to later. Importantly, new section 17 (e) provides that the Supreme Court may make an order to remove an identity record if satisfied there is a risk of that record linking the program participant's previous identity and new identity. It ensures that identity record removals only occur when their existence could potentially expose a participant.

A key objective of the amendments is to enable the removal of biometric records, which are increasingly being collected and used by agencies. Examples of biometric records could include facial images, fingerprints, voice samples, iris recognition, handwriting or typing characteristics, hand or finger geometrics, palm vein patterns and DNA. It is envisioned that biometric records would generally meet the threshold for removal under the new provisions as they are unique to a person and so present a risk of linking a participant's previous and new identities. The bill also explicitly includes other types of documents that may link a participant's previous and new identities, or may be directly linked to a biometric record and therefore also require removal. These are educational, legal and medical records.

I note that the amendments do not allow unfettered or unnecessary removal of identity records. It is generally intended that they would not enable removal of names and addresses of a previous identity in an agency's files without any biometric or other information attached that presents a risk. Those details alone generally could not link a person's previous and new identities. While I am advised that the New South Wales police expect to only apply for a very small number of orders each year, it is important that police have the ability to protect participants from exposure. The bill includes other amendments related to the removal and creation of identity records for a participant. New section 19A provides that the Commissioner of Police can ask an interstate entity to remove a participant's identity record or create a new identity record in the participant's new identity if there is a risk of the identity record linking the participant's previous and new identities.

New section 19B provides that removed identity records are to be kept by the Commissioner of Police when asked by an authorised person or interstate entity for the purposes of restoring a previous identity. I note the bill does not conflict with provisions in the State Records Act 1998 in respect of protecting State records, as section 21 (2) (d) of that Act already provides that anything done pursuant to an order or determination of a court is not a contravention of the general protection measures of State records under section 21 of that Act. The bill also strengthens existing offences in the Witness Protection Act 1995 to better protect participants, the program and NSW Police Force staff from exposure of information or identities. Section 33 (1) of the Act currently provides that a person must not, either directly or indirectly, disclose certain information relating to the witness protection program.

The bill extends that to provide that a person must also not record certain information. It recognises that the very existence of records related to a participant or the program would pose an unacceptable risk of dissemination or publication, whether accidental or intentional. A person to whom the offence applies means a current participant, former participant and a witness who is being, or has been, assessed for inclusion in the program. The information not to be disclosed or recorded is set out at paragraphs (a) to (d) in new section 33 (1). It includes confidential information about the program. New section 33 (3) defines "confidential information" as information relating to things done under the Act by the Commissioner of Police or another member of the NSW Police Force, information about how the program operates, and information relating to the identity of NSW Police Force members involved in the program.

The information not to be disclosed or recorded also includes the fact that the person is or was a participant in the program. New section 33 (1A) provides an exemption where there is a reasonable excuse for recording or disclosing that fact, and the reasonable excuse relates to a health or safety risk. The onus of proof for the exemption lies with the person seeking to rely on it, which is consistent with provisions concerning proof of exceptions in section 417A of the Crimes Act 1900.

More broadly, section 33 (2) of the Act will continue to provide appropriate exemptions from the offence in section 33 (1). This section will provide that the offence does not apply to a disclosure or communication that has been authorised by the Commissioner of Police, where necessary for an investigation by the Law Enforcement

Conduct Commission or the Inspector of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, or where necessary to comply with a Supreme Court order. The bill also makes various amendments to ensure the Inspector of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission is able to properly exercise functions under the Law Enforcement and Conduct Commission Act 2016 without a risk of contravening offences under sections 23 or 33 of the Witness Protection Act 1994. As I mentioned previously, the bill amends section 33 (2) (b) of the Act to exempt a record or disclosure that is necessary for the purposes of an investigation by the inspector from the offence under section 33 (1).

Additionally, the bill amends section 23 (1) (b) of the Act to exempt a record or disclosure that is necessary for the purposes of an investigation by the inspector from the offence under section 23 (1). This offence provides that a person must not, either directly or indirectly, record or disclose to another person any information relating to making an entry under the Act in a register of births, deaths or marriages. Since the bill enables the inspector to lawfully receive certain information for the purposes of an investigation, the bill also inserts new section 34 (1) (f). This provides that the inspector generally cannot be required to disclose information regarding the exercise of functions under the Act, or the protection of witnesses in the program, in any proceedings. This is unless there is a Supreme Court order or the proceedings relate to an offence under the Act.

The bill makes various amendments to better protect current and former program participants with new identities who become involved in court proceedings where their identity is in issue. Part 3A of the Act currently provides for the Commissioner of Police to give a non-disclosure certificate to a court to protect a current and former participant who has been given a new identity and retains that identity when they are or may be required to give evidence in a relevant proceeding. These certificates effect protections under section 31D of the Act, including limits on questions, answers and statements that might disclose the protected person's identity or where they live.

The bill amends sections 31A and 31B to provide that a non-disclosure certificate must be given to the court in accordance with any requirements prescribed by the regulations, where a protected person becomes involved in a relevant proceeding before a court, whether under their new or previous identity, where their identity is in issue. Currently, a non-disclosure certificate is only given where a protected person is or may be required to give evidence. This recognises that current and former program participants with a new identity can become involved in criminal or civil proceedings without giving evidence. It is important they receive appropriate protections in these situations if their identity is in issue.

The bill also makes amendments to enhance the operation of non-disclosure certificates. Proposed new section 31B (2A) provides that, subject to the regulations, a non-disclosure certificate may be given to the court before the relevant proceeding commences and in the absence of a party to the proceeding. This would provide the court with time to prepare to apply the provisions in part 3A of the Act, as matters involving the Act are uncommon. It would also ensure the existence and contents of the non-disclosure certificate are not revealed before the court decides to do so, using its existing discretion under section 31B (3) of the Act.

The bill also expands section 31E of the Act to enable the court to allow questions or statements that may disclose relevant information about the protected person's identity or where they live on its own motion. Currently, this can only occur on application of a party. However, the party may not know the non-disclosure certificate exists and would not make an application. The bill also makes amendments to ensure the non-disclosure certificate includes appropriate information for the court. Proposed new section 31C (1) (d) provides that the non-disclosure certificate must state that the person is entitled to give evidence via audio visual link [AVL] under existing section 31G of the Act, subject to the other provisions in that section.

As I mentioned previously, the bill provides that the non-disclosure certificate may be given to the court before the relevant proceeding commences. When that ability is used, in conjunction with this amendment, the court will become aware of the person's entitlement to AVL in advance. This will assist the court to prepare to apply the relevant provisions under the Act. I note this will not replace or amend the existing AVL application process under the Evidence (Audio and Audio Visual Links) Act 1998. Such an application would be made in the ordinary course, and continue to give the other party an opportunity to be heard on the AVL application.

After hearing the AVL application, the court may decide whether to make an order under section 31G that the person may not give evidence via AVL, if satisfied that it is not in the interests of justice. Additionally, proposed new section 31C (1) (e) requires the non-disclosure certificate to state "other information about the person that the Commissioner of Police considers necessary or appropriate to include". It also amends section 31C (2) to provide that a non-disclosure certificate must not include any information that may enable the protected identity of the person to be revealed "unless the Commissioner of Police is satisfied the inclusion of the information is necessary or appropriate".

While uncommon, there are situations when a person's protected identity may be revealed through the evidence and facts of a case alone. For example, a person may be charged with offences after they have been given

a new identity. However, most of the evidence is directly linked to their old identity. It is then challenging for the non-disclosure certificate to not include any information that may reveal the protected identity. These amendments will maintain the strong protections related to the non-disclosure certificate while enabling the Commissioner of Police to include other information which may relate to the protected identity on the very rare occasion that it is necessary or appropriate.

The bill also contains a range of reforms to strengthen and enhance the program's operation and integrity. The bill inserts new section 8 (2) (c2) to clarify that the participant's memorandum of understanding [MOU] may contain provisions relating to the "recording or monitoring of the participant's communications with another person". New section 3 (1) defines "communications" to include "any transmission of information". It is necessary for the NSW Police Force to record or monitor the participant's communications because the deliberate or inadvertent disclosure of the participant's safe site location can jeopardise their safety and that of police officers.

Participants who have recently been included in the program are particularly vulnerable to disclosing these details by accident. Including this in the MOU provides transparency to participants before they enter the program. Importantly, the bill provides appropriate safeguards for participants. Proposed new section 9A (2) specifies that recording and monitoring cannot occur in relation to the participant's communications with their legal representative, Law Enforcement Conduct Commission staff, the Inspector of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, or NSW Police Force staff exercising functions in relation to police misconduct investigations. I note that aside from the provisions in the bill, other safeguards exist for the participant.

Recording or monitoring will cease when the participant is terminated from the program, which can occur through voluntary withdrawal. Under section 8 (3) of the Act, the participant can also complain to the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission about the conduct of the Commissioner of Police or other NSW Police Force staff in relation to matters dealt with in the memorandum of understanding. Also of importance, proposed new section 9A (3) provides safeguards for non-participants who are communicating with the participant and are not aware they are being monitored. This section specifies that a recording obtained in accordance with the MOU, or a transcript or report of the recording, must not be used in legal proceedings against persons who are not the participant.

Proposed new section 9A (4) clarifies that recording or monitoring of a participant's communications under new section 9A (2) does not authorise the Commissioner of Police to intercept communications passing over a telecommunications system. This confirms that the Act does not authorise telecommunications interception, which is prohibited under the Commonwealth's Telecommunications (Interception and Access) Act 1979. Schedule 2 to the bill makes consequential amendments to offences contained in sections 7 (1) and 10 (1) of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 to exclude the installation, use or maintenance of a listening or data surveillance device in accordance with the Act or an instrument made under this Act. This intends to put beyond doubt that recording and monitoring of communications under the Act is not unlawful.

The bill inserts new section 11 (2) (d) to provide that protection and assistance provided under the program to a participant may be terminated by the Commissioner of Police if the commissioner is satisfied the participant has been sentenced to full-time detention after their inclusion in the program and the sentence limits the commissioner's ability to provide adequate protection to them. This is because a participant in this situation is at an increased risk of harm, should their protected identity be discovered. In addition, if the commissioner's ability to provide them with adequate protection is limited, this means that the terms of the memorandum of understanding cannot be satisfied. I note that involuntary termination from the program is never automatic. It is always determined on a case-by-case basis. Suspension is and will remain another option in these circumstances but may not be appropriate because the risks to the person and their protection needs may change over the course of their sentence. Termination provides the opportunity for a new risk assessment to occur after their sentence.

The bill amends section 5 (1) to clarify that the Commissioner of Police is to take action that the commissioner thinks necessary and reasonable to protect the safety and welfare of a participant, rather than a witness. The current use of the term "witness" may be understood by some to mean that the commissioner must apply the Act's protections to all general witnesses. The bill inserts new section 18 (2) to provide that a witness protection order may be used to change the participant's identity, if the participant consents, not more than twice. On occasion, a current or former participant who has been re-identified through a witness protection order may become compromised to a degree that they require a second new identity. This is rare and unforeseeable—for example, if there is accidental exposure with an associate from their previous identity. Permitting a second use of a witness protection order also has resourcing benefits for the NSW Police Force and the Supreme Court by reducing subsequent applications. The limit of two uses for each order balances these benefits with maintaining appropriate judicial oversight.

The bill inserts new section 38A to require an agency in possession of confidential documents to take reasonable steps to ensure those documents are kept and handled securely. This must occur in accordance with

section 12 of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, which refers to taking reasonable safeguards to protect information against loss, unauthorised access, use, modification or disclosure, and against all other misuse, and any requirements prescribed by the regulations. A confidential document is defined as a document containing information relating to the program. These amendments set a minimum standard for secure keeping and handling of information across agencies, to reduce the risk of confidential information being exposed or leaked.

Clause 2 of the bill provides that most of the amendments in this Act will commence on the date of assent. However, I note that some matters included in this bill require updates to technical systems and agency processes to ensure they can commence smoothly. This includes the amendments to enable removal and creation of identity records for a participant, and to provide for confidential documents to be kept and handled securely. Accordingly, the bill provides that these amendments will commence upon proclamation or 12 months after the date of assent to this Act, to ensure necessary changes are in place.

The bill implements a range of important reforms that will enhance the effectiveness of the Witness Protection Act 1995. It will strengthen the integrity of the New South Wales witness protection program and better equip the NSW Police Force to protect the safety and welfare of witnesses who agree to give evidence on behalf of the Crown. When these witnesses come forward at great personal risk, it is critical they can trust the New South Wales witness protection program to keep them safe from exposure and retribution and to protect their welfare. I am thankful for the hard work of the NSW Police Force in responding to the threats of serious and organised crime and in continuing to risk their lives daily to protect the safety of witnesses and our community. The measures included in this bill will support this important work, which is ultimately to keep the community safe from such serious threats. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (STATE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT) BILL 2024

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (19:56): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I introduce the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (State Significant Development) Bill 2024, which makes necessary and urgent amendments to support the efficient and orderly assessment and progression of essential development and infrastructure in New South Wales. The bill responds to a recent decision of the New South Wales Court of Appeal in the case of *Bingman Catchment Landcare Group Incorporated v Bowdens Silver Pty Ltd* [2024] NSWCA 205. Let me be absolutely clear: The bill does not seek to overturn that decision. I cannot be clearer on that point. However, this decision has impacted on longstanding planning practice and will likely cause delays and has caused uncertainty in the assessment and determination of applications for State significant development in the planning system.

The bill will remove the uncertainty that now exists and will restore the certainty that should exist, by clearly clarifying the extent of assessment for State significant development applications and reinstating the general approach taken prior to the Court of Appeal decision in the Bowdens case. In the case of Bowdens, on 22 July 2024, the Court of Appeal held that the Independent Planning Commission, as the consent authority, should have considered the likely impacts of a transmission line because it was "integral" and had a "real and sufficient link" with the development of an open-cut silver mine and, therefore, formed part of the "single proposed development" within the meaning of section 4.38 (4) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

The Court of Appeal decision meant that the transmission line could no longer be assessed under an alternative planning pathway that was available. The precedent established in the Bowdens case affects both current State significant development applications awaiting determination and those applications that have already been determined. I emphasise to the House that the significance of this decision cannot be overstated and is the primary reason why this bill is necessary. In the absence of legislative amendment, up to 60 applications currently under State significant development assessment that are critical to the State may be at risk of significant delay or worse.

For the benefit of the House, I note that offsite enabling infrastructure can include, among other things, electrical transmission lines, road and intersection upgrades, water supply works, worker accommodation and public domain works. These types of infrastructure are typically necessary to support the proper operation of many

proposed State significant developments and are often carried out by public authorities, including schools, hospitals, housing, energy and other projects. Before the decision of the NSW Court of Appeal in the Bowdens case, it was general practice for offsite enabling infrastructure to be assessed under an appropriate alternative planning pathway, including, for example, as development without consent or as complying or exempt development.

It was also the case that offsite enabling infrastructure could be the subject of a subsequent approval process whereby its impacts were assessed in more detail when the precise location and proper information about the development was known. This practice was beneficial because it enabled State significant development applications to be more efficiently assessed, even where the details of the offsite enabling infrastructure were still uncertain. However, as a consequence of the decision of the NSW Court of Appeal in the Bowdens case, offsite enabling infrastructure may need to be assessed as part of the proposed State significant development application and not via an alternative planning pathway that would otherwise be available.

This approach presents many practical difficulties, particularly in circumstances where the precise details of the offsite enabling infrastructure required to support a particular development are not known at the time the State significant development application is made. The impracticalities of this approach are apparent when considering a hospital or a school where a traffic intersection upgrade is necessary to enable the hospital or school to operate, and the full details of the road intersection may not be known at the time the State significant development application is being assessed. It is not practical to undertake a robust assessment of those works when details about the nature, size, location and other critical elements of the offsite enabling infrastructure are still being determined. It may also be impractical to assess works which are geographically remote or being delivered by a third party.

This bill will seek to restore them to provide greater clarity to all applicants and consent authorities. More importantly, the NSW Court of Appeal did not provide any clear guidance as to when offsite enabling infrastructure may be considered "integral" to the operation of a particular State significant development, making the precedent established by this case difficult for those assessing proposals to apply in practice with certainty. To make sure there is absolute clarity, my remarks in the context of this bill should not be perceived in any way as a criticism of the Court of Appeal's decision. Rather, it is just a reflection on what the practical and impractical impact of the decision now imposes on the planning system, and requires this Parliament to resolve.

As a consequence of the Court of Appeal decision, each State significant development project involving offsite enabling infrastructure will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. I am sure the House will appreciate, the time, effort and expense—especially for the taxpayer, as public authorities are responsible for delivering much of this offsite enabling infrastructure—required to consider how "integral" offsite enabling infrastructure is to a proposed State significant development on a case-by-case basis will cause significant uncertainty and delays in the assessment and determination of State significant development applications.

This will undermine the Government's key objectives and efforts to cut development time frames and improve the delivery of important infrastructure across the State. As I mentioned earlier, there are up to 60 State significant development applications that are currently under assessment, and a further 21 State significant development projects which have already been determined that may be affected by the decision of the NSW Court of Appeal in the Bowdens case. It is important to strongly emphasise what is at stake here. State significant development involves development that is critically important to New South Wales for economic, environmental or social reasons. State significant development is a longstanding planning pathway within the planning system. It can and does include new education facilities, hospitals, correctional centres, manufacturing facilities, mining and extraction operations, waste management facilities, and energy generating facilities. The risk of delay or legal challenge to delivery or operation of State significant development projects is therefore substantial and one which cannot be overlooked by the Parliament.

Many of those applications seek approval to carry out development involving renewable energy facilities and large-scale housing projects, which are necessary to confront the housing crisis and achieve our shared and legislated target of net zero emissions. A delay in the assessment and determination arising from the uncertainty caused by the NSW Court of Appeal decision in the Bowdens case also now potentially affects the construction of these projects and is an undesirable outcome for the State at a time when this Government has been working to increase certainty, reduce uncertainty in assessment time frames, and improve State significant development outcomes in the planning system.

Perhaps more importantly, it should be noted that uncertainty and delays in the assessment and determination of these applications risks future investment in critical development across the State. I am advised that the applications that are under State significant development assessment which may be affected by the decision in the Bowdens case could amount to approximately \$50 billion worth of direct investment. This is an enormous investment sum by any measure, not to mention the number of homes and jobs created, directly and

indirectly, from this investment. It is important that the Government and this Parliament provide proponents of State significant development and the public authorities undertaking essential public infrastructure with certainty to facilitate the delivery of critical development in New South Wales without unnecessary delay.

I want to make it clear to the House that there is also a risk to recent State significant development applications that have already been determined, on the basis that the offsite enabling infrastructure will be assessed via the alternative planning pathway under the Environmental Planning and Assessment [EP&A] Act, rather than as part of the single proposed development that is State significant development. Those consents arising from a determination of those applications may be at risk of legal challenge, thereby jeopardising the future construction and/or operation of those developments and the offsite enabling infrastructure. The bill's validation provision is intended to protect and validate any State significant development consents and offsite enabling infrastructure, which have not been challenged on the basis of the NSW Court of Appeal decision in Bowdens, before the commencement of this bill, if made.

As I have explained, this bill seeks to address the issues arising from the decision of the NSW Court of Appeal in the Bowdens case, and thereby restore confidence in the processes related to the assessment and determination of all State significant development applications. I now turn to the provisions of the bill. Schedule 1 [1] to the bill provides that the Secretary of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure may determine that a particular development does or does not form part of a single proposed State significant development for the purposes of certain development consent requirements. [*Quorum called for.*]

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

At a high level, this means that the "single proposed development" will be determined based on the particulars included in the development application for the State significant development, subject to any determination made by the planning secretary. In other words, the amendments proposed in schedule 1 [1] allow the planning secretary to clarify, by exception, when offsite enabling infrastructure is "integral" or has "a real or sufficient link" to the operation of a proposed development such that it should form part of the "single proposed development" within the meaning of section 4.38 (4) of the EP&A Act.

Schedule 1 [1] also provides that where the planning secretary has determined that a particular development does not form part of a "single proposed development" within the meaning of section 4.38 (4) of the EP&A Act, that section does not apply with respect to that development. That means that the development can be assessed via an appropriate alternative pathway, including, for example, as development without consent, or as exempt or complying development. Equally, where necessary or appropriate, the development may be assessed via a separate development application in accordance with part 4 of the EP&A Act. I emphasise to the House that this amendment is necessary to allow such development to be assessed via an alternative pathway, thereby reducing time frames related to the assessment and determination of the development that is the subject of the State significant development application.

Schedule 1 [1] also provides that regulations be made to provide for one or more of the following: the form and way in which a determination of the planning secretary must be made, thereby ensuring transparency and accountability in the decision-making process and reassuring stakeholders that the power to make a determination will be exercised in a consistent and appropriate manner; the procedure for making a determination, including requirements for consultation, thereby ensuring that a determination is made having regard to the interests of all affected parties, not just the proponents of State significant development; and the circumstances in which the planning secretary may make a determination, including, for example, when a determination is to be made and whether more than one determination can be made with respect to a particular development. The regulation-making power is vital to make sure that the process of making a determination is clear and transparent.

Schedule 1 [2] validates State significant development consents and offsite enabling infrastructure granted before the commencement of the bill in relation to the operation of the Act at section 4.38 (4). A validation provision of this kind is necessary to provide certainty for development consents that were granted before the commencement of the amending Act and makes sure they can be validated. The bill aims to reinstate the approach taken prior to the decision of the New South Wales Court of Appeal in the Bowdens case. It also aims to protect past development consents from legal challenge on administrative law grounds.

Importantly, I reassure the House that the proposed amendments do not mean that the likely impacts of offsite enabling infrastructure do not need to be considered during the assessment and determination of an application for State significant development. Consideration of the likely impacts of offsite enabling infrastructure will still be required where appropriate, having regard to the requirements in section 4.15 of the EP&A Act. In particular, there will still be a requirement under section 4.15 (1) (b) of the EP&A Act for the consent authority to consider the likely impacts of offsite enabling infrastructure when assessing and determining an application for

State significant development. This process is consistent with existing case law and guidance material published by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

I reinforce my earlier remarks about the need to address the implications of the Court of Appeal decision in the Bowdens case on an urgent basis. As I am sure the House can by now appreciate, without an immediate legislative response, State significant development applications may take longer to be assessed and the uncertainty and associated legal risk established by the precedent in the Bowdens case may affect determination of those proposals; planning pathways—such as exempt or complying development, or part 5, division 5.1, of the Act—that would otherwise have been considered appropriate for offsite enabling infrastructure may no longer be available; and there will be a strategic risk to the efficient functioning of the New South Wales planning system and the orderly progression of essential development, including, amongst other things, development involving infrastructure, energy generation and housing.

The planning system is vital in helping to design and create thriving communities, towns and cities for the people of New South Wales and to determine the use of land. It helps to deliver the housing, renewable energy, economic and social infrastructure projects, as well as the private sector projects that we need, in a way that is practical, timely, sustainable and viable. The efficient operation of the planning system is of the highest importance to the Government, particularly in relation to significant development projects across the State.

The amendments proposed by the bill are proportionate and balanced in addressing the legal uncertainty posed by the Court of Appeal's decision. I repeat that the bill does not seek to overturn that decision. The amendments will restore much-needed certainty to make sure the planning system can continue to work as effectively as possible to deliver the infrastructure we need for over 60 State significant development projects worth around \$50 billion in direct investment. Those State significant development projects include renewable energy, health, education, data centres, warehouse and distribution centres, mining and minerals, housing, and mixed-use developments. Those State significant development projects are crucial to New South Wales, and it is vitally important that this bill passes the Parliament as soon as possible. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Community Recognition Statements

LIDCOMBE TO CABRAMATTA LINE CENTENARY

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (20:17): This week marks the centenary of the Lidcombe to Cabramatta railway line, opened on 14 October 1924 by Richard Ball. Originally an extension of the 1912 Lidcombe to Regents Park line, the railway transformed travel for Liverpool and south-west Sydney commuters, offering a faster route to the city and easing congestion on the Granville line. Before Birrong girls and boys high schools were built, students would walk to Regents Park station as the main junction to catch the train to Liverpool to attend high school. I extend my gratitude to Sydney Trains for commemorating the milestone this week with a delightful cake at Regents Park station, where we celebrated with station staff, commuters and members of the Auburn electorate who rely on public transport. I must also acknowledge Roydon Ng, the indefatigable public transport advocate and spokesperson for the Restore Inner West Line group, who joined us for the celebration. His passion for and knowledge of public transport are unparalleled.

LACHLAN MORTON

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (20:18): I recognise Lachlan Morton, an absolutely incredible Port Macquarie man who recently smashed the record for cycling around Australia, raising over \$137,000 for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. Lachlan started and finished the epic ride in his home town of Port Macquarie, where he first learned to ride before later embarking on cycling challenges across the globe. It is difficult for us to imagine the accomplishments of that incredible journey, both physical and emotional. Lachlan completed the 14,290-kilometre journey in 30 days, nine hours and 59 seconds, beating the previous record by more than a week. That is an average of 450 kilometres of cycling every day. Riding anticlockwise, Lachlan traversed the hills while enduring the cold of Victoria, crossed the vast Nullarbor Plain and then negotiated the Top End, with its challenges and heat. Then there was the unpredictable wildlife, torrential rain and incredible headwinds, as well as the near misses from passing traffic. Lachlan also had a goal of raising funds for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, which provides educational support for First Nations children and young people.

HUME AND HOVELL BICENTENARY

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (20:19): It is no secret that Campbelltown and the broader Macarthur region is steeped in history, and I was thrilled to celebrate the bicentenary of the Hume and Hovell expedition with local historical societies and interested individuals, including everyone who was involved in that momentous event. In 1824 the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Thomas Brisbane, commissioned

Hamilton Hume and former Royal Navy Captain William Hovell to lead an expedition to find new grazing land in the south of the colony. The journey began from Hume's home in Appin, the site of which is marked with a monument on Appin Road, which was erected on the expedition's centenary. This year, Campbelltown City Council and Transport for NSW have worked to erect a new information board at the site to provide more context to the monument. I thank everyone involved, particularly the organisers and the Surveyor General.

GWENNETH DALEY LEGACY CENTRE STORE

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands) (20:20): I recognise the Gwenneth Daley Legacy Centre Store of Inverell for giving back to local families of Australian service men and women through its store, which opened in 2022. The store sells pre-loved goods, with funds being used to support 105 local legacy beneficiaries, including 21 children, from Inverell and the surrounding district. Such is its service and value to the community that the store has been voted the best second-hand store in the New England. I congratulate all the past board members on enabling the project, including David Grant, Rick Ellis, Margaret Coyne, Peter Kearsey, Susanne Hughes, Desie Kearsey and Stuart Legge. I thank the current board members, as well as manager Ian Robinson and the volunteers Viki Borysko, Skye Dunn, Norma Honeysett, Clarry Horsey, Di Lee, Destiny Madden, Maureen Muhs, Wendy Pennington, Ian Robinson, Betty Schuman and Belinda Zammit. I commend all involved with the Gwenneth Daley Legacy Store at Inverell who have given their time and efforts to look after the local families of those who have served our great nation in the defence forces.

ANTOINETTE SULFARO

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (20:21): When it rains, it pours, and this year it has rained awards for Leppington local Antoinette Sulfaro. After being named the Leppington Woman of the Year in March, she has just been awarded the Westfield Local Hero for Liverpool. As part of the local hero award, a \$20,000 community grant will go towards the amazing work she does with Ladies Like to Lunch. Along with her fellow lady in crime Grace Gullo, Ladies Like to Lunch support and advocate for women in south-west Sydney affected by cancer. Each and every year, their work culminates in the Pink Ribbon Luncheon and this year is no different. Later this month, hundreds of locals will come together to celebrate the Ladies Like to Lunch luncheon, raising money for the Liverpool Cancer Therapy Centre. One of the things people can bid on is me. There will be an option to have lunch with me in the Strangers' dining room. Bid early and bid often. I congratulate Antoinette.

THE FOREST HIGH SCHOOL

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (20:22): I commend an outstanding initiative by The Forest High School under the leadership of principal Nathan Lawler, the Friday morning boot camp for primary school students. This awesome program is helping ease the daunting transition from primary to high school. Each Friday morning, around 70 year 6 students gather at 7.30 a.m. for an hour of fun physical activity alongside The Forest High School students. They are building friendships and confidence in a relaxed environment. The boot camp focuses on movement-based activities, which allows students to form natural connections with future peers, reducing the nerves associated with a traditional orientation day. Parents can also see their children engaging in positive experiences with their new school community. I commend Nathan Lawler, The Forest High School team and all involved for creating such a meaningful and impactful program. Great stuff, you lot.

WOYTOPIA FESTIVAL

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (20:23): I offer a huge congratulations to Woytopia, a fantastic community event at Woy Woy South Public School that happened on the weekend. Woytopia is one of the most exciting sustainable living festivals in New South Wales, with amazing mini events lined up such as native bees and natural pest control from the gardening workshops, energy efficiency homes at the green talks, wildlife shows, eco-market, live music, kids' activities and entertainment for all ages. The eco-market included 50-plus stalls, from organic produce, clothes and body care to solar panels. A new addition to this year's festival was the free clothes swap, aiming to reduce some of the 200,000 tonnes of clothing that goes to landfill every year in Australia. The little ones were also spoiled, with choices of entertainment which included Indian dancing, a Roundabout Circus show, a silent disco, all-day story time in the library and so much more. It was a beautiful spring day to celebrate a fantastic family day out for our Coasties and the wider community. I thank everyone involved in making this fantastic festival part of our local community.

DUNGOWAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (20:24): I recognise Dungowan Public School in the Tamworth electorate, which on Friday 18 October will celebrate 150 years of learning. It is incredible to think that 150 years ago a community the size of Dungowan banded together to establish a school that would live on for the next century and a half. Dungowan is a picturesque historic farming community, and generations of young locals have been educated and met their friends at the school. The celebration on Friday will be about reflecting on that history

and paving a way forward for the next 150 years. I congratulate and thank all the teachers, students, P&C committee members, and all the former teachers and students on all they have done for Dungowan Public School. Here is to the next 150 years.

ALEXANDER BILLETT

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (20:25): I congratulate a student from Riverstone High School, Alexander Billett. Last week, Riverstone High School proudly confirmed that Alex has once again been selected as a featured vocalist in this year's Schools Spectacular, a prestigious event showcasing the best of school-based performing arts. Alex is not new to the Schools Spectacular scene; his first appearance was in year 5. This is his second consecutive year of being recognised as a featured artist for his exceptional vocal abilities. In addition to his musical talents, Alex's year 12 HSC drama individual performance has been nominated for inclusion in OnSTAGE, an annual showcase of outstanding HSC drama performances and individual projects. This recognition is a testament to Alex's dedication, hard work and artistic abilities. I congratulate Alex on the remarkable achievements and wish him continued success in his future endeavours. I am sure he is set for a very bright future.

ST AMBROSE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (20:26): I congratulate St Ambrose Catholic Primary School on its centenary celebrations. Founded 100 years ago in 1924, St Ambrose Catholic Primary School was established by the Sisters of Charity to provide quality Catholic education and has since grown to support and nurture over 440 current local students. The school was founded on the motto "The Love of Christ Impels Us". The motto drives the school to instil in its students and families the value of respect and compassion and to strive to be the best they can be. I sincerely congratulate school principal Ms Linda McFadden on her outstanding leadership and dedication to the school community. Under her guidance, the school continues to grow, maintaining the highest standard of learning for our community. I also acknowledge parish priest Father Chaminda for the strong connection he fosters between the parish and school. I extend my congratulations to everyone who has helped shape St Ambrose over the past 100 years. I wish the school, teachers and students all the very best.

NEPEAN CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (20:27): I was honoured to recently attend Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School's year 12 graduation ceremony. It was my pleasure to honour Jenna Galea with this year's Karen McKeown Role Model Award, acknowledging her outstanding contribution to the school and broader community far beyond academic achievements. I congratulate Emily Bengie on receiving the ADF Long Tan Youth Leadership Award for upholding respect and mateship and demonstrating leadership and teamwork within the school and local community. Henry Starr was awarded the ADF Future Innovators Award for his motivation and innovation in STEM while displaying strong personal ethical values. I congratulate Eva Wilmshurst, who was honoured as this year's Most Outstanding Student. Eva epitomises Nepean's values of care, opportunity and success. She demonstrated outstanding commitment to her studies and exceptional leadership qualities within every facet of the school community. Eva continuously upholds the Nepean spirit with integrity, humility, authenticity and selflessness.

SMALL BUSINESS MONTH

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (20:28): October is Small Business Month, a time to recognise and celebrate the vital role that small businesses play across our great State and among all of our local communities. With over 850,000 small businesses across New South Wales, these enterprises form the backbone of our economy, employing nearly two million people and driving local growth and prosperity. Small businesses are more than just enterprises; they are the heart of our communities, providing jobs, services and unique local character and community. They enrich our daily lives, support our families and shape the identity of our neighbourhoods. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the many small businesses in Willoughby for their care, diligence and unwavering support for our community. Their dedication helps keep Willoughby thriving, and we are incredibly grateful for all they do. This month is a chance to recognise their hard work and the hard work of small businesspeople across New South Wales, and to continue supporting the businesses that make our community strong. A quick shout-out to all of the local business chambers in Willoughby.

HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE WALK 4 HOPE

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (20:29): Huntington's disease is a neurological condition that affects approximately 2,600 Australians, stripping away the individual's motor, reasoning and speaking skills. Walk 4 Hope was launched in 2014 to raise awareness of the disease. Due to its rarity, the condition is not widely known in the broader community. We are fortunate that Westmead Hospital is home to one of the five largest Huntington's disease outreach services worldwide and the lead site for Huntington's disease trials in Australia. Walk 4 Hope is

run by the peak national body, Huntington's Australia. This year it was launched as a national event, with a walk being held in every State. Designed for people of all ages and abilities, the four-kilometre walk followed a picturesque route along the Parramatta River that participants attempted at their own pace before returning to Blaxland Riverside Park for live music, face painting and a free sausage sizzle hosted by Lions Club of Parramatta. I give a special shout-out to Dynamic Support Services, Turnbull Brothers Music and event organiser Alison Weir for their fundraising efforts.

BLAYNEY MULTIPURPOSE SERVICE

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (20:30): Yesterday I attended at the site of the Blayney Multipurpose Service [MPS] and joined the mayor, members of the health council, the community, staff, GPs and Health Infrastructure for the start of the major redevelopment. The existing MPS will be redeveloped on its original location following a comprehensive review by Health Infrastructure and the Western NSW Local Health District. The project will bring high-quality health and aged-care services closer to home and ensure that Blayney MPS can continue to meet local healthcare needs for years to come. The former Coalition Government invested \$297 million in multipurpose service redevelopments that will deliver improved access to health and aged-care services for communities in rural and remote New South Wales, including in Blayney. The new Blayney MPS includes individual bedrooms in the residential aged-care wing, the replacement of three existing entries, increased space for inpatients, an expanded HealthOne, new drop-off and parking areas, and courtyards and landscaping. Taylor Construction was recently announced as the successful tenderer for the project and will engage with local trades to complete the job. The community and I look forward to seeing it completed.

KIM TY TRAN

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (20:31): I recognise the celebration of the ninety-ninth birthday of my constituent Ms Kim Ty Tran at the Vietnamese Family Day hosted by the NSW Vietnamese Elderly Friendship Association. On this occasion, we also celebrated the incredible milestone of other respected elderly members of the association who have reached or will soon reach the significant age of 90 and above. The wonderful journeys that my constituents have experienced remind us that wisdom, resilience, and the nurturing of body, mind and spirit are important factors in a fulfilling life. Their longevity inspires us to appreciate every moment, grow from the experiences learnt and cultivate positive energy that enriches our lives. As we celebrate this remarkable occasion, I wish Ms Tran continued joy, good health and the comforting presence of her family and friends. I also wish her a joyous celebration surrounded by loved ones as we come together to recognise the significance of the Vietnamese Family Day, which is a special annual event dedicated to cherishing and preserving Vietnamese traditions and heritage across generations.

COMMUNITY LINKS WELLBEING FOOD DRIVE

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (20:32): Community Links Wellbeing works tirelessly to help our community. Its latest initiative is a food drive where donation bins have been placed in locations around Wollondilly, including outside my electorate office in Tahmoor. Every little bit helps, and we have already seen many residents generously donating new non-perishable items such as tinned and dry goods, personal care and baby items. The items will provide local families and individuals with much-needed support. I was amazed to see the bin that is located outside my office three-quarters full after only five weekdays. I thank those who have shown kindness in donating goods, an act which is almost anonymous and truly selfless. I thank Kalinya Estate and Jam Signs for generously sponsoring the donation bins and the staff, and volunteers of Community Links Wellbeing for mobilising the greater community to help our most vulnerable in their time of need. If people are in Tahmoor, stop by and donate.

BURNING PALMS SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (20:33): One of the hidden gems of the beautiful beaches in the Heathcote electorate is Burning Palms, which is nestled in the Royal National Park and only accessible by a walking track. For the past 85 years, swimmers coming to this beach have been protected by Burning Palms Surf Life Saving Club. This weekend the club will be celebrating 40 years since the current clubhouse, situated back from the beach in the bush, was opened and will recognise the progress that has been made over the past four decades. The clubhouse opened on 20 October 1984 after years of consultation with the Royal National Park and has since undergone a major refurbishment, with recladding, a new roof, new decking and renovated bathrooms. The club has had many natural challenges deriving from its location, including bushfires, storms and high seas. Club members have consistently been there to clean up, repair or replace the damage to lifesaving equipment and buildings. I thank the many volunteers of the Burning Palms Surf Life Saving Club, especially the committee members. We wish them all the best.

INGHAM INSTITUTE ANNUAL RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AWARDS DINNER

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (20:34): On Thursday 10 October 2024 I had the pleasure of attending the Ingham Institute's twelfth Annual Research Excellence Awards Dinner. This prestigious event highlighted the incredible work of researchers who make significant contributions to healthcare innovation and excellence. The evening was a celebration of exceptional advancements in vital disciplines. These advancements are a testament to the dedication and hard work of the researchers at the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research. It was inspiring to see the strength of these collaborations and how they shape the future of medical research in one of Australia's fastest growing regions. Awards and awardees included the Excellence in Teaching Award, awarded to Gracie Micali and Shivani Mani; Early Career Researcher Award, awarded to Dr Abhi Pal; Higher Degree Student Award, awarded to Nevenka Francis; and the prestigious Lady (Mary) Fairfax, Distinguished Researcher Award, awarded to Associate Professor Tara Roberts. I commend the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research, its partners, and the Ingham family for their unwavering commitment to advancing medical research. I congratulate all the awardees.

BATEMANS BAY SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (20:35): I congratulate Batemans Bay Surf Life Saving Club, which has won three world championship medals at the Lifesaving World Championships in Queensland. Every two years the International Life Saving Federation organises the championships to showcase excellence in lifesaving sports and rescue by attracting the most skilled lifesaving athletes to compete for the title of world's best. Held at Kurrawa Beach, Queensland, the Batemans Bay Men's Surfboat Reserve Grade, Men's Masters and Ladies' Masters crews won gold medals, establishing them as world champions. The Ladies' Masters crew consisted of Tracey Innes—a six-time world champion—at stroke, Donna Clarke at bow, Megan Douros at second stroke, Alison Weyman at second bow and Neil Innes as sweep. The crew won every heat race and convincingly won the final. I congratulate all the competitors. I thank the Batemans Bay Surf Life Saving Club for protecting our locals and visitors in our beautiful local waters.

HUNTER VALLEY BOUTIQUE WINE SHOW

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (20:36): It was gold, gold, gold for the Upper Hunter at the Hunter Valley Boutique Wine Show, with the winners announced on 20 September. Andrew Thomas was crowned champion, with a haul of eight awards at the exclusive show for Hunter wine. The Thomas Kiss Shiraz led with four category wins for Thomas reds, backed by a double for its semillon in the white classes. Peter Drayton Wines added to Hermitage Road's success with a trophy for the 2022 Anomaly Barbera. David Hook's Belford Vineyard won the award for Open Vintage Chardonnay. There were also honours for semillon from the Broke Fordwich wine region, with certified biodynamic organic producer Krinklewood Estate recognised for its 2024 Semillon and Whispering Brook for the 2023 Semillon.

EAST HILLS CHARITY CAR SHOW

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (20:37): I acknowledge the importance of the East Hills Charity Car Show not only to the car enthusiasts in the East Hills electorate but also to the many people supported by the event's fundraising efforts. Every year at Kelso Park North in Panania car lovers, families and the broader community get together to admire some of the coolest cars from across New South Wales. The car owners spend many hours polishing their vehicles in the hope of winning one of the many category prizes. The day is also a great fundraiser and this year supported the Australian Pancreatic Cancer Foundation. PanKind is a charity that is working to combat one of the most devastating forms of cancer, pancreatic cancer, which affects so many lives. The research and support provided by PanKind is vital to giving patients a fighting chance. I thank all the organisers, sponsors and volunteers, and especially Glen Waud, who put so much effort into making the day a success. While I was unable to attend this year's event, I hope to join them next year. Congratulations again.

MICHAEL BURGESS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:38): I acknowledge and thank Michael Burgess, the principal of Terrigal Public School, for his incredible leadership and contribution to the school community. Terrigal Public School is the largest public primary school on the Central Coast. During his tenure the school has flourished, with Michael overseeing a multimillion-dollar upgrade of the school courtesy of the Liberal-Nationals Government. Michael has been an outstanding principal to work with, and his leadership has left a lasting impact on the school. His ability to inspire both students and staff has set a standard of excellence. We are incredibly grateful for the passion and commitment that he has shown during his time at Terrigal Public School. While I am sad to see him leave, Michael has secured the role of State President of the NSW Primary Principals' Association. This is a remarkable achievement and reflects Michael's commitment to education at a broader level. I know that he will excel in this new role and continue to make a positive difference for schools across the State. I wish Michael all

the very best in his new journey. I thank him once again for everything he has done for our community and the fantastic team at Terrigal Public School.

NOWRA PLAYERS

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (20:39): I recognise and congratulate the Nowra Players, a remarkable non-profit community organisation that has been bringing live theatre to the Shoalhaven community since 1951. For over 70 years, the Nowra Players have enriched our region with their dedication to the performing arts, presenting four diverse productions each year that showcase a wide variety of styles and genres. The Nowra Players are deeply rooted in the community, regularly donating to local schools and charities and extending their impact beyond the stage. Their commitment to fostering the next generation of performers is evident through their youth drama classes and their annual youth drama program, which I was fortunate enough to attend. Those classes and programs provide young talent with an opportunity to develop and shine. I am honoured to be a patron of the organisation. I commend the Nowra Players for their ongoing contribution to the arts in Shoalhaven. I look forward to seeing everyone at the Christmas presentation *A Kick in the Baubles*.

KEITH WOODBURY

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (20:40): I acknowledge and thank Keith Woodbury for his devotion to the Rural Fire Service. His contribution has set a high standard for leadership and exemplifies the remarkable impact one individual can have on a community. Keith joined the Maroota South brigade in 1968 at the age of 17, following in his father's footsteps. He transferred to the Box Hill-Nelson brigade, taking on the role of deputy captain. Keith became the brigade's longest serving captain, serving from 2003 to 2024, during which he attended more than 1,000 incidents. His captaincy proved transformative for the area. Keith has performed several operational and leadership roles across New South Wales, including leading crews and strike teams during the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires. Keith is immensely proud that three of his children are also members of the brigade. I thank Keith for his outstanding contribution as brigade captain, mentor, volunteer and community contributor. His community applauds him.

BEAUTIFUL GATE CHURCH MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (20:41): Bomoto is an incredible African philosophy that stands for healing as one, embracing strength. That was the thread running through a conference organised by the Redeemed Christian Church of God [RCCG] Beautiful Gate church. October is Mental Health Month, an opportune time to generate conversations that tackle the stigma and shame that still exists to diminish help-seeking for our mental health and wellbeing, especially in culturally and linguistically diverse communities. I joined Pastor Dr Niyi Borire, keynote speakers Dr Tinashe Dune and Aileen Pamonag Lane, and many members and guests of the church for an insightful and engaging morning featuring expert-led discussions on emerging trends, treatment innovations and community support strategies. I shared a stage with Pamela Espin, Dr Olayide Ogunsiji and my former colleague Tracy Tabvuma to highlight the importance of community care and support, and especially the need for culturally safe mental health services. It is important to note that the RCCG Beautiful Gate team continued with Bomoto despite losing their church premises in a fire recently. I encourage all to smash the stigma around mental health.

RSL LIFECARE

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove) (20:42): I extend my congratulations to RSL LifeCare. Many of my colleagues who attended its event today would have heard about some of the amazing work that it does, and I assure members that this only scratches the surface. Providing critical support to our veterans throughout life after service, RSL LifeCare plays a critical role in the Lane Cove electorate and in all communities across this great State. I thank all its wonderful employees, volunteers, donors and supporters.

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (20:43): Ronald McDonald House Charities Greater Western Sydney has been providing life-changing and holistic support to families with seriously ill or injured children since 1981. The charity offers a sanctuary for families during one of the most challenging times in their lives. By providing a home away from home, nutritious meals and learning programs, the house helps to alleviate the financial and emotional burdens faced by families with unwell children. That is all possible because of the dedicated staff and the help of more than 150 volunteers. I thank Trisha Crane, Lyn Travers, Phil Savell and Janet Thomas, all of whom have volunteered for over 20 years. I also commend Ray Finn for 30 years of volunteer service on the board, and CEO Claire Barber. I thank them for the difference that they and the broader team make to the lives of so many families out there.

FIRE AND RESCUE NSW STATION 459 TERRIGAL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:44): I acknowledge an incredible achievement for the 459 Terrigal Fire and Rescue NSW unit, which recently responded to an emergency call-out with an all-female crew. That marks a historic moment for the station and demonstrates the progress being made in fostering diversity and inclusivity within our emergency services. I give a huge congratulations to the outstanding women who made that milestone possible. The officer in charge was firefighter Jen, the motor driver was firefighter Angela, and the crew was made up of firefighters Mackenzie and Jordan. Their dedication, skill and courage are a true testament to the strength of women in the fire service. Women have always played a crucial role in fire and rescue services. This all-female crew exemplifies how far we have come in breaking down barriers and achieving equality in what has traditionally been a male-dominated field. Those wonderful women are role models for future generations. They prove that the fire service is a place for everyone. Their teamwork, leadership and bravery are inspiring. I have no doubt that they will continue to pave the way for even more positive change within the fire service. Again, I congratulate them.

SHARON PERALTA

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (20:45): I acknowledge Sharon Peralta, a powerhouse in the Blue Mountains and a wonderful woman. Sharon recently organised the Blue Mountains Women's Mental Health Forum, held on 13 October in Lawson. The forum included a range of public and private practitioners and community organisations, a panel discussion, workshops to empower women, tools to support women as they navigate their lives and healing journeys, and discussions about services and also gaps in mental health support in the community. Sharon organised a range of gift bags for each participant. I was proud to support the forum and Sharon's efforts alongside my Federal colleague the member for Macquarie, Susan Templeman, MP, and also Bendigo Bank. The event was auspiced by the Blue Mountains Women's Health and Resource Centre. I acknowledge Erin, who is Sharon's friend who suicided earlier this year, and honour her life.

Private Members' Statements

KIRINARI COMMUNITY SERVICES

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (20:46): Tonight I give a shout-out to Kirinari community and disability services in the Blue Mountains. I recently met with Kirinari in Katoomba to hear about the work that it does to support some of our most disadvantaged community members. I met Greg and the very dedicated team. They provide a range of disability services. Kirinari first began with four residents in a leased house in the 1980s. It has diversified over time to offer a broader range of human services like community housing; healthy ageing, including home care packages and Commonwealth home support programs; veterans' services; children and youth services, including out-of-home care; transport services; and health services.

It was good to learn about the disability services in particular and what Kirinari does to genuinely empower people in the community to live a fulfilled life aligned with their goals. Kirinari is based in Katoomba but works across the State. The service deals with a number of vulnerable clients. I had the opportunity to visit a day program, where I saw what happens when people who are isolated and suffer a number of disabilities come together and undertake a range of programs. Programs include a woodwork service, learning to cook or, for a group of older men who do not have family in the community, just sitting together to have a bit of a chat and connect.

Kirinari community services in the Blue Mountains is also heavily focused on the housing crisis at the moment. The team has talked to me about sourcing homes so it can support people through an assisted living arrangement or innovative community housing models, which often operate in rural and regional communities, and contribute to a solution. It is often difficult to sit down and hear about people who struggle in our communities, and it is such a highlight when services offer up solutions and feel positive about connecting people. The team obviously wanted to fill me in on its work, introduce me to some of its clients and talk through some of the issues.

It is my absolute pleasure to stand in this place and acknowledge the team at Kirinari community services. The team members do not seek that acknowledgement or seek awards. They are a group of wonderful team players, who pull together and put smiles on the faces of people. A small bus brings those people to the centre, and they participate in a course, have a bit of a laugh and a cup of tea, and then they are transported home. I give a shout-out to Greg, who manages the team. He has a huge geographical area to cover. Meeting someone who has such a positive view on life made my day. I thank Greg and Kirinari community services for all that they do. I look forward to supporting them into the future.

VETERANS' HEALTH WEEK

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (20:51): I acknowledge the private member's statement of the member for Blue Mountains. I too have seen Kirinari's work in my electorate. I have been on a tour and have seen the

immense effect that the service has on some profoundly disabled people. Kirinari is also branching out into the accommodation space for people who are struggling to get housing. I join with the member in recognising Kirinari in this place.

Speaking of transition, the transition from military life to civilian life is far from easy. After dedicating years of their life to service, many veterans return home to face battles that can feel isolating, overwhelming and, at times, insurmountable. This week marks Veterans' Health Week. It is a timely reminder of the power of connection and community and our responsibility to support those who have served. Last week in Coffs Harbour veterans from across the Mid North Coast, along with their families and members of the community, gathered for the Stay Well Stay Connected event. It was a chance for veterans to feel seen, to feel heard and to reconnect with others who understand the challenges that they face. It was a powerful reminder that community is everything.

We had the incredible honour of being joined by Mark Donaldson, VC, whose story of courage in the face of adversity has inspired countless Australians. Raised in Dorrigo, Mark's roots in our region run deep, and his presence at the event made it even more special. For those who may not be familiar with his story, Mark was awarded the Victoria Cross for his extraordinary bravery in Afghanistan in 2008. In the heat of an ambush, Mark risked his life to save a wounded Afghan interpreter. At the event Mark spoke about the bond that veterans share: the unspoken understanding of trust and connection that only those who have served can truly comprehend. But, as Mark reminded us, that bond must extend beyond military life—at a time when veterans' sense of purpose may be harder to find.

Too many of our service men and women continue to struggle in silence after giving so much for our nation. This week it is important that we recognise and address the scale of the issue of mental health. At the forum in Coffs Harbour, we had the difficult but necessary conversations about the findings of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. The findings are distressing: An average of 78 serving or ex-serving Australian Defence Force [ADF] members have died by suicide each year over the past decade. That is three deaths every fortnight. The Transition and Wellbeing Research Programme, one of the most comprehensive studies of its kind, found that over 20 per cent of former members of the permanent forces who had transitioned into the reserves experienced some form of suicidality in the previous 12 months. The men and women who stood on the front lines for our country are now facing a battle that they feel they cannot win.

As highlighted in the royal commission, we must question the assertion that protective factors dominate in military service. While military service instils qualities such as discipline, resilience and camaraderie, some of the very characteristics that make a soldier strong can become risk factors when they leave the force. A strong military identity, for example, can deepen the divide between military and civilian life. Stoicism and self-reliance, which are virtues in service, can become barriers to seeking help, reinforcing the stigma around perceived mental health issues. A deep sense of belonging to a military unit can make leaving the ADF difficult, particularly when that separation is not by choice. The truth is that while those protective factors may serve our soldiers well in service, they can have detrimental effects when the context changes. Our veterans need to know that it is okay to seek help and to rely on the support systems available to them.

Housing and employment are two critical issues that were also addressed at the forum. Stable housing and meaningful work are necessities to transition successfully into civilian life. Without those foundations, the journey becomes infinitely harder. But it is not just about finding any job or house. It is about ensuring that veterans have access to roles that value their skills and experiences, and that they have access to "connectors"—local champions who can guide them to the support that they need. We, as a community, must create those opportunities and ensure that veterans have access to the support they need to thrive. Veterans' Health Week this year was not just about raising awareness of the issues that veterans face; it was also about offering real solutions, real support and real connection.

I also acknowledge the tireless work of Debbie Locke from Bellingen. Through the Sgt Matthew Locke MG Charity, she honours the legacy of her brother, Sergeant Matthew Locke, MG, who was killed in action in Afghanistan. Her work is a beacon of hope for so many veterans and their families, and Debbie's efforts remind us that we must always fight to ensure that no veteran is left to walk this difficult path alone. I ask that this House continues to advocate for better mental health services, housing solutions and employment opportunities for veterans. The problems are entrenched, and they require systemic change. Our veterans kept their promise to our beautiful country. Now it is time that we keep our promise to them.

TAFE NSW ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (20:56): Tonight I inform the House of the Federal and State Labor governments jointly committing almost \$54 million to establish the TAFE NSW Advanced Manufacturing Centre of Excellence. This state-of-the-art facility will be located at the TAFE NSW Wetherill Park campus, providing advanced education and training in engineering, transport and renewable energy. The centre will offer a unique

blend of practical and theoretical learning, enabling apprentices to gain degree-level qualifications while maintaining their hands-on skills. It will also focus on developing micro-credentials and micro-skills, supporting TAFE NSW to rapidly cater to emerging trends in high-technology industries. By providing access to cutting-edge technology and equipment—including smart factories, industrial 3D printing and robotics—the centre will ensure that our apprentices are equipped with the skills of the future.

Additionally, partnerships with universities and local industry will ensure that the training offered is relevant, providing benefits to employers and learners. The establishment of this centre of excellence is a key part of the Government's commitment to providing fully subsidised training to an additional 1,000 apprentices a year in advanced manufacturing and related industries. This investment is a game changer for Fairfield and Western Sydney. It will boost employment in our local area while also propelling the collective economic strength of local industries. I firmly believe that the TAFE Advanced Manufacturing Centre of Excellence will be a catalyst for positive industrial change, and I look forward to continue working with local employers and employees for a brighter economic future.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (20:59): I acknowledge the strong advocacy and support from the member for Fairfield to ensure that Western Sydney has high-class training facilities that not only prepare workers with the skillsets that the State needs into the future but also make sure they will enter into industries, jobs and roles into the future that are high quality, sustainable and well paid. The centre of excellence in Western Sydney, which is a \$54 million investment by the State and Federal governments, will be part of a network of centres of excellence in domestic manufacturing to help rebuild our domestic manufacturing sector. It is coupled with one in the Hunter. Of course I am very much looking forward to the announcement shortly of the one to be established in the Illawarra. It reinforces, recognises and makes sure that the Government is meeting its commitment to bring back domestic manufacturing in the interests of local consumers, local producers and, most importantly, local workers.

LANE COVE ELECTORATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove) (21:00): The most recent local government elections held on 14 September this year yielded some fantastic results across the Lane Cove electorate, with strong showings from the Liberal Party in the Hunters Hill and Ryde local government areas, with both teams securing a majority of councillors and the popularly elected mayor positions. Unfortunately, the elections mark the first time in over two decades that Liberal Party members, through no fault of their own, were unable to contest the election for the Lane Cove municipality. As such, tonight I pay tribute to the remarkable legacy that they have delivered to the community through world-class infrastructure, responsible fiscal management and proper community engagement in decision-making.

It was only recently that the Lane Cove municipality was ranked the best place to live on the eastern seaboard. Hunters Hill came a close second, but it was Lane Cove that took the crown. The rankings, based on a survey completed by over 50,000 residents, assessed aspects such as connectivity, amenity, lifestyle and natural environment—to name just a few. Based on those metrics, it is easy to see how Lane Cove came out on top. Blessed by natural beauty and proximity to the city, we had a bit of a head start. But, crucially, it is the outcomes that council can control where Lane Cove really shines. It has award-winning shopping precincts such as the Canopy and Market Square, as well as multimillion-dollar upgrades to community clubs such as the Diddy. It also has state-of-the-art sporting infrastructure such as the redevelopment of Blackman Park, Tantallon Oval and Bob Campbell Oval, as well as the construction of the fantastic sports and rec centre. It has better access to natural bushland at Manns Point in Greenwich, Woodford Bay, Aquatic Park and Blackman Park, as well as the installation of first-rate playgrounds for local children.

All those projects, providing immense benefit to the Lane Cove community, are thanks to the advocacy and initiative of successive Liberal teams over the past two decades. I thank a few key people, without whom none of those projects would have been possible: Ian Longbottom, David Brooks-Horn, Kathy Mort, Stephen Bowers, Scott Bennison, Marc Gold, Fay Warner, David Karpin and our dearly departed Deb Hutchens and Soo-Tee Cheong. Of equal importance are the council staff, who have made the projects a tangible reality, often working long hours and dealing with complex and emotive problems. Exemplary is too light a word to describe them. Drawing on diverse personal and professional experiences, both staff and councillors were united in their dedication to the community.

It is with great regret for both our contesting candidates and the broader community that the Liberal Party was unable to contest the most recent election. I extend my deepest sympathies to the affected candidates in Lane Cove and across the State, and I thank candidates from across the political spectrum who acknowledged that the absence of the Liberal Party was a subpar result for representative democracy in local government. A range of views around the table is essential to ensuring that the decisions being made truly represent the views of the

broader community. For the future of the Lane Cove municipality, it causes me great concern that the make-up of council will not truly reflect the desires and needs of our community.

Having spent over three decades representing the Lane Cove municipality at both a local and a State level, I believe I have gained a fairly decent insight into the needs and wants of Lane Cove residents. Residents want council to stick to its lane and maintain and invest in infrastructure, facilities and parks. They want the roads to be safe and the rates to be low, and generally would prefer if council just let them get on with their lives. Unfortunately, I am not convinced that the coalition of teals and Greens councillors that will now dominate the Lane Cove administration will respect those views. I will reserve my verdict in the hope of being proven wrong. Despite all this, the stability that has been provided by successive Liberal teams will see us through this potential turbulent term. I once again thank all those who have made that possible. Their dedication, vision and hard work has made Lane Cove what it is today: the best place to live, work and raise a family in the country.

NSW SERVICE FOR THE TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION OF TORTURE AND TRAUMA SURVIVORS

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (21:04): Today I acknowledge the remarkable work of one of the most important organisations in the Auburn electorate, STARTTS, the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors. STARTTS is more than just a health service provider; it is a lifeline to refugees who have suffered unimaginable pain and hardship. Many refugees whom STARTTS serves have been subjected to extreme human-inflicted suffering, including severe human rights abuses. The challenges those individuals have faced—whether through systematic State terrorism, torture, bombings, kidnappings or sexual violence—are incomprehensible. Such horrors often leave deep scars, not just physically but mentally and emotionally. And yet, despite the challenges, refugees arrive in Australia with hope, searching for safety and the opportunity to rebuild their lives.

Australia has a long history of welcoming those seeking refuge, a tradition that has continued for decades. Since the end of World War II, Australia has been a safe haven for countless individuals fleeing conflict, persecution and violence. As at June 2023, the number of visas issued by the Australian Government since 1947 through its offshore resettlement and onshore protection programs stood at over 958,000. By 2025, that number will surpass one million. That reflects not only Australia's commitment to providing sanctuary but also the increasing demand for services like STARTTS to support those who have experienced profound trauma. STARTTS was established in 1988 as a response to growing needs. Over the past 35 years, it has grown into a specialised organisation that provides culturally relevant psychological treatment and community interventions to help survivors heal.

But STARTTS does more than just provide treatment; it fosters resilience and community recovery. The organisation's approach is both comprehensive and compassionate, understanding that healing from trauma requires more than just clinical intervention; it requires the rebuilding of a person's sense of safety, stability and connection. At the heart of its work is an understanding of the complexities of refugee experiences. The trauma that refugees endure often touches every aspect of their lives. Many have lost family members, homes and communities. They have been forced to flee, leaving behind everything they know, only to face new struggles as they seek safety in a foreign land.

For many in our community, particularly those in the Auburn electorate, these are not abstract stories. They are lived experiences. Many of those seeking asylum on bridging visas in Auburn, especially from countries like Afghanistan and Iraq, continue to grapple with overwhelming memories and trauma. STARTTS has always been there to help them navigate that path to healing. The work STARTTS does is holistic. It includes face-to-face and telehealth counselling, psychiatric assessments, therapeutic massage, physiotherapy, pain management and activities for young people. Perhaps equally important is its effort to train other service providers, raising awareness of the specific challenges refugees face and teaching strategies to support that vulnerable group.

STARTTS does not just work at the individual level; it is deeply embedded in our community. It partners with local schools to provide trauma recovery programs for young refugees and their families. The programs create spaces for healing and also help young people build resilience as individuals and within communities. The breadth of services provided is tailored to the specific cultural and psychological needs of each person, recognising that trauma manifests differently across cultures and experiences. What makes STARTTS unique is not just its commitment to healing but also its commitment to listening. It regularly consults with refugee communities to adapt its services to meet the evolving needs of the people it serves. That client-focused approach is what has allowed STARTTS to remain relevant and responsive for so many years.

STARTTS is not just a service provider; it is a pillar of our community. It is an organisation that has earned deep respect from all of us because of its unwavering dedication to the most vulnerable among us. It is organisations like STARTTS that make Auburn the diverse, resilient and compassionate place that it is today. As

we reflect on the one-millionth refugee and humanitarian visa to be issued in Australia by 2025, we must also reflect on the work that lies ahead. STARTTS will continue to be crucial in ensuring that those individuals are not just resettled but given the support they need to heal and thrive. I thank the entire team at STARTTS for their tireless work.

GULYANGARRI PUBLIC PRESCHOOL

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (21:09): Term 4 started with a bang in Liverpool this week as Gulyangarri Public Preschool opened its doors to families. I cannot overstate how momentous this occasion was for Liverpool. I was honoured to join the Premier and Deputy Premier to cut the ribbon on this new service, which will be high quality and, importantly, free for up to 80 children and their families each week. The preschool is designed to promote children's early development, including fine motor and gross motor skills, critical thinking and problem-solving. It is designed with children front and centre, which is what they deserve.

Gulyangarri Public School was opened on day one, term 1 this year. With the attached preschool coming online, our Government is making significant strides to establishing what I have coined a "cradle to PhD" education precinct in our CBD, complete with a redeveloped co-educational high school, three university campuses and a TAFE. As part of the broader Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct, we are reimagining and revolutionising what it looks like to live, study and work in Liverpool. This is the first of 100 free public preschools that the Minns Labor Government will build by 2027 across New South Wales, with another four to be built across Liverpool. I must highlight that an independent assessment process clearly identified areas of need across our State to determine those locations.

I am extraordinarily proud that Liverpool is the first community to access this important service. That is quite a reversal, because south-west Sydney consistently missed out for 12 years. I look forward to my colleagues experiencing the same feeling of excitement when they start cutting ribbons on preschools in their electorates. Those preschools will make a real difference to the lives of so many families across New South Wales, and they are a monumental step forward in the Government's project to deliver universal preschool to children across our State. Research tells us just how important early education is to setting up our kids for a bright future. We know just how critical the first 2,000 days of a child's life are for their physical, cognitive, social and emotional health. That time is strongly predictive of a child's future learning outcomes, future health conditions and risk of future substance abuse.

We simply cannot afford to let any child fall through the cracks. That is why this free public option is so vital for families like those in my electorate. For many in Liverpool, the cost of child care can be prohibitive, causing them to opt out of a service that we know is so important. The rollout of 100 free public preschools across the State is a lifeline for their kids' futures. The people I speak to in Liverpool know that. At a recent meeting of the 2168 Roundtable—an initiative I put together to devise and deliver real solutions for some of our most historically neglected suburbs—the verdict was clear: Public preschooling is a game changer for families. With the 2168 postcode receiving three public preschools—at Miller, Heckenberg and Cartwright—the impact on families in this area, which was long neglected by those opposite, will be immeasurable.

An additional public preschool at Cecil Hills is appropriate for what is one of the fastest growing parts of my electorate. It will also service workers at the new Western Sydney airport, which will come online in a few short years. As homes continue to pop up in Elizabeth Hills and Cecil Hills, new families will rely on that service for their kids' upbringing. Preschool will help make the transition from early to primary education simpler and easier. It was disappointing, to say the least, to hear members of the Opposition claim credit for Gulyangarri preschool, when they made no undertaking to ensure that this service would remain in public hands and affordable for local families. I remind them that after 12 years in government they built zero public preschools in New South Wales. We know it is only under a Labor government that communities like mine can have confidence in the delivery of public services locally. The five public preschools we will receive are a testament to that fact.

I thank principal Ian Tapuska, deputy principal Jodie Field and all the staff at the new Gulyangarri preschool and the teachers who will receive those young students into the future at Gulyangarri Public School. Their dedication to our kids and to the broader project of delivering an innovative precinct in our CBD has an impact on our children that is too large to assign a number to. The Labor Government, including me, is committed to partnering with those teachers and staff to build a better future for Liverpool. With four additional preschools on the way, and Miller Public School Preschool out for tender and set to begin construction in early 2025, I look forward to delivering this essential service to even more families in my community.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (21:14): I acknowledge the advocacy of the member for Liverpool. I do not think people understand what a transformative difference the co-location of public preschools with public schools can make in communities like those the member and I have the great honour of representing. It is a genuinely life-changing experience for the kids involved. By providing

kids with early learning skills and transitioning them effectively into lifelong learning from their earliest years, we will give them the greatest possible opportunity in life. Government members are absolutely thrilled that we have not only opened the first public preschool but also opened it in Liverpool. We have 99 more to come, including four in the electorate of Wollongong, which I am looking forward to. But every child who goes through that public education will see a marked difference in their possibilities in life. It is all about that opportunity.

BATHURST 1000

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (21:15): Nothing gets race fans revving more than the one and only great race in Bathurst. For decades, the Bathurst 1000 has been widely regarded as the pinnacle of Australian motorsport, with the lure of the iconic Mount Panorama proving irresistible for the hundreds of thousands of spectators who make the annual pilgrimage to the region for the four-day extravaganza. This bucket-list event is a must for sports fans, who come from near and far to reflect on the past heroes and moments in time that have made this show-stopping event all that it has become, and to witness and ignite a new rivalry with the advent of the new-generation clash between the Camaro and Mustang as they compete at the mountain.

This year we saw the fastest Bathurst 1000 in history, with Brodie Kostecki winning the race in true underdog style. On Sunday the Erebus driver fended off red-hot Red Bull star Broc Feeney in the six-hour marathon at Mount Panorama to win Australia's biggest domestic motorsport prize. The reigning Supercars champion is the first driver to win from pole position since Chaz Mostert in 2021. Brodie won by just 1.35 seconds. This was the sixty-fourth Bathurst 1000 race. While there were no dramatic crashes like there have been in years before, this time we saw a menagerie of animals try to compete for the trophy. Usually kangaroos make an appearance, but this year a snake and an echidna caused delays on the track.

Campers who ascended Bathurst in the days leading up to the main event came with their infamous set-ups, including everything one could ever need for camping such as full-blown kitchens and pop-up bars. There were decorations and costumes everywhere. On the Friday and Saturday night, campers were entertained with drone shows lighting up their favourite cars and racing icons, and those who were still awake were also treated to a beautiful display of Aurora Australis in the night sky. While the action on and off the track is invariably fast and furious, the great race is much more than a sporting event; it is also a vital driver for the economy across Bathurst and the Central West.

Around 194,000 people attended this year's event. The hospitality industry is also a big winner, with pubs, clubs, restaurants, supermarkets and accommodation providers all reaping the rewards of the influx of fans. In keeping with the evolving nature of the Bathurst 1000, this year's race week entertainment took on a new look, with the aim of attracting fans to the central business district. Traditionally, the Wednesday of race week features a parade up the main street, where the transport vehicles and drivers take centre stage during the morning. However, this year that event was replaced by a Wednesday afternoon street party, including the "Supercars Track to Town" procession, where the race cars and drivers become the drawcard as they made their way from the mountain to Kings Parade.

Another attraction on Kings Parade was the PIRTEK Pit Stop Challenge finals, where the top four pit crews from across the 2024 Supercars season battled it out for a \$20,000 prize and the coveted Golden Rattle Gun Trophy. Add to the mix an all-driver signing session, where visitors can get a free poster and grab an autograph. From there, fans can see the great lengths the organisers have gone to in their efforts to give back to the fans ahead of Sunday's great race, which is beamed live across the globe. It is coverage like this that the Bathurst region cannot put a price on. Such is the importance of this sporting occasion that, much like the Melbourne Cup, it is an event that stops the nation.

Other regional centres across Australia would love to have a race like the Repco Bathurst 1000 in their own backyard, as it injects millions of dollars into the local economy. But with a facility in the form of Mount Panorama, the race track is a huge drawcard. It also hosts a number of different events throughout the year. I thank the members of the House who made the pilgrimage to Bathurst last weekend. I encourage those who have not yet experienced the atmosphere and noise of the great race to visit. Let me know and I will provide a personal tour next year. Some 161 laps take place on the 6.2 kilometre track to complete the 1,000 kilometre race. It is the best time to visit Bathurst. It certainly brings a lot of fans to the area, including many campers. It is a great event that is enjoyed right across the nation.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (21:20): Like many other Australians, unfortunately, I could not get to Bathurst this weekend, but I had the race on in the background while I was reviewing a whole heap of briefs and correspondence. Major events in regional centres such as Bathurst, the Illawarra or the North Coast are vital for those parts as we build the tourist and visitor economy in New South Wales. It is not only motorsport or other sports; it is a whole range. Sporting, cultural and community events that bring people to towns are a great economic injection, just like the Bathurst 1000 is to Bathurst. I hope

that people went along and saw Chifley house while they were there. But, of course, the Government's support for motorsport remains strong. We have been able to inject \$1 million into Wakefield Park Raceway, getting racing back there on the long weekend. Of course, recently the speedway season at Eastern Creek started up again. If people missed out on Bathurst, get out to one of those racetracks supported by the New South Wales Government.

DISABILITY COUNCIL NSW

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (21:21): I am proud to be part of the Minns Labor Government, working with a fantastic Minister for Disability Inclusion who is absolutely committed to including the voices of people with disabilities in our decision-making as we move forward with all aspects of policy. A key part of that is our Disability Council NSW, an incredible group of community leaders and experts, with and without disability, who provide input to the Government on our policies, promote the inclusion of people with disability in the community, and promote community awareness of matters concerning the interests of people with disability and our families. They also advise the Minister on emerging issues, advise public authorities about the content and implementation of disability action plans and consult with similar councils and bodies and people with disability.

Disability Council NSW helps the Minister and the team at the Department of Communities and Justice to facilitate ongoing forums that include people with disabilities from across New South Wales, from representatives of peak bodies down to individuals, which informs us on policy decisions moving forward. I thank each of the individual members, some of whom will be leaving at the end of this term in November. Jane Spring, who is the chair, is a personal friend of mine. Jane had a spinal cord injury not long after me. She came from a great rowing background into the world of wheelchair basketball. Jane Spring, AM, is an experienced government leader and board executive, most recently having served as assistant commissioner for capability and leadership with the NSW Public Service Commission. She has also recently travelled to the United Nations with the Federal Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Bill Shorten. She is an amazing leader in the public sector, with a wealth of professional experience from her background with disability and a great leader of that group.

Her deputy is Associate Professor Jill Duncan, whom I have incredible respect for and a great friendship with. She has a background in audiology and the education of children who are hard of hearing or deaf. She is a passionate academic in the education of children with disabilities but also a leader in programs for children and young people who are deaf or hard of hearing. But, more important than that, she is just passionate about making sure we get the education of young people with disabilities right across all settings.

I thank Mark Robertson, SC, who lives with congenital sensorineural hearing loss and is a founding part-time judicial member of the Administrative Decisions Tribunal of NSW in the general division and on the appeal panel, for his contribution. Gail Le Bransky has spent many years working on disability issues and applying customer-focused, innovative approaches to accessibility challenges, and for that she was rewarded the Public Service Medal on the Queen's Birthday in 2019. Her feedback, particularly on disability standards for accessible transport and inclusive transport, has been super important.

Julie Charlton, despite her youth, is an amazing ambassador. She has been, as a young person, on many representative bodies, representing young people with disability. For someone so young, she has a great, big, loud voice and a beautiful future to continue her advocacy in this space. She is also an active member of Wheelchair Sports NSW—I can't hold that against her! Caroline Cuddihy is the former CEO of the NSW Trustee and Guardian, which protects, promotes and supports the rights, dignity, choices and wishes of the people of New South Wales, including some of the State's most vulnerable people. Her voice for representing people with disability has been absolutely essential, as has the voice of Kelly Cox, an Aboriginal woman who grew up on Biripi country and is currently living among the Bundjalung nation. She holds a range of advisory positions for State and Federal governments and continues to be a great advocate for people with disabilities, especially across our First Nations.

Jodie Hoger is a blind lady who works at TAFE. She was told as a youngster she could never be a teacher. She went on to become a teacher and educator at TAFE. She is a ferocious fighter for people with disabilities. Even in the New South Wales Parliament I encouraged her to give some input, and she let us know that the committee reports were not accessible for people who are blind, so she is changing the Parliament as well. Matt Liddle has worked for the public service for the past 22 years. He suffered a spinal cord injury and is a lawyer. He has had fantastic feedback. Just before I close, I mention our newest member, Quang Nguyen, who was born in Vietnam. He lives with disability and is the chairperson of the Council for Intellectual Disability, as well as being on the board of the Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association, and is a passionate advocate for a better life for people with disability in New South Wales. I thank all involved.

PENRITH CITY COUNCIL

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (21:26): Last week Penrith City Council swore in its new councillors, marking a momentous occasion for the city. This new council includes a record number of fresh faces, with nine newly elected councillors, ready to bring their energy and vision for the city. Penrith now boasts one of the most diverse councils in its history and, quite possibly, one of the most representative in all of New South Wales. Its councillors have a wide array of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. This diversity is key to ensuring that Penrith continues to thrive as an inclusive, progressive city. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all Penrith's councillors, both returning and the new. The passion and enthusiasm from this team are palpable, and the community can expect an exciting term ahead, as these new councillors bring fresh ideas and bold visions to shape our future.

This election marks a particularly historic moment, as we celebrate the first-ever female-majority council in Penrith's 153-year history, with eight women now serving. This incredible achievement signals a new era, where our elected council now more closely reflects the community it serves. I know that the voices of women across our community will be better heard, understood and represented. As someone who knows firsthand the challenges and triumphs of being a woman in politics, I could not be prouder of these eight amazing women. Watching them take the oath last week was a moment of immense pride, coinciding with the anniversary of Julia Gillard's famous misogyny speech, which was delivered 12 years earlier to the day. It is a reminder of how far we have come and how much further we can still go as a community.

The work ahead may be tough. But, with this strong team, I have no doubt they will make Penrith a more equitable and inclusive city. For the first time we have three councillors under the age of 30, demonstrating that the next generation of leaders is stepping up to shape our future. As our city's young population continues to grow, it is vital that young people are engaged and represented in politics. Their involvement ensures that our policies reflect the needs and aspirations of young people living in Penrith, thus keeping politics connected to the people it aims to serve. Looking ahead, the entire Penrith local government area will undergo significant changes over the coming years, with developments such as the new Western Sydney International Airport, the local infrastructure that will accompany it and, importantly, the businesses and jobs to support it. I am eager to work closely with this forward-thinking council, and I am confident in our ability to work together to lead us through this transformative period.

Penrith City Council has reached another historic milestone with the election of three councillors with Aboriginal heritage—the first time this has occurred in Penrith's history. This achievement is a monumental step forward in ensuring that the voices of First Nations people are heard and respected at the local government level. Penrith has long been committed to reconciliation, striving to foster a meaningful and enduring connection between the council and the Dharug and Gundungurra nations. With the election of three Aboriginal councillors, the council now has the opportunity to deepen its commitment to acknowledge and honour the rich cultural heritage and ongoing contributions of First Nations people in Penrith. Having First Nations representation on the council not only brings important perspectives to the table but also reinforces the council's dedication to inclusive governance. These councillors will be vital in advocating for the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal people in our community, helping to ensure that reconciliation is not only a policy but also a lived reality in Penrith.

What makes this term even more exciting is the fact that Penrith council now has a Labor majority. With a majority of councillors aligned with Labor's core values of equity, sustainability and accessibility, we can expect meaningful and impactful changes that will benefit the entire community. Labor's deep commitment to working for the West means that Penrith is set to see real, tangible progress on issues that matter most to the people of Penrith. I congratulate Mayor Todd Carney and Deputy Mayor Fowler, who were elected uncontested, highlighting their spirit of cooperation and shared commitment to the people of Penrith.

As a former mayor, deputy mayor and longstanding councillor, I know just how challenging and rewarding the role can be. This council is diverse, driven and united by a shared mission to put Penrith first. I have no doubt that amazing things lie ahead for our community. I once again congratulate all the elected councillors. Their dedication to Penrith is deeply appreciated. I know that by working together, the State and local governments will continue to build a brighter future for the people of our Penrith community.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (21:31): A lot of members of this place have a local government background. During my years on Blacktown council, I saw the member for Penrith next door. Penrith council did amazing work when it had to operate in coalition. As the member for Penrith said, the council now has a Labor majority. When I was a kid growing up in the 1970s and 1980s, there used to be Labor majorities. Brian King was the mayor in those days. Todd Carney has worked really hard over the years. He was mentored by the member for Penrith. There is a lot of new blood on the council. It is always good to have a bit of renewal when new councillors have the enthusiasm to take on the job. There are also some experienced heads on the council, and some people who are a little bit older. It is always good to have that balance moving forward. I thank the member

for Penrith for her service to Penrith council. I look forward to the member's wonderful service in this place and Mayor Carney's continued future at Penrith council.

MENTAL HEALTH PATIENT REHABILITATION

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (21:32): I address a troubling issue with our State's health and justice systems in the management of dangerous forensic mental health patients who have committed crimes, including homicide. Earlier this week I was made aware of social media posts on the Orange NSW Community Notice Board and Spread the Word in Orange pages on Facebook. The posts warned the community that a person named Jordan Miller or Jordan Brodie is on Tinder and other social media and is actively talking to girls while in a forensic mental hospital for murdering his last girlfriend. The posts allege also that he gets day leave to roam the Orange community.

I have been contacted by Kristy Smith, an aunt of the late Emerald Wardle, who was murdered in Metford in the Hunter Region in 2020. She was strangled to death by her partner, Jordan Brodie Miller. In 2022, Miller was convicted of murder by the NSW Supreme Court and sentenced to a maximum of 20 years imprisonment. Miller appealed the conviction and sentence in the NSW Court of Criminal Appeal, citing a post-offence clinical diagnosis of schizophrenia. The court upheld the appeal, satisfied that Miller had a mental health impairment at the time he murdered Emerald Wardle. Miller is now subject to the Mental Health Review Tribunal. I convey my heartfelt condolences to Kristy Smith and all of Emerald's loved ones for their heartbreaking loss.

The outcome of the legal process provided little to no solace to Emerald's family, but they, along with most reasonable people in our society, believed that the community was at least safe from Jordan Brodie Miller. This week's revelation makes us wonder how a killer can be granted day release and access to the tools to pose a further threat to unsuspecting women. I understand that Jordan Miller is now at Bloomfield Hospital in Orange. It is alleged he was granted day release and access to social media and dating applications. That is outrageous. Unfortunately, due to the lack of transparency concerning the treatment of forensic patients, I cannot confirm every element of his alleged activity. However, my office's inquiries certainly have not yielded a response to the contrary.

This issue raises an essential question: How can a person who has committed such a heinous crime be permitted to engage in activities that allow him to interact with the public, particularly vulnerable individuals? How was Jordan Miller granted release? What are the guidelines for his rehabilitation? How is access to social media and dating sites justified? These questions go to the heart of our duty to protect the community, particularly young women who could unknowingly interact with him. This situation does not meet the community's expectations. Allowing someone with Miller's history to interact online is a glaring oversight. It poses an unacceptable risk to not only potential victims but also the integrity of our justice and mental health systems.

Mental illness is a serious issue that requires compassion and treatment. However, it must never be used as a blanket justification for violence or to sidestep accountability. The loss of life is a devastating consequence that cannot be overlooked, and we must question how we reconcile the need for rehabilitation with the imperative to safeguard the community. Emerald's family, and indeed all families affected by similar tragedies, deserve transparency. They deserve to know what safeguards are in place to prevent future violence. It is imperative that we re-evaluate protocols around the rehabilitation of criminal clients, especially those with histories of violence. The ability to access social media and dating applications must be critically examined. Are we prioritising rehabilitation at the expense of community safety? That is not just a legal question; it is a moral one. I urge NSW Health, alongside our legal and mental health bureaucracies, to take immediate action to address these concerns.

I thank the Minister for Mental Health for promptly responding to my initial concerns, and for querying the ministry and the response from the local health district. But it is clear the system is designed to favour those who commit crimes rather than supporting living victims and protecting the community. The parents of young women would be appalled to know this unsuspecting threat exists, because the women may not know they are interacting with a killer under the so-called watch of the forensic mental health framework. The alarming behaviour we are witnessing falls far short of the community's reasonable expectations. This issue raises questions that require immediate address and action to make certain such behaviour is not enabled by the very system that should also be protecting the community.

ABBOTSFORD HOUSE

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (21:37): Abbotsford House is a significant and beautiful historical site in my community. Abbotsford House was the residence of Sir Arthur Renwick, a man whose contributions to the early years of New South Wales were profound. Through his work as a physician, philanthropist and politician, Sir Arthur's life was dedicated to service. His achievements still resonate to this day,

including in the foundations of our State healthcare infrastructure. Arthur's wife, Lady Elizabeth Renwick, was equally dedicated to social reform. Her work in the Womanhood Suffrage League of New South Wales was paramount to the success of the Women's Franchise Act 1902 and securing the right to vote for women in New South Wales. The former home of the Renwicks, Abbotsford House is a marvel that everyone in my local community appreciates for its beauty. Tonight, I stress the importance of conserving and protecting this wonderful site for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.

I recently met with Dr Paul and Dr Margaret McKenzie, the current owners of the home. I thank them for the time and effort they have dedicated over the past 27 years to restore Abbotsford House. Their work has ensured the site and history of our community are cherished. They have appreciated the home, treated it with respect and dignity and restored it to its potential. We now have a wonderful home and grounds to marvel at and appreciate. In the past the McKenzies have opened their home to historical societies. That generosity is to be commended. They are very kind people and I acknowledge their contributions.

When I met with the McKenzies, they told me how strongly they feel about having the site protected on the State Heritage Register. I have written to the Minister for Heritage outlining the request to ensure that Abbotsford House is added to the register and that invaluable and wonderful site is protected for years to come. I know the Minister to be a strong advocate for heritage in this State, and I am hopeful we can work collaboratively with the McKenzies to ensure that the home is protected in future.

I share with the House a short history of the home. Abbotsford House was built on an 80-acre plot of land by Sir Arthur Renwick as his family home before the land was subdivided into the great suburb we now know as Abbotsford. The grand Victorian mansion is more than just a beautiful structure; it is a symbol of a time when Sydney was growing and establishing itself as the world-renowned city it has become. Abbotsford House was designed in the Victorian boom style of architecture, characterised by its ornate detailing and grand proportions. From the photographs I have seen, I was impressed by the remarkable refurbished design, which pays homage to the original interior. The house stands as one of the few surviving treasures from its era—a reminder of the heritage that shaped the early days of our community.

Despite its historical and architectural significance, Abbotsford House has not been afforded the protection it deserves. Sir Arthur Renwick was forced to sell the estate in 1904 due to financial losses in the depression. Eventually it was purchased by Nestlé, which used the land for chocolate production until the 1980s. Following the closure of the factory, the land was developed for housing and the 80-acre estate was reduced to a fraction of its original size. Abbotsford House itself has been restored and a heritage listing will ensure its future.

We must not make the mistake of allowing that vital piece of our State's history to fall into disrepair. Abbotsford House stands proudly as a memorial to the history of our area. It is our duty to ensure that its legacy endures. I sincerely thank and congratulate Dr Paul and Dr Margaret McKenzie for their work and advocacy. I hope we can work collaboratively with the Minister and the Government to take action to protect Abbotsford House and place it on the State Heritage Register. Let us honour and preserve a piece of our history that has shaped our community. Abbotsford House is a local treasure to all residents and deserves to be recognised and protected for generations to come.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (21:41): As the parents of three young children growing up in country New South Wales, my wife Tabitha and I are very mindful of the impacts of social media, both good and bad. Social media can be used as a form of self-expression and a means to connect with friends, be entertained and stay informed. However, it is important that we examine ways to be safer online, especially in a world where social media is often impossible to escape, available 24/7 and sometimes addictive. Recently I sat down with Albury-Wodonga youth advocate Al Taylor, who runs a local skateboard school. Al shared with me how he sees mobile devices and social media platforms as an integral part of life. He said, "Social media is not separate; it is just a part of the whole mental health issue."

Al spoke of how he has open and honest conversations with teens about online dangers and tries to empower them to reach out to their parents or a trusted adult if they spot something that is not right. "It is not like the playground, where harassment can be easy to spot," Al said. "It's an invisible danger we must keep on our radars." One of Al's young students, Nate Holland, a year 8 student at Albury's James Fallon High, uses Snapchat and Instagram to connect with his mates and share skate and scooter videos. Growing up with older siblings, Nate has been aware of the darker side of social media for quite some time. He stated:

I'm only part of two group chats focused on skating and mountain biking. If I'm added to groups where kids are talking about after school fights, I delete them. It's not something I want to be involved in.

Nate's mum, Stacey, said that while she understands the need to keep kids safe, she does not believe a ban will necessarily work. Instead, she thinks the pressure ought to be on the powerful social media giants to clean up their platforms. She said, "Social media is useful for kids like Nate. It's a massive communication tool, and he can keep in touch with us and his mates without needing credit on his phone." Border mental health worker Melanie Kilo shared that young people in rural and regional settings use social media as an important form of connection after growing up with the technology and not knowing any other way. She stated:

In rural areas, often social media is the only way for kids to connect outside of school hours, assuming the internet is good enough.

Social media and the internet can reduce that sense of isolation that many rural young people experience.

But with so many positives, we certainly see the downsides too. According to the eSafety Commissioner, the top three negative experiences teens say they experience online are being contacted by a stranger or someone they do not know, receiving inappropriate or unwanted content, and being deliberately excluded from events or social groups. The Australian Psychological Society has revealed that more than four in 10 teens now suffer mental health distress, with the increase linked to the use of social media. It states:

Psychologists report teens are basing their self-worth on the number of likes they receive and were obsessively checking their metrics on apps, often left feeling rejected if they did not receive instant approval for their posts.

But there is an even darker side, with the apps being used to cyberbully and to rate the sexual attractiveness of girls. Ahead of a looming Federal election, both sides of politics are promising to ban teens from social media, while the New South Wales and South Australian governments last week hosted the two-day Social Media Summit in Sydney and Adelaide. That summit brought together experts, policymakers, academics and young people, with participants sharing how platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and WhatsApp impact our lives—particularly those of our children and young people—and how government can best support digital wellbeing.

Tonight I speak as a regional MP about the importance of raising the voice of our young people and listening to them. Coming from the border region, where teens can live in one State but go to school, play sport or work in the other, I know that if social media bans are enforced then consistency across jurisdictions is essential. Whatever decisions are made, we must do our best to protect our young people from the online dangers and feelings of inadequacy, anxiety and low self-esteem. We know these issues can lead sufferers down the path of eating disorders, depression and, tragically, suicide. We want our children and young people to thrive, and they will do so if we promote healthy online habits that prioritise mental wellbeing over seeking validation from a superficial digital world.

PLASREFINE PLASTICS RECYCLING FACILITY

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (21:46): Tonight I raise my considerable concerns regarding the State significant development assessment report handed down by the Department of Planning, Housing, and Infrastructure to the Independent Planning Commission [IPC] recommending approval of the Plasrefine Plastics Recycling Facility in Moss Vale. Despite that considerable piece of work justifying the theory that the project proposal is approvable, the fact of the matter remains that it is not the right site. I reiterate what I have said in this House on previous occasions: The concept of recycling and environmental sustainability is commendable; however, this specific project poses a significant risk within the community and the environment in which it is proposed. Members of this community now face a third instance of needing to respond to the project's proposed operations. Previously I have raised the point in Parliament that their opposition is not a case of "not in my backyard" because it is not a backyard project; it is a serious industrial operation proposed to be located far too close to a residential area.

The Southern Highlands Innovation Park [SHIP] was funded to the tune of \$270,000 by the New South Wales Government to produce a guide for the planning of infrastructure and investment in the highlands. The Plasrefine project ignores those plans. Whilst the draft structure plan of the SHIP identifies heavy industrial uses to the east of the precinct, with opportunities to implement more sustainable resource and waste processes, the proposed Moss Vale plastics recycling facility is located just 200 metres from the nearest home, in a precinct that the plan identified for productivity support, not general or heavy industrial.

The Garvan Institute of Medical Research holds a site nearby, Australian BioResources. That facility is for breeding mouse strains for Garvan researchers and partner institutes in Australian medical research. I am informed that mouse embryos have previously been affected by vibrations related to infrastructure construction, with road noise killing the embryos. I heard an interesting statistic: Without those vibrations, 60 per cent of embryos survive; with the vibrations, only 1 per cent survive. This is the last facility of its kind in Australia, and if it is not operating in the highlands, all of Australia's research mice will be purchased from China. The argued social benefits from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure report appear to outweigh the submissions of locals, but the point is that no-one is arguing that the facility may be beneficial for the community. We are arguing that it must be work conducted in an appropriate location.

The Government and proponent are expecting the community of Moss Vale to trust them to build Australia's largest plastic recycling plant, a facility that is being assumed to be aesthetically, environmentally and socially acceptable without major negative effects. The department suggests it should be approved with stringent conditions imposed. "There will be conditions—trust us. The proponent must meet these conditions—trust us." The Herald reported last year that a key party to this development is a Beijing-based businessman who owns other companies that have been censured by Beijing's environmental and ecological bureau. How does this measure up to addressing the community submissions, which raised potential air and water pollution, including the release of microplastics, when a key party to this development has breached environmental and ecological governance restrictions in their home country? Furthermore, the report states:

To ensure any residual social impacts are carefully managed, the Department has recommended a range of conditions to reflect the Applicant's commitments ... to ensure there is robust and ongoing oversight of the environmental controls for the development, the Department recommends engagement of an Environmental Representative

The environmental representative has their first task, with two dilapidated ACTION buses recently being dumped on a residential block owned by the project's proponent next to the proposed project's site the same week the report was handed down. Neighbours rightly asked whether they were aware of the planning department recommendation before the report was handed down. The upcoming hearing by the IPC will provide a vital opportunity for the community to continue to fight the development and ensure that the IPC fully understands the potential impacts of the project. I encourage the community to be involved.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 21:52 until
Thursday 17 October 2024 at 10:00.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

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

SES CRONULLA UNIT AWARDS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate the State Emergency Service [SES] volunteers from the Cronulla Unit who received awards at the Metro Zone Awards ceremony on Saturday 21 September 2024. I especially highlight Alan Wing, the recipient of the NSW SES 30 Year Long Service Award – a remarkable achievement, and one of which Alan should be very proud. Peter O'Hea, who received a 15 year long service award, should also be commended for his dedication. I congratulate Briget Clark, Linda and Pieter Eecen, Karen Kent, and Mario and Marion Maggio, who all received 10 Year Long Service Medals. Finally, I congratulate those from the Cronulla Unit who received a National Medal, namely John Curtis, Michael Marusic, Kyle Riordon, Ethan Taylor, Kent Wallin, Christopher Watts, and Peter Rozea. The National Medal recognises the long and diligent service of those who put the community above themselves in times of crisis. Those who volunteer in the SES should be proud of the commitment and selflessness they so often display and I thank them for their continual service to the community.

BLAYKE BRAILEY

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Cronulla Sharks hooker Blayke Brailey on claiming the Porter Gallen Medal again, being named back-to-back Sharks Player of the Year. He is the first player to receive the notable achievement two years in a row since Michael Gordon in 2013 and 2014. Blayke has been in the Sharks development system since he was just 13 years old, and it has clearly paid off, with him touching the ball 3,360 times this season, more than any other player. He also managed 1,108 tackles, the second highest in the entire NRL this season. Blayke has not missed a single game for four straight seasons. He also won the NRL Iron Man award this year. Blayke set the standard this year, and I wish him, and the entire Cronulla Sharks team luck for next year!

ANNELIES WHITE, PRIDE OF WORKMANSHIP AWARD

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I wish to congratulate Annelies White on receiving a Pride of Workmanship Award from the Rotary Club of Kenthurst. The Club held its Annual Awards night on 30 September 2024. Annelies was nominated by Gil Kommer. The award was given in recognition and gratitude of the job that Annelies currently does working in the business, All Metal Products. All Metal Products is a typical example of how clerical staff have been replaced by more comprehensive computer systems. With the introduction of a new computer system, Annelies is now the sole clerk in the office. Annelies very ably manages the full field of office responsibilities, what otherwise was done by three. This includes job invoicing, debtors and creditors control, payroll, and banking. The citation includes the following statement: "Her stoic and phlegmatic nature has been able to cope with the many questions that often needed to be dealt with, especially with employees re the payroll."

It is an absolute pleasure to be able to congratulate and recognise Annelies on receipt of the Pride of Workmanship Award.

LINDA AUSTIN WHITE, PRIDE OF WORKMANSHIP AWARD

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I wish to congratulate Linda White on receiving a Pride of Workmanship Award from the Rotary Club of Kenthurst. The Club held its Annual Awards night on 30 September 2024. Linda was nominated by the Principal of Marian Catholic College, Kenthurst, Dr. Gavin Hayes. Linda is the Leader of Learning and Creative and Performing Arts at Marian Catholic College, Kenthurst. Linda's unwavering passion for music and dedication to excellence has fostered a culture of artistic achievement at the college. Through her leadership, Linda has developed a diverse range of musical ensembles, including bands, choirs, and orchestral programs, which reflect her own pride in craftsmanship and inspire students to strive for excellence. Linda is also the driving force, inspiration, and choreographer behind key school events such as Jazz Night, the school musical, and Create festivals. Her work consistently elevates the creative spirit of Marian Catholic College, providing students with extraordinary performance opportunities. Linda plays a vital role in enhancing the school community through her involvement in masses, assemblies, and various school-wide initiatives. It is an absolute pleasure to be able to congratulate and recognise Linda on receipt of the Pride of Workmanship Award.

DAWN SWAINSTON, COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I wish to congratulate Dawn Swainston on receiving a Rotary Club of Kenthurst, Community Service Award. The Club held its Annual Awards night on 30 September 2024. Dawn was nominated by Rotary Club of Kenthurst Member, Peter Bray. Dawn is the Managing Director of Nisbets, a leading multi-national provider of Foodservice equipment and consumables with operations in the UK, Ireland, Holland, Belgium, Germany, and France, with subsidiary companies in India, China, Australia, and New Zealand. Dawn has received her award for leadership and championing the importance of inclusion, with diversity of employees at all levels including senior management. Dawn provided tips for women in business: "With two adult children, and a great support network around me, I am living proof that women can achieve everything they set out to do. It is also important to work in a business that you are genuinely passionate about, having the support of a mentor, and most importantly, believing in yourself." It is an absolute pleasure to be able to congratulate and recognise Dawn on receipt of the Rotary Community Service Award.

CONGRATULATIONS WINGECARRIBEE SHIRE COUNCIL COUNCILLORS

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Congratulations to the newly elected Wingecarribee Shire Council Councillors in the 2024 NSW Local Government elections. I wish each of you the very best as you embark on this important journey of service to our community. It's wonderful to see such an enthusiastic new group of Councillors in Wingecarribee. The new council represents a diverse range of ages, along with six out of the nine councillors being women and mums of young children. I look forward to the opportunity to collaborate and work together toward achieving the best possible outcomes for our region. I'm excited for the road ahead and the positive changes we can bring together. Councillors were inducted on 9th October, 2024, and Jesse Fitzpatrick was unanimously elected as Mayor. He is joined by Erin Foley as Deputy Mayor along with Councillors Rachel Russell, Therese Duffy, James Farrell, David Kent, Nicole Smith, Sara Moylan and Heather Champion. Thank you for stepping up and committing to the betterment of our community.

HIGHLANDS HERO HELEN JOHNSTON

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—The Southern Highlands Community Foundation has honoured yet another remarkable individual with its latest Highlands Hero award, recognizing the invaluable contributions of Helen Johnston. Helen serves as the dedicated secretary for the Bowral District and Art Society, and with this award comes a generous \$5,000 grant for the Art Society. This funding will help support the society's ongoing efforts in promoting art and culture within the community. Helen's work as a volunteer has been instrumental in ensuring the smooth operation of the Bowral District and Art Society. Volunteers like Helen are the backbone of community organisations, often working anonymously behind the scenes to make sure everything runs efficiently. Helen's years of dedication, attention to detail, and commitment to the arts are recognised with this award. This recognition celebrates Helen's personal achievements and reinforces the essential role volunteers play in maintaining the vibrancy of community organisations like the Bowral District and Art Society, which depend on such support to thrive. Congratulations Helen.

WOLLONDILLY FIREFIGHTER SENT TO CANADA

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Firefighters from across Australia, including those from Wollondilly, risked their lives to help fight the devastating wildfires in Canada. Among them was Deputy Captain James Koens, Strike Team Leader of the Alpine Rural Fire Brigade, who travelled to Alberta, Canada earlier this

year. James joined a team of over 100 firefighters from Australia and New Zealand, lending their expertise and support to communities affected by the wildfires. For residents of Wollondilly, who are all too familiar with the dangers of bushfires, the efforts of James and the others resonate deeply. Australia has a long-standing tradition of offering help during international fire crises, sharing knowledge and resources to combat fires across the globe. This spirit of cooperation is mutual, as Canadian firefighters also assisted Australia during the devastating 2019-2020 bushfire season. The deployment of firefighters to Canada was organised by the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council's National Resource Sharing Centre, which coordinates efforts in times of need. James' contribution reflects the courage and dedication of all firefighters who step up to protect lives and property. Thank you James for your service, and commitment to helping communities in need.

COWRA LOCAL SPEEDWAY STAR

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to congratulate and acknowledge Cowra speedway racer Brady Kurtz. Brady is an accomplished speedway racer, renowned for his remarkable skills on the track. Brady quickly rose through the ranks, showcasing his talent in both junior and senior competitions and made a name for himself in the Australian Speedway Championship and has represented Australia on the international stage. In 2017, he clinched the Australian Under-21 Championship, a significant milestone that highlighted his potential and set the stage for future successes. His determination and aggressive racing style have earned him a loyal fan base and respect among peers. Uniquely Brady rides for British Team Belle Vue Aces as well as his Polish Team Klub Sportowy ROW Robnik. His Polish team is the oldest and most successful team in Polish Speedway. And Brady has been at it again, captaining his Polish team Rybnik, and qualifying himself through to the Speedway World Championship Grand Prix Qualification to be held in 2025. I congratulate Brady, wish him well as he continues his march to the top of World Speedway Racing.

ANOTHER GREAT BOOROWA IRISH WOOL FESTIVAL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I was once again delighted to be invited to be part of the official opening at the Boorowa Irish Wool Festival "Woolfest." Woolfest is an annual event held in Boorowa, celebrating its Irish heritage and sheep farming traditions. The festival brings together locals and visitors for a weekend filled with Irish music, cultural displays, and a unique blend of Australian and Irish customs. One of the highlights of Woolfest is the Running of the Sheep, a light-hearted twist on Spain's Running of the Bulls. Boorowa's sheep, race down the main street, symbolising the town's strong wool industry and farming roots. Alongside the sheep race, the festival features a lively street parade showcasing floats, Irish dancing, reflecting the town's rich Irish ancestry. Markets line the streets, offering local produce, artisan crafts, woollen products, and delicious food, while shearing demonstrations and farm displays provide insights into the region's agricultural life. The Boorowa Irish Woolfest celebrates community spirit, heritage, and the bond between culture and agriculture. Congratulations to the hard-working committee on another successful year.

ASSISTANCE DOGS AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE ORCHARD HILLS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I was pleased to recently meet with CEO Tim Taylor and the team at Assistance Dogs Australia's National Training Centre [NTC] in Orchard Hills to see and discuss their outstanding work as a national, not-for-profit organisation that trains dogs to help people with autism, PTSD and physical disabilities, providing them with greater freedom and independence. I thank Mr Taylor and the team at the Orchard Hills training centre for their amazing work in fostering greater independence and wellbeing for members of our community and I wish them the very best as they continue their important mission.

ORCHARD HILLS VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I congratulate and commend Dr Camille and the team at Orchard Hills Veterinary Hospital for winning the 'Outstanding Pet Care' category of the Penrith City Local Business Awards, which were held on 11 September 2024 at the Western Sydney Conference Centre. This is the second year in a row that Dr Camille and her team have won this prestigious award, which is a testament to the consistency of their quality, care and excellence. This remarkable achievement also follows the prestigious Australian Small Business Champion Award, which they won earlier this year. On behalf of my electorate of Badgerys Creek, I thank Dr Camille and her team at Orchard Hills Veterinary Hospital for the high-quality veterinary healthcare that they provide to our cherished pets. I commend Dr Camille and her team on their continuous and outstanding success, and I wish them the very best as they continue their important work.

TERINA EDWARDS AND ABBY WHITE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I congratulate Glenmore Park locals Terina Edwards and Abby White for finishing in the Top 10 of this year's season of America's Got Talent, as part of their team from Sydney dance school 'Brent Street'. To qualify for the America's Got Talent, Brent Street team, over 300 dancers from the ranks auditioned before 30 were chosen to compete in America. To qualify for the team is such an

achievement. To then be part of the team finishing in the top 10 at America's Got Talent is extraordinary. I'm delighted to hear that Terina and Abby took plenty away from the experience and I have no doubt we'll be hearing more of them as they dream of travelling the world, pursuing careers in the dance industry. On behalf of the Badgerys Creek electorate, I congratulate Terina and Abby and I wish them continued success in all their endeavours.

CARLTON SOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOL P&C

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I take this opportunity to recognise Carlton South Public School P&C for their advocacy and campaigning efforts which continue to make our community a better place to live and raise a family. The P&C through their tireless efforts have raised \$120,000 to contribute towards their campaign to upgrade the grass playground and surrounding ball courts at Carlton South Public School. Recently, I attended the school and was proud to announce together with the P&C that the NSW Government will also contribute \$120,000 to deliver a brand-new playground for the school. The new playground will provide a modern environment for students to participate in sporting and recreational activities encouraging an outdoor lifestyle which will benefit the physical and mental wellbeing of our students. I would like to thank and commend Darren Galea the Principal, Jati Teoh the P&C President, past presidents, Heidi Breeze, Andrew Karamitos and all office holders and members of the CPS P&C for making this dream a reality. I look forward to seeing the positive impact the new playground has on the school's students and the wider community, which could not have happened without the work of the P&C.

HEADSPACE HURSTVILLE 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I take this opportunity to recognise the team at Headspace Hurstville for reaching a significant milestone, having recently celebrated their 10-year anniversary. Headspace Hurstville provides vital mental health services that are both free and easily accessible for young adolescents aged 12-15 across the St George Area. Over the past decade, more than 3,893 young people have benefited from the care and expert support provided by the dedicated staff at Headspace. Their commitment to the wellbeing of adolescents and young adults have provided a safe space for those facing challenges with mental health, emotional well-being, and more. This milestone is a testament to the dedication, professionalism, and empathy of the entire Headspace Hurstville team. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the entire team for their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to mental health. I am confident that Headspace Hurstville will continue to make a positive impact in the lives of young people for many years to come.

KEVIN SKELSEY

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I wish to pay tribute and express my condolences for Kevin Skelsey, a highly regarded Southern Sydney teacher who passed away on the 27th of July. During his time, Mr Skelsey worked in many schools across NSW, teaching hundreds of student's practical skills in industrial technology and constantly working to improve the learning environments his students worked in. From 1961 to 1965, Mr Skelsey was an Industrial Arts teacher at James Cook High. He then served as the Industrial Arts subject master at Tempe High in 1966, Hurstville Boys High in 1967-69, and Endeavour High in 1970, where he also acted as the relieving Deputy Principal. Mr Skelsey was a celebrated educator and will be remembered for how he impacted the lives of students every day. On behalf of the Kogarah electorate, I send our sincere condolences to the Skelsey family and wish to express my deepest appreciation for Mr Skelsey's contributions to education in NSW and to the local community.

ISLAMOPHOBIA REGISTER AUSTRALIA

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown Electorate, I want to congratulate Islamophobia Register Australia on their 10th anniversary and recognise their ongoing work addressing Islamophobia in Australia. In the past ten years the Register has grown from a Facebook page into Australia's leading organisation for tracking and tackling Islamophobia across the country. The Register has published 5 academic reports, partnered with universities, and provided vital pro-bono victim support services for those seeking to heal from distressing and traumatising anti-Muslim hate. I extend my congratulations to the Islamophobia Register Australia's Board of Directors, Executive Director Nora Amath, Deputy Chair Dr Derya Iner, Founder Mariam Veiszade and all who have contributed over the past decade. I commend Islamophobia Register Australia on their ongoing commitment to combatting Islamophobia and congratulate them on ten years of working towards an inclusive and just Australian society.

JO BATES

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise Jo Bates, the owner of Forster business Tradie Leader Lady, for her contributions to our community. Jo has taken her passion for property renovations and turned it into a thriving business, supporting young people, especially women, to explore careers

in trades. Jo is breaking down barriers and reshaping perceptions about women in traditionally male-dominated industries. Her work doesn't stop at property maintenance and project management. Jo is committed to mentoring the next generation of tradespeople, encouraging teamwork between men and women in the field. She recently sponsored eight local students to attend the Luminosity Youth Summit, inspiring young people to pursue their passions. Tradie Leader Lady's presence is helping to create real change, and we are lucky to have Jo's leadership in Forster-Tuncurry.

PAUL MARTIN

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognize Paul Martin, who was named Masters Lifesaver of the Year at the Surf Life Saving Lower North Coast Awards of Excellence. Paul holds several roles at Pacific Palms, including Vice President, Complaints Officer, Deputy Captain, and IRB Driver. He also organised the Pacific Palms R2R ocean swim fundraiser. As Complaints Officer, Paul handled incidents promptly and professionally. He also stepped in as an IRB driver for a second patrol throughout much of the 23/24 season, addressing a shortage of qualified personnel and ensuring safety. Beyond his formal duties, Paul is consistently available to offer advice and support to Directors, Patrol Captains, Lifesavers, and members. Congratulations, Paul, on this well-deserved recognition, and thank you for your ongoing commitment to Pacific Palms Surf Life Saving Club.

OUTDOOR FURNITURE TAREN POINT

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate local business Outdoor Furniture Taren Point on celebrating its 50th anniversary. The family-owned business started when Greg Donnelly put up a sign out the front of his parents' home, advertising his hand-made furniture. What began with tables and chairs in his parents' backyard has grown into a well-known retailer of not just outdoor furniture, but also umbrellas, wood heaters and much more. The business is able to boast the impressive achievement of displaying Sydney's largest range of outdoor furniture, and the longevity of the business is a testament to the popularity of service received by customers. The business is not only known for its range of products and its relationships with the customer – it is also in possession of an iconic sheep sculpture that has adorned the front of the business for 30 years. Although the sheep has gone missing over the years, including a time it was found at a local butcher, it has always found its way back to the business. All family businesses require huge levels of determination and hard work in order to succeed, and the Donnelly family should be proud of keeping it up for 50 years.

MICHAEL O'MARA

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I rise to congratulate a 40-year volunteer on his amazing dedication to Athletics Australia, dedication that has earned him the honour of Central West Senior Volunteer of the Year for 2024. Orange's Michael O'Mara has poured his heart and soul into the sport of athletics spending four decades encouraging and coaching juniors and older competitors, working at state and national events and providing expertise where it's needed. He is also the incumbent president of the Commonwealth Games NSW. Michael has also utilised his business and financial skills to contribute to various organisations including the Orange Rotary Club, Gold Seekers Orienteering Club, Athletics NSW and Orange Runners Club. He is also on the Orange City Council working committee for athletics track and sports stadium project. The Central West Senior Volunteer award is handed out by the Centre for Volunteering, an organisation which promotes and supports volunteering across our state. The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards are held each year to recognise and thank the millions of volunteers striving each day to build stronger, more diverse communities across the state. Michael typifies these hard-working folk and I thank him for his contribution to his community.

IRENE RIDGEWAY

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr Speaker, I rise to congratulate Parkes Wiradjuri elder Aunty Irene Ridgeway on fighting for her family's truth to be recognised, a fight that led to an award-winning display at the Australian Museum. The exhibition 'Her Name is Nanny Nellie' earned the Community Connection gong at the 2024 Australian Museums and Galleries Association Awards. The award also marks Nellie Bunjil's descendants' push for a more sensitive depiction of three indigenous figures, Nellie being one, sculpted in the 1920s. The works were commissioned in response to a 1925 census which described the aboriginal people as a dying race and their semi-naked state reflected the out-dated sentiments of the time. Irene, who shares a resemblance to her great grandmother, retraced Nellie's life and fought for a more accurate display. Nellie worked in domestic service and her figure is now dressed accordingly, a direct contradiction to the nomadic way she was portrayed. With the help of her son, Daniel King, who has written and directed an AACTA-nominated documentary on Nellie and his mother's journey, Irene has pushed for a more accurate telling of the aboriginal people's stories and I commend her, and her family, on this important truth telling.

ELIZABETH MACGREGOR

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to congratulate Parkes rugby league prodigy Elizabeth MacGregor on taking the first big steps to fulfilling her enormous potential in the women's code. Still in her teens, Elizabeth has secured a contract with the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs for its first tilt into the National Rugby League Women's competition in 2025, thanks to an outstanding upbringing in central west's women's league. Although cutting her teeth at fullback, Elizabeth has proven her utility value in the backs but it's her vision, at such a young age, that Bulldogs women's coach Blake Cavallaro is most impressed by. Elizabeth has had some experience at elite-level league, having been a member of the Roosters' Tarsha Gale Cup side which made the semi-finals of the under 19s competition. A former Red Bend student, Elizabeth has also been a member of regional squads and NSW Combined Catholic Colleges. The Bulldogs debut in the NRLW will coincide with the club's 90th year celebrations, offering Elizabeth an opportunity to be part of something special. I wish talented young Parkes athlete every success in elite competition but am confident she has what it takes to shine. Well done and good luck!

TERRY GREEN

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise Terry Green from Taree for an important achievement – her 250th blood donation at the Taree Lifeblood Donor Centre. Terry is a retired high school teacher, she started giving blood during her college years and has continued donating wherever life has taken her. For more than 20 years, she has been a familiar face at the Taree centre, making regular contributions that have saved lives. Terry's motivation to help others is clear. While teaching at Taree High School, she encouraged students and fellow teachers to donate as well. I thank Terry for her generosity and for inspiring others to give back and make a difference.

NORTH SHOALHAVEN MEALS ON WHEELS

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—I am thrilled to announce the opening of North Shoalhaven Meals on Wheels' first purpose-built commercial kitchen in South Nowra. This state-of-the-art facility will enable the organisation to produce 100,000 meals annually, ensuring that seniors throughout the Shoalhaven Region have access to nutritious, affordable meals. Over the past year, the organisation has seen remarkable growth, and meeting the increasing demand became a significant challenge. With the launch of this new kitchen, they can now manage that growth and continue serving our community without having to turn anyone away. Having proudly supported the Shoalhaven community for over 56 years, this investment will allow them to carry on their vital work for many years to come. I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the wonderful volunteers - their dedication and hard work have been instrumental in maintaining the high quality of meals and support services for our local seniors. Congratulations and I look forward to visiting this new facility very soon.

CARMELINA HODGSON

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise and congratulate Carmelina Hodgson, a cherished resident of Mollismook, who will celebrate her 90th birthday on the 23rd of October. Carmelina moved to Mollismook in 1995 with her beloved husband Joe, and since then, has been an integral part of the local community. She has raised four children and enjoys the company of six grandchildren, with family connections across NSW, including her sister, Leonie Eason. Remarkably, Carmelina only learnt to drive at the age of 70 after her husband Joe suffered a stroke and only recently Carmelina retired from driving. Carmelina is also a vibrant member of The Milton Follies and the acclaimed choir, The Mudsingers and has been a dedicated church organist since the 1970s, continuing to play at the Catholic churches in Milton and Ulladulla until very recently. Carmelina truly is a beloved figure in Mollismook, Milton, and Ulladulla and on behalf of the community, I wish Carmelina a very Happy 90th Birthday!

MICHAEL BIRRELL

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise and congratulate Michael Birrell, an Ulladulla resident, for his powerful dedication to raising awareness about mental health through the Lift the Load Challenge. After losing a close friend to suicide, Michael is determined to make a difference by participating in this meaningful initiative, which raises funds for the Top Blokes Foundation. The challenge requires participants to wear a 10kg weighted vest while walking, running, or cycling 50km or more throughout Mental Health Month, symbolising the heavy burden those struggling with mental health issues carry daily. Michael's commitment to this cause, along with his efforts to engage the local community and raise awareness is inspiring. Michael's own personal experiences with mental health, both in his family and his community, have fuelled his passion to help others. By sharing his story and participating in this challenge, Michael is helping to break the stigma surrounding mental health and provide much-needed support to those in need - and I commend Michael's efforts to make a positive impact through the Lift the Load Challenge.

TUMBARUMBA ROTARY CLUB AND THE HUME AND HOVELL ULTRAMARATHON

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge the Tumbarumba Rotary Club and give a shout out to the following incredible volunteers. Glen Keefe, Allison Dennis, Lachie Mackenzie, Ken Dale, Bruce Wright, Kristina Kaminsky, David Magginito, and Julie Giddings, rose with the sun to serve up a delicious bacon and egg breakfast for the hungry competitors of the Hume and Hovell Ultramarathon. The dedicated Rotarians not only cooked but also bravely trekked in from the car park to the BBQ area – true champions in their own right! A special mention to Cam's Coffee for fuelling our early risers with their wake-up brews. Finally, let's not forget the amazing athletes who tackled the gruelling 100km and 50km courses, conquering elevations of up to 1200m. Well done to all those who participated in this event, you have all made Tumbarumba shine, with your community spirit and teamwork.

GEROGERY HOTEL – FINALIST

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate the Gerogery Hotel, for being named a finalist for the Best Pub in NSW. This recognition celebrates the hotel's creativity and innovation, particularly when it comes to its food challenges, such as The Bogan Burger, a true culinary masterpiece. Under the leadership of Norm Carl, who took over ownership in mid-2021, the pub has thrived attracting visitors from far and wide. Being named a finalist in the 2022 Australian Hotel Association NSW People's Choice Award, is one of its many ongoing achievements, driven by the overwhelming support and love of the local community. The Gerogery Hotel has built its success on the foundation of a family-friendly atmosphere where the motto is clear, "No one leaves hungry". Congratulations Norm and the entire Gerogery Hotel team for your outstanding efforts.

MEN'S WALK AND TALK TUGGERAWONG

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—I would like to acknowledge the Central Coast Men's Walk and Talk group at Tuggerawong who celebrated Mental Health Month on the 10th of October with a sausage sizzle prior to their walk. The group support the theme with Mental Health Month Let's Talk About It – by focussing on open conversations and encouraging everyone to break the silence surrounding mental health. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare claims that 43 per cent of the population will experience a mental illness at some stage in their life, yet stigma and shame still prevent many from seeking help. The Thursday walks are designed to bring men together in a safe, supportive environment, allowing them to connect, share their experiences, and get active, all of which contribute positively to mental health. An opportunity for men to engage in informal conversations while enjoying physical activity. It is great to see men in our community connecting with others who are facing similar challenges, showing that vulnerability is a strength, not a weakness.

YARRAMALONG VALLEY SCARECROW COMPETITION

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—Community event Yarramalong Valley Scarecrow Competition runs annually and returned for the second time with the new organiser Yarramalong School Community Centre. This year the famous event held a crow building workshop at the Yarramalong Old School for first time goes or looking for ideas to expand their creativity. Congratulations to the winners in each category: People's Choice - The Maze Express, Topical - Beetlejuice, Beetlejuice, Be..., Traditional - Alice in Wonderland and Humorous – Carecrow. Each of the scarecrow entries brought something unique and special to our community and a fun-filled family adventure driving through the valleys. It is great to see the community coming together and I look forward to next years creations.

4ID SOLUTIONS

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—Congratulations to 4id Solutions from Wyong for being recognised as Business of the Year at the Central Coast Business Awards 2024 held. Owners and Managing Directors Bruce and Kathy Hegan specialises in manufacturing smart labels and tags, designed for cutting-edge RFID, NFC, Bluetooth, and Sensor technologies. Mr Hegan's passion for innovation and product development and Mrs Hegan's attention to detail for all aspects of administration have paved the way for steady growth. I first visited 4id Solutions business over 10 years ago in Warnervale and it's great to see their very impressive growth. The business aim to continue reducing waste, increasing efficiency, and improving the environmental impact of their operations. As well as remain dedicated to fostering a positive work environment, enhancing employee skills, and creating products that meet the evolving needs of their customers and the market.

OAK FLATS ALBION PARK GYMNASTICS CLUB

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate the Oak Flats Albion Park Gymnastics Club with three teams who have qualified for the 2024 Acrobatic Gymnastics World Championships in Portugal. Two junior teams left on 6 September to compete in the Junior World Age Games, and a senior team the week after for the Acrobatic World Championships. Coming to the nation's attention in 2022 when they won the TV variety show Australia's Got Talent, head coach Kim Lacey said its "little tin shed" hadn't held them back from achieving success nationally and internationally – or securing three of the group spots in the national team. Kim said the groups, which were made up of duos or trios, would compete in their age category – sub-junior 12-18 years, junior 13-19 years and senior 15-plus. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate the Oak Flats Albion Park Gymnastics Club and wish them well in the World Championships.

NICOLE RISTOSKI

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Ms Nicole Ristoski of the NSW State Emergency Service, for her nomination of the NSW Volunteer of the Year Award. This nomination is a testament to Nicole's commendable volunteering efforts that have not gone unnoticed. Since joining the SES in 2020, Nicole has given countless hours of service back to the community. Time and effort that has been spent on helping those in the most extreme of situations. Not only has Nicole been nominated for the NSW Volunteer of the Year Award, in the past Nicole has also been the recipient of the NSW SES Emerging Woman Leader Award. I am proud that the Shellharbour Electorate has such a strong and caring woman giving back to the community through the NSW State Emergency Service. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate and thank Nicole for her amazing community service.

DELTA AMIDZOVSKI

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Delta Amidovski, from Corpus Christi High School, who has claimed the world championship in the Under 20's long jump event in Lima, Peru in August 2024. Delta completed the feat jumping a personal best 6.58 metres in the final to win out over competition from the USA, Poland, and Ukraine. Delta also placed 3rd in the 100m hurdle with a time of 13.24. She reached the Under 20's world championships with her performances in the national champs in Adelaide. It was in South Australia where Delta secured double national championship status in the Under 20's hurdles with a blistering 13.31 seconds, which was a championship record and a personal best. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Delta and wish her all the best in her future sporting endeavours.

SHOOTING FOR THE STARS

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—In the heart of our community, Smithtown Public School recently shone brightly at the NSW PSSA Small Schools Division Four Finals, showcasing impressive skill and tenacity. As the balls soared through the hoops and the whistle echoed across the court, the team's incredible abilities and unwavering solidarity brought everyone together, embodying the true spirit of sportsmanship. Competing against schools from all over the state, they revealed the untapped brilliance of our talented players. Despite being a school with under a hundred students, their hard work and determination propelled them to an impressive fifth-place finish. This journey was particularly meaningful, as some team members were seasoned netball players while others were stepping onto the court for the very first time. Each game was filled with invaluable experiences and lessons, fostering a sense of accomplishment that went far beyond the final score. The bonds formed, challenges overcome, and joy shared during this experience truly reflect the essence of Smithtown and our close-knit neighbourhood. This story is a testament to their perseverance and dedication. Here's to their future successes—may they always aim high and never give up!

FLYING CLUB FUNDS HELPS HOSPICE

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—The Kempsey Flying Club has once again demonstrated its strong commitment to the community, recently donating three essential pieces of equipment to the Macleay Valley Home Hospice. Thanks to the generous gold coin donations collected during the Family Open Day at Kempsey Airport, the hospice received two lightweight wheelchairs and a tall wheelie walker. Celebrating its 21st year, the Macleay Valley Home Hospice provides mobility equipment free of charge to over 100 clients in the Macleay Valley. The newly donated equipment will assist the hospice in its mission to provide much-needed support to palliative care patients, helping them remain at home for as long as possible. In addition to supporting the hospice, Kempsey Flying Club also contributed to the Westpac Helicopter Service, continuing their tradition of directing fundraising efforts to local charities. Thank you to the Kempsey Flying Club for their generosity and ongoing donations to local charities, and to the other clubs at the Family Open Day for raising vital funds for worthy causes. Your contributions are making a real difference in the lives of many across the Macleay Valley.

ST PAUL'S STUDENTS' SUCCESS

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Congratulations to St Paul's outstanding athletes, Amelia W. and Wilton T., who shone at the NSW All Schools Athletics Championships in Sydney over the holidays. Their dedication and hard work paid off, making their community proud. Amelia's performance in the 2000m steeplechase was nothing short of heroic. Competing fiercely against talented athletes, she secured an impressive second place with a time of 7:42.64. This remarkable achievement earned her a coveted spot at the Australian All Schools Championships 2024, set to take place in Queensland in early December. Wilton also showcased his talent, representing St Paul's with great determination. While he may not have qualified for the national championships this time, his commitment to the sport and perseverance inspires the whole community. His unwavering spirit exemplifies the resilience needed to excel in athletics. Amelia and Wilton exemplify the spirit of hard work, dedication, and sportsmanship. Their accomplishments not only highlight their individual talents but also the supportive environment at St Paul's. We celebrate their achievements and look forward to witnessing their future successes on the athletic stage, where their journeys continue to inspire us all!

FIRE ENGINE MUSTER TURNS COOLAMON'S STREETS RED

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—Chris and Joanne Berry, curators of the Coolamon's Fire Museum, were the driving forces behind the Fire Engine Muster held in the main street of Coolamon recently. The Berry's share their incredible private collection at their Fire Museum in Cowabbie Street, Coolamon for the enjoyment and learning of the general public and once a year, others with similar passions meet in Coolamon. This community day is a tribute to all the emergency services our communities rely on and this year there was the added feature of historic police vehicles. The Riverina Concert Band and the Wagga Pipe Band kept the music coming and visitors enjoyed viewing and purchasing from over 30 stalls as they wandered down the street. The Junee Dog Sport Club was a big hit with crowds as was the Coolamon and Ganmain RFS Brigades, the Coolamon SES and visiting teams from the Loftus RFS Brigade who hotly contested the Fireman's Relay. It was the visitors that secured the trophy this year. Acting Mayor David McCann commented that the day was a huge success for the community.

JOHN TRAPPMAN

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises and congratulates local Kiama resident Mr John Trappman for his outstanding service to our local sporting community. On Monday 23rd September 2024, the Kiama Junior Basketball Association honoured John Trappman as he stepped down from his role as President after nearly a decade of leadership. Mr Trappman has been involved with the club for 18 years, contributing as both a coach and administrator, and he even played for Kiama's representative team, which he captained in 1978-79. John is now 70 and has been involved with basketball since he was 19 – a whopping 51 years of involvement. One of John's proudest moments was coaching a team to victory in the Country Championships in 2014 which was the first time the club had won in over a decade. As he steps down, Mr Trappman feels confident about the future of the club, which he believes is in a strong position with dedicated volunteers and a capable committee. A huge congratulations, 'thank you' and well done to Mr John Trappman of Kiama for his outstanding and distinguished contribution to local basketball over several decades.

BOMBADERRY HIGH SCHOOL

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises an outstanding group of 23 students and 9 teachers from Bomaderry High School who are currently in South Korea on the trip-of-a-lifetime educational experience. Bomaderry High School has a very exciting schedule which has included a visit to the Gyeongbokgung Palace which was the first and the largest of the royal palaces built during the Joseon Dynasty. Bomaderry students then visited the National Folk Museum which illustrates the history of the traditional life of the Korean people. The students then successfully navigated the subway and went to the COEX Mall and the Starfield COEX library in Gangnam. The following day students explored Bukchon Hanok Village a residential area in Seoul where people still live in traditional housing. Students also went to Yongmunsa Temple, a Buddhist temple which has a ginkgo tree estimated at over 1100 years old and then visited Seokgram Grotto before visiting Haedong Yonggungsa Temple. What a sensational educational experience which these Bomaderry students will always remember. I acknowledge Bomaderry High School Principal Ian Morris and the teachers, staff and parents who do an incredible job supporting these students to reach their full potential.

LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS GET READY WEEKEND

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises our local firefighters across the Kiama electorate who participated in the recent Get Ready Weekend event hosted by the NSW Rural Fire Service. On Saturday 28th September 2024, a number of local community open day events were hosted by local RFS brigades across our region. I acknowledge and thank local Jamberoo firefighters including:

Craig Downs, Peter Leeson and Dave Brennan. Get Ready Weekend is a State-wide event hosted by the NSW Rural Fire Service each September, firefighters provide valuable information and resources to prepare their communities for the upcoming bushfire season. The Jamberoo Rural Fire Service had information packs on display which families were able to take home with them to begin a conversation on household fire safety. Jamberoo Brigade has been busy responding to grass and bushfire jobs, as well as multi-agency jobs assisting other emergency services. A huge thank you and well done to all local Rural Fire Service brigades and also the volunteers engaged with their own Get Ready Weekend initiatives right across the Kiama electorate. Our local community is extremely proud of you all and grateful for your ongoing dedication, commitment and hard work.

90TH BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—I recognise the celebration of the 90th Birthday of a number of members of our community at the Vietnamese Family Day hosted by the NSW Vietnamese Elderly Friendship Association. On this day, we also celebrate the incredible milestone of other elderly members of the Association, who have or will soon reach the significant age of 90 and above. My heartfelt congratulations are extended to: Ms Thi Hoc Tran, Mr Dinh Khoa Nguyen, Mr Van Pham Lam, Mrs Thi Hen Chau, Mrs Kim Anh Lam, Mr Van Duc Truong. Their wonderful journeys remind us that wisdom, resilience, and the nurturing of body, mind, and spirit are important factors to a fulfilling life. Their longevity inspires us to appreciate every moment, grow from the experiences learnt, and cultivate positive energy that enriches our lives. On this special occasion, I wish everyone continued joy, good health, and the comforting presence of their family and friends. I also wish every one of them a joyous celebration as we come together to recognise the significance of the Vietnamese Family Day - a special annual event dedicated to cherishing and preserving Vietnamese traditions and heritage across generations.

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VIEN GIAC TEMPLE

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—Vien Giac Temple in my Cabramatta electorate stands as a beacon of Buddhist values, with its name signifying the path to complete enlightenment. At the heart of Vien Giac Temple's mission is a deep commitment to sowing the seeds of loving-kindness and enlightenment through meditation and Buddhist teachings, with a special focus on the younger generation in our local community and beyond. Vien Giac Temple is approved to provide Buddhist education in public schools. The Temple is currently providing Buddhism classes to primary school students at several local primary schools and also at their own facility. Vien Giac Temple's remarkable achievements would not have been possible without Abbess Bhikkhuni Thich An Thien. Her profound knowledge, wisdom, and dedication have been truly commendable. I congratulate Vien Giac Temple and Abbess Thich An Thien on receiving the NSW Community Building Partnership grant. I look forward to seeing the completion of the projects from this grant and their continual benefits to our local community.

COUNTRY HOPE FUNDRAISER

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge the 2024 On Key 4 Kids event for truly making history by raising an astounding \$280,000 for Country Hope in support of local children battling cancer and life-threatening illnesses. A huge congratulations to the Highest Fundraiser winners, Chantelle Hutchins and Niki Strauss, who collected an incredible \$71,000! The Judges Choice award went to Johnny Rodriguez and Natalie Schrikker for their electrifying performance of "Lose Control", which had the crowd on their feet. Meanwhile, the People's Choice Award was claimed by Heidi McKay and Dave Daly for kicking off the show with Kasey Chambers "Rattlin' Bones". I thank all the contestants who displayed remarkable talent. A big thank you to everyone who participated and supported this amazing event, during these challenging times.

AUSTRALIAN NATURAL THERAPEUTICS GROUP

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the achievements of the Australian Natural Therapeutics Group [ANTG] for being selected as a finalist in 2024 Premier's NSW Export Awards, in

the Regional Exporter category. ANTG is being recognised for their outstanding contribution to the NSW and Australian export industry. As such, ANTG is a premier producer of high quality medicinal cannabis and is committed to advancing the industry through innovation, sustainability and excellence. ANTG provides therapeutic solutions that enhance the quality of life for patients worldwide. I congratulate all involved in winning this award, from its founder Matthew Cantelo in 2016, through to the present executive and staff. ANTG is an Australian owned and operated business, having a farming operation in the Northern Tablelands Electorate, where cannabis-derived medicinal products are produced and manufactured, using the latest science and cutting-edge technology. I commend ANTG for this impressive accolade, for the support given to the local economy and importantly, for improving the lives of others in our community, across Australia and internationally.

GWENNETH DALEY LEGACY CENTRE STORE

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the Gwenneth Daley Legacy Centre Store of Inverell, for giving back to the community of families of the Australian Servicemen and Servicewomen through their store, which opened in 2022. The store sells pre-loved goods, with funds being used to support 105 local legacy beneficiaries (including 21 children) from Inverell and district. Such is their service and value to the community, the store has been voted Best Second-hand Store in the New England recently. I congratulate past board members for enabling the project, including: President Rick Ellis, Secretary-Treasurer Margaret Coyne, Directors Peter Kearsey, Susanne Hughes, Desie Kearsey and Stuart Legge. Special thanks to Vice President David Grant for being instrumental in the precuring and setting up the store for operation. Thank you to current board members as well as Manager Ian Robinson and to the volunteers: Viki Borysko, Skye Dunn, Norma Honeysett, Clarry Horsey, Di Lee, Destiny Madden, Maureen Muhs, Wendy Pennington, Ian Robinson, Betty Schuman and Belinda Zammit. I commend all involved with the Gwenneth Daley Legacy Store, who have given their time and tireless effort(s), to the better the lives of others.

RECOGNITION OF DUSTIN UEBERGANG

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the achievements of Dustin Uebergang of The Armidale School and local to Inverell. Dustin is making his mark in mid distance running, after finishing with a silver medal at the under 15 boys 400m final at the NSW All School Championships, held at Sydney recently. I congratulate Dustin on this impressive accolade and importantly at a personal best time of 50:84, almost a second faster than he clocked to win the event at the Athletics Association of Great Public Schools NSW championships, held also recently. I commend Dustin on his commitment to the sport of running, for the hard work put into training for events and for taking opportunities to do his best. Special thanks to those who have supported Dustin, including coach Jay Stone, staff from The Armidale School, fellow team members and family members. We wish Dustin all the best at the Nationals in December – the Northern Tablelands Electorate is right behind you.

CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE ST BEDE'S HOME CELEBRATES IT'S 30 YEARS OF AGED CARE

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I would like to acknowledge St Bede's Home in South Hurstville and the work they do for seniors in our community. St Bede's Home recently celebrated their 30th anniversary. Together with staff, residents, friends and family, many came together to celebrate the occasion and the work that St Bede's has done over the years. As the former Minister for Seniors, I know our seniors are amongst the most vulnerable in our community. Tailored support is crucial to ensure they are cared for in our community. It brings me great joy to see aged care facilities like St Bede's Home offer this calibre of support to their elderly residents and their 30-year anniversary is a testament to their work. I would like to commend Anusha Khadka, the Lifestyle Coordinator at St Bede's and her team of Recreational Activities Officers for the work they have done with St Bede's over the years. I would like also to thank and congratulate all the staff at St Bede's Home for their hard work and on-going efforts to support the residents.

CELEBRATING A DECADE OF HEADSPACE HURSTVILLE

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I rise to recognise an important organisation in my community that is celebrating ten years of supporting young people. Headspace Hurstville provides free mental health support for young people aged 12-25 years, across Georges River community. The team at Headspace assist people who are going through a tough time across four key areas, including: physical health, mental health, alcohol, drugs, work and study support. Mental health is an incredibly significant topic to be addressed in our society, and since 2014, when Headspace Hurstville first opened its doors, the centre has undergone significant positive changes to meet the unique needs of its clients. With Mental Health Month being celebrated this October, Headspace Hurstville looks forward to promoting the theme for 2024, 'Let's talk about it'. The theme aims to prompt people to reflect on mental health and overall well-being, while encouraging a proactive approach to seeking help. I would like to thank all the staff at Headspace Hurstville for their commitment to addressing mental health concerns for young people and congratulate them on ten years of service to the community.

CHRIS LANE'S RETIREMENT FROM THE LEADER

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I would like to recognise a local talent who has contributed his eye for photography in the St George and Sutherland Shire Leader for nearly 25 years. Chris Lane has had an incredible career, with his photography journey beginning at 14, using his mother's old Kodak camera to capture friends in sports, which sparked his passion for the craft. He joined the Leader in 2000, drawn by the appeal of surf and sports photography. Dropping out of school at 16, Chris quickly moved into professional photography, working on major events like NRL grand finals and Origin games. He considered his craft as more than a job and this is evident in all the photos he has captured with great passion. Now retired, Chris reflected that the most memorable moments in his career included capturing a tornado in Kurnell in 2015 and simply seeing familiar faces walking along the Esplanade in Cronulla. I would like to thank Chris for his contributions to the community over the years and wish him well for the future.

MAKINLEA DURNIAN

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in acknowledging Makinlea Durnian, who competed in the 2024 Granny Smith Festival Queen competition. Makinlea has a strong connection to the festival, where she has been a lifelong attendee, and active participant in the Ryde and Eastwood communities. As a social media influencer, Makinlea has used her platform to engage with the community, sharing her experiences and bringing attention to local initiatives. Her online presence has provided her with incredible opportunities, but more importantly, she uses it as a tool to connect with others and promote positive community engagement. In addition to her digital work, Makinlea spends her weekends giving back by hosting children's craft sessions at the local Bunnings, ensuring the next generation has a fun and creative outlet. Her passion for both fashion and marketing drives her to keep learning and growing, a quality that will undoubtedly serve her well in the competition. I wish Makinlea the very best of luck in her future Endeavor's, and I commend her for her outstanding contribution to our community.

GRANNY SMITH QUEEN QUEST – SAVANNAH MELVIN

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in acknowledging Savannah Melvin, who competed in the 2024 Granny Smith Festival Queen competition. Savannah embodies leadership and compassion, with a deep passion for guiding and supporting young women as they navigate life's challenges. Her dedication to helping others feel seen, understood, and worthy of achieving their dreams speaks volumes about her character and her commitment to empowering the next generation. Savannah's love for acting, singing, and acrobatics adds to her vibrant and well-rounded personality. She is also passionate about spending time at the beach and embracing a life full of energy, creativity, and ambition. Her sense of purpose and her desire to make a positive impact on the lives of others reflect the values we hold dear in Ryde. As Savannah pursues the role of Granny Smith Queen, she brings with her a strong sense of purpose and community spirit. I have no doubt that her positive influence will continue to inspire many young women in Ryde and beyond. I wish Savannah the best of luck in her future endeavours, and thank her for her ongoing efforts to uplift and support our local community.

COUNCILLOR CAMERON LAST

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Speaker, There are few things that make me prouder than the success of the Ryde Liberal team in the recent local government elections. Diverse, professional and future focused, the team is a reflection of modern Ryde. I want to particularly acknowledge the success of West Ward Councillor Cameron Last, who was elected following an historic result in Ryde. Our youngest Councillor, a lifelong local, student of Macquarie University, and a dedicated and hard working campaigner, Councillor Last has already done so much to advance the cause of Ryde. His election will represent a new-era of Liberal representation, as part of a team that breaks our own record for diversity set last term. Councillor Last, like so much of the Ryde Liberal team, is thoroughly community based. His ability to know his neighbours, engage with new audiences, share good ideas and be responsive to community needs is the ultimate recipe for political success. I look forward to working closely with Cameron this term, to make the place I truly love, Ryde, an even better place. Congratulations!

FAVORITE CHILD CHURCH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SERVICE

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On Sunday, 15 September 2024, I had the pleasure of attending the Favorite Child Church [FCC] Annual International Sunday Service. This event serves as a celebration, inspiring the church community—particularly its youth—to unite in recognition of our wonderfully diverse and multicultural society. The FCC is a vibrant mix of individuals of all ages, cultures, and backgrounds who, despite their differences, come together in a spirit of unity to uphold shared values of respect, diligence, and integrity. This service stands as a testament to the church's unwavering commitment to inclusivity and community support. In addition to celebrating diversity, the FCC community works tirelessly to uplift the disadvantaged and vulnerable, striving to promote equality and foster a sense of belonging for all. The Annual International Sunday

Service not only showcases the richness of cultural diversity but also emphasizes the crucial role of solidarity and mutual support in building a more inclusive and compassionate society. I am grateful to Reverend Joshua Kpodo for his kind invitation and I commend his dedication and leadership, which have been instrumental in nurturing such a positive and welcoming environment for all who are part of the FCC family.

ALEXA LEARY WINS GOLD AT THE 2024 PARALYMPICS

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—Alexa Leary is a very fine example that determination can get you anywhere. Alexa grew up in Yamba and competed in her first Australian Swimming Titles at the age of 13. Alexa was part of the Yamba Triathlon Club for 3 years before moving to Noosa to pursue her potential as a triathlete, winning many titles. A catastrophic cycling accident in July 2021 left Alexa with severe head injuries, a fractured scapula, shoulder blade, wrist, ribs, a collapsed lung and serious nerve damage. Strong family support, 111 days in hospital and three months of daily visits to rehab, Alexa was well and truly on the road to recovery. About 12 months after the accident, Alexa got back into the pool. Alexa went on to break world records and take home 2 gold medals and one silver medal at the 2024 Paris Paralympics. Alexa won gold in both the 100 metre S9 freestyle and the mixed 4 x 100 metre medley relay, plus silver in the mixed 4 x 100 metre freestyle relay. I would like to acknowledge Alexa's amazing journey and congratulate her on her admirable dedication to doing what she loves.

DR IAN TILEY

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to acknowledge in the NSW Parliament Dr Ian Tiley for his dedication to local government in NSW, a lifelong work spanning over 60 years. Ian recently retired as an elected member of the Clarence Valley Council. I first met Ian in 2005 when we were both elected to the first Clarence Valley Council; while it's fair to say we didn't always agree all of the time, our differing views were always respectful and respected. Ian's long career started in 1964 as a local government officer. However, he saw the light and was elected to council in 1991; he has served in various roles ever since, including being elected the first Mayor of Clarence Valley Council, appointed Administrator to the newly merged Armidale Regional Council and in September 2017 was elected to that council, serving as mayor from December 2020 to December 2021, then returned to Clarence Valley Council in January 2022 until the September 2024 election where Ian didn't seek re-election. Congratulations on your dedication to local government in many roles over 60 years. I am sure you will keep yourself busy and keep a close eye on local government.

KIM HEALEY

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to recognise the outstanding achievement of Clarence Valley Aboriginal artist Kim Healey, whose work has been commissioned as part of the NSW Parliament's Legislative Council Bicentenary celebrations. Kim's major artwork, titled Ngurra Jagun—meaning "Home Country"—was unveiled by the President of the Legislative Council, Ben Franklin on 11 September and is displayed in the Parliament's Fountain Court public foyer. Kim, a proud Gumbaynggirr and Bundjalung woman, has used her talent to create a piece that reflects the deep connection of Aboriginal people to the land and waters where the NSW Parliament stands today. Her work invites reflection on the history, traditions and future of First Nations people. This recognition is testament to Kim's dedication to her craft and to sharing the rich cultural heritage of our region with a broader audience. I had the privilege of viewing this exquisite piece firsthand and experienced the beauty and depth of her work. I am thrilled to see a local artist receive such prestigious recognition and congratulate Kim on this remarkable achievement. It not only honours her as an artist but also stands as a lasting legacy of her contribution to our State's cultural fabric.

THE LATE JOHN HOLMES HONOURED AS FALLEN FIREFIGHTER

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—Two ceremonies last week honoured the late John Barry Holmes, former Senior Deputy Captain of the Mallanganee Rural Fire Service Brigade, who passed away on 14 October 2023 while fighting the Bean Creek fire at Old Bonalbo. John's partner Mavis Goodlad unveiled a plaque at Mallanganee Rural Fire Station dedicated to his memory. The event was attended by RFS members and community members. The plaque reads that John died doing what he loved. John's name was also added to the NSW Emergency Service Volunteers Memorial at Mrs Macquarie's Chair in Sydney last Sunday. Minister for Emergency Services Jihad Dib joined Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service Rob Rogers and Acting Commissioner of the NSW State Emergency Service Deb Platz at the 24th memorial service to commemorate 119 fallen emergency services personnel. Commissioner Rogers said Mallanganee Senior Deputy Captain John Holmes, Diamond Beach Captain Leo Fransen and Mid Murray Group Captain Dale Bowles had each left an indelible mark upon their brigades, their communities and the wider RFS family. There are 90,000 volunteers across the NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW State Emergency Service, Marine Rescue NSW and the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association.

LISMORE CITY COUNCIL ELECTED FOR 2024-2028 TERM

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—In my regular podcast with The Lismore App I reflected on the recent elections for the Lismore City Local Government Area, which I described as 'peaceful and friendly'. Everyone was friendly, laughing, talking, it was good. I think we're good at elections and the way we do them here. I think consistency at this election is a good thing because we've had such a battering over the last few years, from the bushfires to Covid to the mammoth floods. People know what's going on, know what needs to be done, and there are a few new faces, which is always good. I congratulate Lismore Mayor Cr Steve Krieg on his re-election by popular vote and will continue to work with him, his fellow councillors and senior staff on the city's and surrounding villages' ongoing flood recovery. Congratulations to re-elected Deputy Mayor Cr Jeri Hall, Cr Harper Dalton-Earls, Cr Big Rob, Cr Adam Guise, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Virginia Waters, Cr Electra Jensen, Cr Andrew Bing, Cr Gianpiero Battista and Cr Jasmine Knight-Smith. I wish to pay tribute to retiring councillors Vanessa Ekins, Elly Bird, Darlene Cook and Peter Colby for their community service.

LISMORE STUDENTS ATTEND SOCIAL MEDIA SUMMIT

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I congratulate Lismore students Fareeha Anjum and Jesse Alexander-Gordon for attending the Social Media Summit in Sydney on Thursday 10 October. While I put them forward as prospective attendees with the Premier's Department, I thank the Australian Council For Young People for supporting their attendance. It is important that voices from regional areas like the Northern Rivers are included in forums like this. The Social Media Summit, jointly hosted by the NSW and South Australian governments, brought together international and national experts, policy makers, young people and community voices to discuss strategies to combat the negative impacts of social media. Fareeha, a Year 10 Student at Blue Hills College, was one of the winners of the ABC Takeover program this year, and Jesse, a Year 12 Student from Trinity Catholic College, is a member of the NSW Youth Advisory Council. Fareeha supports restricting access to social media for young people because of the addictive nature of social media platforms, and Jesse is interested in how the social media platforms themselves can be held to account. Both of these articulate young people proved to be great local representatives and actively engaged in the Sydney sessions.

BEN KERR AND NATHAN HARDMAN RUN THE WALL

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Police Remembrance Day is held every year in September at the National Police Remembrance Memorial in Canberra and around the country. This year, two Hunter Valley Police memorialised their fallen comrades by running the 300 kilometres from the NSW Police Wall of Remembrance in Sydney to the Canberra Memorial. Maitland based Constable Ben Kerr and Newcastle based Senior Sergeant Nathan Hardman laced on their joggers and hit the road for the four-day run. This "Run the Wall" Challenge was organised by the NSW Police Legacy group to raise funds for the families of police officers who have died. The men ran between 68 and 85 kilometres on three of the days with a short sprint of 10 kilometres to finish the run. In all, the run raised \$6,660 for NSW Police Legacy. Congratulations Ben and Nathan on your efforts.

BESPOKE ARTISTRY HAIR AWARDS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Congratulations to Maitland's luxury hair salon Bespoke Hair Artistry has been named finalist in four categories in the Australian Hair Industry Awards. Bespoke Hair Artistry is a finalist in the Business Director/Owner of the Year, Salon Team of the Year, Best in Training and State Salon of the Year categories. Director Mel Chandler and Manager Ali Gillon, who have been working together for 9 years, have their names nominated alongside their own industry idols, many of whom have been in the industry for a lot longer than Bespoke. In the Salon Team of the Year category, they are one of only three finalists from NSW and in the State Salon of the year category, Bespoke Hair Artistry is one of only two finalists outside of Sydney. I congratulate Bespoke Hair Artistry on creating such a successful, creative business and wish them well at the awards.

PETER SPOHR

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Thank you to Ashtonfield's Peter Spohr who has turned a prostate cancer diagnosis into a chance to advocate for awareness and funds to fight the disease. At 60 years of age Peter was diagnosed with prostate cancer, having experienced no symptoms and has had surgery to resolve the disease in June. That month Peter joined Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia's Walk for Him campaign, which saw hundreds of men and women across the country walk 25,000kms during Men's Health Week, raising awareness and funds to fight the disease. The Men's Health Week campaign ran from June 10 to June 16 and Peter raised a total of \$4,300. Peter is part of a local cycling group and usually rides 60km each Saturday to keep fit. Approximately 239 men in Maitland and over 24,000 nationally will be diagnosed with prostate cancer every year. However, if caught early, the survival rate for the following 5 years

is approximately 95%. Awareness saves lives, improving action on early detection and treatment, thank you Peter for your advocacy.

HASTINGS VALLEY FINE ART ASSOCIATION INAUGURAL EXHIBITION

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise the Hastings Valley Fine Art Association [HVFAA] Laurieton Group's inaugural exhibition held from 5-7 October 2024 featuring local artists and showcasing their contemporary, abstract and creative artworks. Founded in 1983 the HVFAA develops the appreciation of art and the passion to explore one's own personal talents. As we live in the picturesque coastline setting of the Mid North Coast our region is the perfect place to inspire and mature that creative flare and artistic expression. The Association is fortunate to have its own art gallery in William Street in Port Macquarie led by President Peta Riley and her talented members. As an art enthusiast myself, I was pleased to hear the HVFAA launching a new exhibition at the Laurieton United Services Club on the October long weekend. Caroline Hopwood coordinated the event with twelve dedicated members. Over 200 artworks were exhibited, with 30 pieces sold which is a fantastic achievement and no doubt will cement the event as an annual exhibition. I pay tribute to local artists Dorothy Ramsden and Joan Newton who founded the Laurieton Group in 1993 along with the many other members that supported the efforts. Congratulations.

ST COLUMBA ANGLICAN SCHOOL AWARD WINNERS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise the outstanding achievements of St Columba Anglican School's [SCAS] Senior School award winners. Firstly, congratulations to Ashleigh Barlin, who has attained the highest honour by a secondary student - the SCAS Foundation Award. This prestigious award is bestowed on a student who has immersed themselves in every aspect of school life and given wholeheartedly to those endeavours. Ashleigh holds a top 10 merit position and has shown outstanding leadership in sports, the arts and community service. She has shone in the Senior Choir, had nominations for OnSTAGE in Drama and Callback in Dance. What an incredible portfolio! Remy Bucton's academic prowess, application and determination is rewarded with her receiving the Rogers Prize for Secondary School Dux. She can be incredibly proud knowing that she is the top performing Year 12 student for 2024. The SCAS 2024 Senior Sportspersons of the Year were presented to Sarah King and Robert Vadoros. Both students have had a high involvement in SCAS teams, displayed exceptional sportsmanship and school pride during competition as well as achieving great success in their sporting endeavours. Commendations and congratulations to you all for your steadfast commitment and outstanding achievements.

LORD HOWE ISLAND DISTILLING CO

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Congratulations to Anthony Riddle and Christian Young from Lord Howe Island Distilling Co on winning the 2024 Champion Other Gin accolade at the Australian Agricultural Society of NSW, Sydney Royal Distilled Spirits Show. Mates with a goal to produce world class spirits from one of the most pristine locations in Australia, Anthony and Christian opened Lord Howe Island Distilling in May 2019 and have not only accomplished their aspirations but continue to excel through their multi award-winning gins. Now distributing all over the country and exporting internationally, Anthony and Christian are setting a benchmark for quality, refined spirits while promoting our hidden treasure of Lord Howe Island and all its beauty to the world. The Royal Agricultural Society of NSW introduced the Sydney Royal Distilled Spirits Show in April with several categories of spirits showcased for competition aiming to support a viable and prosperous future for our agricultural communities. The announcement of the 2024 Sydney Royal Distilled Spirits Champion winners were published on 17th September with Anthony and Christian taking out the Champion Other Gin with their entry Wolfe Rock Gin. A wonderful accomplishment in the Australian world of distilled spirits! Congratulations!

GRANVILLE AND DISTRICTS SOCCER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Thursday 3rd October, the Granville and Districts Soccer Football Association celebrated the 2024 season with their annual Presentation Gala Dinner at Renaissance Westella, Lidcombe. Established in 1900, GDSFA is one of the oldest Football Associations in the world. Today, the Association features 23 Football Clubs and 7,000 players from across our local Prospect Electorate and nearby Western Sydney football community, from Under 6s through to All Age, with Men's X-League and Women's Premier League. The GDSFA provide an inclusive hub for our local clubs to learn and play together – ensuring there is a place on the pitch for every football fan. Celebrating its 124th anniversary this year, the Presentation Gala Dinner was an opportunity to acknowledge a number of Major Awards for achievement on the football pitch, as well as a number of Special and Appreciation Awards. Congratulations to the outstanding players, coaches and volunteers, whose skills and sportsmanship were recognised at the Presentation. As GDSFA Patron, I congratulate Steve Elriche, Chairperson, Rosanna Lentini, General Manager, and all our hardworking administrators and club

volunteers at the Granville and Districts Soccer Football Association on adding another wonderful chapter to our Western Sydney football community.

PARRAMATTA AND DISTRICT REGIONAL LAW SOCIETY ANNUAL DINNER 2024

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Wednesday 9th October, the Parramatta and District Regional Law Society held its Annual Dinner at CommBank Stadium, Parramatta. The Parramatta and District Regional Law Society is a collective of lawyers from both private and public practice, across the wider Parramatta region. The Society aims to provide support to legal practitioners by promoting education and training, opportunities to connect our professional community, and supporting local legal initiatives. Notably, this year's Annual Dinner included attendance by His Honour, Chief Justice Andrew Bell of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, as well as His Honour, Deputy Chief Magistrate Theo Tsavdaridis of the NSW Local Court, and Mr Brett McGrath, President of the Law Society of New South Wales. His Honour Chief Justice Bell gave a speech on the progress of the profession since the proclamation of the Supreme Court in 1824, including greater diversity in the profession, and the more recent advancements of AI technology. As Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney-General, I extend my congratulations to Rebecca Hegarty, President and Steve McAuley Vice-President, Parramatta and District Regional Law Society for another successful event.

ST MARK'S COPTIC CATHOLIC CHURCH, PROSPECT

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Sunday 13th October, I was delighted to join parishioners, volunteers and organisers in welcoming His Grace Tomas, Coptic Catholic Bishop of Sohag, Upper Egypt, to St Mark's Coptic Catholic Church, Prospect for a celebratory Mass. Western Sydney is home to a vibrant and historic Coptic-Australian community. St Mark's in Prospect is on the site of the first Catholic Church in the Blacktown district, dating from 1856, marking its historical significance. After many years without a dedicated home in Australia, our local Coptic Catholic community is now proudly centred around the Parish, which became the first purpose-built Coptic Catholic Church in Australia when it was consecrated in 2019. I was honoured to participate with an Epistle reading during the Mass, before joining reverend Fathers and parishioners for an awards ceremony after the service. Bishop Tomas and I awarded Certificates of Achievement to Coptic Catholic students, all recent graduates from Year 12 and university. My congratulations go out to Fr Andrawes Farag, Parish Priest, all members of the Parish Committee and all our dedicated volunteers at St Mark's Coptic Catholic Church, Prospect on a wonderful celebration of faith and community in our local Prospect Electorate.

ROAN BROWN

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—It was a true honour to celebrate the remarkable achievements of our volunteers at the 2024 Central Coast Volunteer of the Year Awards recently. This event highlights the dedication, compassion, and tireless support volunteers provide to our communities, and provides a unique opportunity for the community to express our deepest gratitude. I want to extend a heartfelt congratulations to all the volunteers who were recognised. In particular, I would like to commend Roan Brown of Copacabana, who was named Central Coast Young Volunteer of the Year. Roan's selflessness and passion, especially through his work with Camp Quality, is truly inspiring. His personal experiences living with cancer have allowed him to connect with others, offering invaluable support at family camps and fun days both locally and interstate. Roan's dedication to making a difference in the lives of children and families facing tough challenges is an example to us all. This event, hosted by The Centre for Volunteering, reminds us of the critical role volunteers play in ensuring the vitality and well-being of our communities. We are very thankful to Roan and all our volunteers—you are the heartbeat of the Central Coast, and your efforts do not go unnoticed.

NATIONAL POLICE REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I am both honoured and humbled to have recently attended the National Police Remembrance Day Service hosted by Tuggerah Lakes Police District at St James Anglican Church, Wyong. This day is one of special significance—a reminder of the outstanding work our men and women in blue perform every day to keep our community safe. Police Remembrance Day offers a solemn opportunity for all of us to pause, reflect, and pay our respects to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty, through illness, or in other tragic circumstances. Their courage and commitment to public service is nothing short of extraordinary. I was grateful to once again attend this deeply moving service, representing not just myself, but our entire community, in honouring the sacrifices made. I would also like to acknowledge the daily work of the Brisbane Water and Tuggerah Lakes Police District officers. From one end of the Central Coast to the other, they don their uniforms each day, not knowing what challenges lie ahead, but always with the singular goal of protecting others. On this Police Remembrance Day, we say, "Lest we forget."

TERRIGAL BMX CLUB

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to congratulate Terrigal BMX Club on recently hosting the 2024 NSW BMX State Championships. This incredible event brought together over 1,000 riders and spectators from across the state, showcasing the very best of BMX racing. Riders from as young as 2 to over 60 took part, highlighting the true spirit and inclusivity of this sport. I would like to extend a special congratulations to Luke Birch and all the organiser's and volunteers from the club who dedicated their time and energy to making this event such a success. Your hard work certainly paid off. What a weekend it was for the Terrigal Tornadoes, with some outstanding results, including Sienna Pal, who claimed the NSW State Championship title in the Superclass Women category, and Noah Elton, who secured his place in the upcoming National Championships. These accomplishments are a testament to the dedication and talent within the club. Since starting in 1983, Terrigal BMX has offered an inclusive environment that encourages commitment and sportsmanship allowing riders of all ages to thrive. Congratulations again on an exceptional event, and we look forward to more incredible achievements from the Club and its riders in the future!

STEVEN MUDFORD

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker, I would like to congratulate Dubbo Shearing Contractor, Steven Mudford, who has become the only person to hold three world shearing records simultaneously when he took the wool off 421 merino wethers in nine hours on Saturday 12 October 2024. The previous record of 418 wethers was set in New Zealand in 1999, taking twenty five years and a Dubbo man to beat it! A talented shearer Steve already held the eight hour Merino wether shearing record and is just one of three shearers that set a world three stand merino ewe record of 1294 in 2014. Breaking the record was no easy feat, and it required Steve to draw on not only his skill but also his strength, resilience, and determination as the wethers to be shorn were bigger and more energetic than anticipated! Digging deep, Steve shorn 89 in his first run, followed by 84,85 and 80 in subsequent runs, and finished strong with 83 in his last run. Referees came from Australia and New Zealand to Dubbo to oversee the competition. Congratulations Steve on this brilliant achievement. Great recognition of your expertise and hard work!

MANO MANORATHAN

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker, I would like to acknowledge Mano Manorathan from Dubbo on being awarded both the Adult Volunteer of the Year and the Volunteer of the Year at the 2024 Orana Regional Volunteer of the Year Award Ceremony on 1 October 2024. For the last fourteen years, Mano has tirelessly been supporting migrants from the Indian subcontinent, building on a greater understanding and inclusion. Mano volunteers with the Orana Residents of Indian Sub-Continental Heritage group where he is a driving force behind community, cultural and sporting events. In all that he does, Mano ensures that he focusses on ways to bridge understanding and inclusion between cultures and support of newly arrived migrants throughout the region. Volunteers are the lifeblood of our community. They are selfless, passionate, dedicated and make invaluable contributions. Mano certainly embodies all these characteristics. Mano will now go on to represent the Orana region at the Gala State Sydney Ceremony at the end of the year. Thank you for all you do Mano, I congratulate you on all your hard work and countless hours you continue to devote to Dubbo and the Orana region.

BRYAN SMITH

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker, I would like to congratulate Bryan Smith on being awarded the Senior Volunteer of the Year at the 2024 Orana Regional Volunteer of the Year Award Ceremony on 1 October 2024. Bryan has devoted eighteen years of his life to Meals on Wheels in Dubbo, delivering meals, engaging in conversation, and checking on the well-being of elderly residents. Bryan has also generously given his time as a community transport driver, helping clients with everyday appointments such as doctors' visits, hairdresser appointments and trips to the shops. The impact of Bryan's volunteering on people's lives is invaluable, as it helps ensure the elderly community can remain independent and continue living in the comfort of their own homes. With his wife, Margaret, also named as a finalist for the award, Dubbo is very lucky to have this dynamic duo! Thank you for all you do Bryan. Your passion, commitment and dedication are what allows our community to continue to thrive. I hope you continue to enjoy the well-deserved celebrations at the State Gala Ceremony in Sydney!

ADDISON KOWALIW

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Addison Kowaliw for being awarded the Central Coast Academy of Sport Rising Star Award in the category of netball. The Central Coast Academy of Sport Awards represents a significant occasion in our community, as they bring together outstanding athletes from across 15 diverse sport

programs. This annual ceremony not only highlights the exceptional talent within our region but also fosters a spirit of camaraderie and healthy competition among young athletes. Addison is a shining example of dedication and talent within the Central Coast Academy of Sport. Her commitment to excellence in netball has been evident throughout the season, as she has consistently demonstrated remarkable skill, resilience, and a strong work ethic. Whether in practice or competition, Addison has shown that she is not only a formidable competitor but also a true sportsperson, inspiring her peers and coaches alike with her unwavering dedication. Congratulations Addison. Your award is truly well-deserved, and I eagerly look forward to witnessing your continued growth in the upcoming season.

AVA PRINCE

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Ava Prince for being awarded the Central Coast Academy of Sport Rising Star Award in the category of golf. The Central Coast Academy of Sport Awards represents a significant occasion in our community, as they bring together outstanding athletes from across 15 diverse sport programs. This annual ceremony not only highlights the exceptional talent within our region but also fosters a spirit of camaraderie and healthy competition among young athletes. Ava is a shining example of dedication and talent within the Central Coast Academy of Sport. Her commitment to excellence in golf has been evident throughout the season, as she has consistently demonstrated remarkable skill, resilience, and a strong work ethic. Whether in practice or competition, Ava has shown that she is not only a formidable competitor but also a true sportsperson, inspiring her peers and coaches alike with her unwavering dedication. Congratulations Ava. Your award is truly well-deserved, and I eagerly look forward to witnessing your continued growth in the upcoming season.

AFLW DERBY - SYDNEY SWANS VS GWS GIANTS

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—The AFLW Sydney Derby III came to Henson Park on Sunday 22 September. Fans and locals flocked to the hill at Henson Park as the Swans searched for a win after back-to-back losses and the Giants were out to defeat their crosstown rivals. Ably led by co-captains Lucy McEvoy and Chloe Molly, the Sydney Swans started the season with a bang defeating Collingwood before losing to St Kilda and Richmond. After a tight, challenging game the Swans emerged victorious in this nail-biting derby with a 3 point victory only certain in the final minute of the game. The Swans have two more home games for this season, Saturday October 19 against the Gold Coast Suns and Saturday November 2 against the West Coast Eagles. I encourage everyone to come along and support these talented sportswomen and enjoy some local Inner West hospitality at the AFLW at Henson Park.

VALE JENNIFER NEWMAN

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—I wish to acknowledge the passing of Jennifer Newman, a proud Wiradjuri woman and a well-loved and valued member of the Inner West community. Jennifer lived on Wangal land along the Cooks River, where she worked tirelessly as an author, activist, and educator. Jennifer spent her life story-telling, creating and strengthening connections between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people through her work such as her great contributions to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander forums. Jennifer also had a great passion for nature and cared greatly for the local environment. She was an invaluable member and Vice President of the Cooks River Valley Association and Mudcrabs, and worked within the CRVA on critical, environmental objectives such as improving the rivers water quality, the state of the riverbed and the flora and fauna. Jennifer served as an active member of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal and delivered Aboriginal study talks and courses for local and international universities, training centres and community groups. Vale Jennifer Newman.

SDN CHILDREN'S SERVICES 80TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—Congratulations to the team from Marrickville SDN Children's Services Preschool on 80 years service to the Inner West community. Established in 1944 Marrickville SDN Children's Services was founded out of need. In a time when many fathers were off serving in the armed forces in World War 2 and mothers were working supporting the war effort in factories near Marrickville, there was a need for this new kind of childcare. In 1943 what was, at the time, Marrickville Municipal Council recognised the need for a day care service in the area. They began canvassing State Government for funding. Eventually, with the help of community fundraising, they received enough to purchase a shop and house in Marrickville. The 28th of October 1944 marked the official opening of Marrickville SDN Children's Services. Since then, the service has become a vital part of our community, building strong connections with local families committed to enhance the wellbeing and development of all children. Congratulations to Centre Manager Fiona Redwood and all the team and families over the many years that have made Marrickville SDN such a wonderful place for our children to grow and learn. Happy 80th birthday!

HOPE AND CARE LIFE SKILLS CENTRE GRAND OPENING

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—On 23 July I had the pleasure of attending the grand opening of the new Mini Woolies at the Hope and Care Life Skills Centre in Denham Court. This Mini Woolies provides a nurturing space for people with disabilities to learn and practice essential life skills. This initiative by Woolworths is a great example of community support and inclusivity. Programs like these make a significant difference for people with a disability. We cannot forget the importance of creating spaces where everyone, regardless of their ability, can thrive and contribute to our communities. We should always support and back initiatives that uplift every individual in our community. I want to thank everyone involved in making this great initiative a reality and acknowledge your hard work and dedication. A special mention to Mona Salem, the co-founder of Hope And Care, her perseverance has been unwavering and an inspiration to many.

ORAN PARK LEISURE CENTRE PLAQUE UNVEILING

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—On 29 July I joined Mayor of Camden Ashleigh Cagney at the plaque unveiling at Oran Park Leisure Centre. Set to open in October, the centre will be a significant milestone for the local community throughout this part of Camden Council who eagerly await the grand opening of the state-of-the-art facility. I had the privilege of getting a sneak peek at the new centre and it was truly impressive. The centre will become a key facility for health, wellness and community engagement in the area. It will feature multi-purpose courts that can host a variety of sports and activities, ensuring there is something for everyone. The 50-metre lap pool is a fantastic addition, catering to both competitive swimmers and those looking to maintain their fitness. Additionally, the leisure and learn-to-swim pool will be a wonderful space for families and children, promoting water safety and fun for all ages. I look forward to seeing the positive impact the Leisure Centre will have on the community of and I encourage all residents including those in Leppington to take full advantage of all it has to offer when it opens in October.

ST ANTHONY'S FEAST DAY MASS AND FETE

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—On June 16, I had the pleasure of attending the Feast of St. Anthony of Padua at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church in Austral. This special day, deeply rooted in our community's traditions, featured a beautiful Mass and processions that showcased the rich cultural heritage, especially among those of Italian descent. The day was vibrant with celebrations, a BBQ, food trucks, a petting zoo, live music, jumping castles, and rides for the kids. But this feast day is more than just a religious observance; it's a cornerstone of cultural heritage for many in our community. It's a time when traditions are passed down, stories are shared, and bonds are strengthened. The Feast of St. Anthony of Padua at Austral was more than a religious observance; it was a testament to community spirit and cultural pride, bringing people together in a heartfelt, memorable celebration.

BALMAIN BRIGHT SPARKS WORLD RIVERS DAY

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today, I would like to acknowledge the work of Nicole De Souza and the Balmain Bright Sparks, who recently marked World Rivers Day with a rubbish collection walk in Balmain. Bright Sparks Balmain provides a range of services for students and young people to support their learning and development and are committed to community and supporting environmental stewardship. Each year, students host a community event on World Rivers Day to promote waterway awareness and celebrate the Balmain/Rozelle community. For this year's event, the group met in Balmain at 10am and performed a Litter Walk down Darling Street to East Balmain Wharf. This hard work was finished off with a community picnic and BBQ at Illoura Reserve. It was fantastic to support this environmental stewardship effort and to have the opportunity to discuss environmental concerns with the young people and their families. The students deserve commendation for their efforts to address pollution, and for presenting their insightful and mature reflections on the importance of looking after our rivers and waterways. Congratulations to Bright Sparks Director Nicole De Souza, student speakers Alex, Jorgie, Amelia and Leila, and Caitlin and Tash for BBQ duty.

STYLES STREET CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY LONG DAYCARE CENTRE

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I acknowledge the wonderful team at Styles Street Children's Community Long Day Care Centre in Leichhardt. Styles Street is an award-winning day care centre educating children aged from 2 to 5 years old. I was grateful for the opportunity to visit the Centre last month to see their new playground, which provides a fantastic space for the children to play and learn. For many years, Styles Street Children's Community Long Daycare Centre has offered exceptional early childhood education in an inclusive and nurturing environment. The work of the dedicated staff, including Director Radha Babicci, and Room Leaders Rhonda, Cherie, Laura, Jess, Saima, Claire and Tracy continues to make a lasting impact on the families at the centre and the wider community. I thank them all for their fantastic work and for their outstanding contribution to our community.

UOW U8'S SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL CUP CHAMPIONS

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)—I am proud to inform the house of the University of Wollongong U8's recent win at the Sydney International Cup, where they came away as champions. The side, composed of future Matilda's and Socceroo's, beat out both local and national teams to claim the victory and further prove how talented our athletes and up and coming future stars are from the Illawarra. With the majority of this side tackling both training full time and schoolwork, they have done themselves and their families extremely proud to come away with the top prize at such a prestigious competition. This win would not be possible without the support of the club, the Illawarra football community and the family and friends of the players. To come away as champions is an immense achievement and something to be very proud of. I would like to pass on my congratulations to the club, staff and players for their win and outstanding efforts during this season. I hope that you continue to work hard work, set goals, and achieve your dreams. From everyone here in this place, congratulations and all the best for the 2025 season.

LOUISE TURNER

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise Louise Turner from White Cliffs. For the past 32 years, she has been a champion of Landcare and, for the last 14 years, a conservation leader with Western Landcare NSW. After serving in key roles such as Executive Officer and more recently as Regional Landcare Coordinator, Louise is stepping down from her position at Western Landcare NSW. Her work has covered more than 40% of the state, leaving a legacy of sustainable agriculture, biodiversity, and conservation. Louise's dedication and advocacy for local people and landholders in the region will ensure that the next generation is educated and well-equipped to live, work, and care for the land. I congratulate Louise on all her achievements at Western Landcare NSW and wish her the very best in her future roles.

PAUL PETTITT

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—It is with great pleasure that I congratulate Paul "Frog" Pettitt on his retirement after 60 years in the car industry servicing Broken Hill. Paul started his career at the age of 15 in the spare parts department and spent the later part of his career as a salesman for the dealership that is now known as Far West Auto. Paul is well known for being a gentleman and is highly respected by his colleagues and the wider community. Paul's commitment and hard work has left a legacy for the Broken Hill community. I wish Paul a healthy, happy and well-deserved retirement.

MARION BROWNE

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—After almost 40 years of service to her community, Councillor Marion Browne will retire this year. Marion, a former teacher, has been a dedicated advocate and is passionate about education, environment, water, volunteering and the future of Broken Hill and the Far West. In 2021, Marion was recognised with a Ministers' Award for Women in Local Government that celebrated and acknowledged her work as an elected representative for regional and rural areas. I am sure her corporate knowledge on the local council will be missed but know that Marion will continue to volunteer and enhance the future for all, in her community of Broken Hill. Thank you for your service, Marion Browne. I wish you, all the best in your future endeavours.

SURF LIFE SAVERS

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—As we enter the warmer months of Spring and Summer, crowds are once again returning to our popular beaches. This is especially evident in my Electorate of Manly, which includes some of the best – and most famous – surfing beaches in the world. I wish to acknowledge the many surf life savers who faithfully turn up to patrol our beaches and help keep them safe. In particular, I wish to acknowledge those who volunteer with the Manly Surf Club, the Manly Life Saving Club and the Freshwater, North Curl Curl, North Steyne, Queenscliff, South Curl Curl and Dee Why Surf Life Saving Clubs. The dedication of the surf life savers, as demonstrated by their hours of training and beach patrols is truly appreciated. To help address the incidents of drowning, it is timely to remember to always seek out a beach that is patrolled and to always swim between the red and yellow flags. For those seeking such a beach, I can recommend those in the electorate of Manly, famously described as 'seven miles from Sydney and a thousand miles from care'.

MANLY WARRINGAH WOMEN'S CRICKET 2024-25 SEASON LAUNCH

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, I wish to recognise the Manly Warringah District Cricket Club's Women's Cricket program who on 9th October celebrated their season launch at the Harbord Diggers in my electorate of Manly. I was delighted to be given the opportunity to attend this year's launch and engage in some great discussions about their aspirations for the upcoming 2024/25 season. Manly Warringah's Women's program has exploded out of the gates since its formation, being crowned NSW Club Champions last season in

what was only their third year of fielding a side in all four grades. Given the depth and breadth of talent in the group, and under the stewardship of an experienced coaching staff led by Duncan Kerr, I am sure that this season will be no different for our mighty Waratahs. I wish all grades all the best for the 2024/25 season and have every confidence that they will be bringing home the Ann Mitchell Trophy once again.

DANIEL BROWNING

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today, I proudly acknowledge Byron Shire resident Daniel Browning for his remarkable achievements in the literary world. His hybrid collection of essays, interviews, poetry and memoir, *Close to the Subject: Selected Works*, has been awarded the prestigious 2024 Prime Minister's Literary Award for Non-Fiction. The book has also been shortlisted for both the 2024 Victorian and NSW Premier's Literary Awards for Indigenous Writing. Daniel is a highly respected Bundjalung and Kullilli polymath. Currently presenting *The Art Show* on Radio National, he has had a significant impact on Indigenous journalism since beginning his career with the ABC in 1994. His expertise and contributions to Indigenous radio and arts programming have been recognized through various accolades, including his tenure as the editor of Indigenous Radio at ABC, managing flagship programs such as *Awaye!* and *Speaking Out*. Through his work, Daniel continues to amplify First Nations voices and perspectives, curating deep listening experiences and producing award-winning sound projects like *Blak Box*. His commitment to Indigenous storytelling is inspirational and far-reaching, making him a true cultural leader both locally and nationally. I commend Daniel for his outstanding contributions to the literary and arts communities, and for bringing such pride to our region.

LENNOX RUN CLUB - THE OX CHALLENGE

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—I commend the Lennox Run Club for their outstanding dedication to raising awareness and funds for RUN DIPG through the "Ox Challenge," held on 12-13 October 2024 in Lennox Head, NSW. This 24-hour endurance event where participants ran 4.2 km every hour on the hour, tested their physical and mental strength while demonstrating the remarkable spirit of the community. Established in memory of Frankie Willow Fitzgerald, a local girl who tragically passed away from Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG), this year's event raised over \$200,000 for RUN DIPG. The funds will support crucial DIPG research, with every \$120 contributing to an hour of scientific work, offering hope to affected families. The Lennox Running Club's dedication, led by Josh Ford, Andrew Fraser, and Kelly Müller, alongside Jo Bennett, GM of RUN DIPG, is a powerful tribute to Frankie's courage and love for the ocean. I applaud everyone involved for their determination and for running in Frankie's honour, making a profound impact in the fight against DIPG.

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN - WILLOUGHBY THEATRE COMPANY

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—The Willoughby Theatre Company produces musicals of exceptional quality, and on Sunday 13 October, I had the joy of taking my two daughters to their latest production, *Singin' in the Rain* at the Chatswood Concourse Theatre. This classic musical follows the lives of silent film stars Don Lockwood and Lina Lamont as they navigate the challenges of transitioning from the silent movies to the 'talkies' in the late 1920s. Set in Hollywood, it provides a rollicking tale of glitz, glamour, romance and unending entertainment. The audience and I were so impressed with the Willoughby Theatre Company's rendition of this musical with their superb singing, acting and costuming. The classic songs including *Good Morning, Moses*, *You Were Meant for Me*, and of course, *Singin' in the Rain*, proved to be a real hit and went down like a treat. I congratulate the Willoughby Theatre Company for staging yet another brilliant musical and look forward with eagerness to their future productions.

YEAR 12 HSC EXAMS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I would like to wish our local students of Willoughby the very best of success with their HSC exams. I know how hard they have worked to prepare for these exams and I acknowledge their parents who have invested so much in their education and studies to date. I again acknowledge all the high schools in my community including Chatswood High School, Mercy Catholic College Chatswood, St Pius X College Chatswood, Willoughby Girls High School, Cammeraygal High School, Redlands School and Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School who have prepared our students for these exams. I commend all the teachers at these schools for their dedication and professionalism. I know that the success of their students will also be their success. To the students, I wish you the very best in your exams and I know that what ultimately counts will not so much be your ATAR score, but your heart, attitude and character. As important as these exams are, they will be just the first of many steps in your chosen career path. Best of luck Year 12!

NORTH SYDNEY BEARS GRAND FINAL

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—As a proud supporter of the North Sydney Bears, I had the pleasure of watching the Bears square off against the Newtown Jets in the Grand Final of the Knock-On Effect NSW Cup. In what was a gripping contest between the two Foundation Clubs at the Parramatta CommBank Stadium on Sunday

29 September, the Bears lost to the Newtown Jets 22-28. I congratulate the Jets on their win and commend the Bears for their hard-fought match which produced a game of excellent rugby league all round. The match was watched by over 10 000 spectators at the ground, and I was delighted to be surrounded by throngs of North Sydney supporters all decked out in the red and black. The Bears have done their supporters very proud, and I congratulate all the club players, coaches, board, staff, sponsors and supporters on a great 2024 season. The North Sydney Bears maintain a very popular following in my community of Willoughby and we are all looking forward to an even stronger season in 2025.

GOURMET TRAVELLER RESTAURANT GUIDE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—Pipit in Pottsville in the Tweed Electorate has been recognised as one of the best restaurants in NSW, being named in the 2024 Gourmet Traveller Restaurant Guide. The guide lists the top 25 restaurants in the state and reviews are independent with reviewers visiting unannounced and paying their own bill. Pipit is a family business run by Ben Devlin and Yen Trinh that uses local, unique produce and with the menu guided by the seasons. Pipit has a strong sustainability policy which, for instance, sees Ben and the kitchen team maximising ingredients and preserving offcuts with garums, ferments, dried and cured foods. This is not the first award for Pipit, which has also received 2 hats in the Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide as well as being awarded the Guide's Best Regional Restaurant and a finalist in the Best Restaurant category. Congratulations to Ben, Yen and the entire team at Pipit on all you have achieved.

SURF LIFE SAVING FAR NORTH COAST

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—September 28 marked the official start of the swimming season in the Tweed, with the Raising of the Flags ceremony conducted by Surf Life Saving Far North Coast (SLSFNC). The ceremony was held at Cudgen Headland Surf Life Saving Club to kick off what will be the Club's 102nd season. SLSFNC combines ten surf life saving clubs and one Jet Rescue Boat Service in the Far North Coast region from Yamba in the south to Fingal Heads in the north. The Branch covers more than 284 kilometres of coastline. This year SLSFNC is celebrating its 90th anniversary since its formation in 1934. Last season SLSFNC volunteer lifesavers undertook more than 100 rescues, completed nearly 10,000 preventative actions and provided first aid 313 times. Together they completed 100,000 patrol hours – a real testament to the dedicated service provided by SLSFNC to Far North Coast communities. Thank you to everyone at SLSFNC for keeping us safe in and around our beautiful beaches. I remind all beach goers, whether locals or here on holidays, to swim between the flags. This keeps you and our amazing lifesavers safe.

ADULT ADMITTED PATIENT SURVEY

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—The latest Bureau of Health Information (BHI) Adult Admitted Patient Survey showed patients at The Tweed Hospital between January and December 2023 rated their doctors, nurses and healthcare teams very highly, a testament to the high-quality healthcare provided in the Tweed. Ninety-six per cent of patients rated their overall care as very good or good and 95 per cent rated the doctors as very good or good. The nurses at The Tweed Hospital were rated as very good or good by 97 per cent of patients surveyed, and 93 per cent of patients said the teamwork of health professionals was very good or good. And 88 per cent of surveyed patients said the health professionals were always kind and caring. These excellent results illustrate the outstanding healthcare professionals here in the Tweed, who are now at Tweed Valley Hospital, after the Tweed Hospital was decommissioned in May this year. Well done to all staff of The Tweed Hospital on these first-rate survey results and thank you for all you do for the people of the Tweed.

DR EWALD JOOSTE

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Serving the community has been a labour of love for well-known Bathurst veterinarian Dr Ewald Jooste. For the past two decades Ewald has been a friendly and familiar face at the Stewart Street Veterinary Hospital. He has now called time on his tenure and announced his retirement. It will no doubt be a huge loss for the business as Ewald has been an integral part of the Bathurst animal community, having grown the practice from three to 11 vets during his time at the helm. Having gained the trust of the community to care for their pets, the commitment and dedication to the role by this outstanding vet is something very special and a credit to his unwavering commitment to all the animals entrusted under his care. Stewart Street's growth has enabled it to be able to offer advanced services and training opportunities that are often only available in larger metropolitan areas. Congratulations and best of luck in your retirement Ewald. Enjoy spending more time with your wife Charmeon and three children who are spread across three continents as well as reconnecting with your South African roots and passion for nature conservation.

SAMANTHA ZANNES

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—The drive and dedication to being the best that she can has led to early childhood teacher Samantha Zannes taking out the prestigious honour of TAFE NSW Vocational Student of the

Year. Samantha is the Assistant Director and Education Leader at Jenny's Kindergarten and Early Learning Centre in Bathurst and completed the TAFE Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. It was Samantha's desire to tailor education to children with additional needs that led her to pursue a vocational pathway to become an Early Childhood Teacher. Initially trained as a Primary School Special Education Teacher, Samantha took time away from her professional to raise her own children. However, after a 10-year hiatus, she was ready to return to the profession, but wanted to connect with an approach that mirrored her personal education philosophy knowing the importance of early intervention for students with additional needs. With this in mind, Samantha set her focus on obtaining a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care and completed this qualification in just over 12 months. Congratulations Samantha on a job well done and thank you for giving back to the community through the gift of learning.

GLENRAY

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—It's fitting that a local not-for-profit organisation that has been supporting the local community for more than 67 years has won major recognition as part of the 2024 Bathurst Business Awards. Glenray takes pride in providing support to people living with a disability and took out the category for Outstanding Employer of Choice. The organisation's aim is simple and its importance to the community cannot be underestimated, providing opportunities to enhance independence, provide choice and enrich people's lives. Through quality, trusted support that focuses on residential and vocational services, together with plan management, support coordination, short term accommodation, supported employment, individual community support and lifestyle and learning programs, Glenray's name is synonymous with all that's good about living in the Bathurst region. A registered NDIS provider in regional NSW, Glenray offers employment to more than 300 people including people living with a disability. Congratulations to everyone at Glenray for a job well done. Our community owes you a vote of thanks for all that you do for us.

MOOCOBOOLA FESTIVAL

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Hunters Hill Council for the recent Moocooboola Festival, held on 13th October 2024. The festival is a much loved local event that Council staff work hard to organise, and which attracts strong community support and enjoyment.

COUNCILLOR CALEB TAYLOR

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—Mr Speaker, I would like to congratulate Councillor Caleb Taylor on his election to Lane Cove Council. Caleb is a committed member of the Lane Cove Community, having served as the President of the Lane Cove Public School P&C, and on the committees of the Lane Cove Fun Run, the Lane Cove Festival, and the Repair Café. His election is further recognition of his hard work in and dedication to the Lane Cove area.

COUNCILLOR DAVID ROENFELDT

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—Mr Speaker, I would like to congratulate Councillor David Roenfeldt on his re-election to Lane Cove Council. Although Cr Roenfeldt and I fall on opposite sides of the political fence, he has always proven to be a man willing to reach across the aisle and has conducted himself with honesty and decency. Once again, Congratulations Cr Roenfeldt.

SUPPORT LINDFIELD

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—I recognise Support Lindfield, a local community group supporting the residents of Roseville, Lindfield, Killara and Gordon. Established in 2012, Support Lindfield advocates for positive change within the community, working with local representatives, including Ku-ring-gai Council, to make our north shore community a destination – more than a place to live or work. Support Lindfield is equally strong in supporting protection of the built and natural heritage and environment, improvements to local parks, roads and footpaths, and ensuring that planning remains appropriate for the character of the community. I recognise Support Lindfield led by President Linda McDonald, Vice President Richard Vowell, Secretary Alan McDermid, Treasurer Warren Dwyer, Assistant Secretary Laurie Ormerod, and committee members Sarah Davis, Scott Savage, Andrew Sweeney, Richard Bonouvrie, Bruce Allen and Bruce Strachan. I thank Support Lindfield for their continued service to our community and advocacy on important community issues. I look forward to working with them for the benefit of our community.

1ST LINDFIELD SCOUTS

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Saturday 26 October 2024, I will attend the 1st Lindfield Scouts at their Slade Street Lindfield Hall for their annual birthday celebrations. Founded in 1920, 1st Lindfield Scouts are marking and celebrating 104 years of active scouting. The 1st Lindfield Scout Group includes ages 8 to 18 that includes Cubs, Scouts and Venturers. I recognise the adult leaders too, making 1st Lindfield Scouts a place for

the whole family to be involved. I recognise 1st Lindfield Scout Group Leader and Cub Scout Leader Peter Clifton-Smith, together with fellow volunteers for their ongoing dedication, commitment and leadership. I am very proud to represent 1st Lindfield Scouts in the Parliament of NSW.

DR GRAHAM GRANT, AO

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—I recognise anaesthetist, engineer, jazz musician and inventor Dr Graham Grant AO of Roseville. Dr Grant is the inventor of the portable incubator for premature babies, which has saved countless lives since 1964. On a personal level, I thank Dr Grant for his work in relation to the incubator, which I used when I was born five weeks premature in 1984. Dr Grant first qualified as an engineer, then studied medicine, specialising in anaesthetics. As a medical intern in London, he saw the need for a safer means of transporting premature babies to hospital. He believed an incubator he had designed in Australia would work and built a prototype, which soon went into production. The principles of Dr Grant's work are still used and still saving lives today. In recognition of his distinguished service to both biomedical engineering and to medicine, Dr Grant was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in the 2024 Australia Day Honours. I congratulate him on this well deserved honour.

LILLIAN RAGAN

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise to recognise Lillian Ragan a student at Moss Vale High School. Lillian's outstanding performance with the NSW All Schools basketball team at the national competition on the Gold Coast is a remarkable achievement that showcases her skill, determination, and team spirit. The team's undefeated run in the preliminary rounds and their impressive performance throughout the tournament is a testament to their hard work and dedication. Although they narrowly missed out on the gold, Lillian's contribution to the team's success is a source of great pride for Moss Vale High School. Her commitment to basketball and her ability to compete at such a high level is inspiring. Congratulations to Lillian on your achievements. I look forward to your continued success both on and off the court.

TIM ANDREWS MOSS VALE HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise to recognise Moss Vale High School's performing arts talent in Tim. Tim's nomination for OnStage, the NESA showcase of exemplary HSC Drama projects, is a significant achievement that highlights his exceptional talent and dedication to the performing arts. His captivating performance of the monologue "Wedding from Hell" by Rowan Atkinson has earned him this prestigious recognition. This nomination is a testament to his hard work, creativity, and passion for drama. Being selected for OnStage is a rare honour, and Tim's achievement is a source of great pride for Moss Vale High School. His success not only recognises his individual efforts but also reflects the support and encouragement of his teachers and peers. I eagerly await the final selection in November and am confident that Tim will continue to excel in his artistic pursuits.

VAN SOON

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise to recognise Van Soon a student at Moss Vale High School. Van's selection to represent NSW in the 16 and Under team at the National 'Home Grown' Championships is an outstanding achievement that highlights his talent and dedication to basketball. Competing in this prestigious tournament in Melbourne, Van will showcase his skills against the best Filipino state teams from across Australia. His selection is a testament to his hard work, perseverance, and passion for the sport. This opportunity has allowed Van to represent the state of NSW and provide a platform to be seen by selectors for the Filipino 'Home Grown' Australian team. Van's achievement is a source of great pride for Moss Vale High School and the broader community. I wish Van the best of luck in his basketball and look forward to celebrating his continued success on and off the court.

EMAN YAGHI

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I am delighted to recognise Eman Yaghi for her exceptional contributions to Punchbowl United Football Club. Eman has consistently demonstrated a steadfast dedication and passion for the Punchbowl United Club and its members, making a profound impact on our community. Through her tireless efforts in coaching teams and creating a welcoming environment for players of all ages, Eman has become a vital part of the club. Her leadership extends beyond the field; she encourages teamwork, sportsmanship, and resilience, instilling values that resonate with both young athletes and their families. She has a unique ability to connect with each player, encouraging their personal growth and helping them develop not just as athletes but as individuals. Moreover, her commitment to inclusivity ensures that everyone feels valued and empowered within the club. Eman has built bridges between diverse groups, promoting a sense of belonging that enhances the Punchbowl United Football Club experience. Thank you, Eman, for your

hard work, dedication, and the positive energy you bring to our community. Your impact is truly immeasurable, and I am incredibly grateful to have you as part of the Punchbowl United FC family and within my electorate of Bankstown.

CELEBRATING TENDER LOVING CARE'S DEDICATION TO EMPOWERMENT AND INCLUSION

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—On behalf of the community, I am delighted to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Tender Loving Care (TLC) for their remarkable achievements in promoting inclusivity and empowerment. Their innovative Life Skills program, showcased at the Sydney Disability Expo, represents their unwavering commitment to breaking down barriers and creating meaningful opportunities for individuals with disabilities. The success of the Frapp & Capp Coffee Shack is a testament to TLC's dedication to integrating people with disabilities into the workforce. This social enterprise café not only offers valuable hospitality training but also fosters essential community connections, illustrating that disability is no obstacle to achieving professional success. TLC's holistic approach, which includes in-home support, financial planning, and social participation, reflects a profound understanding of the diverse needs of those you serve. With over 50 years of combined experience, their compassionate and tailored care sets a high standard in the disability sector. Thank you, TLC, for your relentless pursuit of excellence and for making a significant difference in our community. Your work offers the community hope, and it is a model of inclusivity. Congratulations on your continued success and impactful contributions.

RIVERWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE SPRING FESTIVAL 2024

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—On 28 September, I had the pleasure of attending the Riverwood Community Centre Spring Festival 2024. This year, our community celebrated 50 years of the Centre's ability to bring everyone together and celebrate our diversity through music, food, and dance. The Riverwood Spring Fair is held annually on the grounds of the well-maintained Salt Pan Creek Parklands. It is the premier local community event that allows us to celebrate our diverse community. This festival attracts thousands of locals and visitors to Riverwood every year and showcases our welcoming, diverse, and talented community. There is always a wide range of food stalls and amusements for children and parents, as well as an exciting entertainment program. This event is a wonderful way for the community to get involved, enjoy many different activities, and enjoy delicious food. It allows for inclusivity and brings the community together in a day filled with fun. I want to thank Councillor Khodr Saleh OAM, the Chief Executive Office Ram Nishant Alajangi, the staff, and the volunteers at Riverwood Community Centre for all their hard work in putting together such an amazing celebration. Well done to them!

99 YEARS OF QUEENWOOD

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker, this year marks the 99th birthday of Queenwood School for Girls. On 20 September I attended the school's annual celebration, which is always such a wonderful and heartfelt occasion. Girls from every year group come together to remember Queenwood's impressive history in Mosman. At the heart of the celebration, the Queenwood girls partake in a cherished school tradition; with each girl bringing a posy of flowers, filling the school with colour. The girls pay tribute to beloved past principal Ms Rennie. After the celebration, the girls take their flowers to various local hospitals and nursing homes, spreading the love and joy that is at the centre of Queenwood's school ethos. This lovely tradition teaches the students the virtue of giving from their first years at Queenwood. I wish Queenwood a happy 99th birthday and acknowledge the effort of the students, staff and wider school community in ensuring another touching school celebration. I congratulate Principal Marise McConaghy.

NORTH SHORE SCHOOLGIRLS DOMINATE ON THE SPORTING FIELD

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker, recently, the young women of the North Shore have been absolutely dominating the sporting arena. I want to congratulate all the girls involved in the following events; Loreto Kirribilli's Rowing Team delivered outstanding results at the 2024 Schoolgirl Head of the River. The team won the overall medal tally and the coveted Betty Deer Rosebowl for the Overall Pointscore. Congratulations girls. Star soccer player Maddie, a Loreto Kirribilli student who recently graduated, debuted for the Under 20 Young Matildas at the AFC Asian Cup earlier this year. Maddie's team took home bronze medals, which secured them a place in the FIFA Under 20 Women's World Cup in Colombia. Congratulations Maddie. Sally, from Queenwood, played exceptionally at the NSW All Schools National Championships for netball. Sally's team smashed the competition at the NSW CIS Netball Challenge Day with an undefeated record. Sally earned her spot as Co-Vice Captain of the UNSWCIS U15 Team. Congratulations Sally. Finally, the North Sydney Girls High

School Chess team, Joy, Sarah, Iris, Ella, and Isobel, qualified for the national championships. They will represent NSW in the Secondary Girls' Division. Congratulations, girls.

REMEMBERING BILL MCNAMARA, OAM

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—I would like to acknowledge Mr. Bill McNamara OAM for his contributions to the Parramatta and New South Wales community. Bill sadly passed away on the 29th of June 2024 aged 96. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather and friend. Bill was a stalwart of the Parramatta community, having been incredibly involved in the evolution of Parramatta's CBD. He was the founder of the McNamara Group and was responsible for the construction of many buildings across Blacktown and Parramatta; including the McNamara Centre, the Parramatta Cultural Centre, and Riverside Theatres. Built in 1988, the design and construction of the Riverside Theatre was of such a high standard that the new design for the redeveloped Riverside Theatre complex will retain the central theatre intact because it is regarded within the theatrical world to be one of the best performance spaces in Australia. Bill was also very involved in engaging local small businesses in preparation for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. He was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1984 and was made Blacktown City Council's Corporate Citizen of the Year in 2017. Vale Bill McNamara, a true Western Sydney advocate and visionary.

PHIL WARREN

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—On Sunday 2 June, local historian and Wallsend resident Phil Warren gave a talk entitled "Newcastle to Plattsburg/Wallsend Trams", highlighting their importance to this area. Phil, now retired DP at Glendale TAFE, has compiled a 50-page downloadable booklet on various aspects of Wallsend's history. He has roots in Plattsburg going back to 1876, the year his grandmother was born and is fascinated by the old buildings, events, industry and lifestyle of the community. In 1887, steam trams came with a published timetable and comfort that was far superior to that of any horse-drawn bus. The trams connected the towns and its citizens to Newcastle, making services and recreation, such as the beaches, more accessible. The first second-hand trams were delivered to Newcastle by sea, and after 1889 they could be pulled from Sydney on the recently completed railway. This journey took over 11 hours as the trams had to travel slowly to avoid derailment. The tramline infrastructure endorsed the importance of what some were calling "Coalopolis" by 1880, as Wallsend's coal was a key contribution to the NSW economy. Thankyou, Phil, for helping to celebrate Wallsend's 150th!

COSY KOOKA CAFÉ

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Book-ended between two children's wards, the popular cafe at John Hunter Hospital, the Cosy Kooka Cafe, closed in September after almost 35 years of operation. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, it was a coveted meeting place for staff, patients and visitors to talk, de-stress and access affordable food and drink. Run by HealthShare, a public arm of NSW Health, the Cosy Kooka Café was an institution at John Hunter, and people hold very fond memories of it as being a hub for relaxing and connecting with others, even for a short time. It's said that the café offered delicious coffee, roast lamb rolls, sausage and onion rolls with BBQ sauce. The sausage rolls and party pies were a staple for morning tea for the regulars. All of this combined with inexpensive prices and happy, caring staff. The area is to remain a place for staff to utilise in their down-time, and the café workers, thankfully, have secured positions elsewhere in the hospital. Thankyou to the staff for your contributions over the years. I will miss the Cosy Kooka Cafe, as I'm sure you will.

CHRISTINE M BRAMBLE

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—On Sunday May 12, 2024 – Mother's Day - local historian and author Christine Bramble presented a talk on Wallsend Nurses and the Great War. Christine's book about nurses in the wars – Sisters of the Valley: First World War Nurses from Newcastle and the Hunter Region (2011) tells of nurses' experiences and provides insight into the history of Australian women being accepted into the workforce and into military nursing during WW1. Most enlisted in the Australian Army Nursing Service ("AANS") – around 70 were from the Hunter - and some in the British service – Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service Reserve ("QAs"), at least 8 from the Hunter and a small number in other units. 33 nurses from Newcastle/Wallsend served in France, Egypt, India, Salonika and the UK, including SN Lydia Abell, SR Agnes Ross Cuthbertson, SN Ilma Emily Lovell, SR Bessie Lowrey, SN Ellen Scott, SN Gertrude Wilkinson and SN Mabel Wood. They toiled in the field of battle, on hospital ships, in general hospitals, and in field ambulances which could be less than 1km from the Front. Thankyou, Christine, for helping to celebrate Wallsend's 150th!

AL AMANAH COLLEGE

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—I would like to recognize and commend the students of Al Amanah College who visited NSW Parliament on September 17, 2024, and attended Question Time. The delegation included Year 10 and Year 11 SRC leaders, as well as the Year 6 • leadership team. Their presence at Question

Time showcased their enthusiasm for understanding the legislative process and the role of leadership in shaping our society. Accompanied by their dedicated teachers, Ms. Siba Chams and Ms. Sarah El Sabah, these students actively engaged with the proceedings and demonstrated a strong interest in learning about the workings of government. Their insightful questions and curiosity during their visit reflected their eagerness to make positive contributions to both their school and the broader community. This visit gave them a valuable opportunity to observe firsthand how parliamentary debates and decisions influence everyday life in New South Wales. I commend these students for their dedication to leadership and learning. The Al Amanah College community can take great pride in the example these young leaders are setting for future generations.

GREG BUDWORTH

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—I would like to recognise Greg Budworth for his 20 years of dedicated service with Home in Place. Through his work, Greg has helped countless people gain access to safe and affordable housing, which is essential for building strong, connected communities. When Greg started at Home in Place, the organisation only managed 500 properties with ten employees. Under Greg's leadership, Home in Place now manages over 8,000 properties in both Australia and New Zealand with 285 employees. Further, Greg has also introduced programs that go beyond housing, such as scholarships and mentoring for young people in need, and mental health first aid for tenants and staff. Greg's leadership has made a huge difference for so many across Australia. His vision has changed lives, giving people a real sense of security, hope, and belonging. We're incredibly grateful for his ongoing commitment to creating supportive, inclusive communities.

NEWCASTLE PARKOUR NATIONAL GATHERING

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—I would like to congratulate all involved in the recent Newcastle Parkour National Gathering on the 5th of October. Newcastle recently hosted the first formalised national gathering for the sport, continuing a longstanding 17-year tradition of national parkour athletes coming together to share their skills and test themselves. Newcastle has a long and storied sporting history, and it was an amazing experience to see everyone come together and share their sporting parkour experiences and show off their immense skill in the discipline. The gathering was a massive success, with over 200 people descending on the city to demonstrate their skill and passion for their sport. I'm extremely happy that Newcastle was able to host this event, and I hope that by nurturing national talent in this sport, it can continue to grow and captivate new audiences. I'd like to offer a huge congratulations to the head organiser of the event, Alex Rzechwicz, and the wider Newcastle parkour community.

NIHON UNIVERSITY NEWCASTLE CAMPUS

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—Recently, Nihon University has opened its first international campus in Newcastle. Located in the historic courthouse, this campus will allow up to 100 international students to study at Newcastle, with a proposed plan to boost capacity to 600 students. This will act as a hub for university exchange programs for Australia and Japan. Further, the new campus provides exciting opportunities for University of Newcastle students with the establishment of the 'buddy' program between the two universities. Law students will also be able to use the historic courthouse for mock trials. I recently attended the opening of the campus and was impressed by the facilities and exchange program. I encourage University of Newcastle students to get involved in the program to gain an international perspective on their studies. I look forward to this close partnership and welcoming more international students!

GYMEA GORILLAS JRLFC

Ms ELANI PETINOS (Miranda)—Another incredible rugby league season has concluded for the GyMEA Gorillas Junior Rugby League Football Club. Season 2024 saw the Gorillas excel across the Cronulla Sutherland District Junior Rugby Football League. Impressively, the Gorillas won the Under 11 Bronze, Under 11 Gold, Under 13 Bronze, Under 11 League tag, Under 14 Silver League-tag, Open 30 Women League-tag, the Open 35 Gold League-tag competitions and the PWM Emerging Cup. The accolades didn't end there, with the Gorillas winning the Junior Tackle Club Championship and Bob Gorrick Junior Club of the Year at the District's End of Season Dinner. None of this would have been possible without the dedication of the Gorillas Management Committee. I recognise Jordan Moyle, Scott Miller, Steve Coffey, Brendan McNamara, Grant Smith, Daniel Walsh, Jo Hardy, Luke Kemp, Lisa Coffey, Chris Brown, Mark Hartley, Bev Herbert, Keith O'Grady, Darren Stephens, Peter Hadfield, Paul McCormack, Alex Phillis, Sallie Wilson, Glenn Wilson, Brendan Hodge, Dean Bladdon, Joanne Hartley, Sanderson Hartley, Ken Ayling, Sarah Catlett, Wade Horsnell, Tony Ash, David Gumley, Matt Haboan, Grant Oldroyd and Kieron Moore for their efforts. I congratulate everyone at the GyMEA Gorilla Junior Rugby League Football Club on their success this year.

ENDEAVOUR SPORTS HIGH SCHOOL

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate the incoming student leadership team of Endeavour Sports High School on their appointment. Being democratically elected by your peers is an incredible achievement of which these students should be proud. I encourage them to make the most of this fantastic opportunity and to develop the skills that shape the community and professional leaders of the future. I use this occasion in NSW Parliament to acknowledge the new student leadership team for 2025, namely School Captains Felicia Dimitriadis and Harley Phelps, Vice Captains Eliza Dawking and Cooper Sigsworth, Senior Prefects Georgia Santo, Evie Gooding, Benjamin Harris and Luca Croft and House Captains Rhiannon Bellette, Paris Mavrick, Tallulah Prentice, Byron Dollman, Amelie Kelly, Marcus Jewel, Samantha Reidy and Lachlan Snell. I also recognise the school's Student Representative Council members including Quinne Hunt, Michaela Togia, Sebastian Thomas, Ethan Moody, Miricah Murdoch, Olivia Trieu, Joel Glasson, Canberra Yamasaki, Anna McCrone, Zac Brealey, Brodie Abrook, Mathilda Delfs, Neve Jenkins, Isacc Leonard, Madison Field, Sasha Croft, Jonathan Mytilinios, Vincent Candido and Nicholas Everett. I extend my best wishes to these student leaders as they continue to exemplify Endeavour Sports High School's motto of 'valuing individual potential [and] achieving personal best'.

BURWOOD COUNCILLORS

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to congratulate local councillors who were recently sworn in to Burwood Council. I offer my sincerest congratulations to Councillor David Hull and Councillor Deyi Wu on their successful election to the Council. It is a privilege to represent your constituents at the most grassroots level of local decision making, and I trust these Councillors will use this time to serve our community with courage, compassion and conviction. I also acknowledge Liberal candidate and former Burwood Councillor Raj Dixit who put his hand up to run on the ticket and worked hard during the campaign. I extend my congratulations to all the successful Councillors elected to Burwood Council. I look forward to working collaboratively with all Councillors to deliver for our shared constituencies. I wish them all the very best in their service to the community.

STRATHFIELD COUNCILLORS

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to congratulate local councillors who were recently sworn in to Strathfield Council on Tuesday 8 October 2024. I would like to sincerely congratulate Councillor John-Paul Baladi on his election as Mayor of Strathfield. I also offer my sincerest congratulations to Councillor Sandy Reddy and Councillor Esther Kim for their successful elections. The results of the Strathfield Liberal team is a testament to the trust that the community has placed in John-Paul, Sandy and Esther to lead and deliver a strong vision for the Council. It is a privilege to represent your constituents at the most grassroots level of local decision making, and I trust these Councillors will use this time to serve our community with courage, compassion and conviction. I also acknowledge Liberal candidate Satvik Sharma who put his hand up to run on the Strathfield Liberal ticket and worked tirelessly throughout the campaign. I extend my congratulations to all the successful Councillors elected to Strathfield Council. I look forward to working collaboratively with all Councillors to deliver for our shared constituencies. I wish them all the very best in their service to the community.

DOMREMY COLLEGE 2024 STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to congratulate the newly appointed 2025 Student Leadership Team at Domremy College. In their time at high school, the 2025 Student Leadership Team have demonstrated integrity, dedication, and commitment to their school community. Their appointment to leadership positions is a testament to their passion caring for their school and helping their peers. I sincerely congratulate College Captain Olivia Azzi, Vice-Captains Jessica De Freitas and Sophia Pollicina, Creative and Performing Arts Captain Mimi Mooney, Environment Captain Lucinda Godwin, Events Captain Isabella Haramis, Faith and Mission Captain Krista Orias-Cabasal, Humanities Captain Sophia Nouris, Languages Captain Sophia Denina, Promotions Captain Katherine Nicolaou, Public Speaking and Debating Captain Elodie Atherton, Sports Captain Chloe Gao, SRC Liaison Bianca Kolokotsas, STEM Captain Susannah King and House Captains Mariana Farhat, Antonia Carbone, Charlize-Maree Marroun and Jasmine Youssef. As Domremy women who are guided to shine their light in all that they do, I know that these leaders will embrace this opportunity and make a lasting impact on the school community. Congratulations to the 2025 Student Leaders at Domremy College. I wish you all the very best as you head into your final year of schooling.

ANNUAL 2024 LOCAL CHAMPION AWARD WINNERS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—I'm pleased to recognise two outstanding individuals who exemplify the spirit of community and commitment in our local football scene. Tim Ward, from

Garden Suburb Football Club, received the Local Champion Award 2024 for his coaching. Tim truly embodies what it means to lead with heart. Tim has built a strong family-like bond with his team, fostering a supportive environment where players thrive. Tim believes it's not just about winning; it's about making a positive impact on the lives of those he coaches. I also congratulate Jillian McTaggart from South Cardiff Community Football Club, who was awarded the Local Champion Award 2024 for her volunteer work. As a vital member of the committee, Jillian goes above and beyond to ensure that every player feels valued and supported. Her infectious smile and unwavering commitment create a welcoming atmosphere for everyone involved. Jillian's efforts to coordinate teams and organise events truly enrich the lives of our young athletes and their families. Tim and Jillian inspire us all with their dedication and love for the game. I would like to thank both Tim and Jillian for their hard work to make our community a better place.

LAKE MACQUARIE CITY COUNCILLORS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—I wish to warmly congratulate my friends and colleagues in local government who commenced the new Council term on Monday night following the recent Council elections. Councillor Adam Shultz was decisively elected as Mayor of the City of Lake Macquarie by its residents a few weeks ago, and as someone who served in that role before my election to Parliament, I have every confidence he will make a fantastic contribution to our city and the broader Hunter region. It's a proud moment for Adam's family, his wife Cass and their three beautiful children. I also congratulate my Labor colleagues who were re-elected in their respective wards, Madeleine Bishop, Keara Conroy, Brian Adamthwaite and Christine Buckley, and newly elected Councillor Stacey Radcliffe in East Ward. Finally, I send my best wishes to outgoing Mayor Kay Fraser, who has served on Council for twenty years, the last eight as the city's leader.

NEW SCHOOL LEADERS FOR 2025

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—I have every confidence in the future whenever I visit schools around Charlestown, and so it's a pleasure to be able to acknowledge the incoming leaders for Charlestown's high schools, as they commence their leadership duties. So, I wish the very best of luck to the following leaders: At Hunter Sports High School, Captains Anika McCarthy and Patrick Innes, Gem Academy Captain Sarahkay John and Vice Captains Ava Kennedy and Sian Wilde. At Whitebridge High School, Captains Brina Chong Nee and Braith Pavlou and Vice Captains Neve Scully and Jesse Hill. At Kotara High School Nicola and Isla and Vice Captains Oliver and Allia. St Mary's College Leaders are Macy Nash, Sienna Pitt, James Bernasconi and Ben Breasley. At Cardiff High School good luck to Captains Maddison Ridgeway and Nash Smith, Vice Captains Isla Williams and Roy Cruickshank and prefects Emma Mantle and Max Baldwin. And finally, best of luck to Warners Bay High School's incoming Captains Ella Brownell and Angelina Majurovski and Vice Captains Daniel Leggett and Samuel Voigt.

15TH ANNIVERSARY OF NSW STATE APOLOGY TO FORGOTTEN AUSTRALIANS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—2024 marks the 15th anniversary of the NSW State Apology to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants. This is an important opportunity to acknowledge the trauma and pain in the childhood of Forgotten Australians and former Child Migrants, and how under child welfare policies they were taken away from their families and placed into out-of-home care. Today, after many years of pain and advocacy, services exist to provide support and redress for those impacted by these policies. Wattle Place is a trauma-informed service in Harris Park that seeks to provide support to those impacted by these policies. Their goal is to raise awareness about the Forgotten Australians and former Child Migrants in our society, promoting understanding and acknowledgement. Thank you to Manager Yvonne Porter of Wattle Place along with your team for your continued work in supporting Forgotten Australians and former Child Migrants.
