

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday 24 October 2024

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[*Notices of motions given.*]

Bills

RETURN OF PROCEEDS OF CRIME (GAMBLING COMPANIES) BILL 2024

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mrs Helen Dalton, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (10:18): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I introduce my private member's bill, the Return of Proceeds of Crime (Gambling Companies) Bill 2024. Sports gambling companies in Australia are directly connected to crime. One of the main reasons that Betfair, Ladbrokes, TAB and all other gambling companies make so much money is that they receive stolen money.

Even when they find out it is stolen money, the gambling companies choose to keep that stolen money. I ask every member in this place to look at the MP sitting next to them. If someone stole your wallet or your purse and gave it to the MP sitting next to you, would it be fair for that MP to keep it? Of course it would not. You would expect them to give it back. And if the MP would not return your stolen wallet or purse, you would expect the police to get it back for you. No-one in this place or in the wider community would think that it is okay for the MP sitting next to you to keep your stolen wallet or purse.

And yet that is exactly what gambling companies that are operating in Australia are doing right now. At the moment, gambling companies deliberately and knowingly hold onto the proceeds of crime. They keep the stolen money even when they know that those monies are the proceeds of crime and even when they know the names of the victims the money was stolen from and how much was stolen. As far as I am concerned, that makes those gambling companies complicit in those crimes. It is time that New South Wales law is changed to require that the proceeds of crime currently being hoarded by gambling companies are given back to victims. Gambling companies see that stolen money as profits. But for the victims it is often their life savings.

There are two stages of harm being felt by victims of gambling-related crime. The first stage of harm is when the gambler steals that money. The second stage of harm is when the gambling company refuses to give that stolen money back to the victim. For a long time gambling companies have argued that they cannot ever be sure that the money they received was stolen, so why should they have to give that money back to the victims? It is a pathetic argument. Let me explain why. For a start, gambling companies are meant to do checks to ensure that gamblers are not using the proceeds of crime to gamble. So it should not be happening even though we all know that it is. For example, South Australia's Independent Gambling Authority has found that 50 per cent of problem gamblers—that is one in every two—admit to committing crimes in order to gamble.

Under my bill—which I am calling on the Government, the Opposition and the crossbench to support—there can be no doubt that gambling companies have received the proceeds of crime. That is because my bill requires a court to rule that gambling companies have received the proceeds of crime. Then that court can order the return of those proceeds of crime to the victims who have also been identified by the court. Across Australia in every jurisdiction we see gamblers going to jail for gambling-related crimes. The judge will look at the evidence, work out how much was stolen and from whom, and then sentence the gambler. What the judges cannot currently do is to order that stolen money be returned to the victims. That must change and my bill will finally give judges that power.

Most MPs in this place fall over themselves to declare that they support law and order. Prove it. Support the bill and make the gambling companies give back the stolen money. My bill is in part based on a Federal bill that has been tabled by Federal Independent Andrew Wilkie. As many Australians know, no-one in Federal Parliament has done more to fight the damage done by gambling companies than Andrew. One of the cases that Andrew has been closely involved with is that of Gavin Fineff and his victims. Gavin is from New South Wales and was a financial planner who had developed an addiction to sports betting. This addiction was facilitated and actively exploited by the gambling companies: Sportsbet, Ladbrokes and TAB. Gavin defrauded 12 of his clients, stealing amounts ranging from \$60,000 to \$745,000.

When his crimes were discovered, Gavin quickly confessed everything. He then helped prosecutors and forensic accountants to work out how much money was stolen and from whom. Gavin was sentenced to nine years in jail. What happened to the victims' money? Two of the gambling companies kept that stolen money they received from Gavin and one of the companies just gave a portion of the stolen money back to the victims. At the time of sentencing, the judge did not have the power to order that stolen money be given back to the victims. But under this bill, the judge will have that power. Under this bill, victims will get their money back and have their devastated lives at least partly repaired.

Initially my office had what seemed like a very productive discussion about my bill with representatives of Australia's biggest sports gambling company, Sportsbet. For weeks representatives of Sportsbet played along. I suspect they knew that saying no to this bill would not pass the pub test. Gambling companies need a social licence to operate. More importantly, gambling companies need a social licence for politicians to allow them to operate. After weeks of making all the right noises and even expressing in-principle support of the bill in writing, Sportsbet did a backflip. Sportsbet knows that criminal laws are usually State or Territory laws and therefore reform can only be achieved at the State and Territory level.

Now Sportsbet says it does not want to have to submit itself to changed State and Territory laws. No, apparently Sportsbet only wants to deal with the Federal Parliament on this issue, meaning more delays, which allow Sportsbet to keep holding onto stolen money indefinitely. I for one do not really care what Sportsbet wants or does not want. It is a gambling company and it clearly cannot be trusted, so why are we listening to it? Ultimately, I care about what the major parties and the crossbench think, and I care about what the Australian people think too, which usually is right. Does any one of us want a world where gambling companies continue to knowingly keep the proceeds of crime? Does any one of us think that voters will go along with that? Does any one of us not want to give judges the power to return stolen money to victims?

I had hoped to work with Sportsbet and eventually the other gambling companies to begin returning stolen money to victims. But in Sportsbet's case, it could not be trusted. A gambling company putting profits before principles—who would have thought! That said, Sportsbet has drawn a line in the sand. It has picked the fight. Now it has to lose that fight and the Parliament of New South Wales needs to win that fight. If we do not pass the bill, we will be telling voters that we are happy for gambling companies to keep stolen money. I am not happy with that and I sincerely hope no-one else in this place or the other place is either.

I say to Sportsbet and all the other gambling companies that change is coming and not just in New South Wales. Already the brilliant Independent member for Clark in Tasmania, Kristie Johnston, has drafted a similar bill for the Tasmanian Parliament. In time, I anticipate we will get similar bills introduced by Independent members in every State and Territory in this country. But, for now, New South Wales can and must be the first to pass this legislation. We need to lead the way. We must hold the gambling companies to account by forcing them to give stolen money back to victims. The bill must become law.

I do not want to hear any Government or Opposition members talking about cost-of-living pressures or being tough on crime if they do not support the bill. The fact is that most Australians did not realise until now that gambling companies knowingly choose to keep stolen money rather than returning that stolen money to victims. But now voters do know that. And they are going to keep hearing about it—mark my words. It is now up to us as members of Parliament to force gambling companies to do the right thing once and for all. I call on all members to support the bill, which will help to restore the lives of victims of crime.

Debate adjourned.

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (PUBLIC ACCESS) BILL 2024 (NO 2)

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 6 June 2024.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (10:29): I lead for the Government in debate on the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024 (No 2). From the outset, I make clear that we oppose the

legislation. The New South Wales Government already supports initiatives to increase access to life-saving emergency care to members of the community, and it has already invested significantly in a range of initiatives and programs to improve the survival rates for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. Every minute counts when someone is in cardiac arrest. The chances for survival drop by 7 per cent to 10 per cent for every minute that cardiopulmonary resuscitation is not administered.

An automated external defibrillator, or AED, is a portable electronic device that automatically diagnoses arrhythmias that can be defibrillated, potentially restoring the heart to a stable rhythm with return of spontaneous circulation. However, defibrillation is only one component of cardiopulmonary resuscitation in a minority of out-of-hospital cardiac arrests. External cardiac compression with artificial ventilation or expired air ventilation are the mainstay of initial responses. When I was a medical student I was taught the ABCDE of resuscitation—airway, breathing, circulation, drugs and electricity. Circulation is the most important. As a specialist obstetrician in a rural area, we did simulation training for rare obstetric emergencies, including cardiac arrest in pregnant women.

So often participants overlooked that critical first component, even in a hospital setting, while they were waiting for drugs and a defibrillator. Public access defibrillation involves a bystander and a trained first responder or recruited trained volunteer initiating cardiopulmonary resuscitation and defibrillation before the arrival of an emergency medical service. The speed with which defibrillation is performed is the major determinant in the success of resuscitative attempts for treatment of ventricular fibrillation cardiac arrest. The Australian Resuscitation Council reports that the median emergency response time by ambulance services throughout Australia is between 7½ minutes and 10 minutes. Also, the data shows that two-thirds of out-of-hospital cardiac arrests exhibit a non-shockable rhythm for which the use of an AED would be futile.

Thousands of Australians will experience out-of-hospital cardiac arrests each year. However, 79 per cent of cardiac arrests occur at home, with 8 per cent in aged-care facilities and only 11 per cent in public places. Of those, 60 per cent occur at night or on weekends. We know that survival to hospital discharge after out-of-hospital cardiac arrest is poor, with just one in 10 people surviving. The Australian College of Emergency Medicine recognises that members of the community obtain information about cardiac arrest from the media and sometimes their perception about possible outcomes may be unrealistically optimistic. That may be due to a lack of knowledge about the difference between cardiac arrest and a heart attack, and the significantly differing outcomes for each condition.

Although there is some evidence that survival rates can be high, that has been documented in rare situations in supervised settings such as cardiac rehabilitation programs and performed by AED-trained individuals. There is no strong evidence that dissemination of AEDs outside of key public areas is effective, unless there is consideration of how the defibrillator can be most effectively brought to the patient. The Australian College of Emergency Medicine aligns with the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation guidelines, which recommend that public access defibrillation programs for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest should be implemented only when warranted by evidence of clinical benefit. The Australian College of Emergency Medicine similarly states that new AED replacements should match country- and region-specific out-of-hospital cardiac arrest event rates.

Queensland Ambulance Service data indicates that intervention by bystanders is rare, with only 1.2 per cent of out-of-hospital cardiac arrests defibrillated by a bystander before the arrival of paramedics. Broader consultation is required on the proposal, as well as consideration of the existing programs and initiatives that aim to improve survival rates for out-of-hospital cardiac arrests. The \$2.5 million partnership between NSW Ambulance and GoodSAM is one of a range of investments aimed at improving survival rates for people having a cardiac arrest outside of a hospital setting. The GoodSAM program will give people who are in cardiac arrest a better chance of survival by alerting a nearby registered community member who is willing to perform chest compression, or cardiopulmonary resuscitation, until paramedics arrive.

GoodSAM is a free, global smartphone app that is linked to NSW Ambulance's 000 control centres, alerting people when someone nearby is in cardiac arrest. Up to three GoodSAM users in the vicinity of the person in need will be notified simultaneously through the app. They can then make their way to the patient to begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation, with guidance from a NSW Ambulance emergency call-taker while paramedics are dispatched to the location. I am pleased to share that more than 35 lives have been saved since the volunteer recruitment program for GoodSAM was launched in November last year. That is more than 35 families who still have a loved one with them today thanks to GoodSAM-registered responders. To date, more than 8,000 people have signed up to GoodSAM, and I am one of them. I have the app on my phone.

Ms Liesl Tesch: Thanks, Doctor.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND: You can join up too. We want more to register, and we want to improve the efficacy of GoodSAM. People can register as a GoodSAM responder if they are over 18 and willing and able to provide chest compressions, which are easy and safe to do. They do not need to have formal first aid or CPR training to sign up. That is a tremendous opportunity for people to make a lifesaving difference in their local communities. Having more GoodSAM volunteers means that when someone is experiencing cardiac arrest, there is a greater chance that people nearby can perform simple chest compressions while paramedics make their way to the location. As I said, every minute counts when someone is in cardiac arrest, and the chances of survival drop by 7 per cent to 10 per cent for every minute that CPR is not administered.

That is why I am very pleased to update the House on the exciting new development of the GoodSAM Responder App. In August the Minister and I announced that the New South Wales public access defibrillator registry is now linked to the GoodSAM app, as well as to the NSW Ambulance 000 control centres. NSW Ambulance has worked very hard on that in recent months, and it will save more lives. A responder can now be directed to the closest AED where appropriate. Previously the only way for responders to find the closest AED was to check the Service NSW register, which could not be done particularly quickly or easily in circumstances where every second matters. Now responders will be able to find the closest AED very quickly and easily as they make their way to the person in need of cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

The GoodSAM app will show the closest AED on the map and 000 call-takers can also see the nearest of over 4,400 registered AED locations and direct responders to them if needed. The partnership between NSW Ambulance and GoodSAM is one of a range of investments aimed at improving survival rates for people who are having a heart attack outside of a hospital setting. In 2021 more than 9,200 cardiac arrests were recorded across New South Wales. That is the highest number for all Australian States and Territories. Work health and safety legislation already requires persons conducting a business to have accessible first aid equipment. SafeWork NSW provides detailed information on its website about what should be included within those first-aid kits, including AEDs, which are suggested for use on sites with electrocution hazards. Persons conducting a business must also ensure that an adequate number of workers have been trained to administer first aid, and that those trained persons are accessible to workers.

From my perspective as a medical practitioner who performed invasive procedures and used infiltration of drugs for over 20 years in an outpatient setting opposite a busy cafe, the local post office and the Fire and Rescue department, in the middle of town, I can say that the AED was never used in that situation. There has been a lack of consultation with relevant and important stakeholders on this bill, including NSW Health, NSW Ambulance, the Agency for Clinical Innovation, the Government more broadly, public health experts and businesses. The Government is disappointed that the Opposition is supporting legislation that has not been consulted on with the very agencies that will be involved in its implementation. There is no estimate of how many AEDs will be provided or the likely costs associated with this proposal, for maintaining and replacing them.

Legislators in this House have a responsibility to ensure the legislation it passes is robust and fit for purpose. At the least, extensive consultation with key agencies should be carried out. This simply has not happened with this bill before us. As a former Minister, the member for Kiama should have a strong understanding of the absolute necessity of consultation with important stakeholders, especially when it comes to legislation that involves significant policy changes and will impose significant costs and new requirements on government entities as well as businesses. Before any mandates are implemented by means of legislation through this House, it is critical that consultation with impacted stakeholders, as well as the experts in the field, take place.

The installation and ongoing maintenance of AEDs is expected to have significant impacts across a range of government agencies and private entities. There is no estimate of the likely costs associated with this proposal. It would also impact residential aged-care facilities, which are the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. I urge the Opposition and the crossbench to not support this bill. At the end of the day, we know that AEDs do not save lives; people with AEDs do. That is what we need to focus on doing: increasing the amount of people who can use AEDs where and when they are needed.

Mr Gareth Ward: I thought we had a real doctor, not a spin doctor.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND: There is white noise over there.

Mr Gareth Ward: Excuse me. Did the member just reflect on my albinism? Was that what that was?

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND: That is a common term.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: I have had enough of being bullied by this Government about my disability. The member for Bega made an ableist comment about white noise. Mr Temporary Speaker, you should ask him to withdraw it. I have had enough from the Premier and from him. I am sick of it.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Does the member for Bega wish to withdraw his comment?

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND: If the generally used term "white noise" offends the member for Kiama, I withdraw it. It was not used in that way.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (10:42): On behalf of the Opposition, I speak in debate on the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024. The Opposition supports the bill, but I will be flagging some amendments later. This bill has broad stakeholder support and has precedence in another State. It has the potential to both save lives and have a beneficial impact on our economy. I will start by telling a story that some people in this place might be familiar with. When the late Kerry Packer suffered a heart attack on the polo field in 1990, he was revived by a passing ambulance that just happened to have a portable defibrillator—one of few at that time. It saved his life. Packer called then Liberal Premier Nick Greiner from his hospital bed and said, "I'm told it costs \$5 million to put them in every ambulance. I'll go you halves." So, in tandem with the Liberal Government, Mr Packer famously had defibrillators installed in every ambulance in New South Wales. They were referred to as packer whackers. These days, external defibrillators have evolved from weighing 70 kilograms to some current models weighing only 300 grams.

It has never been more feasible to roll out widespread public access to defibrillators, and we know the importance of doing so. Each year in New South Wales, more than 8,500 people experience out-of-hospital cardiac arrests [OHCA] and survival rates remain low, with only 12 per cent of such people surviving to discharge from hospital. For every minute a patient is in cardiac arrest, not receiving CPR or a shock from an automated external defibrillator [AED], chances of survival drop by 10 per cent. Prompt defibrillation, within three to five minutes of collapse, can lead to rates of survival to hospital discharge after OHCA as high as 50 per cent to 70 per cent. Unfortunately, it is likely we all know someone who has died of cardiac arrest or suffered a heart attack. I know so many people. It is often a sudden and unforeseen emergency, and the human toll is so steep.

Health economists point to the impact on productivity, because a third of the people who have died from heart attacks were working full-time. Analysis of heart attacks in Victoria showed that reduced productivity led to GDP losses of \$448 million. In South Australia the estimated cost of a similar policy to its government over a four-year period was \$7.2 million. That is small change compared to the impact it can have. We have an opportunity today to save both lives and money for our economy by supporting this important bill. This is an important bill. I commend the member for Kiama for bringing it to the House. It is modelled on a bill introduced in South Australia in 2022, and the Heart Foundation wants New South Wales to follow. The Heart Foundation said:

New South Wales should do the same and the Heart Foundation is ready to assist the government on the rollout of such an initiative. This will save lives and decrease the burden of out of hospital cardiac arrests on our community.

The Heart Foundation has been advocating for the mandating the installation and maintenance of AEDs in large commercial buildings; funding the purchase and installation of AEDs in all publicly owned or contracted transport vehicles, including buses, trains and light rail; funding the purchase and installation of AEDs in all publicly owned or managed buildings and State-owned corporations; and expanding the existing program to fund the purchase of AEDs for sporting organisations, to ensure that every sporting facility in New South Wales has an AED accessible to the public. That is what this bill attempts to achieve. I note that the former Coalition Government introduced the Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program. It was this Labor Government that capped it and imposed limits based on socio-economic data. Heart attacks do not discriminate; neither should our policies. A key principle of our system of government is universal access to health care.

One objective of this bill is to require the installation of automatic external defibrillators in certain buildings and vehicles. The buildings must be over 1,200 square metres, so that would not mandate installation of defibrillators in small businesses. I congratulate the many larger commercial entities that do this voluntarily, such as Officeworks, Coles, Woolworths, Bunnings and Dan Murphy's—just to name a few. I foreshadow that we will be also seeking to move an amendment regarding vehicles. I will come to that at the appropriate time. The bill requires the registration and maintenance of the defibrillators. That job has been made easier because former Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government Victor Dominello already set up a register of defibrillators. The bill also requires the Minister to keep a publicly accessible register of the defibrillators, including the location of the defibrillators, which is ready to go, and to develop a strategy to inform the public about defibrillators. That is important.

Hand in hand with the introduction of this bill should be a public awareness campaign, because we need to give people the confidence to use these devices and to reassure them they are easy to use. They cannot get it wrong or be blamed for using one. I thank St John Ambulance, where I had a brief demonstration of how they work. It was simple. You open up the machine and it talks to you. The machine tells you what to do. You cannot

send a shock to someone who does not need it. It is important we get the message out to people because it is confronting, but it is a simple and easy message. It is easy to do, and it is our job to do it. Application of an AED increases the survival rate. If the right treatment is given in the first three to five minutes, the chance of survival can increase from 6 per cent to 74 per cent. That is why this bill is so important. The rollout too is important. In supporting this bill the Government will control, via regulation, the timing and rollout of defibrillators.

We do not have to install defibrillators on every bus tomorrow. The bill commences two years after assent, allowing time for planning and preparation. Former Ironman Guy Leech told me about a day he will never forget, when one of his mates, Chucky, collapsed during a paddling session. Guy performed CPR and an ambulance arrived 10 minutes later with a defibrillator. By then it was too late. There was sudden damage from that cardiac arrest and Chucky never recovered, dying in hospital a week later. Guy said:

One of life's most haunting questions I ask myself is, "What If? What if I had a defib in the car? What if there was one in the cafe nearby? What if I could have put Chucky on a defib in those first 180 seconds? If any of my other fit and healthy friends, my kids or my wife were to suffer from a sudden cardiac arrest, where is the nearest defib now? Does anyone know how to use it?"

If this Parliament has an opportunity to make a change today and chooses not to, will we be asking "What if?". Today there is a defibrillator on the wall just outside the Chamber. There is one on every floor of the Parliament building for parliamentarians. Why should people working in major sporting clubs, government buildings or commercial premises be treated differently? Why not them? Why us? We cannot wait for another high-profile cardiac arrest to jolt us into action. We cannot wait for another enigmatic figure to write a cheque. We need to act now. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (10:51): I make a brief contribution to debate on the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024 (No 2). I will discuss some important research projects led by NSW Ambulance to identify new ways to treat cardiac arrest. The NSW Health EVIDENCE trial is a large, randomised, controlled study of rapidly expediting care to specialist cardiac hospitals across Sydney, the Illawarra and regional communities. The PRECARE study, which began late last year, is a feasibility trial for the use of portable extracorporeal membrane oxygenation [ECMO] devices. The ECMO trial involves a heart-lung bypass machine, two specialist doctors and a critical care paramedic. Taking the machine outside the hospital has the potential to increase the survival rate of some patients in cardiac arrest from less than 5 per cent to approximately 30 per cent. The trial stems from ongoing collaborative research between NSW Ambulance and Royal Prince Alfred, St Vincent's and Westmead hospitals to improve cardiac arrest outcomes.

The New South Wales Government already supports automated external defibrillators [AED] for sport and recreational facilities and clubs. The Government is providing up to \$500,000 through the Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program, with individual grants of up to \$3,000. The 2024-25 program is now open for persons to register an interest. The grants support local sport and recreational clubs to purchase an AED package for use in emergencies involving cardiac arrest. NSW Ambulance conducts regular analysis of all AED locations in New South Wales to identify areas of growing demand for the prioritisation of resources. Best-practice modelling software maps the 000 calls to determine the most suitable locations for emergency care and examines current response areas and potential station locations to meet community needs.

An intensive care paramedic—I give a shout-out to all our paramedics—is a specialist clinical role within NSW Ambulance. It requires a more comprehensive scope of practice in order to provide additional acute specialist care. Intensive care paramedics are credentialed and equipped specialist registered paramedics who treat acutely ill and injured patients with advanced procedures and medications. Intensive care paramedics assess and manage a wide range of acute illnesses and potentially serious trauma conditions. Intensive care paramedics utilise their knowledge to enable rapid and appropriate treatment in the early phases of an acute presentation. I am extremely proud of the excellent work that NSW Ambulance is doing in this space.

NSW Health is doing fantastic work to link the AED register to the GoodSAM app, which the Parliamentary Secretary spoke about during his contribution to debate. Good Samaritans can now be guided to AEDs to help them respond to people experiencing cardiac arrest while they wait for paramedics to arrive. The GoodSAM app works by alerting registered responders when someone near them goes into cardiac arrest and a 000 call has been made. I urge everyone to download the app today. It guides volunteers to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation, or CPR, while an ambulance is dispatched, buying precious time. The incorporation of the New South Wales public access defibrillator register into the free, life-saving app will allow responders to see whether an AED is located near a person experiencing cardiac arrest and use it to improve their chance of survival.

There are already 4,300 AEDs registered on the GoodSAM AED register. At least 30 lives have been saved thanks to the assistance of GoodSAM volunteers. More than 7,300 people have signed up to be responders. I again encourage everyone to download the GoodSAM app to their phones today. At least 12 of those 30 patients benefited from a life-saving AED prior to the arrival of NSW Ambulance paramedics. The changes to the

GoodSAM app to include AED data will no doubt help save even more lives. The New South Wales Government is taking a sensible, logical approach that is backed by evidence, which is crucial to make the best decisions for the citizens of New South Wales.

I thank the Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast, and member for Keira and the Parliamentary Secretary, and member for Bega. Since the Minns Labor Government was elected 18 months ago, they have done an enormous amount of work with NSW Health, the Health Services Union and the Nurses and Midwives' Association. It is very important that any policy in this area has a strong foundation. The Government does not believe that is the case with this bill, which is why we cannot support it. We encourage the Opposition and crossbench to reach out to stakeholders, including NSW Health, the unions and specialist paramedics to seek their advice on this bill.

As I have said before, it is important that any policy in this area has a strong foundation. We do not believe that to be the case for this bill, which is why the New South Wales Government cannot and will not support it. I again encourage people to download the GoodSAM app today. It enables Good Samaritans to be guided to AEDs to help them respond to those experiencing cardiac arrest while they wait for paramedics to arrive. I thank the House for its consideration of this important matter, but I reiterate that the Government will not support the bill because we need a strong foundation and strong evidence to make any decision in the best interests of the people of New South Wales.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): It being 11.00 a.m., pursuant to standing and sessional orders, debate is interrupted for question time. I set down resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour.

Members

MEMBER FOR DRUMMOYNE

MEMBER FOR WOLLONGONG

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge the member for Drummoyne and wish her a happy birthday. I have it on good authority that the member for Wollongong has a significant milestone birthday coming up. I will not give away what that milestone is, but I note that it falls somewhere between 49 and 51. While it is significant that the member for Drummoyne is having a birthday, it is not a milestone birthday. I hope both of them have wonderful celebrations.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome our visitors to the gallery, including members of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association. I love the interest they take in parliamentary democracy. I extend a warm welcome to Anthony Li, Phoebe Reason and Emmy Chou, work experience students and guests of the member for Murray. I also welcome Lucy Belling and Jessica Lee from the Office of the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People.

I welcome to the gallery guests of the member for Prospect, students from St Anthony's Primary School, Girraween, including principal Trish Reilly and school captains Damian Deng and Geneva McDermott, the member's daughter. Geneva, watch your dad today—he is going to be so good. I also welcome Emmy Gyulai and András Vaski, guests of the member for Blacktown. I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of senior electorate officer Angela Maltese, who celebrates 10 years working for the member for Badgerys Creek—an extraordinary milestone for a number of reasons—and her partner, Tony Maltese. Finally, I acknowledge teachers and students from the Kingsgrove branch of Scope Australia, one of the largest not-for-profit disability service providers in Australia, and from Camden High School.

Members

REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS

Mr RON HOENIG: On behalf of Mr Chris Minns: I inform the House that the Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney will answer questions today in the absence of the Premier.

*Question Time***RAIL, TRAM AND BUS UNION INDUSTRIAL ACTION**

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (11:07): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier, representing the Premier. The Rail, Tram and Bus Union website states that Transport for NSW was notified 10 days ago regarding the strike action this morning. Why did the Government not inform the public so they could plan accordingly?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:08): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. As members know, there was a short stoppage in the early hours of this morning, I believe at 3.10 a.m. The Minister for Transport is nodding at me so I will take that as correct. We apologise for the disruption that caused passengers. But I will be clear that trains were up and running during the morning peak-hour period for those travelling to work or dropping off children to school. Millions of people used Sydney trains this morning.

Let me be very clear: We are in negotiations with workers that work on Sydney trains, and we are negotiating in good faith. We are at the bargaining table. That separates this side of the House from the opposite side very clearly. The Coalition had a wages cap in place. It could not even bargain with workers and their representatives.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Ms PRUE CAR: Because of the abolition of the wages cap, the Minister for Transport and her department and agencies are able to bargain in good faith with the workers that work on our rail network.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Blacktown will come to order. The Leader of the Opposition rises on a point of order.

Mr Mark Speakman: It is Standing Order 129. The Minister was not asked why there was industrial disruption; the Minister was asked why the public was not informed.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: As I clearly said at the start of my answer to this question, we acknowledge that there was a five-minute stoppage, which did cause some disruption to passengers. We directly apologise to passengers who were affected by that change. I am directly answering the question. If members of the Opposition actually cared about the travelling public, they would listen to the answer to the question.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier will resume her seat while I hear from the member for Dubbo.

Mr Dugald Saunders: It is under Standing Order 129 because the answer is not directly relevant. The Minister saying that she did not want to explain they had known for a while is not relevant. People were impacted because of the strike, and the Government knew about it for a long time.

The SPEAKER: The member for Dubbo knows that is not how to take a point of order. I call the member for Dubbo to order for the first time. He will resume his seat. There is no point of order.

Ms PRUE CAR: Opposition members are constantly flouting your rulings in this place, Mr Speaker. That action was more disruptive than initially indicated, and we quickly got on with ensuring that the rail service was up and running.

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order. They are not the timekeepers; I am quite capable of managing the House. Members on both sides of the House run over time sometimes.

GOVERNMENT AGENCY MERCHANT FEES

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (11:11): My question is addressed to the Acting Premier. Will the Acting Premier please update the House on the Minns Labor Government's response to customers being unlawfully charged merchant fees, despite repeated advice during the term of the former Liberal-Nationals Government that the surcharges were unlawful?

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. I could hardly hear the question because of interjections from Government members. The member with the call will be heard in silence.

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:13): I thank the member for The Entrance for that important and timely question. Let us not sugar-coat what has happened with merchant fees. The truth is that the Liberal Party and The Nationals presided over one of the biggest rip-offs of New South Wales taxpayers in the State's history. That is what happened. The Coalition can crow about it, but it was warned time and again about it. What was overseen by those opposite when they were in government is clear now for everyone to see.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: To levy unlawful merchant fees is one thing, but to be warned that it was in fact illegal—not once, not twice but three times—and then to continue to do it is a completely different thing altogether.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: It is gross misconduct, and the Ministers and agencies responsible have referred the matter to the Ombudsman to investigate, because the Crown Solicitor's advice time and again that merchant fees were unlawful was simply ignored. In today's media, we see a conga line of previous Ministers making the Richard Nixon defence—"I don't recall if I was ever briefed." Either we have a situation where they are actually telling a mistruth—they are lying—or they actually had no idea what was going on.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: What are the people of New South Wales supposed to believe? Does it pass the commonsense test that three times the Crown Solicitor—which is a pretty serious outfit—gave serious advice to the former Government that it was unlawful to charge merchant fees, that three times the Government ignored it and that the Ministers were not aware? What was going on in that Government? I inform the House what is going on in our Government. As soon as the Auditor-General made the matter clear to us, we acted. We put a stop to the unlawful charging of merchant fees because it is wrong to collect them when agencies do not have the legal authority to do so.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: That is what members opposite were doing in government. They owe the people of New South Wales an apology for taking money from them that they were not legally allowed to take. I remind members opposite—

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

Mr David Mehan: I seek further information.

The SPEAKER: An additional two minutes is granted.

Ms PRUE CAR: The people of New South Wales are owed an apology for the gross misconduct from the previous Government.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Say sorry.

Ms PRUE CAR: As Minister Kamper said, they should say sorry to the people of New South Wales. It is one thing to be warned three times and do nothing, but then we find out that a Treasury circular went to all agencies, and members opposite cannot tell us it was not shared with Ministers' offices. How stupid do they think everyone is? The direction not to collect merchant fees would have been shared with ministerial offices, Ministers and all agencies. The Treasury circular was public, but they just kept taking unlawful merchant fees, even though the Crown Solicitor—

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Oatley to remove himself from the Chamber for five minutes under Standing Order 249A.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Oatley left the Chamber at 11:17.]

Ms PRUE CAR: At one point the member for Oatley was around the Cabinet table. Members opposite are very sensitive about this; they are very touchy. I commend Minister Dib and Minister Houssos for bringing the matter to the public's attention. We are acting on the Crown Solicitor's advice. We have referred it to the Ombudsman. I remind those opposite that the Ombudsman has similar powers to a royal commission and will get to the bottom of what happened in this great theft from the people of New South Wales, brought to you by those opposite. They presided over a scenario where they were warned three times and then given a Treasury circular, but kept collecting that money—the public's money, which they did not have a legal right to collect. Only a Labor government is getting on top of it.

The SPEAKER: The member for Manly will come to order. That behaviour is most unlike him; he has disappointed me.

Mr James Griffin: It was Oatley.

The SPEAKER: The member for Oatley has infected the member for Manly. I call the member for Hawkesbury.

RAIL, TRAM AND BUS UNION INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (11:18): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. This morning Transport for NSW suggested that rail passengers affected by the strike consider using the metro instead. If there is a rail union strike like this in the future, with drivers on driverless trains on Sydney metro south-west, will the metro also shut down?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:19): Before I try to explain "drivers on driverless trains" and how the member for Hawkesbury thinks they are the same staff who work on Sydney Metro, which is a city metro, as education Minister, I implore every member of the House to write their questions in plain English so they are understandable. Proofreading is a dying skill in the Opposition. I make it very clear that the Government is not trying to hide the fact that there was a five-minute stoppage that the union indicated—

Mr Alister Henskens: Everyone knows that.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: You asked the question and I am providing the answer. There was a five-minute stoppage that the union had indicated to the Government would not be as big a deal as it turned out to be this morning. When that eventuated, of course our job as a government was to make sure that services were up and running for the commuters who needed to get to work or to wherever they were going. Opposition members can try to launch a conspiracy theory about who knew what when—

Ms Robyn Preston: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129 relating to direct relevance. The question was: If there was a future strike with drivers on driverless trains on Sydney metro south-west, will it shut down?

The SPEAKER: I make a blanket ruling about this question and direct relevance. The question was out of order under Standing Order 128 (2) (h) because it poses a hypothetical proposition. If the question had been challenged, I probably would have ruled it out of order. However, it was not challenged so the Deputy Premier will be given more leeway in answering the question.

Ms PRUE CAR: The question may have been out of order; it was certainly confusing. Without having a crystal ball in front of me to look at a hypothetical situation, I use this opportunity to remind the member for Hawkesbury and other members opposite that they are talking about those working on the metro. They have separate agreements to those working on Sydney Trains. They are a completely different workforce. I know members opposite like to crow about the metro—the Government has given them credit for that—but you would think they would understand that these workers have completely different employment arrangements under different awards. I know Opposition members struggle to understand industrial relations and workers in any way, but that is the case. I have answered the question in all its confusing glory. The Government apologises to affected passengers, who were eventually able to get the train to work.

TOBACCO REGULATION

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (11:23): My question is addressed to the laser-like focused Minister for Health.

The SPEAKER: Order! Questions do not usually contain introductory comments. They are not helpful because they excite members. The member for Cabramatta will go straight to the question.

Mr TRI VO: Will the Minister update the House on the Minns Labor Government's work to better protect the community from the harms of illegal tobacco?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (11:24): What laser-like focus! I thank the member for Cabramatta. It is a fantastic question. Before I start, I acknowledge the Nurses and Midwives' Association in the Parliament today. It has been great to have its representatives here over the past few days and weeks. They are always welcome at the home of democracy. I do not think there is a bigger issue from a public health perspective in communities across New South Wales right now than the rise in illegal tobacco and in the number of illegal e-cigarettes and vapes.

Ms Robyn Preston: Just ask the nurses. They think the pay rise is more important.

Mr RYAN PARK: Comrade, be quiet. This morning Dr Kerry Chant and I announced the single biggest reform to legislation for the distribution and selling of tobacco in well over two decades. The New South Wales Government will attack this problem on two levels. Firstly, it will establish a robust licensing system for the first time in this State. New South Wales has always led the nation in public health but, unfortunately—and I do not know why this is the case—we are the only jurisdiction that does not have such a system in place. When I became the Minister I made it clear to Dr Chant and her team that I felt this was the biggest public health issue facing young people going forward and we needed to ramp up our efforts. The licensing scheme will be backed by an enforcement regime. When I was first elected Minister, the department had seven enforcement staff. Since then, the number has doubled to 14 and as a result of this announcement it will be doubled again to 28, forming part of 66 part-time staff across New South Wales who can engage in inspections of businesses but also have other roles within the New South Wales health system.

The second part of the reform will see the Government double fines for those who do the wrong thing. This significant increase will mean fines of \$22,000 for a first offence for an individual, increasing to \$120,000 for a corporation that sells to minors or sells outside the licensing system. [*Extension of time*]

The three tranches of the reforms will be a new licensing scheme, increased enforcement and an increase to—in many cases the doubling of—fines. The Government hopes to put a dent in this issue, which, to be frank, has got ahead of legislators across the country over the past five years. We were promised that vaping was about trying to get people off cigarettes, but we now know that was a myth. Vapes are marketed to young people, with colours designed to attract young people, and are often sold metres away from school gates. The Government has worked with the Commonwealth to change that. This legislation will be the next tranche of reforms focused on illegal tobacco. As recently as this week there have been more attacks on tobacconists in Victoria. The Government is determined to get in front of this problem.

As Minister, I will not say the bill will stop all illegal activity in this area. But I will say to retailers that when this licensing scheme is in place it will be backed by the largest ever fines in these areas, additional enforcement and a team at NSW Health working in partnership with the Therapeutic Goods Administration, the Commonwealth, the New South Wales police and the Australian Taxation Office. We are determined to send a clear signal that this is not appropriate. We are also determined to make sure we do our bit to protect the next generation to ensure it does not get hooked on nicotine or illegal tobacco, which causes grave harm.

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (11:29): My question is directed to the Minister for Health, representing the Minister for Mental Health. How is the New South Wales Government helping young people on the northern beaches who experience mental ill health? Given it has been over two years since additional investment for youth mental health services on the northern beaches was announced, when will the remaining \$4½ million be delivered and start benefitting our community?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (11:29): I thank the member for Wakehurst for his question. On behalf of the Minister for Mental Health, whom I represent in this place, I acknowledge that he has been a tireless advocate for his community. I assume all members are tireless advocates for better mental health services for young people. He is right that the previous Government made a commitment of around \$4½ million that was meant to be for a dedicated four-bed mental health unit in that area. Unfortunately and surprisingly to me—and probably more so to the Minister for Mental Health—there was no needs analysis done; nor was there any assessment of whether that commitment could be met within the \$4½ million. That is a minor issue, I suppose, but it is a significant problem when that commitment towards mental health has been made to the community.

When I heard about that commitment as the shadow Minister, I must admit I thought it was a little bit light on. But given that those opposite were in Government, I thought they had probably done the assessment. Unfortunately, that was not the case. We have established a liaison, engagement and consultation service that allows young people and their families to navigate mental health supports. Some members may be aware of the Police, Ambulance and Clinical Early Response [PACER] model. We are increasing PACER in various communities, working in partnership with the police. I hope all members understand that. The police Minister has been a tireless advocate for that model, alongside the Minister for Mental Health. That program works—it makes sure that the right supports are put around people experiencing mental distress and that mental health professionals work closely with police officers. It is about making sure that we get the right care in the right place at the right time. We have also expanded Safe Haven at Brookvale. All members would acknowledge that those programs are important, and they have traversed various governments of different political persuasions.

The Minister has commenced engagement with the member and his community on how the remaining part of the \$4½ million needs to be spent. That engagement has meant looking at the needs analysis and the service gaps et cetera that exist. The member would be aware that some of the feedback from that consultation is about access to services and navigation of services. Unfortunately, in a complex health system like ours, navigation is a real issue. [*Extension of time*]

I have had a number of discussions about that with the Minister for Mental Health. She assures me—and I am sure that the member for Wakehurst would agree—that she is working closely with him, with representatives from health professionals organisations such as the Nurses and Midwives' Association, and also with the community to identify any gaps and determine how the remainder of the \$4.5 million can be spent. It may be, but not necessarily will be, that we look towards a more integrated one-stop shop for mental health services to address some of the navigation issues. For people presenting for mental health services, navigation is often a problem. To be honest, it is sometimes a problem not just for them but also for their family, their carer or the loved ones providing them with support. We understand that. I understand that.

Sometimes the health system in New South Wales is complex for me, and I am the health Minister. That is why people sometimes present to emergency departments when they do not need to—because they think it is the only way to get care. That is why I am working to move Healthdirect from 1800 022 222 to a simple 222 number or one similar to that. We have to make the complex health system in New South Wales more user-friendly and easy to understand, especially for people experiencing mental distress. The member has raised that issue a number of times and, on behalf of the House, I sincerely acknowledge his advocacy for mental health services for his people, particularly the young people in his community. I give him this commitment, as will the Minister for Mental Health: We will continue to work with him and his community to boost services in that area.

BROKEN HILL POWER SUPPLY

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (11:34): My question is addressed to the Minister for Emergency Services. Will the Minister update the House on the Minns Labor Government's response to the power outage in the Far West of New South Wales?

Mr Kevin Anderson: You've got the right answer today.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (11:35): I had the right answer yesterday.

Mrs Leslie Williams: No, you didn't.

Mr JIHAD DIB: I certainly did.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. The interjections were out of order and unfortunately led to a natural response. That can lead to disorder in the House, as I am sure the member for Port Macquarie will agree. I can rely on her; she is sensible. The Minister has the call.

Mr JIHAD DIB: I thank the member for Cessnock for his question. I am sure that all members in this place and people across New South Wales are thinking about those in Broken Hill, Tibooburra, White Cliffs, Wilcannia, Menindee and other parts of the Far West. Today the New South Wales Government is announcing financial support to the residents—

Opposition members: Oh!

Mr JIHAD DIB: I would have thought those opposite would be silent and show a little respect.

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

Mr JIHAD DIB: Again, while those opposite might want to play politics, the Government is getting on with doing the job and trying to get it done right. Today the Government has announced financial support to residents and small and medium-sized businesses in the Far West of the State who have been impacted by the major electrical outage in the region. The electrical outage community support package is being delivered by the New South Wales Government, with a contribution from Transgrid. That support will be provided as soon as possible through Service NSW.

That follows a severe storm that destroyed seven Transgrid transmission towers on Thursday 17 October and caused significant disruption to the supply of electricity to communities in the Far West. Over 12,000 properties have been without power for prolonged periods and, of course, over the past week there has been disruption to families, businesses and the community. The electrical outage community support package will be available to impacted households and to small and medium-sized local businesses. Payments of \$200 will be made available to each of the residential electricity account holders impacted by the outage, and payments of \$400

will be made available to impacted small and medium-sized businesses. Both of those grants are available through Service NSW.

While those grants are being established, the Government will continue to support people's immediate needs, with pantry staples, fresh produce, food hampers and mobile coldrooms being made available in partnership with Foodbank NSW and ACT at key locations in the Far West to support communities that have been most greatly impacted. The Government is also bringing together agencies and industry to support longer term recovery needs, including working with the insurance sector to provide clear advice to people and with charities to provide mental health support. I also acknowledge the RFS, which over the past weekend transported generators, fuel pods, coolrooms and communication satellites to those communities. The community support package being provided by the Government will total \$4 million, including a \$1½ million contribution by Transgrid. That package is in addition to a range of actions the Government has already taken in the week since the power outage. *[Extension of time]*

I acknowledge the member for Barwon, who has been incredibly strong and persistent in his tireless advocacy for his local community.

A natural disaster declaration was swiftly issued, unlocking the State Government disaster funding for the Broken Hill and Central Darling local government areas. The New South Wales Government has also declared an electricity supply emergency in the Far West region. The declaration allows the Minister for Energy to give directions considered to be necessary to respond to the electricity supply emergency. The situation remains uncertain and work is underway to restore mains power to the region.

The region is primarily relying on Transgrid's large-scale backup generator while the company constructs temporary towers, which are expected to be in place by 6 November. Transgrid and Essential Energy are getting more generators into the region to also reduce reliance on the main backup generator, and it is hoped that this will negate the need for the rolling blackouts that have kept the wider network unstable. To ensure that the backup generator can continue to provide function and meet the community's needs, particularly during the evening peak, communities are being asked to reduce energy use where possible between 5.30 p.m. and 10.30 p.m. That includes turning off any non-essential appliances, using lights only in occupied rooms, setting air conditioners at 26 degrees and closing all blinds and windows. Outside those times, the community should continue to use electricity as per normal.

The days and weeks ahead will continue to be tough, and teams on the ground are responding to what we know has been a very difficult period for the people of far western New South Wales. Today's package is an important step and is in addition to the support that councils have already received under the natural disaster declaration. I thank our emergency services personnel for their work, as well as community groups and leaders who have shown the best of who we are in these trying times.

BROKEN HILL POWER SUPPLY

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (11:40): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. As we have just heard, the Government has announced a paltry \$200 for every household and only \$400 for businesses in Broken Hill impacted by a severe power outage. In a cost-of-living crisis, how will \$400 help businesses like the cafe Giovanni and Co, the owner of which estimates that she has lost around \$35,000 in perishables and other costs?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:41): As the Minister for Emergency Services has just outlined to the House, and as the Premier and the member for Barwon are announcing in Broken Hill right now, our priority as a government has not only been the important work of trying to get electricity up back and running for the people of Broken Hill. Working together with Transgrid, we have announced an emergency relief package for local residents and local businesses. I understand that the Opposition wants to use this opportunity in its campaign to get back Barwon. I get that.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Dubbo rises on a point of order. The Deputy Premier will resume her seat.

Mr Dugald Saunders: I was giving the Deputy Premier the benefit of the doubt, but she is answering as expected. The point of order is taken under Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Dubbo that is not how to take a point of order. Members will not approach the table until they have the call.

Mr Dugald Saunders: I apologise. I thought I was given the call. The point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question specifically asked how \$400 will help businesses that have lost \$35,000 in costs.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Deputy Premier will continue her answer. I call the member for Maitland to order for the first time. The member for Dubbo will not engage further. The Deputy Premier has the call.

Ms PRUE CAR: I remind all members, particularly the member for Dubbo, that it is not about them. It is about the people of Broken Hill. The Premier is in Broken Hill right now, announcing financial support for small- and medium-sized businesses as well as local residents. Members opposite can make this political point all they want, but our Government is acting. Let us be clear. I will make this point—

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier will resume her seat. I will hear the point of order.

Mr Dugald Saunders: This is nothing but political spin. We do not want political spin. How about answering the question? I refer to Standing Order 129. We want an answer for the people of Broken Hill. How is \$200 per household or \$400 for a business helping anyone? It is not.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Dubbo knows that is not how to take a point of order. I direct the member for Dubbo to remove himself from the Chamber for five minutes under Standing Order 249A.

[*Interruption*]

The member for Bankstown will come to order. I now direct the member for Dubbo to remove himself from the Chamber for the duration of question time. He is lucky not to be given the direction under Standing Order 249.

[*Pursuant to standing order the member for Dubbo left the Chamber at 11:43.*]

Ms Yasmin Catley: Well, he should be.

The SPEAKER: Who is giving me advice?

Ms Yasmin Catley: Me!

The SPEAKER: I do not need advice from the member for Swansea. Members will come to order.

HOUSING SUPPLY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (11:45): My question is addressed to the Minister for Lands and Property. Will the Minister update the House on the Minns Labor Government's work to leverage government-owned land to deliver more housing across New South Wales?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (11:45): That is a great question from the member for Prospect, who is focused on taking action on housing and truly cares about housing in his community. The Minns Labor Government is delivering. This morning we made the fantastic announcement that our Building Homes for NSW program has delivered a further 30 sites to build around 1,600 homes across existing Homes NSW and land audit sites. The member for Willoughby should be listening.

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

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: For 12 years, members opposite sat on their hands as the housing crisis grew. For 12 years, they were offended by housing. Housing affordability and availability is the single biggest pressure facing the people of New South Wales. The land audit is methodically assessing thousands of government-owned sites, and we are now rolling out those sites for much-needed housing. I am sorry if that offends members opposite. Today we announced another 14 land audit sites that will provide 1,400 homes with a mix of social, affordable and market housing, while another 16 Homes NSW sites will deliver an additional 200 social homes.

The sites are all across Sydney and New South Wales. It reminds me of that song *I've Been Everywhere*. We have sites in Riverstone, Rouse Hill, Morisset, Merrylands, Maryland, Belfield, Box Hill, Broadmeadow, Camden, Chippendale, Wagga Wagga, Wyong, North Sydney, Stanmore and the list goes on. Importantly, the Minns Labor Government is on track to deliver our social and affordable housing commitments across government housing projects. That is all possible due to our record investment of \$5.1 billion to deliver much-needed social housing as part of the Building Homes for NSW program.

Ms Robyn Preston: Where is it?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The member for Hawkesbury thinks she can click her fingers and a house is built.

The SPEAKER: The Minister should learn to ignore the member for Hawkesbury when she interjects.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The investment will fund the purchase and construction of 8,400 new social homes, including new homes on land audit sites. We made this investment because we understand that housing is a critical issue. Unfortunately, the Opposition has failed to grasp that. The New South Wales Coalition not only sold off more than \$3 billion in public housing stock but also has taken its nimbyism to new levels of crazed conspiracy. [*Extension of time*]

The Coalition has gone "BANANAs". The new acronym stands for "build absolutely nothing anywhere near anyone". On his podcast, the member for Wahroonga said, "The sewerage system in Ku-ring-gai could not take it", proving once again that he is full of it. He is full of it up to his neck.

When we announced we would change planning controls in Macquarie Park to allow for more build-to-rent units, the member for Ryde said no way. We on this side of the Chamber are about providing housing for everybody. Other people should be able to buy apartments.

Mr Ryan Park: Including cats.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: They should be able to house their cats as well. Whether it is poor excuses like those or the shadow planning Minister's ludicrous anti transport oriented development bill, those opposite are trying to clog the State's housing supply. That is their mission. When it comes to planning, they are the human embodiment of Imodium.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We are getting on with the job. We are delivering on our Building Homes for NSW plan. We are delivering the land audit. With the greatest respect to the Opposition, we are unashamedly delivering real action on housing.

The SPEAKER: That was a high-fibre contribution.

MEMBER FOR NEWCASTLE

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (11:50): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier, representing the Premier. In April ICAC found, "Mr Crakanthorp's failure to declare a conflict of interest in all the circumstances was done knowingly" and that there was a "breach of public trust". It has now been revealed that the member for Newcastle received campaign support from connections in four of nine organisations associated with the Local Small Commitments Allocation projects that he nominated. When will the member for Newcastle be removed from the Labor caucus?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:51): I thank the member for Davidson for his question.

The SPEAKER: Order! All members will come to order.

Ms PRUE CAR: The Premier has dealt with this particular matter, but I will take up the substantive issue of what the member for Davidson has raised in this Chamber—that is, the Local Small Commitments Allocation. There is absolutely no way that we on this side of the House are going to be lectured to about grants distribution by those opposite—the party of bushfire grants, the party of Daryl Maguire, the party of shredding documents and the party of the Premier who said, "Pork-barrelling—everyone does it." In fact, today it was revealed that the Local Small Commitments Allocation process has actually picked up potential conflicts of interest before money has gone out the door. That is proof the system is working. Before we get too carried away with believing that the Opposition does not like the Local Small Commitments Allocation, let us be clear that, unlike the grants under those opposite, they have gone to each and every electorate, which means that grants would have gone to electorates represented by Liberals or Nationals.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. I direct the member for Coffs Harbour to remove himself from the Chamber until the conclusion of the Deputy Premier's answer.

[*Pursuant to standing order the member for Coffs Harbour left the Chamber at 11:52.*]

Ms PRUE CAR: I noticed that the member for Bathurst was quite celebratory about a ninja park that was delivered under the program—hanging from the monkey bars training to be a ninja.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: Is the Coalition actually suggesting that we should dismantle the ninja park that the member for Bathurst is so happy to be taking part in?

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

Ms PRUE CAR: The member for Davidson, who asked the question, spoke in May last year about the allocation given to Davidson for the Killara RFS. That seems like a good allocation to me. The member said, "This is a great win for the community. Well done to everyone involved."

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: The question was, "Will the member for Newcastle be removed from the Labor caucus?"

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga will resume his seat. There is no point of order.

Ms PRUE CAR: The fact is those opposite love the local small commitments grants when they go to their electorates, and we have processes in place to ensure that that money goes where it is needed.

The SPEAKER: The member for Coffs Harbour may return to the Chamber now that the Deputy Premier has concluded her answer.

ASSET PRIVATISATION

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (11:54): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, representing the Treasurer in the other place. Will the Minister update the House on the impact the former Coalition Government's privatisation agenda has had on our State?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (11:54): Mr Speaker, thank you for your earlier reminder of my upcoming anniversary. It is greatly appreciated. I did not need it, though. I start my answer with a quote from Rod Sims, the former chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, who in July 2021 said:

Privatising assets without allowing for competition or regulation creates private monopolies that raise prices, reduce efficiency and harm the economy.

In direct answer to the question, the former Government's privatisation agenda did exactly that to the State: increased prices, reduced services and had a negative effect on the New South Wales economy. That is why the Labor Party took a very different approach to the last election, which was backed in by the people of New South Wales. The agenda to stop the rampant privatisation by those opposite was backed in by the people of this State, and our Government remains absolutely committed to ending that rampage. Under the previous Government, if something moved, members opposite would sell it. If it did not move, they would push it and then they would sell it. From the amount of privatisation of State assets that went on over the past 12 years, we would think those opposite simply have privatisation in their blood. Let us look at some examples of it under the former Liberal-Nationals Government.

The Sydney Desalination Plant and Hunter Water were sold off. Port Botany, Port Kembla and the Port of Newcastle were sold off. The Eraring, Wallerawang, Bayswater and Liddell power stations were sold off. Vales Point Power Station—this is a special one—was sold for a million bucks in 2015. And to who? Former National Party candidate Trevor St Baker. Our motorways—the M7, M5 and M4—were sold off. The lands and title registry is the office that keeps track of and maintains land titles. Guess what those opposite did with that? They sold it off. Our poles and wires across the State were sold off because, in their view, private companies would deliver a better service. We have all seen the results of that: higher electricity prices, less choice and competition for consumers, the introduction of estimated readings, and less security and certainty for the people of New South Wales. But that does not even begin to scratch the surface of the long history of privatisation under the Liberals and The Nationals. They even tried to sell off public hospitals.

Ms Liesl Tesch: Mr Speaker—

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

Ms Liesl Tesch: I seek further information.

The SPEAKER: An additional two minutes is granted.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: The privatisation agenda under the previous Government was undoubtedly one of largest we have seen. The worst part is that members opposite still want to do it. They have not learned the lessons. When faced with the opportunity to vote for a constitutional change that would have prevented the privatisation of Sydney Water and Hunter Water, what did National Party members do? They voted against it.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: But do not just take our word for it. The New South Wales parliamentary research office has shown that they are addicted to it. It even put it in a handy graph for everyone to see. It shows that they were selling all over the place. They claimed they were a world-leading government. Yes, world leading at privatisation. It is now so ingrained in The Nationals DNA, it is incredible. You know those people you meet who jokingly say that they have a bridge to sell you? Well, The Nationals actually want to sell it to you. They have latched onto Perrottet's golden key and they will not let go.

If they have their way, there will be nothing left to hand to future generations.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Yesterday the Opposition even backed it in by acknowledging and supporting the Government's amendment to the public interest motion, which noted that the former Coalition Government's privatisation of Transgrid was responsible for some of the problems in Broken Hill now. The final paragraph of the amended motion called on The Nationals to rule out further privatisation. "Sell, sell, sell!" I hear from Opposition members; they sound like Gordon Gekko. That is all we hear from the other side.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Opposition members have not ruled out further privatisation because, if they ever get back into government, they will be at it again. They will sell, sell, sell. Opposition members love it so much, they will never give it up. The modern National Party is the party of asset sales, not the party of the bush.

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

TAFE NSW

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (12:00): My question is directed Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education. With TAFE NSW having now released its road map to the stand-up of its final operating model, how many TAFE employees will be directly impacted by the placement process?

The SPEAKER: The member for Oatley is on 3½ calls to order. He has already been removed from the Chamber today. I thought he would have learnt his lesson, but he has not. The Minister will be heard in silence.

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education) (12:01): I thank the member for Albury for his question. As I have said before in this place, when Labor came to government it had a big task to rebuild TAFE. One of the most important things we needed to do was to give it structure so that it can deliver the skills we need in New South Wales. The member for Albury is absolutely right: The Government has undertaken the work of introducing a new operating model. Staff and unions have been extensively consulted on that, which I know is hard for Opposition members to understand.

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

Mr STEVE WHAN: It is important to move to an operating model that is capable of working better with local communities, the business community and with industry to provide the skills we need for the future. We are moving to an operating model, to be introduced next year, that will give us the ability to structure TAFE on a statewide basis so that it works with industries and responds quickly to the changes we need to see in curriculum and training over the next few years. The member for Albury is right: Staff job roles will change in the process, and some staff will be offered the opportunity of either redundancy or transfer to other parts of the organisation as we go through. No-one likes to do that. Certainly, as TAFE Minister, I do not like to do that. But out of that we will have more teaching staff, so there will be positive growth in the number of teaching staff.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr STEVE WHAN: There will be more head teachers and teaching staff overall. In that restructure we will set up an operating model that takes us through to the future and enables us to expand. Out of the operating model I expect the net change will be such that about 80 employees will lose their positions. That is disappointing; no-one likes to do that. But, as I have said, there will be a net increase in teachers.

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

Mr STEVE WHAN: That net decrease in teachers is less than every single year under the former Government, which ran TAFE into the ground. We will have an increase of 14 head teacher positions as we go through this process and, over time, there will be more teachers. Out of the vocational education and training review, TAFE will have the capacity to deliver for the future of vocational training in New South Wales. There has been an overall increase in resourcing for TAFE, and I expect that to continue—unlike the Opposition, which ran down the number of skills and positions across our State.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Goulburn to order for the third time. The member for Keira will come to order.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (12:04): My question is addressed to Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety. Will the Minister please inform the House of how the Minns Labor Government is keeping the New South Wales workforce safe?

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (12:04): I thank the member for Fairfield for his question. He is doing a fantastic job and has been a very strong advocate for his community, particularly for health and safety representatives, or HSRs. Every worker deserves to come home safely to their family and friends at the end of the working day. Every worker has a fundamental right to feel physically and mentally safe in their workplace. Health and safety representatives play a critical role. Elected by their peers, they are the eyes and ears of workers on workplace safety. I acknowledge the Nurses and Midwives' Association representatives in the gallery; they are very strong advocates for HSRs in the workplace.

While the legal responsibility for workplace safety rests squarely with a business or employer, HSRs have an important role in representing members of their work group and bringing issues to the attention of management. HSRs help to identify and resolve workplace risks on behalf of their colleagues. That process creates openness and transparency and a positive work culture. The Minns Government truly values the role of HSRs. We want to support and empower them to do their jobs. That is why SafeWork NSW has conducted a series of HSR forums around the State. The first forum was held last October, and it was so successful that forums have been rolled out to the regions. Between May and July this year, forums have been held in nine regional centres, including Wollongong, Tamworth, Cooma, Albury, Newcastle, Wagga Wagga, Coffs Harbour, Orange and Ballina.

The forums provided important educational tools and resources for HSRs and workplaces. They delivered sessions that focused on workplace consultation requirements and legislation, how to identify key parties in the consultation process, consultation methods, and how to manage disputes to ensure work health and safety issues are addressed in the workplace. Participants in the forums included HSRs, health and safety committee members, unions, industry stakeholders and other workers. Of course, the forums have been open to industries and businesses of all sizes. [*Extension of time*]

Next week is the final week of National Safe Work Month. SafeWork NSW and Unions NSW will co-host a major one-day, free HSR refresher training day in Sydney, which is fantastic. This is probably the first time in 12 or 13 years that any Minister has referred to HSRs, because members opposite did not even talk about safety in the workplace. They hid the regulator beneath one of the puzzling mega departments they created. There was no standalone regulator. That is what the Minns Government is doing in New South Wales. We will have a lot more to say about that in the coming months.

The very important HSR forum between Unions NSW and SafeWork NSW will bring together over 200 people. The program will explain HSR roles and their powers and responsibilities under the work health and safety laws. It will also cover essential topics, including the management of psychosocial hazards such as bullying, excessive workloads, violence and the prevention of sexual harassment.

I know that all of us care about those matters, and I acknowledge that those opposite did a few things, one of which was to bring forward a code of practice with respect to psychosocial hazards. But that was at the insistence of many unions, including the Nurses and Midwives' Association, who pushed and strongly advocated. We cannot have a SafeWork inspector in every workplace, but we can have HSRs.

MINE SUBSIDENCE COMPENSATION

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (12:10): My question is directed to the Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading. My community is excited for the new mine subsidence compensation system. Will the Minister outline how the consultation is progressing and the next stage of the new, fairer system?

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields—Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections) (12:10): I thank the member for Wollondilly for her question and for her continued advocacy for her community. She is the best member for Wollondilly this Parliament has ever had.

The SPEAKER: That is not a controversial comment. Members will come to order.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: I am pleased to inform the House that the Government has spent the past five weeks consulting on the new draft approved procedures for coalmine subsidence compensation

claims. The public consultation process was extended due to the member's request on behalf of her community. This consultation shows that the Minns Labor Government is listening and ensuring that people's voices are heard. It should be noted that in August the Government passed the Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Amendment Bill 2024, to implement the recommendations from a statutory review carried out in 2021.

The Government amended the Act to require public consultation on the approved procedures. We got straight to work after the passing of the legislation, and consultation started on 19 September. Prior to this amendment, Subsidence Advisory NSW was required only to consult with mining operators about changes to the approved procedures. It cannot be understated how important this change is for residents of Wollondilly, Wallsend, Newcastle and all other areas affected by coalmine subsidence. The Government's comprehensive reforms to the coalmine subsidence compensation process gets right the balance between residents and mining proprietors.

These reforms include extending relocation compensation to affected residents; increasing powers for the Subsidence Advisory to provide support in mine subsidence events by arranging accommodation and reimbursing out-of-pocket expenses such as food and clothing if people have to relocate because of emergencies; allowing claims to be lodged outside of the online portal; giving powers to the Subsidence Advisory to direct pre-mining inspections; requiring information and documents from mining proprietors; clarifying that the Subsidence Advisory is responsible for assessing claims for compensation; expanding the scope of the approved procedures to outline the steps that occur before, during and after the determination of claims; and increasing penalties to ensure that they are in line with inflation.

In short, the Minns Labor Government has acted to ensure that the compensation process for coalmine subsidence is robust and fair. I am pleased to advise that the Government is getting on with the job of implementing the changes to the coalmine subsidence compensation system. The public consultation ending tonight seeks feedback on draft approval procedures that will work to provide more clarity and certainty to the mining subsidence compensation claims process. Previously, there had been a significant amount of uncertainty regarding who was responsible for the determination of claims. [*Extension of time*]

The approved procedures on public exhibition clarify that Subsidence Advisory NSW is responsible for determining claims, making it clear that the Government, not mining operators, is in control of the compensation process. In 2017 the Act introduced a no-cost review, allowing residents to appeal decisions to the Secretary of the Department of Customer Service. This was the only available mechanism for people who wanted to challenge the outcome of their claims prior to appealing to the Land and Environment Court. Through the survey, we are currently receiving feedback on a second no-cost review mechanism. These measures will give residents multiple no-cost opportunities to ensure that they are receiving adequate compensation for damage to their property from coalmine subsidence, while working to reduce the burden on the Land and Environment Court.

I sincerely thank the member for Wollondilly for her important question and continued advocacy on behalf of her community. I look forward to working with the member to ensure that the coalmining subsidence compensation system continues to deliver for the community.

REGIONAL ROADS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:15): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on the Minns Labor Government's plan to improve road connectivity across regional New South Wales to support the State's energy transition?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:15): I thank the Parliamentary Secretary, who is another great advocate from the party of the bush on these issues. I reinforce the great announcement we made last week of \$128.5 million for port-to-plant projects on Golden Highway, Castlereagh Highway, New England Highway, the Pacific Highway, John Renshaw Drive and the Hunter Expressway to start the transition. When those opposite were in government, they made these great renewable energy zones and forgot to include the Hunter and the Central Coast. We put them in. They forgot to build the roads, just like they forgot to build a road to Jindabyne Public School. We are doing it for them. I give a call-out to the great Jeff Drayton, councillor and now Mayor of Muswellbrook. He is a great advocate for his community.

Another great advocate for his community—but he is an aspirational candidate—is Mr Faraway from the other place. My spies tell me he slipped out of question time again. Where is he? He is attending the Australian National Fields Days at Borenore, near Orange. He is campaigning on our dime again. He failed as a Minister and as a member of the upper House, and now he wants to go and fail as an aspirational candidate for the seat of Calare in the Federal Parliament. Those opposite think that it is okay.

Yesterday was like an audition for leadership from those opposite, and it was a pretty bad audition. I never thought that I would be pleased to see the member for Dubbo back in the Chamber, but yesterday was dismal. The

Liberals asked all their questions about Broken Hill. They then followed up with a public interest debate where they got smashed again. They have no idea. Privatisation is in their DNA. They want to privatise the profits and socialise the pain and leave the communities in the west powerless. That is what they do. They are an absolute disgrace. We are the party of the bush. We will not stand by while Sam Farraway campaigns on the taxpayers' dime. He announced on 8 October that he was going, and I was excited. But he is still here—but he is not actually here.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 73. If the Minister wishes to reflect on other members, she should do so by substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: I did not hear the comment. I do not uphold the point of order. It is a moot point as the Minister's time has expired.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr RON HOENIG: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit:

- (1) If any messages from the Legislative Council regarding Government business are received before or during private members' statements, business before the House to be interrupted for the consideration of the messages forthwith, and to resume once the consideration of the messages has concluded.
- (2) The House to continue to sit after the conclusion of private members' statements to consider any messages from the Legislative Council regarding Government business, including the option for the Speaker to leave and resume the chair on the ringing of one long bell, with the House to adjourn without motion moved once consideration of the messages has concluded.

Motion agreed to.

Committees

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESSENTIAL WORKER HOUSING

Extension of Reporting Date

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:20): By leave: I move:

That the reporting date of the Select Committee on Essential Worker Housing, as set out in the resolution of the House of 16 May 2024 appointing the committee, be extended from 7 March 2025 to 16 June 2025.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (12:20): I note that the Leader of the House mentioned that notice was not given for this motion. Last week, The Greens introduced an affordable housing bill—which was voted down by the Government—that tried to address the need for genuinely affordable housing in the context of the urgent supply being delivered by this Government. During debate on the bill, many members said that the Select Committee on Essential Worker Housing was how the Government was dealing with the issue, ahead of that supply being delivered. Now the Government is extending the time allowed for the committee to hand down its report. Every month that the committee spends inquiring into whether we should ensure affordable housing is genuinely affordable, is another month when more homes will be built in Sydney and New South Wales that do not meet the affordable housing targets that were in The Greens bill. The Government is further delaying that process through the committee. The Greens are concerned that the timeline is blowing out. We will not oppose the motion, but we raise serious concerns.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:22): In reply: The committee asked for the date to be extended to allow for a comprehensive decision-making process. While the member for Newtown may disagree with decisions of the House, it is the people's House and all members must accept the resolutions and decisions it makes on behalf of the people of New South Wales, whether we like them or not.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (12:23): By leave: I am a member of the Select Committee on Essential Worker Housing. To correct—or improve—the record, another committee is inquiring into affordable housing, but this committee is looking at essential workers. The committee is seeking the extension because we are visiting rural areas in March to gain further information. There is no way we could provide the report in the current time frame. We are looking at the definition of an "essential worker". It does deal with affordable housing, but it is actually a different committee. We need the extra time to complete the work properly.

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

Motion agreed to.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Springwood and Winmalee Traffic

Petition requesting that the Government call on Transport for NSW to release options for improved traffic flow in Springwood and Winmalee, received from **Ms Trish Doyle**.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

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

The Hon. John Graham—Speeding Penalties—lodged 18 September 2024 (Ms Jenny Aitchison)

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

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (12:24): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to extend the lapsing date for the Road Transport Amendment (Driving Through Floodwaters) Bill 2024 until 31 March 2025.

As members are aware, accommodations have been made for other crossbench members to introduce bills for the Parliament to debate and discharge one way or another. For the benefit of members who are unfamiliar with this piece of the legislation, my bill deals with the imposition of a fine for people who deliberately and recklessly drive through floodwaters. I developed this bill partly in response to the death of a friend of my family and community, who unwittingly drove into floodwaters. The bill does not apply to people who unwittingly drive into floodwaters but does apply to people who ignore all of the warnings from the SES and political leadership to not drive. We need to address this moral hazard issue, so people think twice about driving in floodwater, particularly when they do not know the depth or velocity of the water.

Most of us would not drive into a bushfire, but some people continually ignore warnings. They put at risk not only their own lives but also the lives of volunteer rescuers. This bill could save lives, and the Parliament should debate it. This motion is not a vote on the bill itself. I understand that The Nationals members wish to discuss certain provisions of the bill, particularly around the definition of "deliberately and recklessly". This is a procedural motion so the bill can be introduced to the House. I have had discussions with the Leader of the Government on this matter. I will leave his comments to him. I make no reference or reflection on what he may or may not say. But this is a procedural motion.

Crossbench members have bills they want to introduce. I remind my friends on the crossbench that the Minns Government is a minority government, not a majority government. We need to make sure that governments do not use their numbers to stymie ideas. We need to debate the ideas. We are elected to debate the issues that are important to our communities. This particular issue is quite personal to me and my family, and members should be able to debate the bill.

Mr Edmond Atalla: You've got the same time as anyone else.

Mr GARETH WARD: For clarity, I am trying to get that time. The member for Mount Druitt said I have the same time as anyone else. The bill will expire before November. To be clear, I am seeking to allow a debate on an issue that affects many of us. I note the member for Lismore is in the Chamber. I have enormous respect for her. The member for Shellharbour is also present. In spite of some of the public commentary, I have enormous respect for her. We have all seen the impacts of floodwaters, particularly on our SES. I know both the member for Lismore and the member for Shellharbour are incredible supporters of their SES brigades—all members are. This bill makes a change that our SES frontline personnel are asking for to dissuade people from driving through floodwaters.

The Government did a good thing when it introduced legislation to allow the SES to erect signage. I commend the Government for its work. My bill goes further. As I said earlier, I am not asking members to reflect on the merits of the bill; I am simply asking for the opportunity to have the debate. We should not put off this important matter. Members should treat me the same way they treat other crossbench members and allow this bill to be introduced. My local SES brigade has asked me to push the matter. My community has asked me to push the matter. Like any other member of Parliament, I am in this place to do the job I was elected to do. I have moved

this motion to ensure that this bill does not fall off the *Business Paper* as a result of some mishap of standing orders.

As I have done before, should this motion not be successful I will reintroduce the bill. I will keep on bringing it back to the House. Let us not have to go through the process of a reintroduction and a second reading debate. I ask that the debate be had and a vote held on something that I believe will save lives. It is not only me saying that but also the State Emergency Service. If members vote against this extension of lapsing date for my bill today, I do not want to later see them standing in front of television cameras saying "Don't drive through floodwaters" when they could have done something about it. They could even just have allowed the debate. I ask members to support this motion.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:29): As the member for Kiama fully knew beforehand, the Government is not going to support his proposal. The standing orders that cause his bill to expire are the same standing orders he had the luxury of implementing over the 12 years he was in government, when he was a member of the Liberal Party, and was a Minister of the Crown. Effectively, he is not jumping the queue. Whilst he wants to have a debate on issues that he selects and it plays well in the electorate of Kiama or anywhere else across the State, he also knows full well how government works.

After his very lengthy service in this House—some 13 years, I think—he knows precisely how to get the Government to consider a genuine policy position or a shortfall he has identified in some part of the New South Wales Parliament's legislation or laws. He knows how to have those matters carefully looked at by the machinery of government. He also knows that most public policy items are not legitimately dealt with just through the introduction of legislation, and that trying to get up a private member's bill such as this is usually the last resort of a private member who is not a member of the Government. This bill is not a last resort. The member for Kiama has, at least from some members, an open door policy that enables legitimate public policy to be considered. The Government is not going to amend or change the order of business that it is trying to get through.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (12:31): In reply: The Leader of the House knows I have enormous respect for him. However, I hope every member of the crossbench listened carefully to what he just said. He said, "Don't bring private members' bills. Don't bother. We're the Government and we're going to do the job." If a crossbench member intends to vote against this motion today, I urge them to consider that the Government has said, "No more. We're not interested in private members' bills from any member of this place other than those in the Government." That is not what Parliament is for. Parliament is for members to bring forward ideas. I acknowledge there are many pathways to do that. I say to the Government that I do not need my name on this bill. That would not be a problem with me at all. If this bill were to come into force and save lives, that is all I am here to accomplish. I would be quite happy for those opposite to reintroduce this as a Government bill.

But I think it is inappropriate to disrespect the crossbench by saying there is no point to a Greens, Independent or any other crossbench member bringing a bill to the House. That is what all parliamentarians are here to do. Whilst I understand all too well what the Government will do in relation to matters I might bring forward, I hope that at least the idea contained in the bill has been ventilated and that members will consider the concept further. My comments regarding members opposite have not been pejorative; in fact, I have favourably reflected on their contributions, including some of the reforms the Government has introduced and which I have supported. I simply say that this motion is about having a debate, which is what members have been elected to do. I have brought this bill to the House because of personal experience but also because it is what the SES volunteers in my electorate have asked me to do. I ask members opposite: Would they do any differently?

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

The House divided.

Ayes33
Noes46
Majority..... 13

AYES

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

Hodges, M
James, T
Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D
Moylan, B
Petinos, E
Preston, R

Singh, G
Sloane, K
Speakman, M
Taylor, M
Thompson, T
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Ward, G

AYES

| | | |
|-------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Griffin, J | Provest, G | Williams, L |
| Hannan, J | Regan, M | Williamson, R (teller) |
| Henskens, A | Saunders, D | Wilson, F |

NOES

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

PAIRS

| | |
|-------------|---------------|
| Roberts, A | Minns, C |
| Williams, R | Washington, K |

Motion negatived.

*Bills***AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (PUBLIC ACCESS) BILL 2024 (NO 2)****Second Reading Debate**

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:40): I contribute to the debate on the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024 (No 2). I always enjoy debating bills and motions put forward by the member for Kiama. It is much different now that he is out of the Liberal Party and no longer a Minister. How many times have I heard his catchphrase of "when I make a promise, I always get it done"? That is much harder to deliver on these days without the support of his pork-barrelling Liberal Government.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The member for Kiama will come to order.

Ms ANNA WATSON: Hopefully he did not make the promise to deliver on this bill because I will be voting against it. He can be rest assured of that. But fear not, it does not really matter to the member for Kiama because he claims every victory regardless of how much work he has put in. He blames the Labor Party for every single defeat.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 76. This is not open mic Thursday. We are debating a very serious bill in relation to people's lives. The member for Shellharbour should be brought back to the leave of the bill.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The member for Shellharbour has just commenced her contribution. There is no point of order. The member for Shellharbour will continue.

Ms ANNA WATSON: The Shellharbour Hospital is a great example of this. He simultaneously claims to have done the heavy-lifting and secured the funding, but it is also Labor's fault there was no helipad planned by the Liberals. The member for Kiama does not need to worry; we will clean up his mess. The Minns Labor Government already supports initiatives to increase access to life-saving emergency care for members of the community, including New South Wales sport and recreation facilities and clubs. The Local Sport Defibrillator

Grant Program funding is up to \$500,000 in grants, with individual grants of up to \$3,000. The 2024-25 program is—

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I move:

That the question be now put.

The House divided.

Ayes32
 Noes47
 Majority.....15

AYES

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Anderson, K | James, T | Sloane, K |
| Ayyad, T | Kemp, M | Speakman, M |
| Cooke, S | Lane, J | Taylor, M |
| Coore, M | Layzell, D | Thompson, T |
| Cross, M | Moylan, B | Tuckerman, W |
| Crouch, A (teller) | Petinos, E | Ward, G |
| Davies, T | Preston, R | Williams, L |
| Griffin, J | Provest, G | Williams, R |
| Hannan, J | Roberts, A | Williamson, R (teller) |
| Henskens, A | Saunders, D | Wilson, F |
| Hodges, M | Singh, G | |

NOES

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

PAIRS

| | |
|-----------|---------------|
| Clancy, J | Minns, C |
| Toole, P | Washington, K |

Motion negatived.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:49): As I was saying, the 2024-25 program is now open for persons to register their interest. I encourage all eligible groups from Kiama, Shellharbour and right across the State to apply. Simply increasing the number of automatic external defibrillators [AEDs] in buildings and vehicles is not the best way to improve the outcome of out-of-hospital cardiac arrests. When legislation is introduced to the House, it is important that it has a strong foundation. In this case, the bill has not been drafted in consultation with the experts, with NSW Health or with businesses. That comes as no surprise to me, as the member for Kiama loves a stunt, and this is no different. He is all pastry and no pie.

The Government has invested significantly in a range of initiatives and programs to improve survival relates for out-of-hospital cardiac arrests, including a very successful partnership between NSW Ambulance and GoodSAM, which is a free global smartphone app that is linked to NSW Ambulance's 000 call centre and alerts

people when someone nearby is in cardiac arrest. Up to three GoodSAM users in the vicinity of the person in need will be notified simultaneously through the app. People do not need formal first aid or CPR training to sign up to GoodSAM, and anyone who owns an AED can register it on the GoodSAM AED register. Any member of the public can also register an AED they see in a public place, as the register also accepts crowdsourced information.

This is a tremendous opportunity for people to make a life-saving difference in their local communities. Work health and safety legislation already requires persons conducting a business to have accessible first aid equipment. SafeWork NSW provides detailed information on its website about what should be included in first aid kits, including AEDs, which are suggested to be used on sites with electrocution hazards. Persons conducting a business must also ensure that an adequate number of workers have been trained to administer first aid and that those trained persons are accessible to workers.

As other members have mentioned, relevant and important stakeholders have not been consulted on the bill, including NSW Health, NSW Ambulance, the Agency for Clinical Innovation, government more broadly, public health experts and businesses. The Government is disappointed that the Opposition is supporting the bill, despite the very agencies that will be involved in its implementation not having been consulted. It comes as no surprise to me because everyone in the Illawarra and the Shoalhaven knows that the member for Kiama is still a Liberal and that he cannot wait to pull on that blue T-shirt and help his Liberal mates at the upcoming Federal election.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: It has been personal attack after personal attack on me from the Government. First it was the attack on my disability by the member for Bega, and now it is the personal attacks on me by the member for Shellharbour.

Ms ANNA WATSON: What's the point of order?

Mr Gareth Ward: It is under Standing Order 76—relevance. Temporary Speaker, the member should come back to the leave of the bill and stop attacking me personally. If she wants to have that debate, bring it on!

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The member for Shellharbour has been relevant. I have allowed her some latitude in her contribution, but I ask that she come back to the leave of the bill.

Ms ANNA WATSON: Legislators in this House have a responsibility to ensure that the legislation it passes is robust and fit for purpose. At the very least, extensive consultation with key agencies should be carried out, but that has not happened on the bill before us and that is not okay.

Ms Kellie Sloane: You haven't consulted; we have.

Ms ANNA WATSON: No, you haven't. As a former Liberal Minister, the member for Kiama should have a strong understanding of the absolute necessity of consultation with important stakeholders. The installation and ongoing maintenance of AEDs is expected to have significant impacts across a range of government agencies and private entities. Before any mandates are implemented through legislation, it is critical that consultation with impacted stakeholders and experts in the field takes place. That would be the sensible approach, and members on this side of the House understand that. A more targeted, evidence-based strategy would better serve our community and ensure that resources are allocated where they are most needed. As such, the Government does not support the bill.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (12:55): I speak in debate on the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024 (No 2). It is important that people in cardiac arrest across the community are looked after. I understand that the member for Kiama's bill is attempting to do that, but the Government is committed to supporting initiatives that increase access to life-saving emergency care for members of the community. The Government has invested significantly in a range of initiatives and programs to help improve survival rates for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, including a \$2.5 million partnership between NSW Ambulance and GoodSAM. It is nice to hear that the member for Bega is one of the 8,000 people in New South Wales who has signed up to the app.

Luke Stevenson from the suburb of Umina Beach in my electorate has signed up to the app. Luke is an amazing guy. He works at home and has been called up three times to respond to a cardiac arrest. He was only available one of those times, and he did his best to resuscitate someone in my community. He signed up before GoodSAM even came to Australia. It is great that the app is being adopted and linked to NSW Ambulance's 000 control centres, alerting responders when someone in New South Wales is in cardiac arrest.

Up to three GoodSAM users in the vicinity of the person in need will be notified simultaneously through the app. They can indicate if they are available and make their way to the patient to begin CPR, with guidance from a NSW Ambulance medical call taker, while paramedics are dispatched to their location. I thank all those who have signed up, and I encourage more people to get the app. I have the app but I do not feel confident using

it at this point. People can register as a GoodSAM respondent if they are over 18 and are willing and able to provide chest compressions, which are easy and safe to do. They do not have to have formal first aid or CPR training to sign up. In addition, anyone who owns an automatic external defibrillator can register it on the State's AED register. Any member of the public can also register an AED they see in a public place, as the register also accepts crowdsourced information.

This is a tremendous opportunity for people to make a life-saving difference in their local communities. Having more GoodSAM volunteers and registered AEDs means that when a patient is experiencing cardiac arrest, there is a greater chance that someone can perform simple chest compressions and access and apply an AED while paramedics make their way to their location. So far 35 lives have been saved as a result of the GoodSAM initiative in New South Wales. Of the 35 who survived after receiving chest compressions from a public GoodSAM responder, 12 of them also received defibrillation from a public access defibrillator.

I am very pleased that GoodSAM has been so successful, and I look forward to that success continuing as more people sign up. I am also very excited about the improvement to the GoodSAM app that the member for Bega mentioned earlier. Responders will now be directed by the app to the closest AED by the 000 call taker. Previously, the only way for responders to find the closest AED was to check the Service NSW register—not something that was particularly quick or easy in circumstances where every second matters. Now responders are able to quickly and easily find the closest AED as they are making their way to the person in need of CPR. AEDs do not save lives; people with AEDs do, and that is what the Government is focused on doing.

We will increase the number of people who can use an AED when that is needed.

In addition, NSW Ambulance has received funding for another 2,500 staff and 30 new ambulance stations over the coming years. That is an investment to frontline emergency care under the Strategic Workforce and Infrastructure Team program. It is important to reiterate that the approach taken in the bill lacks supporting evidence, overlaps with existing regulation and has not been adequately discussed with key stakeholders, including NSW Health, NSW Ambulance, the Agency for Clinical Innovation, businesses, public health experts and the Government more broadly. A targeted evidence-based strategy would better serve our community by ensuring that resources are allocated where they are most needed. For those reasons, the Government does not support the bill.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (12:59): I speak in opposition to the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024. When any member introduced a bill, I respect their reasons for doing so. It is their right to do so. Also, automated external defibrillators, or defibrillators, as we call them, are a good thing and the spread of them has been a good thing across our communities and across society. Every member in this place supports the Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program. I encourage everyone to apply. Eventually, all the places people want them will have them. A lot of groups in my area have applied for them and got them. They always ask me when a local sport program will open and they look to that with some degree of anticipation. I always make sure that I advertise it widely in my electorate. Recently I advertised it in a flyer. It stated:

With our high participation rates in organised sports and public spaces lending themselves to outdoor recreation, it's critical that as many local sports facilities as possible are equipped with defibrillators to respond to potentially life-threatening incidents.

This popular program traditionally has had a strong take-up rate, so I urge eligible sporting organisations to make an application in this funding round—

that is open now—

to increase the coverage of defibrillators in our towns and villages.

Every life saved is worth it.

It also said that the Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program:

... provides up to \$3,000 to eligible sporting organisations for purchasing Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) at local sports facilities.

Having them is great, but we also have to make sure people how to use them. I remember a time when we did not have them in the community at all. I remember a big sporting event where somebody did have an episode. With medical intervention—first aid and a defibrillator—they were saved. As a result of that, Kerry Packer gave donation to NSW Ambulance to have defibrillators in our ambulances. That was many years ago. I remember it really well. It is important to note that NSW Ambulance has received quite a bit of funding for up to 2,500 staff and 30 new ambulance stations over the coming years. That investment in frontline emergency care under the Strategic Workforce and Infrastructure Team program will see 500 full-time paramedics in regional and rural New South Wales. I am very pleased that some of them will be in my electorate.

As the Minister for Health knows, every time there is talk of ambulances and vehicles, I never miss an opportunity to bring up Tenterfield four-wheel drive ambulances. And I say it again today; I will keep going until we get one. That investment will mean improved patient outcomes and better services for the community of New South Wales. As members know, paramedics are a mobile workforce and usually respond from one patient to the next across New South Wales, whether they are located at a hospital, ambulance station or another location. I note that my ambos in Lismore are located at Southern Cross University, which is where they moved to after the flood. They are still there and are operating really well. They may have an opportunity to stay there if that decision is made.

Vehicles and their paramedic crews are moved throughout their shift to provide geographical coverage of ambulance resources across New South Wales. At a recent event outside our local memorial pool, I had the chance to talk with our local paramedics. They saw us doing media as they were driving by. They pulled up and we had a good catch-up on all of sorts things that were happening across the area. The Government, in opposing the bill, has said there is a lack of evidence supporting the wider dissemination of AEDs outside key public areas. Studies and data have not demonstrated that placing AEDs in all public buildings would significantly improve outcomes in cases of cardiac arrest, especially if community members are unable to use them. Instead, there is good evidence that community education to improve the use of AEDs, which is already in place, and increasing bystander willingness to perform CPR are more effective. Recently we were discussing that in my office because we are not up to date with CPR. I said that we should be. I will take some corrective action about that.

Mr Gareth Ward: That is very wise.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN: Yes, it is. It is a good skill for everyone to have. I am sure if I was called upon I could do it based on past training, but it is always better to do something like that on a yearly basis. I cannot tell everyone else to do it if we have not done it in my office, so we will do that. Several initiatives are in place to increase the accessibility of AEDs in the community. There is a very successful partnership between NSW Ambulance and the GoodSAM app, which the member for Gosford gave some detail about it. That app alerts responders who are willing to conduct CPR in the first critical minutes of cardiac arrest while paramedics are on the way. It is critical and it saves lives. A requirement already exists for persons conducting a business or undertaking to provide accessible first aid equipment. That is everywhere and is increasing. I have talked about how popular the grant programs are with sporting and recreation facilities in clubs. The demand is really high; everybody clamours for that one.

The New South Wales Government already maintains a comprehensive register of AEDs. The aim of the bill is important. It is also important to not get tied up with so many regulatory requirements that we do not do the work we need to do. Many public buildings have AEDs installed, so the bill could lead to significant duplication. There has also been a widespread lack of consultation on the bill with relevant stakeholders including businesses, medical professionals and public health experts. I have discussed it with the member for Bega and the member for Wagga Wagga—both doctors—to canvass their views. I note that the member for Bega led for the Government in debate on the bill. He has said that we do not need this bill. But I am not trying to verbal him.

Dr Michael Holland: The Government opposes the bill.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN: Yes, the Government opposes the bill.

I think I am in safe hands if I take my counsel from the good doctors in this place. I have also talked with other doctors externally, as well as with paramedics. I oppose the bill.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (13:09): The Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024 (No 2) raises a topic that I am passionate about. The member for Kiama is a good retail politician, but members need to prove their convictions and commitment and show that they actually believe in the bills that they introduce to the House. Other members in this place have worked hard and tirelessly over many years, without the support of government, to make defibrillators available in their communities. I note that the member for Mount Druitt is at the table. In 2016 when I was Mayor of Blacktown, I worked with the member for Mount Druitt and other Labor councillors to develop a program to buy 101 defibrillators—one for every sportsground, with a handful of extra defibrillators being kept at the library. If a sporting organisation was using a local sportsground, they could borrow a defibrillator—as well as a book—from the library.

It was reported in *The Daily Telegraph* that Blacktown was the first council both in New South Wales and across Australia to make such a large investment. It was not just Blacktown council and its \$252,000 program. It is great that the State Government has now gone on record with its support for a \$500,000 program. Over many years, both sides of the House have supported rolling out defibrillators, but it had no support in 2016. The Blacktown and Districts Soccer Football Association, which holds probably half of the fields in the Blacktown area, paid about \$28,000 towards the program. Through her Stronger Communities grant, Michelle Rowland gave

us about \$20,000, and Cricket New South Wales threw in about 10 grand. Various other organisations worked with us, such as the Australian Football League, Penrith and District Junior Rugby League, Parramatta Junior Rugby League, Blacktown City Football Club and Blacktown City Oztg. We all worked together to raise about \$90,000, and now the council is rolling out the program to community centres.

I note that when the member for Wakehurst was mayor for some 16 years at Warringah and Northern Beaches councils, he also implemented a big defibrillator program. The Northern Beaches Council has a page on its website—<https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/community/safety-and-wellbeing/defibrillators>—which identifies the locations of the defibrillators. It has established what it calls "ZapStands," which are bright green, about 2.3 metres tall and easy to find in public locations. In Blacktown Police Station, two of the patrol cars are currently trialling defibrillators. My concern with the bill is the lack of consultation. A lot of work is happening behind the scenes. We have to be careful about the useful life of defibs. Websites may not reflect when they break down or get stolen. Imagine a person going down to the local sporting field in a panic and trying to find an available defibrillator, having looked it up on the app, only to find it is not working. A lot of work needs to be done. We do not need a kneejerk reaction, copying South Australian legislation, and a press release that says, "Look how good I am," when there is not that much.

Let us look at the member for Kiama's record. All electorates were allocated Community Building Partnership grants. As far as we can tell from the member for Kiama's speeches in Parliament, he provided funding for only one organisation, back in 2017. On two occasions, in 2022 and 2024, his community recognition statements supported the Rotary club and others that put together defibrillator programs. We need to consult and work with the community. There are lots of challenges in just putting them out there. I remember the pushback and the challenges that I faced as mayor when I sat down with different organisations. What happens if the defibrillators go missing or are not looked after? Who is liable if someone turns up and picks up a defibrillator that is broken or no longer serviceable? At the time, the council put in a 12-month program that checked every single defibrillator.

They are all manageable issues, but we need to work through and discuss them before considering a bill in this Parliament that is just a kneejerk reaction to say, "Look how good I am." It needs to be worked through with community organisations, councils, the State Government and the different private organisations that will host them in their commercial buildings et cetera. The bill does not look at the costings or who takes responsibility. I know that the member for Kiama was a Minister at one stage, and I do not think he would have wanted to be responsible for the location of every single defibrillator. But his bill basically says that needs to be looked at.

Ms Kellie Sloane: That is what the register does. The register is already there.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: He might have the register. I acknowledge the interjection from the member for Vaucluse; I know that Blacktown is the Vaucluse of the west. To a large extent, a register is just a line in a book. In the end, as the member for Kiama identified, if someone is suspected to be suffering from a heart attack, we want to make sure that the defibrillator is working. The member for Kiama has criticised the Labor Party's \$500,000 grant, saying that it is going to lower socio-economic areas. They are the areas where it is sometimes difficult for community organisations to raise money, whether it is half the funding or more. Lower socio-economic areas, like Blacktown, Western Sydney and regional areas, are where issues of heart disease, diabetes and obesity are prevalent. That is why we rolled out the program to those areas in the first instance, not to areas that can afford to pay for it.

The member for Kiama is a conservative member. He seems to be talking about how we can socialise the costs across rich and middle-class areas and make sure that the poor areas have to somehow raise their own money. We need a detailed discussion to go through how the program is rolled out. Where is it essential? Where should it be? How do we do it? Do the police have a role? We have heard that the ambulance services are being included. We are doing trials all over the place, and lots of organisations are putting in a whole lot of effort. We need to have better coordination, better funding and better identification of locations. A self-gratifying private member's bill is not the magic bullet to solve all the problems and will not resolve the issue.

We need to talk to the people who have raised money and worked hard to roll out defibrillator programs for their local communities. We have to make it a bit easier. In the past four to five years, everyone has jumped on that important bandwagon. Heart disease is ever growing, particularly in Western Sydney, which also has a large subcontinental population. Recent statistics show that people aged between 30 and 45 from the subcontinent have seen a massive increase in the percentage experiencing heart disease compared with the general population.

That important issue should not be relegated to a quick private member's bill and a Facebook post that talks about how wonderful the member is. A whole heap of other members in this House are spending time and effort to raise money and work with the Government towards grants to deliver real outcomes to support people. There are a lot of issues. The program that we implemented in Blacktown saved about six lives that I know of, as has

been reported. This bill is a kneejerk reaction and does not deliver for the people. That is why Labor opposes the bill.

Business interrupted.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: COMMITTEES

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (13:20): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the moving of a motion without notice regarding the appointment of a Select Committee on the Local Small Commitments Allocation grants scheme.

I am moving that we establish a select committee on the Local Small Commitments Allocation grants scheme. The idea of the committee would be that it would inquire into the Local Small Commitments Allocation Program specifically to look at how the program was established and communicated to the public, the risks of any perceived, potential or real conflicts of interest arising from the program, and the relevance and effectiveness of any oversight, guidance, compliance and legislative obligations to ensure the prevention of corruption arising from the program. It would also look at the integrity of the program's application process, assessment criteria and other probity considerations. There would be six members on the select committee, comprising of two Government members, two Opposition members, one regional Independent and me as the chair. The reason we are looking to set up the committee is that it is clear that, with further media articles coming out recently, there are ongoing concerns and issues around the way the program was rolled out. We have seen controversy around the grants process, with issues around the declaration and management of conflicts of interest.

That is a huge concern for The Greens. In July last year my Greens colleagues and I wrote to the Premier to raise a number of questions about the program, including where the funding from the program was drawn from; what were the criteria against which applications were being assessed; who comprised the assessment team; on what basis the organisations were nominated to be offered the chance to apply for funding; whether information about the assessment and nomination of grants will be made public; what conflict of interest disclosures were required at the time that those commitments were made by the candidates; and what probity process was undertaken. Those questions were never formally answered by the Premier, although we were given the opportunity to speak with the executive director of the program and to have some of our questions considered. Today the Herald has picked up the story again. It states:

The Premier's Department has kiboshed two community projects, including one worth \$100,000, nominated for taxpayer funding under Labor's controversial local grants program due to "unacceptable" conflict of interest concerns.

A further 28 projects were identified as having a "moderate probity risk" following a ministerial-commissioned review of funding allocated within 15 electorates through the Local Small Commitments Allocation (LSCA) program late last year.

...

Of the 28 projects considered a "moderate" risk, 10 were due to political connections. This included [one] MP ... who the review found received campaign support from connections in four of the nine organisations associated with his nominated projects.

...

Other moderate conflicts identified were in relation to "strong political or other affiliation" ...

It is clear that there is more to be explored.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): I remind the member for Balmain that the question before the House is the suspension of standing and sessional orders, not the establishment of the committee.

Ms KOBI SHETTY: I will talk about why it is important to suspend standing and sessional orders to establish this committee. There are very deserving organisations and projects. We know that some of the work is being overshadowed by the processes themselves. We want to learn from mistakes and make sure that we are restoring people's faith in democracy. It is a critical issue. I urge every member to support this suspension of standing and sessional orders motion.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (13:23): The Government does not support the suspension of standing and sessional orders.

Mr Matt Cross: What are you hiding?

Mr RON HOENIG: The member for Wahroonga interrupts, but the Auditor-General described the conduct of those opposite in relation to grants as the most egregious example, effectively corrupt—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: The Leader of the House's hearing must be bad because I did not utter a word. He has just accused me of saying something. There seems to be a real problem with members of the Government misattributing comments that are made in the Chamber. I ask the Leader of House to withdraw the falsity that he just articulated in the Chamber.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): Does the Leader of the House wish to withdraw his comment?

Mr RON HOENIG: If the Manager of Opposition Business tells me who the interjector was—it came from his direction—then I am prepared to withdraw my comment about him and attribute the interjection to that person. It is pretty simple. If it was not the member for Wahroonga, he should tell me who it was.

Mr Tim James: You got it wrong.

Mr RON HOENIG: The member for New York ought to behave and keep his comments to himself. We are not prepared to agree to what we consider to be a stunt. The small commitments grant program was a commitment made by the Government in opposition.

Ms Kellie Sloane: It's called transparency.

Mr RON HOENIG: You got 400 grand in Vacluse as well, didn't you?

Ms Kellie Sloane: I didn't choose it. The Labor candidate chose it.

Mr RON HOENIG: The Government is delivering the commitments made by the person who promised them.

Ms Kellie Sloane: You should direct your comments through the Chair.

Mr RON HOENIG: How about you keep quiet and learn some courtesy.

Ms Kellie Sloane: Point of order: Madam Temporary Speaker, I ask that the member direct his comments through the Chair and not insult me.

Mr RON HOENIG: The member for Vacluse should not interject.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The Leader of the House will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr RON HOENIG: And I ask that the member for Vacluse adhere to the standing orders and not interject. The Government is not prepared to agree to what it considers to be a stunt. The Premier has pretty clearly and repeatedly given an explanation to this House and in other places about the small commitments grant, and procedures have been put in place to ensure the integrity of the process. The issues identified in the example referred to by the member for Balmain were caught by the processes themselves. That is why the processes have been put in place: to ensure integrity. They are not the egregious examples of pork-barrelling that had been implemented by those opposite when they were in government.

As the Premier has indicated to this House repeatedly, there was a fair process designed to ensure that every one of the 93 electorates had the opportunity to equal amounts for commitments made by those who made them. The Government, having won the election, is adhering to those commitments that have been given. These matters have been raised with the Government. If the member for Balmain wants any details whatsoever, they are available to her. Greens members meet regularly with the Premier in my presence and can ask whatever they want. They have received considerable cooperation from the Government in respect of various matters and information. If they need details, they need to ask for it. They say they have been asking for something for 12 months and they have not got something back. How many times have they met with the Premier privately in relation to a range of matters? They could have raised it then and it could have been provided to them.

The other issue I bring to the attention of the House is that I am receiving constant complaints from members of this House about the volume of committees that they are currently serving on. The Parliament does not have the resources to provide for another committee, which is not required at this particular stage. If The Greens have a genuine request for information as part of the crossbench, the Government can provide, has provided and will provide that information to them, as it would for all members of the crossbench. If they want any information, they only need to ask for it. But this is nothing but a stunt.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I seek leave to make a contribution to debate.

Leave not granted.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: Standing Order 365 states:

When the mover is a Member not supporting the Government, the response shall be by a Minister and, when the mover is a Member supporting the Government the response shall be by the Leader of the Opposition or a Member deputed.

I believe that on previous occasions when a member of the crossbench has moved a suspension of standing and sessional orders the Opposition has been allowed to speak without leave.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): I will seek advice from the Clerk. On advice from the Clerk, I rule that the Manager of Opposition Business may contribute to debate because the member for Balmain holds a position contrary to that of the Government.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (13:29): The Opposition will support the motion moved by the member for Balmain but with the following amendment:

To insert at paragraph (1) after the words "to inquire into" the words "the integrity, efficacy and value for money".

To add additional subparagraphs to paragraph (2) as follows:

- (f) the range and availability of funding under the program, including but not limited to:
- (g) the manner in which grants were and are determined, including:
 - (i) the oversight of funding determinations,
 - (ii) the transparency of decision-making,
 - (iii) the independence of the assessment of projects,
 - (iv) the role of advocates, candidates and members of Parliament in proposing projects for funding, and
 - (v) the scope of Ministers' discretion in determining which projects are approved—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Firstly, the member for Wahroonga has proposed to amend a motion that is not before the House. The question before the House is whether standing and sessional orders should be suspended. The member for Wahroonga seeks to move an amendment to the substantive motion of the member for Balmain, not the motion before the House to suspend standing and sessional orders. Secondly, Standing Order 365 (4) states:

When the mover is a Member not supporting the Government, the response shall be by a Minister and, when the mover is a Member supporting the Government the response shall be by the Leader of the Opposition or a Member deputed.

Under the standing order, the mover is a member not supporting the Government. Therefore, the standing order provides that the response shall be by a Minister. Had the member for Balmain supported the Government, the Opposition would be entitled to contribute to debate on the motion. My point of order as two parts: first, the attempt of the member for Wahroonga to amend the substantive motion of the member for Balmain is out of order because the House is not debating that motion; and, secondly, the member for Wahroonga was confused by Standing Order 365 (4) and is not entitled to contribute to debate on the motion without leave.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: To the point of order: There is no point of order. The second point cannot be raised because the Leader of the House did not make it before Temporary Speaker Di Pasqua made her ruling.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The Leader of the House has raised two points. The first point is correct. I direct the Manager of Opposition Business to restrict his arguments to the motion before the House about why standing and sessional orders should be suspended and not to his proposed amendment to the substantive motion of the member for Balmain. I agree with the second point in that it is a grey area, but I have made my ruling. In that case, after receiving advice from the Clerk, I allowed the member for Wahroonga to make a contribution.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: May I speak to the first point before the Clerk restarts the clock?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): No, I have made my ruling.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: But I was not heard on the point of order.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The member for Wahroonga may do so quickly, but I have made my ruling.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I am explaining why the Opposition supports the motion to suspend standing and sessional orders. Part of why we support the motion is explained by the amendment that we propose to make to the motion of the member for Balmain. Therefore, it is directly relevant to the motion before the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): I thank the Manager of Opposition Business for the clarification. He will now restrict his arguments to the motion to suspend standing and sessional orders.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: The proposed amendment is directly relevant to the motion to suspend standing and sessional orders because it allows the House to understand the basis upon which the Opposition supports the substantive motion of the member for Balmain. That is why it is good to hear the arguments of members before advice is taken and rulings are made. The Opposition will seek to further amend the motion to be moved by the member for Balmain by adding the following subparagraphs:

- (h) the role and interaction of the Premier's Department and other agencies in the process, assessment and facilitation of grants.
- (i) measures necessary to ensure the integrity of grants schemes and public confidence in the allocation of public money.

It is also necessary to add some machinery provisions to the motion to be moved by the member for Balmain. Those proposed paragraphs include:

- (4) That the committee table an interim report if it so desires by 30 June 2025 and a final report by 31 December 2025.
- (5) The member for Davidson be deputy chair of the committee and one of the Opposition's two members.

Those are the changes that the Opposition will seek to make to the motion proposed by the member for Balmain. It is obviously a matter of great public interest that there be proper scrutiny of the Local Small Commitments Allocation process, which is the subject of the motion to suspend standing and sessional orders. That matter is in the public interest because never in the history of New South Wales has there been a scheme without a public process and where candidates who have never been elected to public office in this Parliament can nominate for public moneys to be allocated to public groups within their electorates. The process has none of the usual probity measures, and it was implemented by a government that said there would be a fresh start. In particular, the Government criticised alleged pork-barrelling by the former Government.

None of those measures would have passed any of the integrity measures that were set up by the Coalition Government prior to the election. A ray of sunshine must be shone on the first-of-its-kind, unprecedented process that has been conducted. It is only thanks to the good work of the member for Davidson and others that we have been able to shine a light on the murky skulduggery by the lurk merchants of the Labor Party who are absolutely behind the scheme. Any member of this place who does not support the motion to suspend standing orders does not support integrity in the processes of government and measures that would prevent corruption within our State. It is absolutely essential that there is a proper investigation into the matter. That is why the Opposition supports the suspension of standing orders.

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (13:38): In reply: I briefly respond to the comment that the motion is a stunt. It is absolutely not a stunt. The issues are critical.

I have raised my concerns with the Premier on numerous occasions, and the Premier stands by the program. So I continue to have concerns about it. We do not want to see this continue as a slanging match in the media. It needs to be properly worked through as an inquiry. As I said before, it is not about the worthiness of these organisations. Many worthy organisations and projects have received these funds. The problem is with how this came about. The procedures put in place after these funds were offered are why it has not been implemented properly. It is a poor process when people who are not elected members of Parliament make decisions with absolutely no guidelines around them and those decisions are retrospectively checked to see whether they are okay. There are huge issues around transparency and accountability. There are serious issues of democracy.

I find being accused of pulling a political stunt to be incredibly frustrating, when I have made clear that I think this process is an inappropriate way to hand out public money. If the Government thinks this process is fine, then it should be comfortable with us looking at it in more detail. The public deserves to know. The discussions I and my colleagues have had with the Premier in private are not sufficient. We need to talk about these issues publicly. It is critically important that the community have faith in how the Government hands out public funds. Clearly, there are issues, which are still being raised in the media, about how this has happened.

I appreciate the criticism of the former Government. There were different issues around how public funds were disposed of, but just because the former Government did things we also disagreed with it does not mean that how this process was rolled out is any better or any more legitimate. I will respond to the Opposition's amendment if we get an opportunity to debate the motion, which I suspect we will not. For now I stand by my motion to suspend standing orders in order to establish a select committee.

It is incredibly important for democracy that we work across the Parliament, with members of the Opposition, members of the Government, Independents and The Greens on the committee, to look at this in detail and to make sure that we do not end up with another process that is undertaken in such a way that we do not trust that there will be no actual or perceived conflicts of interest. We have a huge responsibility to our communities to make sure we are spending public funds in a way that people are comfortable with and so that people do not think money is being handed out because of connections or friendships or relationships with certain people. It is hugely problematic. We need to get this select committee set up.

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

The House divided.

Ayes37
 Noes46
 Majority.....9

AYES

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

NOES

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Aitchison, J | Greenwich, A | O'Neill, M |
| Atalla, E | Hagarty, N (teller) | Park, R |
| Bali, S | Harris, D | Piper, G |
| Barr, C | Harrison, J | Quinnell, S |
| Butler, L | Haylen, J | Saffin, J (teller) |
| Car, P | Hoening, 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 |
| Davis, D | Li, J | Warren, G |
| Dib, J | McDermott, H | Watson, A |
| Donato, P | McKeown, K | Whan, S |
| Doyle, T | Mehan, D | Wilkinson, K |
| Finn, J | | |

PAIRS

| | |
|-------------|---------------|
| Hodges, M | Minns, C |
| Thompson, T | Washington, K |

Motion negatived.

Bills

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (PUBLIC ACCESS) BILL 2024 (NO 2)

Second Reading Debate

Business resumed.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (13:49): I contribute to debate on the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024 (No 2). Sudden cardiac arrest can affect not only athletes but also any member of the community. Defibrillators play a vital role in saving lives when tragic cardiac arrest events occur. This issue is important to many people in my electorate of Leppington because of two particular events, one from a decade ago and one that occurred recently. Austral Soccer Club in my electorate is a beacon of advocacy and action for cardiac arrest awareness and defibrillators. The club has been at the forefront of enhancing the safety of players, officials and spectators, and ensuring that defibrillators are readily available at sporting facilities.

Just over 10 years ago, on Saturday 9 July 2014, a tragic and heartbreaking event took place at Austral Soccer Club that continues to affect the community. A 15-year-old young man named Marc Arcuri, who was healthy and happy and loved football, was playing for his local club—like many young kids do every Saturday, including my son. During the game, Marc collapsed on the field after suffering a cardiac arrest. Tragically, he passed away, devastating his family and friends and the entire football community of the southern districts and across Sydney. The event highlighted the harsh reality that anyone can be struck down by sudden cardiac arrest at any time. In response to the tragedy, Marc's family and friends organised a six-a-side football tournament, which quickly turned into a massive fundraiser to buy defibrillators for the club and ensure that Marc is remembered and a tragic event like that never occurs again.

That tournament came to be known as the Marc Arcuri Cup. It was organised by a couple of Marc's friends, including Alex Cauchi and Robby Mansour, who is Marc's older cousin. In 2014 the tournament was held in Bella Vista at the home of the Norwest Football Club. Twelve men's teams competed in the competition and more than \$6,500 was raised, enabling the purchase of three defibrillators from the Royal Life Saving Society. In the following years the Marc Arcuri Cup was held on and off and continued to grow. In 2014, 32 men's teams played at Greystanes. More than 50 men, women and junior teams competed in the tournament when it was held at Marconi Stadium. Just before COVID, in 2019, the tournament included 100 teams. The event is completely funded by player registrations, donations from businesses and the barbeque fundraiser. The money goes towards purchasing much-needed automated defibrillators. All members understand that defibrillators save lives and make an immense difference to our communities.

A couple of months ago, in August, another event took place at the Eschol Park Football Club. A 13-year-old, who was playing up in the under 14s or 15s team with his brother, collapsed. Initially, the coach thought he was having an asthma attack. Thankfully, the boy's brother plays on the team and he told the coach the 13-year-old does not have asthma. They then realised it was a very serious medical episode. Because it was training night, the committee was meeting at the amenities block. Luckily, two of the committee members were trained in how to operate the defibrillator that is located at the Eschol Park sporting complex. They jumped into action, performed CPR and started to use the defibrillator. The GoodSAM app, which other members have mentioned in their contributions to the debate, kicked into gear and a nearby individual rushed to attend to the boy. They gave him three jolts from the defibrillator. I am happy to report that the boy is now doing much better. He has undergone multiple procedures and been in and out of hospital, but the doctors report that he will not suffer any permanent damage.

I contrast those two examples. But simply having a defibrillator on site will not prevent these tragic incidents. Defibrillators require people who are trained in how to use them, which we had at Eschol Park. Someone nearby who can attend the scene must also be pinged by the GoodSAM app. I do not want to sound flippant but if we located a lifesaving buoy along every kilometre of coastline, for example, it would not stop drownings. We would still need personnel there who know how to use buoys and how to perform CPR. It is a similar situation with defibrillators. That is why I oppose the bill. Simply rolling out a tool across the State is one thing, but we need people who know how to operate that tool. When it is a life-or-death situation, if we roll them out but the people who use them are not trained, we could end up making things worse.

Defibrillators are sophisticated pieces of technology that can cause injury or worse. They can even injure the operator or people nearby if they are not used properly. I do not know whether the member for Kiama has considered that. I believe the member introduced the bill in good faith. Members who both oppose and support the bill agree that defibrillators save lives. No-one is opposed to them. We want to roll out as many as possible. But the Government wants that to occur in a methodical manner that ensures the right people are trained in their use. I talked about two events that took place in my electorate, and I thank Austral Soccer Club, Eschol Park Football Club, the Marc Arcuri Foundation and Heartbeat of Football, which have all worked tirelessly for more than a decade to ensure we have defibrillators in and around our sporting facilities. They are almost like fire hydrants now. I remember a time when fire hydrants were not compulsory but we started to see little red things pop up. Then they became compulsory.

But in workplaces we have work health and safety officers who are trained in how to use them and know when to use them. It is the same story with defibrillators. We cannot roll them out and think they will magically save lives. We need to train people in their use. I support additional funding and any other initiative that seeks to train everyone, if possible, in defibrillator use. Like other members, I encourage everyone to download the GoodSAM app.

While members might not end up agreeing on this particular bill, I think we all agree that more should be done in this area. I note that the Minister for Sport recently announced a grant program for defibrillators. I have encouraged some of the sporting clubs in my area to apply for that because we cannot have enough defibs. But, as I said, we need to make sure we have people who are trained using them. It is the mission of all members of this House to

reduce the incidence of sudden cardiac arrest in sporting environments through education, awareness and the provision of defibrillators. As we look to the future, it is essential that we continue to support and expand those initiatives. [*Extension of time*]

I mentioned Heartbeat of Football, which does work not only around defibrillators but also around prevention. Andy and the guys will turn up to do heart checks wherever you ask them, pretty much at the drop of a dime. They have told me numerous stories of being at a game and conducting a check-up on a dad or mum who was there watching their kid play, only for that check-up to indicate the person was probably weeks away from a severe heart attack. We must work on prevention and ensure that people that people are healthy and do not need to use these defibrillators. I encourage members to visit the Victor Chang Foundation in the Macquarie Room today for a check-up. I had my check-up today; I note the doc, the member for Bega, is indicating he had one too. Despite the tremendous amount of stress that members on both sides of the House put on me as Government Whip, I am happy to report that that I do have reasonably good blood pressure. I need to work on my cholesterol, as apparently it is at a slightly elevated rate.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: You have a big heart, Nathan.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: It was confirmed that not only do I have a heart, but it is a big heart. In closing, and on a serious note, I say that we need to do a whole bunch of wraparound things in this area. Prevention is better than cure. I urge people to stay healthy, stay happy, eat healthily and get check-ups. If, heaven forbid, someone does have a serious cardiac arrest, we have someone nearby using the GoodSAM app and the defibs to assist. But we cannot roll out defibrillators willy-nilly, as this bill suggests, and expect they will save lives. This is a well-intentioned bill, but I will be opposing it for the reasons I have outlined. I thank the House.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (14:02): I am pleased to make some remarks in relation to the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024 (No 2). I thank the member for Kiama for bringing this timely and valuable bill to the Parliament. Like other members, I too have had a heart health check today thanks to the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute. I think it is mere coincidence that on this day in 1968 Australia's first heart transplant was performed by no less than Dr Victor Chang and Dr Harry Windsor, two legends of the profession. As a co-chair and co-founder of the Parliamentary Friends of Heart Health, I say proudly that this important anniversary is a poignant reminder of how far we have come regarding heart health.

I acknowledge the life-saving importance of automated external defibrillators [AEDs] in communities across New South Wales. These devices play a critical role in providing immediate intervention in cases of cardiac arrest, where every second truly counts. Sudden cardiac arrest can strike without warning. In those crucial minutes, having access to an AED can be the difference between life and death. Each year, 25,000 people in New South Wales experience cardiac arrest and are either severely impaired or lose their lives, with a survival rate of only 12 per cent. However, the combination of CPR and defibrillation can increase survival rates by 70 to 80 per cent. The presence of these devices in public spaces, especially at sporting events and local gatherings, ensures that the community is equipped to act effectively and quickly. With an AED nearby, the chance of survival dramatically increases, underscoring the necessity of those devices in community spaces.

I commend the previous Coalition Government for its foresight in establishing the Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program. That program has enabled sports clubs and community groups across the State to access much-needed funding to acquire AEDs, ensuring that life-saving equipment is readily available at local sporting events and community facilities. Last year I was honoured to attend the launch of a new AED initiative at Northbridge Oval alongside then Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government the Hon. Victor Dominello, who is a great champion in this space. We were joined by Wiggle Anthony Field and former Wiggle Greg Page, from Heart of the Nation, Julie Hughes from the Michael Hughes Foundation, Andy Paschalidis from Heartbeat of Football, and the team from St John Ambulance Australia.

That event was, in effect, the launch of a statewide "FuelCheck for defibrillators" initiative, led by the former Coalition Government, in which residents of our great State were encouraged to register the defibs in their communities with Service NSW. At the time the GoodSAM app was also being rolled out thanks to the hard work of former Minister for Health Brad Hazzard. All of those measures further ensured the accessibility of these life-saving devices across New South Wales.

However, it is deeply concerning that the current Minns Labor Government has chosen to cut funding from the Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program. By excluding key electorates such as Willoughby and many others based on postcode alone, the Government is, effectively, playing politics with people's lives. The decision to limit access to AED funding based on location undermines the very purpose of the grants, which is to ensure that all communities, regardless of where they are, have access to this life-saving equipment. This exclusionary approach is not just misguided but dangerous. The chance of survival should not depend on where you live. Every community, whether in metropolitan or regional New South Wales, deserves equal access to defibrillators. The

devices should be available in every community in our State, from sportsgrounds to schools, community centres, parks and many other public spaces.

Furthermore, we must ensure that access to defibrillators is paired with proper training. It is vital that members of the community are confident in their ability to use the devices when the situation arises. It is one thing to have the equipment but another to ensure that people are ready, willing and able to deploy it in an emergency. The Coalition Government made significant progress in supporting the placement of AEDs in public spaces, but there is still more work to be done. This issue transcends politics; it is about protecting the health and safety of our citizens. It is about ensuring that, in moments of crisis, our communities are prepared to act.

I urge the Government to reconsider its decision to cut funding to the Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program. Lives are on the line, and we cannot afford to ignore the importance of these devices. The Government must recognise that every community deserves to have equal access to this essential equipment and we must continue to expand AED availability, not limit it. The lives of our athletes, our children and the people of our communities depend on it. Let us not lose sight of what is truly at stake here. It is not just about equipment; it is about ensuring that every person in our great State has the best possible chance of survival in the face of sudden cardiac arrest. For all of those reasons, I commend the member for Kiama for what is a sound, timely and valuable bill, one which I commend to the House.

Ms KOBİ SHETTY (Balmain) (14:07): On behalf of The Greens, I make a brief contribution to debate on the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024 (No 2) and indicate that while the bill is commendable in its intent, we will not be supporting it. The objects of the bill are to mandate by 2026 the installation of automated external defibrillators [AEDs] in specific buildings and vehicles, along with their registration and maintenance. It also requires the Minister responsible to maintain a publicly accessible register detailing the locations of these defibrillators and devise a strategy for public education about them.

The bill defines "relevant buildings" as large commercial buildings; government buildings; educational settings, including schools; prisons; retirement villages as defined in the Retirement Villages Act 1999; facilities providing residential care as defined in the Commonwealth Aged Care Act 1997; entertainment and major recreation facilities; buildings within caravan parks; and casinos and gambling venues, excluding those only authorised for lottery ticket sales. "Relevant vehicles" are defined as emergency services vehicles and public passenger vehicles. The regulations may prescribe or exclude certain buildings and vehicles as relevant.

Each year approximately 3,800 people in New South Wales experience an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, with some 90 per cent unable to be revived. Studies have shown that the combination of CPR and defibrillation can increase survival rates by up to 70 per cent. Presently in New South Wales, AEDs are sourced and placed largely via grants and government initiatives, including at some train stations, some sporting grounds, some community centres and the like. It is often a matter for community members and community organisations to seek out and apply for funding for such a purpose.

The SPEAKER: The time for consideration of general business orders of the day for bills has expired. I set down resumption of the interrupted debate as an order of the day for a later time. I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.30 p.m.

Motions

STATE OF ORIGIN

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (14:30): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that on 17 July 2024 the New South Wales Blues won the State of Origin series in Queensland.
- (2) Congratulates all the players who were selected to represent New South Wales on their commitment to the sport, especially all those mighty Penrith Panthers.
- (3) Acknowledges the economic significance of events such as the State of Origin, which brings together fans, families and the broader community.

The famous rugby league rivalry between New South Wales and Queensland dates back to the first interstate game played at Sydney's Agricultural Ground on 11 July 1908. Since then, the two States have continually fought it out on the field. At that time, no consideration was given to the origins of the players. The first of the interstate games was played before Queensland had even commenced its club competition. New South Wales got the better of its opponents in that game, with an initial 43-0 thrashing. The match signalled the start of a 70-year era dominated by the Blues, which won more than 70 per cent of games against Queensland.

In the decades since, the State of Origin Shield has traversed the border numerous times, with the competition played almost annually—apart from during World War I, the Spanish flu and World War II. However,

1980 is recognised as the start of the modern State of Origin era. Three one-off games were played in 1980, 1981 and 1987, with Queensland winning two of those three games. Since the '80s there have been 43 series played, with Queensland winning 24, New South Wales winning 17 and the remaining two resulting in draws.

I turn to 2024. This year's Blues team was coached by the now Brisbane Broncos head coach Michael Maguire and captained by Sea Eagles' Jake Trbojevic. The New South Wales team featured 25 star players from numerous clubs. I have previously put on record my one-eyed support for the Penrith Panthers. I know we all congratulate the New South Wales Blues team and all the players and staff on what they achieved in the deciding game to bring home the series trophy. I am so proud that Panther Dylan Edwards was picked to debut at fullback, but unfortunately due to injury he could not play in the first game. However, Dylan was named man of the match in game three.

Current and former Panther players featured heavily in the Origin team, with eight of the 20-man squad all having worn the Panthers jersey, five of whom are current players. Powerhouse winger Brian To'o made his twelfth Origin appearance, as did backrower Liam Martin. Panthers co-captain Isaah Yeo made his fourteenth appearance for the Blues. Jarome Luai played his tenth Origin game and had a new halves partner that did not interrupt his outstanding form. I take this opportunity to sing the praises of the best rugby league team of the modern era, the Penrith Panthers, which won the premiership again this year for the fourth consecutive year. That outstanding feat has not happened for over 50 years and must be acknowledged. In this year's Origin series, it was great to see our current Panthers back together in a team including ex-Panthers Spencer Leniu from the Roosters, and Matt Burton and Stephen Crichton from the Bulldogs.

It was a tough series for New South Wales this year, after being comprehensively dominated by Queensland at home in Accor Stadium in what can only be described as a sickening 38-10 defeat. Then it was down to the Melbourne Cricket Ground for game two, and the Blues wiped the floor with Queensland, leading them 34-0 at half-time, before putting them out of their misery with a 38-18 win. The series decider was a nailbiter in Queensland, and the odds were not in New South Wales' favour. The Blues' heroic 14-4 win over Queensland at Suncorp Stadium marked only their third win in a series decider in Brisbane from 13 attempts. Importantly, they denied Queensland a third straight series crown in what has been described as one of the toughest Origin games ever played.

It would be remiss of me not to also mention that 2024 marked the seventh official Ampol Women's State of Origin rugby league series. Playing on enemy grounds at Suncorp Stadium, the Sky Blues came out with a vengeance after losing their title to Queensland in 2023. This year was the first time in Women's State of Origin history that they played a three-game series. Sadly, Queensland prevailed in the historic inaugural series decider that was played at Townsville's Queensland Country Bank Stadium. The women's series was a sellout. The opening game alone broke attendance and television rating records, drawing in a crowd of 25,492 for the clash.

Despite the wet weather, game two attracted a turnout of 25,872 people who packed into McDonald Jones Stadium, which is the highest recorded crowd attendance for a Women's State of Origin; the stats speak for themselves. The myth that people will not come out to watch the women's game and support our Sky Blue players has been well and truly dispelled. We have demonstrated a real appetite for women's rugby league, with its style, skill and overall quality being nationally acknowledged. These women athletes are showing other young women and girls everywhere that they can do whatever they set their mind to—as long as they are in a Sky Blues jersey!

The economic benefits that State of Origin brings New South Wales are profound. The 2024 Men's State of Origin in Sydney attracted a total crowd attendance of 77,214, an increase of 2.5 per cent year on year. Over 21,000 tickets were purchased from interstate and internationally. The men's and women's State of Origins are estimated to generate approximately \$16.2 million in visitor expenditure and attract over 26,000 visitors to our State. The visitor spending and job creation has flow-on benefits for businesses and the State that extend far beyond the action on the field. The outcome of the investment this Government made in the 2024 State of Origin matches, together with the men's and women's grand finals, will be a total estimated visitor expenditure of more than \$41 million being injected into the New South Wales economy.

I acknowledge that the NRL is growing its audience to international markets in the United States and the Asia-Pacific. A new audience of fans is engaging with the code. Our Penrith Panthers and the Sharks are off to Las Vegas for a preseason match early next year. Each year tens of thousands of fans from across the country converge on Sydney in support of their teams. The New South Wales Government's vibrancy reforms support extended trading hours around major events like the State of Origin. I am also proud that our Government is pushing ahead with the redevelopment of Penrith Stadium, which could not come at a better time. I look forward to our own women's Panthers teams entering the NRL competition. I commend the motion to the House.

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (14:37): The one thing we can agree on in this House is that we all love our footy. It does not matter which team we support. The Opposition is very much in support of

acknowledging the very stellar performance of both our men's and women's State of Origin teams, but I disagree with the member for Penrith on one point. I am proud of all of our State of Origin players, but I give a shout-out to our Sharkies. I know the Panthers are on a roll at the moment and the member for Penrith is proud of them, but the Shire is very proud of its Sharkies.

It was a great State of Origin season, which was a surprise because the first game was quite difficult to watch at times. New South Wales came away with two wins out of the three games. Michael Maguire had an incredible season on debut for the Blues, and he was just the third New South Wales Origin coach to lead the Blues to a deciding win in Brisbane, which is a feat in itself. Angus Crichton was named player of the series and received the Wally Lewis Medal. I also acknowledge Zac Lomax, the top pointscorer, accounting for 28 points. Game one was at Accor Stadium in front of 52,000 fans, and it was a tough game to watch, with the game going to Queensland 38-10.

Mr Stephen Kamper: We lost a player. He was sent off.

Ms ELENI PETINOS: I note that the Minister acknowledges that we were a man down, but it was still a difficult game to watch for all the diehard Blues fans. But the tide turned in game two at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on 26 June when 90,000 fans packed in to watch the game. Blues legend Joey Johns said he had never seen anything like it at this level. The Blues were untouchable in a dominant first half performance, going in 34-0 up at half-time. It was an incredible game and the player of the match was Eels halfback Mitchell Moses.

Game three was on 17 July in front of 52,500 fans at Suncorp Stadium. New South Wales had not won a decider at Suncorp since 2005, and 2024 was just their third overall. Suncorp was completely silenced when the Blues came home in a dominant win. The Blues dominated possession in the first half, with 26 tackles in Queensland's 20 compared with just three for the Maroons. Queensland led at half-time thanks to a successful penalty by Valentine Holmes, who I am quite soft on because he played for the Sharkies at one point. In the second half New South Wales pulled ahead thanks to tries from Bradman Best and Mitchell Moses, as well as a penalty and two conversions by Zac Lomax. The Blues won the game 14-4, bringing the State of Origin trophy home back to Sydney, where it belongs.

New South Wales is the best footy State in the country. Since the member for Penrith raised it, when in government the Opposition believed in football so much that we locked in consecutive NRL grand finals, built Allianz and CommBank stadiums and significantly invested in footy infrastructure throughout this State. We all love our footy so much in New South Wales that the Government should put their money where their mouth is and invest in first-class infrastructure in this State, not just doing patch-up jobs but redeveloping stadiums to the extent that the Coalition said it would have done when in government.

I also acknowledge the Women's State of Origin series and the incredible performance of our women. Unfortunately, they did not come away with the win but it is important that we recognise these trailblazers. They have done incredible things, pushing the women's game in its early stages to finally achieve professional status. The Sky Blues won the first game 12-22 but, unfortunately, lost the second game in Newcastle in a nailbiter 10-11, and the third 22-6. These women are incredible trailblazers, doing incredible things for young women who look up to them and see that they can be anything in today's society.

I put on record the names of those incredible women. This year the Sky Blues were coached by Kylie Hilder and were comprised of Emma Tonegato, Jaime Chapman and Tiana Penitani from the Sharks, Jess Sergis, Isabelle Kelly, Corban Baxter, Rachael Pearson, Millie Elliott, Caitlan Johnston, Olivia Higgins, Kezie Apps, Yasmin Clydsdale, Olivia Kernick, Keeley Davis, Taliah Fuimaono, Grace Kemp, Sarah Togatuki, Jakiya Whitfield, Kirra Dibb and Ellie Johnston. New South Wales is as proud of those women, who put on our State colour and took fight to the Queenslanders, as it is of the men. Let us be honest, we all love taking it to the Queenslanders and it is even better when we win. All members are united in our celebration of football and are proud of the efforts of our New South Wales State of Origin teams in flying the flag for our State.

It was incredible to see the men's team have such a dominant win this year. I am sure that all members are looking forward to seeing investment in rugby league continue, ensuring that next year we not only talking about the success of the men's team but also how well the women did—hopefully bringing their State of Origin trophy home. It has been such a journey for women playing rugby league. In 2024 the Women's State of Origin went from a two-game series to a three-game series, which was one of many firsts this year. I look forward to continuing to cheer on the Blues and the Sky Blues, celebrating the success of rugby league in New South Wales. Go the Blues and the Sky Blues! We could not be prouder of them.

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (14:44): It gives me great pleasure to support the motion. While a lot has improved for the State of New South Wales since the election of the Minns Labor Government last year, no reform has brought as great a joy to our community as the Blues lifting the Origin shield on 17 July. The results

speak for themselves. The previous Government took three years to have an Origin series victory. In 2024 New South Wales did it in the first full NRL season under this Labor Government. I congratulate the Minister for Sport on that achievement, and I recognise his presence in the Chamber. In all seriousness, the Blues have done us all extraordinarily proud this year. They pulled off one of the all-time great comebacks in Australian rugby league. To lose in game one in what was Queensland's biggest ever win in Sydney and then to come back and win game two, with 34 unanswered points in the first half, was simply phenomenal.

My good friend the member for Penrith is right to acknowledge those representatives from the Panthers for their significant involvement in the success of the Blues. We also thank the Panthers for keeping the NRL's Provan-Summons trophy in the State where it belongs, New South Wales, for another year—even if they kept it out of the trophy cabinet where it belongs, the one at Shark Park, for another year. However, the representatives from the Panthers could not have raised the Origin shield this year without the contributions of Nico Hynes and Cameron McInnes from the mighty Cronulla Sharks. They have been my team since they were established in 1966. I have followed them since I was one. Nico Hynes scored an amazing goal in game one, which was also Cameron McInnes' Origin debut, with the hooker receiving cap number 313. Fellas, you did the shire proud!

I also note that while the Sky Blues women's team was not as successful in fending off Queensland this year, they also did our State proud in the first three-game series in the history of Women's State of Origin. Congratulations, girls. The member for Penrith is also right to acknowledge the economic significance of events such as State of Origin and the amazing way this great game brings together fans, families and the broader community of our State. The Government's commitment to supporting major sporting events like the NRL State of Origin matches goes beyond the excitement on the field. We recognise the significant economic benefits they bring, with millions of dollars injected into the local economy through visitor spending and job creation. The outcome of the Government's investment in the 2024 State of Origin matches and the 2024 NRL Premiership men's and women's grand finals will be a total estimated visitor expenditure of more than \$41 million injected into the New South Wales economy. The Government and the Australian Rugby League Commission has provided certainty to rugby league fans across the nation by ensuring that the grand final will remain in New South Wales, the birthplace of the NRL.

Earlier this month New South Wales was once again Australia's home of sport when Accor Stadium at Olympic Park was filled for the NRL grand final, further cementing Sydney's status as the premier destination and major events capital in the Asia-Pacific. In the past year the city has hosted the Ultimate Fighting Championship, the FIFA Women's World Cup, Harry Styles, Foo Fighters, Elton John, Paul McCartney, P!nk and, of course, Taylor Swift. With the NRL growing its audience to international markets both in the United States and the Asia-Pacific, a new audience of fans is engaging with the code. This Government's investment will ensure that this growing market will continue to see New South Wales as the home of the NRL and Sydney as the home of the grand final. The NRL grand final is one of our country's greatest annual sporting events and footy fans will continue to experience it right here in New South Wales. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (14:48): I am delighted to make a short contribution to debate on the motion. I thank my good friend, the great member for Penrith, who fixed the debacle that was Penrith Stadium. I note the presence in the Chamber of the sports Minister. They took a concept that was unworkable, unachievable and unaffordable and have turned it into something that the people of Penrith deserve. Next stop: Campbelltown.

Mr Stephen Kamper: We don't muck around, mate.

Mr GREG WARREN: I acknowledge the Minister's interjection.

That is right. We are not mucking around with this. I begin with the women's team because I am impressed—not just as a rugby league supporter but also as the co-chair of the parliamentary friends of the NRL. This year marks the seventh official Women's State of Origin Rugby League series between New South Wales and the "cane toads". It was the first time in the Women's State of Origin history that it was a three-game series. That represents the growing support for women's sport and, indeed, for women's rugby league. Do we have more to go? Yes, we absolutely do. We have come so far, but we still have a way to go. The first game was played at Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane on 16 May. The second game was on 6 June at Newcastle, and the third game was in Townsville. New South Wales did not come away with the crown but we are equally proud of our girls—how hard they fought, how well they played and, most of all, for representing New South Wales with pride.

I touch on the importance of rugby league more broadly in and around our community. I am a passionate believer in suburban rugby league. I congratulate our men's team; it was a great effort by them. It was fabulous to see them stride out and then bring it home at the end when we were in all sorts of trouble at the beginning. Let's get fair dinkum. We thought we were going to get trampled on this, but the lads pulled themselves together and brought it home. I congratulate them, NSW Rugby League, and the National Rugby League. I do think that is the

representation, because there have been 43 full series of the State of Origin. Queensland has won 24; New South Wales has won 17. So we have a bit of catching up to do. Three one-off games were played in 1980.

Those in Campbelltown who have obviously tuned in to listen to my contribution live would know that the great Tommy Raudonikis captained the first team. We did not bring it home, but word has it that old Tommy was punching a couple of Winnie Reds into him as he marched out of the hall to go and play, in true Campbelltown-ian style. We have moved on from that. We are a lot healthier these days, but we love our Tommy Raudonikis, who started off playing for the Wagga Kangaroos. I must also mention former Western Sydney Magpies players Bob Cooper and Jimmy Leis. Again, we did not bring it home that year—but them's the breaks. What do you do? We got better from there but we still have more to go.

I conclude with the importance of junior rugby league and rugby league in our suburbs. I especially note the Appin Dogs, Macarthur Saints, East Campbelltown Eagles, Campbelltown City Kangaroos and a raft of others, including the Collies—what a great team. I am honoured and privileged to represent the people of Campbelltown. One of our greatest attributes is our sporting community. We have produced some greats and that has only happened because of the community's commitment and our volunteers. While we are not Penrith—we are on the other side—we are all westies, and I close by congratulating the mighty Penny Panthers.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (14:52): It is a privilege to speak about the fabulous performance of the Blues this year, and what a year it was. Other members spoke about the series and how it was won 2-1. We lost a player early on—within the first minutes—but we battled on. At one stage it even looked like they would be bringing the first game home. They played an outstanding game in the first game; in the second game, they without a doubt dominated. Unfortunately, I was in Corfu for my son's wedding for the third game. We delayed the wedding by half an hour because we were all waiting for the final result of the Origin. And how wonderful it was—we celebrated double after that win. We were very proud.

What a year it has been for rugby league. I am 60 years of age, and I have been a fan and follower of rugby league all my life. I am a tragic St George supporter. From the time I could speak, I have been following St George. I cannot remember a year like this. It all started with the great launch of the game in Vegas, which was an amazing success. I must describe the atmosphere when we were in Vegas. It was an outdoor event with 10,000 Australians on the street celebrating the game of rugby league in the American market. I have never felt such a feeling on the ground in my life. Like many followers of rugby league, I was brought to tears by the atmosphere. It was such a fitting start to a fantastic year for all of our teams in the NRL. We must acknowledge the Penrith Panthers and their marvellous four-peat. I remember announcing the new stadium at Penrith. I did say at the time that I was looking forward to a four-peat, and they delivered. They are an outstanding side, on the field and off. They are wonderful players, wonderful advocates for the game and great role models for kids.

I also acknowledge the Women's State of Origin side. I thought they were going to get there. They started off really well and I personally thought they had the superior side. I know Jaime Chapman's mother really well, and Jaime is one of my favourite players. I noticed that both she and Jess Sergis were carrying injuries in the final game, which contributed to them not winning the series, but they played fantastically well. I echo the comments about the women's game of the shadow Minister for Sport. It has been seven years but the way it has evolved during that time has been amazing. I state for the record that I actually enjoy watching the women's game more than the men's game these days. I truly appreciate the game. I love the way they express themselves on the field. The good thing about the women's team is that they are very professional. If they have been dropped on the ground, they will not lay around and pretend they have an injury.

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (14:56): State of Origin 2024 did not get off to the start that we had hoped for, but it all turned around at that glorious Melbourne Cricket Ground. I am a very proud member of Parramatta. Very few members of Parliament across this nation can boast not one but two stadiums in their electorate, but I have to give credit where credit is due: The MCG does pull a crowd. An incredible feat occurred that night. They did not have a great year, but Mitch Moses showed the true talent of Parramatta. It took a Parramatta player to give us that chance for game three. I give a big call-out to Mitch. We are very proud of every single player on the field that night after the heartbreak of game one, but for those who wear the blue and gold in the place where I come from, that was extremely significant. It turned the tournament around in 2024.

One of the things I wanted to talk about with the State of Origin is where it all started. Last Friday night I had the privilege of attending the sixtieth anniversary of the Dundas Shamrocks. The club is based at St Patrick's Marist College Dundas. It was only a small gathering, but it is a gathering of those who play with the club today and those who have played and coached over the years. They had a jersey with the names of players who had gone through the club over that 60 years and who had represented the club at first grade and State of Origin, and who had gone on to be leaders in their field and in the game of rugby league. John Muggleton was there. Those who have followed rugby league for a little bit of time will know the influence he has had on football.

He was part of the winning Eels teams in the '80s. The event on Saturday night celebrated 60 years. As the Minister and the member for Campbelltown have mentioned, rugby league has travelled the pathway from being a predominantly male sport through to also being a female sport. That night we celebrated funding from the Minns Labor Government for women's sport at the club. It was a wonderful expression of where rugby league is headed.

State of Origin continues to be a prime event on the calendar not only for New South Wales and Queensland but across the whole of Australia. We celebrate rugby league as not just men's sport but also as women's sport. That would not be happening if we did not invest in those grassroots clubs. The prowess that is on display on Sundays is now channelled onto the main stages of Accor Stadium and CommBank Stadium in the Parramatta electorate. Go the Blues in 2025. We are sure that they can do it again. The State of Origin competition is important for our economy, for sport in general and for moral in this State.

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (15:00): In reply: I thank members for their contributions to the debate. I make note of the particular mention by the member for Miranda of women as trailblazers in rugby league and her praise for her Sharks—or the Sharkies, I should say. I thank the member for Heathcote, who also acknowledged the Sharks players who contributed to the Blues' win and rightly pointed out that New South Wales is the birthplace of the NRL, bringing home the grand final for New South Wales come next year.

I thank the member for Campbelltown, who is the co-chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Rugby League. He also sang the praises of the women's NRL and talked about the long history of the NRL and where it came from. Who could ever forget Tommy Raudonikis and his "cattle dog" call in a scrum during a Blues game—which is something that we do not celebrate anymore. I thank the Minister for Sport for his contribution. It was fortuitous that the Minister was in the Chamber and was able to contribute to this motion, particularly calling out the women's league. The Minister is a keen advocate for all sport. He is passionate about the NRL, and he outed himself to say that he enjoys the women's league more than the men's league. Good on him!

I also thank the member for Parramatta, who importantly spoke about the league's roots. The roots go back to our junior rugby league clubs, and I thank her for calling that out and reminding us that junior rugby league is one of the largest participatory sports—certainly in New South Wales. I believe that the Nepean junior rugby league clubs in my particular area are the largest anywhere in New South Wales. A significant number of junior clubs play in the league, and they contribute to all grades of competition—certainly to State of Origin, as well as a number of international players from different countries in the recent Pacific Games and representing at that particular level.

Unfortunately, the Panthers do not have a women's team just yet. We currently do not have the facilities for a women's team, which we will remedy with the new stadium that hopefully will be up and running at the end of 2026. We look forward to the Panthers women's team joining the NRL. All I can say is watch out. At the moment a number of locals play for other clubs in the women's league, and they are itching to put on a Panthers jersey and represent their home club. Go the Panthers. Make it five in '25 and the Blues for '25.

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

Motion agreed to.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX DISTRIBUTION

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (15:05): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises that hardworking New South Wales taxpayers pay the most GST in this country.
- (2) Expresses its anger with the Commonwealth Grants Commission's recent decision to strip New South Wales of \$1.65 billion in GST funding.
- (3) Calls on the Federal Government to end its GST rip-off and give New South Wales its fair share.

Earlier this year New South Wales was ripped off from receiving our fair share of the GST distribution, resulting in a \$11.9 billion hit to the budget. Every year the Commonwealth Grants Commission distributes the GST between the States and Territories. This year New South Wales lucked out, and the grants commission decided to reduce New South Wales's share of GST revenue from 92.4 per cent to 86.7 per cent of our population, resulting in the largest single year reduction to our GST share since the system was introduced in 2000. The decision will see New South Wales lose more revenue than it did during COVID-19, a global pandemic. For every dollar that Victoria will give to the smaller States next year, New South Wales will give upwards of four.

The Minns Labor Government has since called on the Prime Minister and the Federal Treasurer to reform the GST distribution model, as there is a better system for dividing GST between the States and Territories. Our Labor Government calls for a move to a per capita basis of distribution, which would recognise the fact that

New South Wales gets 37 per cent of net overseas migration and makes up 31 per cent of the country's entire population. We have also advocated for other reforms, including increasing transparency between the States, publishing a draft determination before the final decision, and switching to four-year estimates to assist States with planning their budgets. Dividing GST according to population share and having the Federal Government topping up the smaller States to make sure that they are no worse off, is a system that will give every State its fair share.

Let us review how we arrived at the situation where New South Wales can be told that \$1.65 billion in 2024—\$11.9 billion over the forward estimates—has been taken from us and given to other States. In March this year, the Commonwealth Grants Commission released its annual ruling on GST distribution. The commission cut the New South Wales share of GST by six points—from 92.4 cents in the dollar per head of population in 2023-24 to a new cut of 86.7 cents in the dollar in 2024-25. This is the biggest single-year decline in GST share for New South Wales since 2000, and our GST share is now at its lowest level since 2018-19. Our population has continued to grow and costs continue to rise, but the money is decreasing. The decision means that New South Wales will be \$1.9 billion worse off while other States will benefit—mainly Victoria and Western Australia.

We do not have anything against our neighbours across the border and over on the other side, far away in the west. But that decision puts pressure on an already strained budget, after the former Liberal Government delivered New South Wales's two biggest ever deficits and left behind the biggest debt to date ever handed from one government to another.

However, as a result of the Minns Government's considerate and responsible approach to financial management, we were able to absorb the \$11.9 billion hit so that the people of New South Wales would not have to. We continued to do the necessary work of stabilising the State's debt, reducing expense growth and delivering the world-class essential services that the people of this State need and deserve. But New South Wales still deserves its fair share. We make up 31.3 per cent of the Australian population and receive 37 per cent of inbound immigration, as per the past decade average. Yet, under the latest ruling, in 2024-25 we are set to receive just 27.5 per cent of GST revenue.

If we got our per capita share, we would have \$3.6 billion more. That is enough to employ 10,000 nurses and 10,000 police. Earlier today New South Wales nurses and midwives were in the gallery and I met with them. We have a commitment to those nurses to ensure that we are able to deliver safe ratios across New South Wales hospitals, but that delivery is much more difficult when we have reduced funding from the Federal Government. We came to government with an expectation that the State would continue to receive the same level of funding that it had been receiving, not such a massive decrease. That \$3.6 billion is also enough to nearly double the budget of TAFE. It is more than the entire cost of Parramatta Light Rail stage one. Sadly, New South Wales is missing out on more than just our fair share of GST. We are receiving 30 per cent of schools funding, 29 per cent of health funding and 24 per cent of funding for affordable housing.

If we received our per capita share of those payments, that would mean \$600 million in additional health funding, \$380 million in additional funding for our schools and \$160 million in additional funding for housing. Across all payments, we would be \$5.8 billion better off in 2024-25 if we simply received our fair share of Commonwealth payments to the States. The "no worse off" guarantee was established in 2018 after the GST floor was introduced, to make sure that all States and Territories were no worse off and received a guaranteed minimum 70 per cent share of GST revenue. But we are worse off. We will continue to stand up to the Federal Government on education, health and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. We are prepared to be the last State standing in order to get our fair share. The Minns Labor Government will continue to fight for team New South Wales because it is time we received our fair share.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (15:12): On behalf of the Opposition, I speak in debate on the motion moved by the member for Parramatta. It is quite an interesting motion because it is hard to disagree with the sentiment of the wording used by the member for Parramatta. We all want New South Wales to get more money from the Federal Government. We all want our communities to have the best facilities they possibly can. The member for Parramatta and I are in agreement: We are worse off. But we are worse off because everyone in this State is subjected to the rule of the Minns Labor Government. That is why the State is worse off. That is what is wrong with the budget position.

Frankly, I am surprised that the Labor Party is still moving motions in this Chamber trying to say, "There's nothing to see here. The budget is all bad. Let's blame the Feds", when we all know what happened during the time of the budget. The Treasurer claimed that there was an \$11.9 billion GST rip-off, but the budget papers themselves confirmed that, over the four years from 2027 to 2028, GST revenue has been revised down by—wait for it—\$6.2 billion. A lot of members on the other side of the Chamber simply cannot do maths and would really like to point fingers at anyone else. "It's not us. Nothing to see here. Let's look over at the Feds." But what really

happened was the Treasurer did not tell the people of New South Wales the truth and we had to get it out of the budget papers.

I have said that we are all in agreement about wanting our fair share for our communities. When we were in government, we wanted to give the people of Parramatta their fair share. When in government, the Coalition delivered many things for the member's electorate. We delivered WestConnex to ease congestion, CommBank Stadium and the redevelopment of Westmead Hospital. We rejuvenated the Parramatta CBD. We even did stage one of the Parramatta Light Rail and we upgraded Parramatta Public School. Those are just some of the many things delivered for the people in the Parramatta electorate because we on this side of the Chamber are fiscally responsible. We know how to manage the budget. As a result, we know how to deliver for our communities.

By contrast, those opposite could not account for \$6.2 billion. It is interesting that they cannot see the difference in the GST claim, but the budget papers will keep pointing that out for them. Not only can they not do the maths; they also cannot find projects to deliver for their communities without re-badging things that the Coalition announced when in government. I will stick with the electorate of the member for Parramatta, in which Westmead light rail has been re-announced and Sydney Metro West has been re-announced. I am sure there are many more because, frankly, the vision for this State and the financial responsibility to deliver projects for this State have always come from Liberal-Nationals governments. I understand why members opposite just want to re-badge our achievements and call them their own, because the State was much better off under the Liberals and Nationals. Let me return to the GST. I put on record comments made by Judith Sloan on page 7 of *The Australian* on 19 June:

... NSW has always been a donor state. Extrapolating GST payments, something which the Commonwealth Grants Commission does not do, is a highly manipulable exercise.

The political trick that Mookhey is trying to pull off is as old as the hills: don't blame me for the river of red ink in the budget. If only the feds had given NSW more money, things would be different.

The reality is the economists, analysts and commentators all know what Labor has been trying to do in government: point the finger for things it should have known. As much as we all want more money for this State, the grant commission's exercise has happened year after year. Somehow the Coalition managed to balance the budget and deliver for our communities. The member for Parramatta seems dumbfounded that, all of a sudden, now that Labor members are in government, they cannot make it work. We are not surprised. Our communities are worse off and we are very much feeling it.

We would love more money from the Federal Government. But we want projects that our communities deserve delivered in our electorates. Those opposite simply cannot manage the budget. What is worse, instead of telling the truth, it is all smoke and mirrors. Labor is blaming the State reduction in GST payments for the deterioration in the budget. We all know that that is simply not true. It is just what happens when Labor is in power. It promises a lot but it just does not deliver. Page 10 of *The Australian* on 19 June reads:

Government spending is up by around \$6bn a year for each year across the forward estimates from what was forecast in last year's budget. Mr Mookhey tried to shift the blame for the poor bottom line to the federal government because NSW will receive a less than expected share of GST receipts. This excuse was easily debunked because it relied on Treasury assumptions that the NSW share of GST would remain constant when there was no reason to ever believe this would be the case.

Further, it states:

The common theme is a higher public sector wages bill. The state is fully deploying higher tax revenue into \$12bn of new government services, public sector wages and new housing. There is little evidence of cost-benefit analysis to determine whether taxpayers are getting good value for their money.

That is what happens under Labor. There is no-one to blame other than members on the opposite side of the Chamber. Frankly, the Treasurer must tell the people of New South Wales the truth. We all want more for our communities and this State, but they deserve better than this Government.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (15:19): I am delighted to contribute to debate on the motion, which I thank the member for Parramatta for moving. The reality is that there is a devastating economic effect from the reduction in GST revenue of \$1.65 billion or, over the forward estimates, \$11.9 billion. The other reality is that as we came to government, Labor set up a very good and rational agenda. However, funding for that was heavily impacted because of decisions made by bureaucrats in Canberra. Our budget was fully costed based on forecast GST revenue. I will correct points made by the member for Miranda to ensure the *Hansard* is accurate. The reality is that the people who are paying the price are the people of New South Wales—and not for the first time, as we know. I agree with the former member for Epping when he stated in 2018:

This outcome reinforces the fact that the current GST model is broken. Yet again, we are seeing the hardworking taxpayers of NSW being ripped off by a perverse and unfair distribution model.

Further, he stated:

The fact that NSW is expected to lose almost half a billion dollars—

which was the amount at that time—

only reinforces the view that a root-and-branch overhaul of the GST distribution process, and the Commonwealth Grants Commission itself, is desperately needed.

That almost replicates the exact commentary made courageously by new Premier Chris Minns. The decision of the Premier and Government to take on the commission to get our fair share of GST displays that, under Labor, New South Wales comes first. We took a \$500 million hit in 2018; it is now \$1.65 billion. We could spend that money on the health system and our educators. Our nurses are screaming for a pay rise after members opposite froze their wages for so long. The same goes for teachers and every other essential government worker who carried us through some of the toughest times, including through COVID. The Government has a very clear and costed agenda, but we must see step change from the commission when it comes to the allocation of GST.

The immigration levels and housing targets that have been thrust upon New South Wales by those in Canberra substantiates the view that we need more investment, not less. We need more GST in New South Wales so we can provide for our new and existing residents. The economic tadpoles otherwise known as the New South Wales Liberal Party are clearly blind to the fact that, because of their incompetence and lack of priorities, they left us with \$188 billion in debt and a wages cap for which we will be forced to play catch-up for a generation. We saw budget blowouts on nearly every project. I cannot think of one project in which the budget did not blow out and the timeline did not overrun. Those are the problems Labor inherited. The reduction in GST revenue only adds to the mess we are cleaning up that was left to us by the Liberal Party, and we must continue that clean-up for a very long time.

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (15:23): It is great that all members of this place are 100 per cent pro New South Wales. Like me, the member for Camden is wearing a wonderful blue tie. We are all on team New South Wales. Ever since GST was introduced there has been the concern that for every dollar that comes from New South Wales, sadly, we do not receive a dollar back. Currently in the budget we are getting only 87¢ for every dollar we contribute to the Federal Government. All members are in agreement that New South Wales should be getting a dollar back for every dollar we give to the Federal Government. Of course, I agree with former Premier and Treasurer Dominic Perrottet, who said in 2018:

This outcome reinforces the fact that the current GST model is broken.

All members agree that the GST model is broken. The concern the Opposition has about this motion and the timing of the Government's budget woes is that Labor needs to blame someone for its economic mismanagement. According to opinion polls, a certain Labor Prime Minister is not doing well so now is a great opportunity for the Labor Party to blame someone else for its economic mess. If we look at the budget papers—I am happy to be one of the few members of this place who has a copy of and actually reads the budget papers—I note that the Budget Statement in *Budget Paper No. 01* states:

Over the four years to 2027-28, forecast revenue is expected to be \$10.7 billion higher than forecast at the 2023-24 Half-Yearly Review.

Labor cries poor and blames Anthony Albanese—I blame him for a lot of things too—for its budget woes, yet the Budget Statement says that Labor will be better off by \$10.7 billion. The member for Miranda articulated that unfunded public sector wages have cost the Government \$9 billion. It is so disappointing that members opposite cannot be honest and own up to their budget mismanagement. I always find it fascinating when Government members talk about debt. The most debt ever in the history of New South Wales is currently taking place under the Labor Government. Government members like to rewrite history, but the fact is that over the next four years debt will become the largest in New South Wales history at \$139 billion by 2027-28.

Ms Donna Davis: And where did it come from?

Mr MATT CROSS: It came from the Labor Government; that is where it has come from, and it is getting worse. I will share with members where the record Labor debt will go. During the pandemic the former Government had to make sure it invested in jobs and economic growth. But before the pandemic New South Wales had zero debt; in fact, we had \$10 billion of negative debt. The former Liberal-Nationals Government is extremely proud of that. The Opposition will continue to ensure it maintains its strong economic credentials, unlike the Labor Party.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (15:27): I do not know whether we agree that we would be better off with an extra \$1.7 billion in this year's budget. On the one hand, the member for Miranda said that this looks like a pretty good motion, and the member for Davidson said that we could agree on it; but, on the other hand, the member for Miranda then said it was all smoke and mirrors and Labor is doing everything badly. Do members agree that we would be better off with another \$1.7 billion in our budget? That money has been taken away from us because of a decision made by the Commonwealth Grants Commission. The motion does not state that that is the only thing we need to do to fix the State's current budget position, but getting our fair share of the GST is one of the important things we can do.

I thank the member for Parramatta for moving the motion. I support what my colleagues have said. The motion is about a national issue around which I would hope all members of the House could unite. We must leave aside all of the other matters that we can argue about, such as what the Government might need to do with the budget.

The motion asks us to concentrate on one thing: whether we are getting our fair share of the GST. New South Wales has never said, under either Labor or the Coalition, that we should get back everything we pay in GST in this State. We have never said that. We are just saying we should get our fair share. New South Wales has a population share of about 31 per cent of the national total, and we are getting back only 27 per cent of the GST this year. It is the single biggest reduction from one year to the next we have experienced as a State. We should all agree that that has a significant impact on how we frame the budget.

But, time and again, the allocations to New South Wales fall well below our population share. We get only 30 per cent of school funding, 29 per cent of health funding and 24 per cent for affordable housing, in a State where housing affordability is at a crisis point. It is important that today we unite with a single voice on this one thing we may be able to get correct, knowing that the Commonwealth is engaged with the States on a review of how the GST is distributed. This House saying with one voice that the Federal Government needs to look at how GST is carved up between the States will help us with our budget position.

As I said, that is not the only thing. We are doing a bunch of other things. Leave aside wages for the moment. Let us not forget the Comprehensive Expenditure Review, which the finance Minister's office undertook when she took office. There were \$13 billion in savings. The current budget papers show that \$10 billion of those savings have already been delivered back to the budget. A massive, heroic body of work needs to be undertaken by this incoming Labor government to find the money to invest in the essential services and in rebuilding our schools and hospitals, which the people of New South Wales said they wanted. We believe they deserve it, and now we are trying to deliver it. I will not put up any graphs. Everybody has talked about whether they read the budget papers. I hope we can all agree on our budget position. The forward estimates are clear. Revenue is going up at 3.6 per cent or thereabouts, and expenditure is going up at 1.7 per cent. That is a sustainable position. The House should support the motion.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Kellyville) (15:31): I think that members on both sides of the House would agree that we would all like a fairer cut of the Federal Government's GST, given we contribute more than any other State in this country. Indeed, the Liberal-National Coalition agreed when it was in government. We can jump up and down, cry and whinge and move motions in this place, but the fact remains that that will probably be argued until my grandchildren are in their graves. The Federal Government will not divide it up unless it comes under pressure from every State equally and they all agree. Of course, that will not happen because Queensland and Western Australia are affected by the tyranny of distance. The greater a State's expanse, the more money the State receives in the carve-up of the GST. So we can park that to one side. The New South Wales Government's responsibility is to balance its budget, to provide for the people of New South Wales, to not waste money, to not overtax people, to maintain the quality of life the people of this State deserve and to provide the infrastructure—the hospitals, roads, rails, schools et cetera—that the people of New South Wales need.

I will give a brief history lesson. At the end of the 2018-19 year, when the former Liberal Government was in power, prior to the once-in-a-lifetime COVID-19 pandemic, New South Wales had a \$4.2 billion surplus and a negative net debt of \$11.2 billion. I will say that again: There was \$4 billion in a surplus year and \$11.2 billion above and beyond the debt. There was no net debt in New South Wales at that time, and we were in the black to the tune of \$11 billion. COVID hit and over the course of the next two years there was a cost of \$54 billion to the New South Wales Government. That is extraordinary. That is an impact any country in the world would struggle to deal with. Were there borrowings? Of course. There had to be borrowings. And every aspect of those borrowings on behalf of the people of New South Wales, to cope with COVID, were supported by not only the Liberal-Nationals Government but also the Labor Opposition. Every measure we put in place to support struggling people and businesses was supported by the Labor Opposition.

That is where that debt sits today. But that debt is not getting better. The Minns Labor Government is not improving that debt; it is expanding it. That is why, in the years to come, we will have a greater debt in New South

Wales under the Minns Labor Government than we have ever seen before. Prior to the last election, the budget was on track to return to surplus by 2024-25, with a projected small surplus of \$328 million. That was confirmed by the Treasury secretary and related to the return to surplus in itself. This Government has failed on so many measures. It continues to increase taxes, which impacts on the poor people of New South Wales, because it cannot balance a budget.

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (15:35): I thank all members who have made a contribution to this important debate. I thank the member for Miranda for reiterating our arguments. We are all on the same pathway. We all want New South Wales to get its fair share. But I point out to the member for Miranda, who might not have been done debating at school, that the number one rule of school debating is that you get marked down for rewriting the topic of the debate and not actually debating the topic that was set. She can present anything she wants in her argument, but the topic of debate is what we are doing in this State. For example, I could stand here and talk about how the sky is yellow, but that is not the topic of today's debate. The member has rewritten not only the topic but also history. The facts are in the budget papers. The member for Davidson has decided he will not win this one and so has left the room. The former Liberal Government delivered New South Wales the two biggest deficits ever and left behind the biggest debt ever handed from one government to another: \$188 billion.

I thank my colleague the member for Campbelltown for highlighting that the Commonwealth Grants Commission's current process for GST distribution is broken. He also reminded us that the former member for Epping, who is someone I worked with as the former councillor in his neck of the woods, agreed with the important need for GST reform because he recognised, when he was the Treasurer, that the model is broken. I thank the member for reiterating how the Minns Labor Government will continue to advocate for New South Wales and do whatever it takes to get what our State deserves, especially for our essential workers. He is right in saying that we need a step change to address the housing targets and the migration intakes of New South Wales.

I thank the member for Davidson. The debt did not actually magically appear on day one, when we took over in 2023. Where did that debt come from? It must have happened during the six weeks of the election, just magically turned up. Funny, that. It is actually something we inherited. Those on the conservative side are used to a good inheritance. But those of us on this side did not have the advantage of it being in the positive. We had the disadvantage of it being in the negative.

It continues to be a wonderful legacy that we have been left by the former Government. I acknowledge the contribution from the member for The Entrance. This GST redistribution is the single biggest reduction the State has ever experienced. As the member for The Entrance said, why can we not simply agree? We are all heading in one direction. We all want the Federal Government to review the process and recognise that the system is broken and the recent decision of the Commonwealth Grants Commission to strip New South Wales of \$1.65 billion in GST funding is not in the interests of the State. We will continue to fight for those changes.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bills

PUBLIC HEALTH (TOBACCO) AMENDMENT BILL (NO 2) 2024

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Ryan Park, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (15:40): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to bring before the House the Public Health (Tobacco) Amendment Bill (No 2) 2024. This is an area of public policy that I am deeply passionate about. It is an area that I hope all legislators are deeply passionate about. At the moment we are in the midst of a significant public health challenge with both vaping and e-cigarette products and, of course, illegal tobacco. I do not think there would be many members in this House who are not contacted at least once a week by someone, often a parent, raising concerns about the spread of these products in our communities. It is a concern for all of us. It should be a concern for the community. It is certainly a concern for this Government.

This bill is a direct response to these community expectations regarding the need to tackle the trade in illicit tobacco and ensure robust enforcement of tobacco retailing laws. This legislation builds on the legislation that I recently introduced around vaping and e-cigarettes. This bill addresses community expectations in two ways:

firstly, by introducing a licensing scheme for businesses that wish to sell tobacco and non-tobacco smoking products; and, secondly, by increasing penalties for certain existing tobacco-related offences. Smoking continues to be the biggest cause of preventable death and disease in New South Wales and Australia. Smoking is a major risk factor for many diseases, including coronary heart disease, stroke, many types of cancer, and asthma.

Tobacco use creates a substantial burden on the New South Wales health system. In 2021-22, the number of hospitalisations attributable to smoking in New South Wales was, incredibly, 56,118, which was approximately 1.9 per cent of all hospitalisations. In 2021, 6,614 deaths were attributable to smoking in New South Wales. A recent report from the George Institute found that in 2022-23, tobacco use was responsible for \$159.7 billion in economic and social costs across this country, comprising treatment and lost productivity costs. Introducing a tobacco licensing scheme is one part of a comprehensive approach to help reduce the use, impact and associated costs of tobacco in New South Wales.

Daily smoking rates have declined over the past 20 years among New South Wales adults, from 18.4 per cent in 2003 to 8.2 per cent in 2023. We want those rates to continue to decrease, particularly when it comes to our young people. However, the lucrative trade in illicit tobacco threatens to hamper efforts to reduce tobacco consumption. Illicit tobacco is tobacco grown or manufactured in Australia or imported into Australia—as is often the case—without appropriate excise or customs duties being paid. As a result, these products often do not include mandatory public health warnings regarding the harms of smoking, which all members of this place are aware of. Illicit tobacco is often significantly cheaper and therefore appeals to people, especially to young people, because of its attractive price. Its availability and affordability undermine this Government's public health efforts. This bill seeks to reduce that illicit trade through better controls over the sale of tobacco and the introduction of tougher penalties for those who breach tobacco laws, including in relation to sale to minors, which is very personal and important to me.

I turn now to the specifics of the bill. As a starting point, the bill will introduce a new division into the Public Health (Tobacco) Act establishing a new licensing regime for both tobacco retailers and tobacco wholesalers. The regime will require premises that sell tobacco products and non-smoking tobacco products to obtain a licence from the health secretary. I wish that we were leading in this area. New South Wales does often lead the country in public health, but on this occasion we are not. I cannot explain why the previous Government did not set up a licensing scheme during its 12 years in office. But under my leadership, with the health secretary, I am absolutely determined to address this issue. It continues to grow in our community and is extremely concerning to parents, teachers, many community members and legitimate small business owners.

A retail licence will be required regardless of whether a retailer sells tobacco over the counter, by vending machine or both. A wholesale licence will be required for a person who wishes to sell tobacco and non-tobacco smoking products for the purposes of resupply. For retailers, a licence will be required for each individual premises. I will make sure that those licences are on display and visible. In practice, that will mean that if someone operates five stores that sell tobacco products, they will be required to obtain a separate licence for each store. A licence will also be required if tobacco is sold via an online store, even if a retailer has a licence for a physical store.

The health secretary can refuse a licence application if the applicant has been convicted of an offence relating to the sale or supply of tobacco or vaping products under the tobacco or vaping laws of New South Wales or another jurisdiction. Likewise, the health secretary can revoke a licence if the licensee is convicted of an offence relating to the sale or supply of tobacco or vaping products under the tobacco or vaping laws of New South Wales or another jurisdiction after obtaining a licence. Retailers and wholesalers are being put on notice by this Government and this legislation: If you breach tobacco or vaping laws, you may lose your ability to sell tobacco in the future. The scheme will require licensees to renew their licences on a yearly basis and to update business details when they change or if they stop selling tobacco products. An application for a licence or a renewal must be accompanied by payment of the licence fee.

For tobacco retailers that do the right thing, it is anticipated that the licence renewal process will not be administratively burdensome—something I am extremely conscious and aware of. For businesses with multiple sites, the scheme would consider opportunities to streamline the licence application process. We are determined to work closely with legitimate small, medium and larger businesses that sell—and have a right to sell—tobacco and tobacco-related products. While New South Wales currently has a notification scheme under the Public Health (Tobacco) Act for retailers of tobacco and non-tobacco smoking products, the existing provisions are not sufficient for addressing the sale of illicit tobacco. The positive licensing scheme introduced by the bill will provide the health secretary with powers to prevent a person from selling those products if they have been convicted of a relevant tobacco- or vaping-related offence. Further, it will assist in regulation of the tobacco retailing market and target compliance and enforcement efforts.

To ensure compliance with the new regime, the bill introduces offences for selling tobacco products and non-tobacco smoking products in contravention of the Act, the regulations or a condition of a licence. For those offences, the maximum penalty will be significantly increased. The maximum penalty will now be 2,000 penalty units, being \$220,000, for a corporation and 400 penalty units, being \$44,000, for an individual. Importantly, it will also be an offence to falsely claim to be a licensed retailer or wholesaler, with a maximum penalty of 400 penalty units, or \$44,000. All other States and Territories have a licensing regime. The introduction of a licensing scheme in New South Wales will bring this State into line with those other States and Territories. While I wish it had happened earlier, it did not. However, the Government has moved as quickly as possible to address an issue that greatly concerns the community.

I acknowledge that the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety considered this issue in its recent inquiry on e-cigarette regulation and compliance in New South Wales. It recommended that the Government consider the introduction of a positive licensing scheme for tobacco retailers to support comprehensive and targeted enforcement. I acknowledge the member for Wagga Wagga, who is also in the process of drafting legislation in relation to establishing a licensing scheme. We will work closely with him on the implementation of this legislation. I also acknowledge the member for Mount Druitt, who has also been an advocate for this introduction.

I now turn to the increased penalties for certain tobacco-related offences in the bill. The bill will increase the penalties for existing offences under the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008. Firstly, the bill will increase the penalties in sections 6 and 7 of the Act, which prohibit the sale of tobacco products without the mandated health warning, not in the required packaging and as individual cigarettes. This morning I joined Dr Kerry Chant at the NSW Ministry of Health to observe recently seized tobacco products, none of which had appropriate warnings or packaging. Many of the seized items were either in individual packages or consisted of loose-leaf tobacco. Currently, the maximum penalty under sections 6 and 7 is 100 penalty units for an individual, the equivalent of \$11,000, and 500 penalty units, or \$55,000, for a corporation. The bill will double the penalties to 200 penalty units, or \$22,000, for an individual and 1,000 penalty units, the equivalent of \$110,000, for a corporation.

Secondly, the bill will increase the penalties under section 22 of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act for selling tobacco and non-tobacco smoking products to minors, reflecting the seriousness of this offence. Under the Act there are two tiers of offences where a person or corporation sells tobacco products to minors—the first tier being a first offence and the second tier being a second or subsequent offence. Currently, the maximum penalty for an individual for selling tobacco to a minor for a first offence is 100 penalty units, or \$11,000, and 500 penalty units, or \$55,000, for a second or subsequent offence. For a corporation, the maximum penalty for a first offence is 500 penalty units, or \$55,000, and 1,000 penalty units, or \$110,000, for a second or subsequent offence. Under the bill, the maximum penalty for selling tobacco products to minors for an individual will increase to \$22,000 for a first offence and \$110,000 for a second offence; and for a corporation to \$110,000 for a first offence and \$220,000 for a second or subsequent offence.

The bill will also increase the penalties for impersonating or obstructing an inspector from five penalty units, or \$550, to 100 penalty units, or \$11,000, to support NSW Health inspectors undertaking important compliance and enforcement efforts. This brings the penalty into line with the existing penalty for failing to comply with directions or requirements of inspectors. In the three-month period from July to September this year, those inspectors have achieved incredible success. They have inspected over 500 premises, seizing over 600 kilograms of tobacco and over \$3.6 million worth of individual prohibited cigarettes with a total street value of over \$4 million. That is why we need to give the inspectors the power to do their job.

Finally, the bill creates a standalone offence to ensure the retail display of tobacco price boards is adequately captured in the Public Health (Tobacco) Act. The current offence for tobacco price boards is captured under the advertising prohibition provisions. Creating a standalone offence for tobacco price boards will better facilitate compliance activity. Increasing penalties will provide a greater deterrent for the unlawful sale of tobacco products and is consistent with community expectations. Those increased penalties for tobacco retailing and illicit tobacco offences reflect the New South Wales Government's commitment to addressing the health impacts of tobacco smoking and vaping on the New South Wales community. Backed by enforcement, this bill is an important step in the New South Wales Government's continued efforts to protect the community from the harms of illicit tobacco and better equip inspectors to undertake compliance and enforcement activities.

No-one thinks for a moment that simply passing legislation means everyone does the right thing; I certainly do not. However, this bill sends a very clear message to those wishing to operate as a retailer of tobacco and tobacco-related products that they need a licence and they need to do the right thing. If they do not, they need to be aware that we are at least doubling the penalties around enforcement and have dramatically increased the enforcement to back this up. When I began my career as Minister for Health there were seven inspectors. That increased to 14, and is now being doubled to 28, in addition to all the other inspectors that work in and around

this field right across New South Wales. In total, we will have around 68 inspectors across New South Wales. Importantly, we do this in partnership with the NSW Police Force, the Australian Taxation Office and Federal agencies. I hope all members of this House share our desire and commitment to try to get on top of an issue that to date has got ahead of us all. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: DEFERRED DIVISIONS AND RESERVE WEEK

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (15:59): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide for:

- (1) After 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday sitting days for the remainder of 2024, not including today:
 - (a) Any divisions called during Government business to be deferred until 10.30 a.m. on the following sitting day and all remaining proceedings on the items of business be considered; and
 - (b) Provide that during consideration of all remaining business on those days, the following motions may not be moved:
 - (i) member be not further heard;
 - (ii) member be now heard; and
 - (iii) question be now put.
- (2) That the 26, 27 and 28 November 2024 sitting days be rescheduled as a reserve week.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (16:00): The Leader of the House will be aware that there has been correspondence from members of the House concerned about the lateness of some of the sittings and the effect that has on not only the quality of work in the Chamber but also the family-friendly workplace. We are hopeful there will be longer term reform beyond just the remaining sitting days this year, but we commend the Government for listening. We raised the issue many months ago—much earlier in the year—and I am glad the Government has listened and is finally doing something about it at the behest of members on this side of the Chamber.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:01): By leave: I appreciate being granted leave to contribute to the debate. This motion for the suspension of standing and sessional orders was moved with absolutely no notice to any member of the crossbench. Crossbench members, like all members in the Parliament, need to be able to function and do our work as well. It seems very unreasonable. I just happened to be in the foyer so I was able to come to the Chamber. No other member of the crossbench is able to contribute to debate; they are not aware of the suspension motion. I encourage the Government to at the very least share a copy of future motions or to notify us that a suspension motion is going to happen so that crossbench members can be in the Chamber to express our views on it.

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

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

DR BUSHRA ALOBAIDI

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (16:03): It is a great privilege to wish my dear friend Dr Bushra Alobaidi a happy eightieth birthday, which she celebrated on Monday this week. As a pivotal member of the Iraqi Australian University Graduates Forum [IAUGF], established in 2008, Dr Bushra has dedicated herself to uniting the Iraqi community in Australia and aiding the integration of Iraqi graduates into Australian society. Under her leadership, the IAUGF has played a crucial role in supporting Iraqi professionals, and guiding them through university processes, training programs and recognition bodies. The forum actively promotes women's rights and celebrates their contributions, while also highlighting the achievements of Iraqi artists, writers and intellectuals through many cultural events throughout the year. Dr Bushra's commitment to overcoming division and fostering sound social relations has significantly enhanced the ability of Iraqi people to engage with the broader Australian community. Happy birthday, Dr Bushra.

WAHROONGA ELECTORATE VOLUNTEERS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (16:04): The Wahroonga electorate has one of the highest numbers of volunteers in the whole State. That statistic does not surprise me, given the large number of incredible volunteer organisations in the Wahroonga electorate. I was delighted to hear that Janet Fairlie-Cuninghame and

Easy Care Gardening have been recognised in the 2024 Upper North Shore Volunteer of the Year Awards. Local writer and Ku-ring-gai conservationist Janet Fairlie-Cuninghame was awarded Senior Volunteer of the Year. Janet celebrated her ninetieth birthday last year and has played roles in a number of environmental groups locally. Easy Care Gardening Thursday Earthworms were awarded the Volunteer Team of the Year for the help they give older members of our community by maintaining tidy gardens and providing social engagement. I am deeply proud of my electorate and the exceptional volunteers we have, and I congratulate Janet and Easy Care Gardening on their awards and thank them for contributing positively to our community.

HIMYANA SOCIAL SERVICES

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (16:05): I congratulate Himyana Social Services on celebrating its sixth anniversary. I joined the founder of Himyana, Shalaa Khamis, and her team for a wonderful afternoon to reflect on the support they provide to the Liverpool community. The Himyana team also took the opportunity to raise awareness in the local Iraqi community about health issues and staying safe. It was an informative gathering, with valuable insights, traditional music and a beautiful showcase of the Mandaean community of Iraq. I acknowledge the support of the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre, with CEO Maeve Brown attending, as well as Bashar Hanna of the Australian Mesopotamian Cultural Association. Shalaa started Himyana because of the experience of her late father. She noticed that after migrating to Australia he became more isolated, and so she set out to support seniors in the Iraqi community to overcome language and other barriers to regain joy and connection in their lives. Shalaa continues her work to support seniors, although she was devastated by her father's passing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Well done and thank you, Shalaa.

COUNTRY PRESS NSW AWARDS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (16:06): Regional papers are a critical source of information for our residents, and I am thrilled to acknowledge the local outstanding papers and journos who were recently recognised at the 2024 Country Press NSW Awards. The *Wellington and District Leader* took home two awards, winning Best Human-Interest Photograph and Best News Photograph. Well done, Griggysy and Mrs Griggysy. The dynamic sporting duo from *Dubbo Photo News* of Geoff Mann and Mel Pocknall truly shone with their work, earning the award for Best Sports Coverage. The publication was also recognised as Best Free Newspaper and was joint winner of Best Print Advertisement alongside *Riverine Grazier*. The *Narromine Star* was also well rewarded, being named Best Small Publisher for its well-balanced and solid coverage of news, sports and community affairs. Sharon Bonthuys of the *Narromine Star* was honoured with the prestigious Journalist of the Year Award. Her distinctive writing style is well known for taking readers on a journey. Well done to Sharon; that is a big award for her. I congratulate all the winners and thank them for their outstanding work.

MR NAK YOON PAIK

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (16:07): I recognise Mr Nak Yoon Paik, a remarkable leader who has made an indelible mark on both the Korean and Australian communities. Mr Paik's journey began in South Korea, where at just 17 he enlisted as a combat engineer with the United States Army during the Korean War. His experiences there forged an unwavering dedication to veterans, a commitment that has defined much of his life. Since arriving in Australia in 1976, Mr Paik has championed the recognition of Korean War veterans, raising \$770,000 for the Korean War Memorial at Moore Park, a tribute unveiled in 2009. He is president of the Australian Korean Association and now chairman of the Korean War Veterans Association. I thank Mr Paik for his tireless dedication, leadership and service to our shared history. His contributions have strengthened the ties between our nations and ensured that the sacrifices of Korean War veterans are never forgotten.

YOUNG GREENS CAMPAIGNING AND ORGANISING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (16:08): I bring to the attention of the House the important work of the NSW Young Greens Campaigning and Organising Fellowship program. Twenty young people under the age of 31 participated in the fellowship program to learn how to build the skills, relationships and confidence to organise campaigns. I was lucky enough to take part in a public speaking workshop with the participants, and I am confident they will inject new ideas and perspectives into politics that will reflect contemporary issues and future concerns. I congratulate the NSW Young Greens and fellowship organisers Manon O'Neill and Monique Tovo on the hard work they do to involve more young people in politics, including people in my electorate. They are energising the political process and nurturing the next generation of leaders who will shape a more equitable and sustainable world. I also congratulate hardworking participants, including Aava Adhikari, Allister Claasz, Baran Sogut, Bonnie Harvey, El Rose, Ethan Hrnjak, Isabella Rivett-Carnac, Jacaranda Sammut, Jane Sheedy, Kylee Crowle, Lachlan Smart, Leila Nugent and Laura Koefeld.

MATESHIP CUP CRICKET

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (16:09): I was honoured to be a part of the annual Australian Indian Sports, Educational and Cultural Society [AISECS] Mateship Cup cricket match played between Minister XI and High Commissioner XI on Saturday 12 October. I and the Minister for Sport acknowledge Mr Gurnam Singh, the founder of the Australian Indian Sports, Educational and Cultural Society for initiating the cup, a 15-over game. I acknowledge the tremendous work of AISECS over many years within the Australian Indian communities, as it has masterfully used the great game of cricket as an important way to advocate closer bilateral ties and harmony between our communities. Captains Kamper and Bagley led their teams valiantly, with the Minister proving his skill with both bat and ball, while also taking a memorable full-on dive, all in the spirit of victory. I congratulate the Hon. Damien Tudehope, Consul General Tim Thomas and Senator Dave Sharma, amongst others, on contributing on the day. I congratulate Kuhu Nanda, who was one of four women players on the day, who went on to win player of the match. I thank AISECS and all involved for such a successful day.

GARRY AND JENNIFER FERGUSON

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (16:10): I acknowledge the work of Breakfast Point locals Garry and Jennifer Ferguson, who recently launched a coffee grounds recycling program. The initiative aims to increase sustainability across the community through the recycling of coffee grounds from local cafes. Currently, tonnes of coffee grounds that could be repurposed for things like natural fertiliser to enrich our soil are sent to landfill. Since the program launched, Garry and Jennifer have collected approximately 18 tonnes of coffee grounds from local businesses and diverted them to residents and community organisations. I sincerely thank Garry and Jennifer Ferguson for their commitment to bettering my community through this environmental initiative. The success of the coffee grounds recycling program is truly commendable. I also extend my gratitude to members of the Concord Rotary Club and thank them for their dedication to improving our environmental sustainability by making free buckets of coffee grounds available at the fortnightly farmers' market. Keep it up!

PROFESSOR GEORGE WILLIAMS, AO

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (16:11): Professor George Williams, AO, is a distinguished academic and public figure whose appointment as vice-chancellor of Western Sydney University this year marks a significant milestone for the institution and the broader community. Professor Williams brings a wealth of experience and expertise as the fifth vice-chancellor in the university's history, having made invaluable contributions to the fields of law, human rights and social justice. As a scholar and advocate, Professor Williams has consistently championed equality and fairness. As a leader with a deep commitment to academic excellence and inclusion, he is well positioned to lead the university into its next era of transformation. I look forward to the positive and lasting impact that Professor Williams will have on Western Sydney University, its Fairfield hub and its students.

COFFS HARBOUR VETERAN, VINTAGE AND CLASSIC CAR CLUB

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (16:12): A club with a unique place in the Coffs Harbour community is fired up for a special anniversary. The Coffs Harbour Veteran, Vintage and Classic Car Club will celebrate its fiftieth year by hosting the 2024 Great Eastland Hub Rally this weekend on 26 and 27 October. The rally is an annual gathering of vintage car clubs from Taree, Tamworth, Armidale and Coffs Harbour, with members of similar clubs elsewhere also welcome. The rally will include a welcome barbecue, a drive through the lovely Orara Valley to Coramba, a visit to the National Cartoon Gallery and the National Holden Motor Museum, a celebration dinner, a car display at the Coffs Harbour Showground, and then a scenic drive to Urunga. I congratulate Coffs Harbour Veteran, Vintage and Classic Car Club members on their milestone and wish them a successful rally. Geoff Maunder is a founding member and remains active in the club, while the club's executive comprises president Graeme Kane, vice-president Brett Moppett, secretary Marg Murray, treasurer Graeme King and events convenor Gerry De Gabriele.

MOLLY THOMSON

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (16:13): I congratulate Molly Thomson on winning the youth volunteer of the year award at the New South Wales Touch Association awards night. This remarkable achievement reflects her dedication and hard work. Molly has been a vital part of the Bankstown Jets touch football club for the past three years, contributing to the general committee, managing the club's social media and playing in the women's representative team. Her involvement goes beyond the club, as she also serves as an assistant coach for the junior Jets rep teams and she coaches at local schools, inspiring the next generation of players. Volunteers play such an important role in community sport. I was so pleased to be able to present such a passionate and committed young person with this award, particularly given my long association with both the

New South Wales Touch Association and the Bankstown Touch Football Association. I again congratulate Molly. Her contribution to sport and my community is admirable.

COLLARROY TENNIS CLUB

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (16:14): I congratulate the Collaroy Tennis Club, which was nominated in four categories at the annual Tennis NSW awards on 17 October. The club received nominations for most outstanding metropolitan club or venue and most outstanding inclusion initiative. Two players, Isla Gillespie and Rafferty Stevens, were nominated for youth athlete with disability of the year and Pavle Marinkov was nominated for male junior athlete of the year. Collaroy Tennis Club started over 100 years ago and is such an integral part of the northern beaches sporting community. These nominations are very well deserved. The club champions values of inclusion, with purpose-built wheelchair-accessible courts, and leads the community with pride events with the local LGBTQIA+ community that help promote equal opportunity in sport. These nominations are a stunning and remarkable achievement for the club and are testament to its hard work to support players of all ages and abilities. I congratulate Collaroy Tennis Club on being the inclusive club it strives to be, and my community loves it for that.

ILLAWARRA BUSINESS AWARDS

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (16:15): I congratulate the South Coast winners at the 2024 IMB Bank Illawarra Regional Business Awards. Silos Estate was recognised for its outstanding contributions with two prestigious awards: excellence in tourism and hospitality and excellence in sustainability. In 2007 Silos Estate outlined a three-year plan to become self-sufficient in energy, which was achieved in mid-2010. It is now anticipated that Silos Estate will soon be carbon negative. Jack Dinnie of Bumpy Road Catering and Events was named an outstanding young business leader. Jack's entrepreneurial spirit and dedication to pushing the boundaries in the catering industry make him a role model for the next generation of business leaders. Amy Hall from Banksia Support Services won the award for excellence in microbusiness, reflecting her commitment to delivering essential support services with a focus on community impact. I congratulate all the winners, and I look forward to seeing them at the awards ceremony on 30 October.

OLIVER SMITH

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (16:16): I ask members to join me in congratulating Oliver Smith on his recent graduation from Marist College Eastwood. Attending the ceremony in person, I witnessed the culmination of Oliver's years of dedication and hard work. Completing year 12 is an impressive achievement, and he should be incredibly proud of this significant milestone. I am hopeful that he is pleased with his HSC results and wish him every success as he moves into the next phase of life's journey. The HSC is a demanding time for all students, and I commend Oliver for his continued determination to succeed. Undoubtedly, his perseverance and commitment will serve him well in all his future endeavours. On behalf of the Ryde community and this House, I extend my best wishes to Oliver and congratulate him on this exceptional achievement. May the future be bright and prosperous for him and his family.

CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL ORGANISATION

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (16:17): On 27 September 2024 I had the privilege of attending a fundraising dinner organised by the Children's Festival Organisation for an upcoming children's festival. Children's festivals are multicultural celebrations dedicated to the youth in our community and serve as a platform to foster harmony and inclusion. The festivals are fun family days, filled with vibrant cultural festivities, performances, street food, outdoor games, competitions, and other fun and creative activities. They bring together children from all cultures, where they immerse themselves in our rich multicultural society. This year marks 26 years of the Children's Festival Organisation's remarkable journey. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the organisation on this significant milestone and achievement. Over the past 25 years the organisation has staged 40 children's festivals, attracting over a quarter of a million people from diverse cultural backgrounds across Greater Sydney. I extend my gratitude to founder Mr Thuat Nguyen, Dr Maria Tran and the organising committee for their kind invitation to the dinner and I wish them continued success.

GRAFTON JACARANDA FESTIVAL

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence) (16:18): I acknowledge the ninetieth Jacaranda Festival, which is underway in the jacaranda city of Grafton. The festival is Australia's longest running floral festival, and the city has turned purple for this year's event. Thousands of visitors from not only New South Wales and Australia but also all over the world will be coming to Grafton. The parade of youth gets underway on Saturday, with the crowning on Saturday night and the shop dress-up on "jacaranda Thursday", which will see some interesting characters, no doubt. The festival also includes capers, floats, a Venetian carnival, and much more. My office has turned a shade of purple, for which I thank the pre-kindy students at the Clarence Valley Anglican School and

their teacher, Ms Kodi Pracy, for their beautiful artwork. The ninetieth Jacaranda Festival is underway in Grafton and in my community we all cannot wait to go.

PINK RIBBON BREAKFAST

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:19): I congratulate Sue Advani and Rekha Rajvanshi on their incredibly successful twelfth Pink Ribbon Breakfast held in Parramatta on Sunday 13 October. It was a beautiful sea of pink saris with about 200 people supporting a great cause. Rekha and Sue are both breast cancer survivors and every year they hold this wonderful event to raise awareness in the South Asian communities about breast cancer, including the importance of mammograms and early detection, as well as the support services that are available. This year their special guest was Dr Sanjay Warner, who specialises in reconstructive surgery and works with the incredible team at the Chris O'Brien Lifehouse at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. This year Rekha, Sue and all their volunteers raised \$6,377 for the National Breast Cancer Foundation. I congratulate Rekha and Sue.

KENN BORGENSON

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:20): I congratulate Kenn Borgenson from Wamberal Surf Life Saving Club on being awarded life membership of Surf Life Saving Central Coast. This prestigious honour reflects over 51 years of continuous and distinguished service at club, branch and national levels. Kenn's journey began in 1973 when he joined Wamberal Surf Life Saving Club. Since then, he has become a pillar of the Central Coast surf lifesaving community. For 39 years, from 1975 to 2014, Kenn patrolled Wamberal Beach, earning the 35-year National Patrol Service Award in 2012. Though retired from patrols, his influence remains strong. Kenn's leadership is truly remarkable. Serving the club as president, secretary, captain, chief instructor and junior chairman, his dedication has shaped generations of lifesavers. He has also been named "Clubman of the Year" three times and in 1990 was honoured with life membership at Wamberal Surf Life Saving Club. Winning the NSW Life Saver of the Year in 1979-80 was a historic moment. He was the first person from the Central Coast to do so. I congratulate Kenn and say well done to him for his work with the club.

ALICIA AND KOADY WILLIAMS

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (16:21): I congratulate my good friends Alicia and Koady Williams on their marriage last weekend. On Saturday 19 October at 3.00 p.m. they were two members of the Camden community who came together to celebrate their fantastic union at Peterson House at Pokolbin. We were entertained by a beautiful string quartet within the chapel and then we moved into a marquee. It was wonderful to join Camden mayor Ashleigh Cagney and her husband, and newly elected councillor Damien Quinnell, for a fantastic evening of fun and frivolity. We were also surrounded by various friends and members of the Camden community, but it was really a bringing together of many different groups within our Camden area to watch this fantastic event take place. I congratulate Alicia and Koady. We wish you the best.

WILL NEMESH

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (16:22): I congratulate Will Nemesh on being elected mayor of Waverley at the 2024 local government elections. Mayor Nemesh was first elected to council in 2017 and has lived in the Hunter ward almost his entire life. He is passionate about preserving the unique heritage and natural amenity of our local area. Will is also very well known in the local community through his work on council, his commitment to volunteering and his professional endeavours. As a former director of Emanuel Synagogue and through his work with the Jewish Board of Deputies, Will brings an important perspective to the mayoralty for our large Jewish community. With qualifications and experience in planning and housing, he is uniquely placed to provide strategic input to council on sensitive local development. I commend him on his commitment to delivering housing opportunities for those currently priced out of the market. Waverley is fortunate to have Will as their mayor. I look forward to working closely with him to deliver for our community. Congratulations, Will.

LEAD PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (16:23): I congratulate LEAD Professional Development Association on the success of its first ever multicultural edition of Cupcakes and Code. The team at LEAD, led by Sharmily Nagasekar, partnered with Kate Kirwin, the 2024 Western Australian Young Australian of the Year, and her organisation She Codes Australia, and Amar Singh, the 2023 Local Hero of Australia and president and founder of Turbans 4 Australia. The event was part of LEAD's iShine initiative, which empowers financially and socially disadvantaged women from diverse backgrounds, supporting them in entering or re-entering the workplace. It was a fun filled, supportive, educational and liberating day for all those who participated. New friendships were formed, and more importantly, women were able to push their frontiers of knowledge in a safe and friendly environment. It is heartwarming to see so many women come together for such an important purpose. I look forward to their continuing contributions to our community in transforming women's lives.

IAN DANCE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:24): My local community never ceases to amaze me, and Ian Dance's touching story is no exception. Waverton local Ian took on the Sydney Harbour Hike earlier this month. It is a stunning 34-kilometre trek from Bondi Beach to Broughton Street, Kirribilli. Since it began in 2022, the Sydney Harbour Hike has raised over \$480,000 for The Fred Hollows Foundation. Ian, age 84, smashed the 34-kilometre hike and impressively made it onto the leaderboard for money raised by individuals. He raised over \$7,500 so far. We could all take a leaf or two out of Ian's book. He chose to take part in the hike in memory of his late sister, Margaret. Margaret was both a patient and a student of Dr Fred Hollows. After going blind in both eyes, she underwent a third corneal graft that restored her vision. Margaret sadly passed away in 1968. I congratulate Ian on this outstanding achievement. I am sure his friends and family are very proud of the training, effort and time that he has dedicated to this cause. I thank the organisers of the Sydney Harbour Hike and The Fred Hollows Foundation team. Their work is truly inspirational.

THE GLEN CENTRE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast) (16:25): The Glen at Chittaway Point celebrated their thirtieth anniversary of operating a drug and alcohol rehabilitation through a supportive 12-week program to Indigenous and non-Indigenous men and women from all over Australia. The event began with a smoking ceremony by Chris Mason, a proud Ngemba man from Brewarrina, followed by The Glen dancers. The Glen was established by Cyril Hennessy, who worked as a prison and parole officer and witnessed people returning to jail with addiction problems resulting from trauma. Mr Hennessy had a vision and teamed up with Vincent Coyte in 1994 to create the first Indigenous-focused rehab centre in New South Wales. Today, executive director Joe Coyte, the son of Vincent Coyte, is passionate about his role in improving the efficiency of operational systems and led The Glen to achieve a record accreditation result against the Quality Improvement Council of Australia's Health and Community Services Standards in 2015. Over 150 applications are submitted per month and The Glen for Men are looking to expand by providing housing for people who have completed the rehab.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I too congratulate The Glen. They used to have a centre in the electorate that I represent. They do magnificent work.

NAGI MAHASHI

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:26): Christmas—which is in nine Mondays away—is a time for family and friends to come together and enjoy the holiday period. For some, however, Christmas can also represent a time of struggle and stress, particularly given the cost-of-living pressures that so many Australians are feeling. That is why I am so delighted to acknowledge the contribution of chef extraordinaire, Nagi Maehashi of RecipeTin Eats fame. As a supporter of One Meal, I can say with every confidence that she is as good as they come. Her not-for-profit, RecipeTin Meals, is a true testament to this. RecipeTin Meals has donated over 270,000 cooked meals—cooking over 500 fresh meals from scratch each day, using quality ingredients, five days a week. As a proud supporter of One Meal, I acknowledge Nagi's generosity and tireless commitment to ensuring those in need do not go hungry this Christmas season. I thank Nagi for all she does, and for partnering with One Meal to ensure that Christmas can be enjoyable for thousands of Australians who would otherwise be going without during the holiday period.

GLOBAL NATURE POSITIVE SUMMIT

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:27): I note the Global Nature Positive Summit 2024, which was held from 8 to 10 October on Gadigal country in Sydney. It aimed to accelerate collective action to enhance investment in nature and strengthen efforts to protect and restore our environment. I commend both the New South Wales and Commonwealth governments for facilitating this important event that united leaders from government, corporate sectors, research and environmental organisations, and Indigenous peoples. I applaud those who were involved in the planning and execution of the summit. I pay particular tribute to the Federal Minister for the Environment and Water, my good colleague and friend Tanya Plibersek, MP, member for Sydney, who welcomed international delegates to Sydney in style. She is an absolute shining light in the environment space.

SASCHA BAILEY

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands) (16:28): I recognise the achievements of St Philomena's student Sascha Bailey for excelling in the sport of rugby. She was recently selected to play at the 2024 Pasifika Youth Cup for the under-12s Barbarians team in November. Sascha was a member of my mighty victorious Moree under-10s ruby team, of which I was lucky enough to be the coach. I congratulate Sascha on this selection, adding to her bow of sporting achievements. Earlier this year she represented our local diocese at

State level for rugby, playing in the NSW PSSA Girls Rugby Championships and later in the year went on to represent the Central North Barbarians team at the State under-11 Girls Rugby 7's Championships, held at Forster. I commend Sascha for her hard work and commitment to rugby. I thank Sascha's parents, Matthew and Mellita, for their fantastic support.

TIMOR CHINESE ASSOCIATION OF NSW

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (16:29): On 12 October 2024 I had the honour of attending the twenty-third presidential inauguration ceremony of the Timor Chinese Association of NSW. The event not only celebrated a significant transition in leadership but also highlighted the strong community spirit that defines the association. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the outgoing president, Mr Tony Von, and his dedicated team for their outstanding contributions over the past two terms. Their hard work and commitment have laid a solid foundation for the association's future. I also congratulate Mr William Leong, his executive committee and the advisory committee on their recent election. It is inspiring to see such enthusiastic individuals stepping forward to serve our community. As they embark on this new journey, I wish them all the success in their endeavours. Together, we can continue to strengthen our community ties and enhance the lives of those we serve in our local area.

ADRIAN RIZZUTO

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (16:30): I ask the House to join me in congratulating Adrian Rizzuto on his recent graduation from Holy Cross College, Ryde. Having attended the ceremony in person, I witnessed the culmination of Adrian's years of dedication and hard work. Completing year 12 is an impressive achievement and he should be incredibly proud of this significant milestone. I am hopeful that he is pleased with his Higher School Certificate results and I wish him every success as he moves into the next phase of life's journey. The HSC is a demanding time for all students and I commend Adrian for his continued determination to succeed. Undoubtedly, his perseverance and commitment will serve him well in all of his future endeavours. On behalf of the Ryde community and this House, I extend my best wishes to Adrian and congratulate him on this exceptional achievement. May the future be bright and prosperous for him and his family.

MUSOS CORNER

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (16:31): I congratulate Newcastle's beloved music store Musos Corner on the establishment of its new state-of-the-art performance space for all-ages performers. The performance space features a professional sound system, lighting and stage design, and can host a crowd of between 100 and 150 people. Primarily designed for educational workshops and youth development, the venue will be available for hire for school programs and all-ages album and EP launches. Young performers and musicians will also have access to professional music operators to show them how the industry works. Newcastle's all-ages scene has struggled for over a decade to find appropriate venues, so this is an exciting opportunity for our young musicians in Newcastle. I applaud Musos Corner for this unique venue and for investing in the next generation of local musicians.

ALEXANDER MAROON

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (16:32): I ask the House to join me in congratulating Alexander Maroon on his recent graduation from Marist College Eastwood. Having attended the ceremony in person, I witnessed the culmination of Alexander's years of dedication and hard work. Completing year 12 is an impressive achievement and he should be incredibly proud of this significant milestone. I am hopeful that he is pleased with his Higher School Certificate results and I wish him every success as he moves into the next phase of life's journey. The HSC is a demanding time for all students, and I commend Alexander for his continued determination to succeed. Undoubtedly, his perseverance and commitment will serve him well in all of his future endeavours. On behalf of the Ryde community and this House, I extend my best wishes to Alexander and congratulate him on this exceptional achievement. May the future be bright and prosperous for him and his family.

Private Members' Statements

CASHLESS GAMING

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:33): I acknowledge the important work done on 22 October by the Northern Beaches Council and a number of local organisations and agencies, which hosted a round table on the impact of gambling on the northern beaches. Every year more than \$8 billion is funnelled into the 85,000 poker machines in New South Wales. Over the past couple of years the percentage of losses has been increasing steadily. Northern Beaches Council is one of only two councils in this State that has gambling policies. Interestingly, Fairfield council is the other one. The northern beaches has 2,040 poker machines. In comparison, Tasmania has 2,294 poker machines. On the northern beaches, \$2.8 million per week is gambled away and that has been a consistent amount over the past two years.

In the lead-up to the last election, the former Government put forward a comprehensive plan to make every poker machine cashless by 31 December 2028. That was done in response to the NSW Crime Commission report on money laundering via electronic gaming machines. It is important to recognise that the scourge of gambling affects not only the individual who may be facing the challenge but also their family and friends and the broader community. For that reason, it is incredibly important that the work of Northern Beaches Council and others to consider a variety of different policies and the ways in which we can educate and lobby to effect change when it comes to gambling is done quickly.

The policy put forward by the previous Government around the cashless transition was to support all eight recommendations of the NSW Crime Commissioner to eliminate money laundering at pubs and clubs. It included the introduction—through legislation, importantly—of mandatory cashless gaming across all venues in the State by 31 December 2028. The policy also included protecting the economic viability of venues across New South Wales, particularly in regional areas and border communities, by providing financial support to those clubs and organisations so that they could have a thriving music or food scene and not be reliant upon poker machines in their facilities and buildings. We note that there is a trial underway in New South Wales. There is no reason to believe that the Government is not seriously looking at this. However, feedback has suggested that the trial is experiencing some challenges. About 10 clubs and four hotels, one of which is in the Tweed—and I note the member for Tweed is in the Chamber—are participating in it.

Importantly, the results of the cashless gaming trial will be incorporated into a report that will be provided to the Government by the Independent Panel on Gaming Reform. We understand that this report will be provided in November, which is not far away, and should give a good insight into how quickly and steadily recommendations and further action can be taken to potentially introduce cashless gaming across New South Wales. I raise this issue because of the work done in the round table on the northern beaches, which identified significant concerns in my community about the impact of poker machines. I think there is a willingness from clubs and organisations to strongly look at what improvements could be made when it comes to cashless gaming. It is important to deal with this issue. There was and has been near bipartisan support to tackle it head on.

We hope that the report will be produced and published on time in November and we look forward to reading the findings on the cashless gaming trial put forward by the Independent Panel on Gaming Reform. I thank all of the people and organisations that participated in the Northern Beaches Council round table, in particular the mayor and the staff at the council, who put a lot of effort into facilitating it, and also the many advocates who have been along for the ride for a long time to look at how we can reduce the impact of gambling and gaming in our communities. In New South Wales more than \$8 billion is funnelled into 85,000 poker machines every year. The State has some of the highest per capita numbers of poker machines anywhere outside of Nevada in the world, which is not a statistic that any of us should be proud of.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:38): Today the NSW Parliamentary Research Service released its socio-economic disadvantage paper based on the 2021 census. I thank everybody at the parliamentary research group. It is a broad measure of socio-economic disadvantage calculated from the data in the census and it measures income, housing, occupation and education. What does the data tell us? It gives us an understanding of our electorates, where disadvantage is present and where it is not. In the top 10 per cent most socially disadvantaged electorates in New South Wales, sitting at number one is the Fairfield electorate. That is followed by the electorates of Cabramatta, Liverpool, Bankstown, Auburn, Mount Druitt and Granville. Canterbury and Barwon round up the top 10 per cent.

That is where disadvantage sits in our community. Those statistics were released today by the NSW Parliamentary Research Service.

Members will spot the trend: Nearly every single electorate, except for Barwon, is in Western Sydney and is held by Labor. Time and again data comes forward showing exactly where the most disadvantage is and where we should invest government funding. Recently I was asked how my electorate ended up in the top 10 most socially disadvantaged electorates. I told them that I have the second highest unemployment in the State, I have the second highest homelessness in the State, I have a thousand refugees who have no income support, and about 80 per cent of the population speaks another language at home. It is hardly surprising that electorates like Auburn and Fairfield are at the top of that list.

Earlier today I was surprised when Opposition members spoke about how grants are allocated in this State. They tried to compare what happened under the former Government with a Labor grant allocation that gave every single electorate \$400,000. By looking at social data about inequality, we can understand where the former Government's problems occurred. For the past 12 years there was complete inequality in the allocation of grants. Let us look at the 2020 round of the former Government's \$40 million Greater Sydney Sports Facility Fund. Some

\$5 million was spent to upgrade North Sydney pool in the electorate of North Shore, which is almost at the top of the most advantaged electorates in the State; \$618,000 was awarded to the North Shore Rowing Club in the leafy suburb of Lane Cove, which is only one spot behind North Shore on the list of most advantaged electorates; and \$870,000 was given to the Old Barker Rugby Club in Turramurra, in the electorate of Wahroonga, which is also one of the most advantaged electorates in the State.

By looking at the allocation of those funds, we can see what happened under the former Government's grants programs. In 2020 Liberal Party electorates received 67 per cent of funding from that grant program. Five Labor electorates received funding under the program, including only one electorate from the top 10 most disadvantaged. During the first round of those grants, 12 of the 15 grants that were allocated were announced by Liberal MPs and candidates ahead of the 2019 election. Rather than facilitating a rigorous, fair and equitable assessment process, it was clear that then Minister Stuart Ayres directly intervened, including by personally hand-picking five of the successful projects in the final stages.

Labor members watched as schools in other electorates received funding while schools in their electorates received no funding. Auburn Girls High School still has no school hall. Birrong Boys High School and Birrong Girls High School did not receive funding until Labor came to government. Birrong Boys High School had no doors on the toilets; that happened under the Liberal Government. Last week the education Minister announced funding to upgrade those schools—including, most fundamentally, the toilet blocks at Birrong Boys High School, Birrong Girls High School and Regents Park Public School. It is inconceivable that Opposition members would talk about Labor's process for allocating grants given what it did while it was in government, particularly given where the disadvantage is. The actions of the former Government were negligent.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (16:42): International students are an incredibly important group of people who contribute enormously to the State, both as students in our world-class tertiary and vocational education and training systems and also as consumers in our economy. New South Wales is one of Australia's most popular study destinations. More than 190 countries are represented in the nation's largest community of international students. Between January and July 2024, 33,585 international students enrolled to study in the statistical area covering the electorate of Parramatta, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Of those students, 21,843 enrolled in vocational education and training, and 9,596 enrolled in higher education. Seven universities and 21 training colleges in Parramatta attracted that large number of international students.

The top five fields of study among those enrolments were management and commerce, engineering and related technologies, society and culture, information technology, and food, hospitality and personal services. The community of Parramatta is proudly diverse. Some 26 per cent of international students come from China, 13 per cent from Nepal, 11 per cent from India, 4 per cent from the Philippines and 4 per cent from Vietnam. Some 71 per cent of international students in Parramatta are under the age of 30, and they actively contribute to and participate in our community. Recently I met with 12 international students from Western Sydney University to discuss their experiences. The main topics centred on cultural integration, cost-of-living pressures, balancing work and study commitments, and locating appropriate accommodation.

In the current housing crisis and with the cost-of-living pressures, international students face significant challenges. Their student visas limit them to working no more than 48 hours per fortnight while they study. That restriction presents many challenges. When I met with those students and with others at a Sydney Alliance event, I was saddened to hear stories of large and frequent rent increases. For example, one student told me they had received \$340 in rent increases over two years, which is unreasonable for a student whose work is capped at 24 hours per week. I was also shocked to hear stories of overcrowding in rental accommodation available to international students. One young man said that restrictions on utilities had been imposed on him by his landlord due to overcrowding in the granny flat where he lived in North Parramatta. One young woman told me about faulty utilities and other safety concerns at her private accommodation, where 12 students lived in an old house.

The Government's rental reforms will help all renters, including those international students. Students also spoke to me about feeling unsafe and not knowing who to contact for help during their time studying in New South Wales. One young woman told me about a recent experience and how she had begun to worry that she would be followed home. When she reaches her apartment she ritually locks her door three times because of her concerns, fears and trauma. Those students feel they do not have any support services outside of free counselling; they do not know what other help they can access. Students undertaking studies that require work placements have also experienced a loss of shifts at paid jobs as a result of those placements. They face many challenges while juggling those placements given the current cost-of-living pressures.

International students must meet a financial capacity requirement, and they are required to show they have a minimum of \$24,505 in savings to cover their annual living costs. While students acknowledge the requirement

to finance themselves, often that amount is insufficient to provide for their needs in Parramatta and across New South Wales. We are very fortunate that Study NSW supports those students, and universities and other colleges also provide support. But as the local member, I feel there is so much more to do to support them. Those students are residents in our community, and they contribute a lot to our society. I look forward to speaking more in the future about the wonderful international students in Parramatta.

NORTHERN RIVERS BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (16:47): Once again, I am 100 per cent for the Tweed. Businesses in my electorate continue to shine. An impressive number were recognised the 2024 Northern Rivers Regional Business Awards, which were held last month. Potager, a beautiful restaurant in Carool, added to its already long list of achievements by taking home three awards, including Excellence in Tourism, Recreational and Visitor Services and the Employer of Choice in the 20 employees or under category. Peter Burr was highly commended as an Outstanding Business Leader in the 20 employees or under category. It has been a stellar awards season for Potager, which recently received awards at the Tweed Business Awards and the Restaurant and Catering Hostplus Awards for Excellence. I congratulate the team at Potager for all they have achieved and will no doubt continue to achieve in the future.

Another award winner was Nail Snail, which won the award for Excellence in Innovation.

MoneySmith Group was highly commended in this category as well. Paul Baker from McGloin Baker Civil Engineers and Environmental Consultants was named Outstanding Young Business Leader. Farm and Co Restaurant at Cudgen was awarded for outstanding visitor experience. Studio Eleven Hair was commended for excellence in retail and personal services. Highline All Electrical was commended for excellence in trade, construction and manufacturing. Effective Workplace Solutions was highly commended for excellence in business and professional services. Winchester Farm was highly commended for excellence in diversity and inclusion. Pure Health Therapies in Pottsville was highly commended for excellence in health, care and wellness services.

Winners of the State-aligned categories will now represent the Northern Rivers at the New South Wales Business Awards, to be held in Sydney later this month. As many in this place would know, the last few years have been a roller-coaster for businesses in New South Wales and, indeed, Australia. It is so pleasing to see so many Tweed businesses thriving and being recognised among their Northern Rivers business peers. I congratulate every business recognised at the 2024 Northern Rivers Regional Business Awards.

It is a real honour to represent the Tweed. Health, beauty, maintenance, cars and hospitality are highly competitive businesses. Potager recently won at the national level in the Restaurant and Catering Association Awards. Kingscliff TAFE has a large catering area and continues to grow. We were fortunate to receive funding from the previous Government to create a place for training commercial vets at Tweed River High School, which is turning out first-class vets. Being a tourist area, Tweed's population triples over the school holidays and the festive season. There is a lot of employment, but a lot of businesses are now struggling to get workers.

When I managed the Tweed Heads Bowls Club, we would have a steady stream of people coming to apply for jobs. Now there is a new term, "hot bods". A hot bod is someone with no experience whatever. Providing they can stand up, they are hot bods. Whatever job I have, I am looking for a hot bod to train up in that area in whatever I need. It is a term I never heard before. Even the nail salons are advertising for hot bods. That just means if you can walk you can come in and get a job. It is a competitive market out there, but we continue to grow. We are one of the fastest-growing regional areas in New South Wales. Three housing estates that will combine to provide about 14,000 new homes will be approved in the next five to 10 years. It is all very good, and these awards are important for recognising local businesses' achievements. Once again, I am 100 per cent for the Tweed.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): I congratulate all the winners, who are all 100 per cent for the Tweed.

KIDS ECMO REFERRAL SERVICE

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (16:52): It was a privilege to attend with the Minister for Health the launch of the Kids ECMO, or extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, Referral Service, which is saving lives, quite literally. For me this launch holds particular significance, because it hits close to home. I am reminded of my own son, who was born with meconium aspiration syndrome. In those first terrifying hours, his condition developed into a pneumothorax, and he had to be rushed from St George Hospital to the Sydney Children's Hospital. As his condition deteriorated, doctors had to insert a tube into his chest cavity to allow his lung to expand properly again. I know from personal experience the fear and helplessness that accompany those moments and the gratitude that you feel towards the medical professionals, who do everything in their power to save your child's life.

The Kids ECMO Referral Service [KERS] has already provided lifesaving support to Australian families. It was an honour to meet beautiful, little, energetic Jack at the launch. He is one of KERS's first success stories. Just as my family had its moment of deep relief, we are able to celebrate Jack's survival, thanks to the efforts of this service. Jack was born in Canberra and, just like my son, had suffered from severe meconium aspiration. Within 24 hours, Jack's condition had deteriorated. The KERS team placed Jack on a mobile ECMO device and, alongside the Newborn and Paediatric Emergency Transport Service [NETS] team, transported him to the Children's Hospital at Westmead.

ECMO is a form of temporary life support for critically ill patients. It uses a mechanical pump to draw blood from the patient, remove carbon dioxide, add oxygen, and then return the blood to the body. For many parents, this is medical knowledge they would never have expected to learn. But, for parents whose children are critically ill, like Jack's parents, Rosie and David, it means everything. At the launch, I witnessed the technology in action, including its mobile capacity. Now this lifesaving treatment is available not just in the major hospitals of Sydney but right across New South Wales and beyond, including places like Canberra, where Jack's journey began. This expansion is a game changer for families who live in regional areas, giving their children access to cutting-edge, lifesaving treatment without the delays that distance can impose. At the core of this success is a team of dedicated professionals: doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers, and technical and support staff members from KERS, NETS and the Children's Hospital at Westmead. Their commitment to children and their families is remarkable, from the moment they receive the call to the moment they reunite a family, like Jack's, with its child.

Meeting Jack and his parents at the NETS base at Bankstown Airport in my electorate of East Hills was a powerful reminder of the emotional toll these situations take on families and how the work of these extraordinary teams brings not only medical expertise but also hope. I was able to relay my feelings and the fear I experienced over 30 years ago and was pleased to hear that those involved are considering how to improve communication with parents, as well as considering the medical needs of the child. For parents like Rosie and David and for families like mine, the efforts of KERS and NETS mean more than words can express. I thank every individual who has contributed to making KERS a reality. They are not just saving lives; they are giving families back their joy, their future and their children.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER VOICE TO PARLIAMENT

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (16:56): Just over a year ago, 70 percent of my constituents and I accepted the invitation from First Nations people in the Uluru Statement from the Heart by writing yes in the referendum and began the walk in a movement of the Australian people for a better future. While millions of Australians engaged with the Voice, treaty and truth, many for the first time, the nationwide result was heartbreaking. Having been involved in a national public vote, the marriage equality vote, and still impacted by that, I cannot imagine the pain felt by those connected to the Voice campaign.

However, the invitation for a voice, treaty and truth is still open. Across the country, parliaments have responded to the invitation. For a voice, the Australian Capital Territory created a statutory First Nations representative body in 2008. In 2018 Victoria introduced legislation to create a representative body. In 2023 South Australia created statutory local and State voices. The City of Sydney has the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel, which acts as a voice to the council, and I hope it will be protected in the City of Sydney Act. For treaty, Victoria, Queensland and the Northern Territory have passed legislation related to a treaty process. Western Australia's 2016 Noongar settlement has been described as Australia's first treaty. For truth, Victoria is undertaking a formal truth-telling process, and Queensland has commenced a truth-telling and healing inquiry.

Internationally, in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, for voice there is indigenous peoples' rights to participate in decision-making in matters affecting their rights, under article 18, and that States consult with them about measures affecting them, under article 19. For treaty, there is indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination, under articles 3 and 4, and the recognition, observance and enforcement of treaties and agreements, under article 37. For truth, there is indigenous peoples' rights to use and transmit their histories, under article 13, and have dispute resolution procedures and effective remedies for infringement of their individual and collective rights, under article 40.

New Zealand has had a history of dedicated Māori representation in Parliament since 1867, the Treaty of Waitangi since 1840 and, since 1975, the Waitangi Tribunal, which, although not formally a truth commission, determines the meaning and effect of the treaty and differences between its Māori and English texts.

Canada and the United States employ First Nations representative measures and have a long history of treaties and truth commissions. Canada legislated the United Nations declaration, recognising it as an authoritative interpretive source for Canadian law. The declaration was first enacted provincially in British Columbia and required the alignment of local laws with the declaration via an action plan and regular reporting to parliament. The recent Federal parliamentary inquiry into the application of the declaration includes recommendations for a

national action plan, an independent process of agreement-making and truth-telling and a role for parliamentary scrutiny.

The King's recent visit provides a timely reminder that Australia is the only Commonwealth nation yet to sign treaties with indigenous peoples. The truth of the scale of the Australian Frontier Wars—including the disposessions, massacres, assimilations, removals, cultural deprivation and theft—continues to emerge. The truth includes Governor Macquarie's brutal role. He instigated this building's construction as part of the colony's first hospital—paradoxically, a healing place—and is recognised in the street's name. The truth is he has blood on his hands. In 1816 he instructed Captain Schaw of the 46th Regiment "to strike with the greater terror". Our city is littered with statues of colonisers, which, to me, is one of the cruellest forms of propaganda.

The Productivity Commission reported that all governments are not adequately delivering on commitments under the 2020 National Agreement on Closing the Gap. The Uluru invitation seeks to heal the torment of the powerlessness of First Nations peoples so they can take their rightful place and determine their futures. The potential of abrogation by the Federal Parliament—a decade-long process—or the fact that some First Nations peoples may not participate should not stop News South Wales from righting wrongs. Indeed, we would be in great company with other countries, States and Territories that have journeyed for a better future by responding to voice, treaty and truth in distinctive ways.

Everyone who wrote yes in New South Wales is heartened that there is \$5 million budgeted, an awarded community consultation tender and the appointment of three treaty commissioners. First Nations peoples were first recognised in the New South Wales Constitution Act 14 years ago. Today, I call on all members to ensure that voice, treaty and truth are realised.

YILA HEALING TRAIL

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (17:01): The Yila Healing Trail, a wonderful week-long event organised by the Ngungwulah Aboriginal Corporation, concluded last Sunday. The vision of the healing trail is a healed country where people understand reciprocal giving and receiving with nature and see themselves as part of the rich tapestry of lands, waterways, seas, skies and creatures. The more we walk on country and understand each other's cultures, the better off we will all be in the future. The wonderful 10-day trail kicked off in Nowra on Friday 20 October at Paringa Park Reserve, a wonderful natural amphitheatre surrounded by sandstone cliffs and Cullunghutti Mountain, which hold great cultural significance. The sites form part of the dreaming tracks where freshwater songlines meet saltwater songlines.

The opening ceremony began by walking through a smoking ceremony onto the grounds of Paringa, where we were welcomed onto country by Uncle Paul McLeod. The evening was a meaningful celebration of culture and connection to country. It featured a range of Indigenous performers from across the South Coast, including the Mudjingaal Yangamba women's choir, who sang in the Dharawal and Dhurga languages; David Little, who performed a didgeridoo session; and Ash Mac, with her song *Never Letting Go*. Amanda, a possum cloak maker from Lake Conjola, led a heartbeat drumming and meditation session, which was a very special experience. The entire evening was a meaningful celebration of culture and connection to country and was a beautiful way to mark the start of the 10 days of the Yila Healing Trail, with activities aimed at uniting people and honouring the land.

The healing trail included more than 80 events held between Kangaroo Valley and Bawley Point. They all had the objective to advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture within the community. Participants engaged with programs on Yuin astronomy, local seasons and stories, connection to country walks, bush tucker, cultural burning, honouring creation ancestry, dying on country, women's business and more. I was lucky enough to attend three events as part of the healing trail. Last Saturday, I was honoured to attend the weaving workshop at Jervis Bay Maritime Museum, where I learnt an Indigenous weaving technique. It was wonderful to learn the local technique and the fabulous workshop was enjoyed by many.

On Sunday the official closing ceremony on the grass of the Ulladulla Civic Centre kicked off with a welcome to country by a local Yuin man and Aboriginal education officer, Uncle Phil Butler. There was strong involvement from many local schools. More than 500 students were gifted beautiful clapsticks made by Michael Robinson. With the help of Uncle Paul, Uncle Joe and Uncle Ronald McLeod, the students were taught the traditional *Yila* song. During the closing ceremony, children joined in to clap in healing to *Yila*, which means "to bring" in the Dhurga language. As the afternoon moved into picnic mode, the community was graced with Hein Cooper singing his version of *Nature Boy* and many other tunes.

The afternoon was a fitting end to a wonderful 10-day event. However, there was one more very special event that night, facilitated by Jorg Lowrey from Manyana Matters. Jorg hosted a guided night walk in a public forest in Manyana, where we got up close and personal with some of our local native, nocturnal, non-human family. It was a special experience to be in the forest and breathe out with the trees as night fell, and to feel the

stars all around us. I thank Cate Peterson, Uncle Paul McLeod and all members of the committee for their commitment to reconciliation and organising this fabulous event. I look forward to seeing what they organise for next year.

NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:06): Local councils play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our communities. They provide essential services, maintain our beautiful parks and open spaces and plan for the infrastructure that will support our growing population. Whether they are protecting our unique heritage, supporting local businesses or fostering sustainability, local councils are instrumental in making sure our goals are achieved. My electorate covers three local council areas: Mosman, North Sydney and a little bit of Lane Cove. I congratulate all councillors who were elected in the recent local government elections.

I congratulate newly elected Mosman mayor Ann Marie Kimber and look forward to working alongside her to ensure Mosman continues to flourish under her leadership. I thank former Mosman mayor Carolyn Corrigan for her service to the community over a number of years and note that she has been re-elected to remain on the council as a councillor. I acknowledge Roy Bendall, Pip Friedrich, Simon Menzies, Michael Randall and Colleen Godsell for their election to council. I acknowledge and pay tribute to my wonderful friend Libby Moline, who served on Mosman Council for 16 years, including two years as the deputy mayor. I recognise Libby's fantastic achievements during her time on the council and thank her for her unwavering dedication to her role. Her tenure was marked by her genuine care and concern for the Mosman community. I thank her for her service. She will not be returning to council.

I make special mention of Colleen Godsell, AM, who was elected to Mosman Council. Over the years, Colleen has dedicated much of her time to volunteering for the Mosman community. She has worked tirelessly for the 1st Mosman Scouts, organising fundraising and events. She raised more than \$1 million to preserve the Mosman Scout Hall, known as "The Barn", which is regarded as the birthplace of scouting in Australia. Colleen was also awarded North Shore Woman of the Year in 2021 for her dedication and service to our local community. I look forward to seeing the contributions she makes on Mosman Council. She is the first Greens member to be elected.

I congratulate Zoe Baker on her re-election as North Sydney mayor. I look forward to once again working alongside her to ensure the best possible outcomes for the north Sydney area. I also acknowledge Godfrey Santer, Nicole Antonini, MaryAnn Beregi, Efi Carr, Christopher Holding, Angus Hoy, Jess Keen, James Spenceley and Shannon Welch for their election to council. I am particularly excited to see two strong local voices articulating Liberal values on North Sydney Council. I congratulate councillors Jess Keen and Efi Carr on their election to council. I have no doubt their commitment to our community will be pivotal in shaping a prosperous future for our local area.

I note Jess Keen's past work as a councillor. I look forward to working alongside her and Efi on a number of projects and key issues. We have already met to talk about some of the challenges facing our community, including preserving and protecting the Young Street Plaza precinct and other green space areas, tackling the issue of tobacconist stores, finding new and innovative ways to increase public space across our community and addressing the challenges we are experiencing with parking meters. All members would have read recent newspaper reports about the challenges North Sydney Council faces with parking meters.

Finally, I congratulate newly elected Lane Cove mayor Merri Southwood and note her previous work as a councillor. I look forward to working with her for our local community in the small part of my electorate that overlaps the Lane Cove local government area. I acknowledge Kathy Bryla, Bridget Kennedy, Caleb Taylor, Helena Greenwell, David Roenfeldt, Merri Southwood, Scott Bennison, Rochelle Flood and Katie Little on their election to council. I look forward to working with all our new and returning councillors across Mosman, North Sydney and Lane Cove councils. I am excited about what we can accomplish together, and my door is always open for constructive dialogue, partnership and support. Once again, I offer my congratulations. I know we can make our local community an even better place to live, work and grow.

LIVERPOOL ELECTORATE COMMUNITY

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (17:09): We often speak proudly of Australia as a melting pot of people from all over the world who have been attracted by a variety of factors. I prefer the metaphor of a fruit salad that I once heard used by Federal Minister for Education Jason Clare to describe the way our diverse community groups maintain connection to culture and heritage but come together to form an enhanced society. Liverpool is a perfect example of this fruit salad, a community that wears its diversity proudly and uses curiosity and empathy to learn more about colleagues, neighbours and friends. It is worth reflecting on this important,

special source of our harmonious and exemplary multicultural and multi-faith country in the context of the research that just won the Nobel Prize for economics.

The 2024 prize was awarded to three United States based economists who examined the advantages of democracy and rule of law, and why they are strong in some countries and not in others. Daron Acemoglu and Simon Johnson of MIT and James Robinson of the University of Chicago were awarded the prize for their influential work on how institutions shape economic development. Their work incorporates politics and sociology as much as economics. As we live in a time when democracy appears to be losing support, the Nobel Committee has rewarded work that demonstrates that, on average, democratic countries governed by the rule of law have wealthier citizens.

Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson's work divides institutions into two categories: inclusive and extractive. According to the laureates, inclusive institutions such as those that enforce property rights, protect democracy and limit corruption will foster economic development. In contrast, extractive institutions, which give rise to a high concentration of power and limited political freedom, seek to concentrate resources in the hands of a small elite and thus stifle economic development. The laureates claim that the introduction of inclusive institutions has had a positive long-term effect on prosperity. Indeed, those institutions are today found primarily in high-income countries mainly in the West. The richest 20 per cent of the world's countries are around 30 times richer than the poorest 20 per cent.

Moreover, the income gap is persistent. Although the poorest countries have become richer, they are not catching up with the most prosperous. The award winners have connected this to differences in institutions and found it derives from differences in the behaviour of European colonisers in different parts of the world many centuries ago. An Indigenous population of higher density could be expected to give greater resistance, hence fewer European settlers moved there. On the other hand, a large Indigenous population, once defeated, offered opportunities for cheap labour in those times. That meant the institutions focused on benefiting a small elite at the expense of the wider population. There were no elections and limited political rights. In the places that were more sparsely populated, the more colonisers settled and established inclusive institutions that incentivised hard work and led to demands for political rights.

Paradoxically, this means parts of the world that were more prosperous around 500 years ago are now relatively poor. Prosperity was greater in Mexico under the Aztecs than it was at the same time in the parts of North America now called Canada and the United States. More so than in previous years, this year's winners have written for the public as well as the profession. The writers have long explored the link between progress, institutions and technology. In May this year Acemoglu wrote about artificial intelligence, putting forward the controversial position that its effects on productivity would be non-trivial but modest—another way of saying they would be small—and that its effect on wellbeing might be even smaller and was unlikely to reduce inequality.

As we navigate future challenges and counter threats to democracy and the rule of law, we must also acknowledge the importance of social cohesion and community harmony to our relative prosperity and quality of life. As we seek to respond to those challenges, it is important that in the current cost-of-living crisis, when many of our community members are doing it quite tough, we must not seek to further threaten democracy and weaken the rule of law. Instead, we must seek to put down the threats that divide our diverse community and strengthen Australia's social fabric by enhancing social cohesion.

NORTHERN TABLELANDS ELECTORATE WINTER CROP HARVEST

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands) (17:14): Across my electorate of Northern Tablelands we are getting ready for the winter crop harvest, from Mungindi in the west to Swan Vale in the east and from Boggabilla in the north to Berrigal Creek in the south. To harvest and bring in our winter crops means long days and nights, with 18-hour shifts on average. In my electorate those crops are wheat, barley, faba beans, canola and chickpeas. It has been a good season at home this year. We are looking at around 17 million tonnes coming off over the next few months, which would be the third highest production on record for the State of New South Wales. My electorate measures 60,000 square kilometres. In my western patch, in Moree, we are looking at probably the best wheat crop in the past 50 years. In New South Wales this year the area planted for winter crops has increased by approximately 18 per cent, which will result in around 6½ million hectares for this season's winter crop. Again, that would be the third highest ever planted on record. It has been a good season across the State.

A good winter harvest has massive economic benefits for those of us who live in the bush. If we can get this crop off, get it in the bins and get it to market, there will be anywhere up to around \$8 billion worth of grain, money that will come back into our local economies. It is not only the farmers who benefit from a good winter crop harvest; indeed, all of our towns do. For example, in Moree our diesel mechanics do well. Our spare parts shops go well. Our freight businesses, truck drivers, bearings shops, fuel distributors, machinery shops and even

our uni students coming home to work on the chaser bins all make money. When farmers are going well in our regional communities, our entire communities do well.

The harvest opens up employment opportunities for our locals, our kids and our Indigenous community, but also for travellers. Last week at the airport I was chatting—very badly in my schoolboy French, I must admit—with two French guys who have come to Moree for three months to work on the harvest. They did not speak much English and I certainly did not speak much French, but we worked out what each of us was doing. They are excited to be in Australia for the first time. A community like Moree will welcome them. I hope all the backpackers back home have an enjoyable winter crop harvest. Our bakeries make money. Our pubs make money, particularly when it rains. Our local towns are absolutely abuzz at this time of year.

However, the harvest is not without its issues. For example, the Moree Plains Shire Council area is 18,000 square kilometres—a big local government area—yet our rate base is not enough to maintain our roads. A lot of our black soil roads have issues. It has been wet in the western half of my electorate, which means those roads have been chopped up. That makes it difficult to get the product to market. Staffing is also an issue. Every member of this House knows how hard it is to attract and retain staff across all industries. The Federal Government could help in that regard by loosening visa eligibility requirements for regional New South Wales.

The Croppa Creek store makes a lot of money at this time of year. Unfortunately, it was broken into last night by what appears to be three hooded young men.

Caroline and Todd heard them as they live at the shop. Caroline was injured in the scuffle that occurred, and their nine-year-old daughter Matilda saw all of it. It is not without its issues but, in true country spirit, they had the shop open by 5.30 this morning and they were trading again. It is a great time for regional New South Wales. If we can get this crop in the bins, all our community will benefit, not just the farmers. I look forward to helping with the harvest this Saturday afternoon when I will be on a chaser bin.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): I thank the member for Northern Tablelands. I have fingers and toes crossed for a great harvest. Hopefully the weather stays good.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:19): Modern justices of the peace [JPs] are steeped in tradition. Their role traces back to 1195 when Richard the Lionheart commissioned certain knights to preserve the peace in unruly areas. The knights were responsible to the King for ensuring the law was upheld. They were known as keepers of the peace. Fast-forward through history to 1788 when Governor Arthur Phillip was appointed Australia's first justice of the peace. JPs have since become a vital element in maintaining peace, decorum and a successful justice system in Australia. A voluntary honour, the title of justice of the peace is entrusted to members of our community who demonstrate the responsibility, candour and respect for law required to bear the significant post-nominal JP.

JPs hold a pivotal position, serving as guardians of law and order at the grassroots level, where the impacts of their decisions resonate deeply with everyday lives. They are entrusted to witness important documents like statutory declarations and affidavits, and to certify copies of original documents. Our JPs in Western Sydney stand ready to assist, volunteering their time to support our community. Their role extends beyond legal formalities; it embraces the human aspect of justice, offering clarity and reassurance to those who seek it. Their decisions may not always be easy, yet they are made with careful consideration and a deep respect for the law. Each ruling carries the weight of accountability and the responsibility to uphold the rights and liberties of every individual, irrespective of background or circumstance.

As a barrister and a member of Parliament, I know that our courts system would grind to a halt without our JPs. The electorate of Prospect is home to the NSW Justices Association Cumberland Branch. Its peak body, the NSW Justices Association [NSWJA], was established in 1911 to offer support, information and advocacy to justices of the peace across New South Wales. Led by State president Dr John Brodie, the NSWJA has grown to provide accurate and trusted JP services all across New South Wales. I will spotlight the fine work of the Cumberland branch. The branch has fostered a community of professional committed JPs through training and development opportunities, advocacy services, and networking and fellowship initiatives. Their local complimentary services assist our community to achieve just and efficient outcomes. Offering nine registered desks at shopping centres and libraries and three affiliate desks at council offices across the Cumberland local government area, their services meet our community when and where they need it.

Those JPs have helped the Prospect electorate to access fair and informed support on over 28,000 occasions this year. I am so proud to be a patron of the Cumberland branch. I look forward to continued work with the NSWJA, particularly in Prospect, to improve the JP experience. I thank the NSWJA, particularly the Cumberland branch, and all JPs in the Prospect electorate for giving their time and effort so generously to help our community

achieve timely and efficient access to justice. I acknowledge Cumberland branch president Rees John, JP; Nino Strangio, JP, secretary and treasurer; the Cumberland executive committee; and our Cumberland JPs for their support for our Western Sydney community.

In New South Wales, we are fortunate to have 63,000 JPs in metropolitan, regional and rural New South Wales. As a government, we are committed to continuing to work with JPs across New South Wales to see that their work is valued and supported. The Government's changes aim to improve the experience of all JPs, future-fit their role and maintain connectivity to our communities. I thank JPs in Western Sydney and across Prospect for their unwavering commitment and for generously giving their time to uphold the principles of fairness and equality for all.

ROZELLE INTERCHANGE

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (17:24): It has been nearly three months since I have spoken about the Rozelle interchange in this place, which means it is well and truly time to speak about it again. As members will recall, when the interchange opened almost a year ago it shut down our major road network, causing chaos across the city. The impacts on my community and across the Balmain electorate were catastrophic, and my office received hundreds of calls and messages from distressed pedestrians and motorists calling for the issues to be resolved. The congestion along the City West Link and Victoria Road, where drivers were forced to merge into a single lane, caused widespread disruption and tailbacks across the area for several months. Those impacts flowed onto our local streets, creating an unacceptable situation.

Over the following weeks I met with Transport for NSW officials and liaised with the Minister's office to make a number of improvements. But it soon became clear that the operational interventions would not be sufficient to fix the problems being experienced in my community. Our community deserves streets that are safe and efficient and that allow us to travel easily and reliably, which is why I worked with my Greens colleague Cate Faehrmann to establish the parliamentary inquiry into the impacts of the Rozelle interchange. Since the Rozelle interchange opened in November last year, our local streets have faced widespread challenges. Through the inquiry, many members of my community and others across Sydney were able to share directly how the changes have made it harder to commute safely and on time, not just if they are travelling by car but also trying to catch buses. I thank the thousands of people who took part in the inquiry, whether by lodging submissions, signing petitions or speaking at the committee hearings.

The committee's inquiry report was damning, with critical findings including that the financial model of WestConnex was based on maximising its sale value, driving design decisions that increased traffic congestion, and that lack of transparency and accountability for those design decisions is unacceptable given the significant impact it has had on the community. The Government has now responded to the inquiry report and, thanks to the thousands of community contributions, we have some positive results. Together, we secured support for key changes, including an urgent and immediate review of traffic light signalling on local roads in Balmain, Rozelle and Drummoyne that intersect with Victoria Road to mitigate traffic congestion on local roads; the implementation of strategies to address rat-running on local roads occurring as a result of the Rozelle interchange; a guarantee that no future major road projects will be privatised; and genuine community consultation and engagement between Transport for NSW, local councils and residents to work to address ongoing issues and concerns from the interchange.

Additionally, we have gained in-principle support for improving active transport links and safety on Victoria Road and along Lilyfield Road and upgrading cycling infrastructure to align with best standards; installing more and safer pedestrian crossings along Victoria Road, one of which has already been installed in my community, which they are very grateful for; and prioritising the expansion of public transport before undertaking new major road projects. We also need a commitment from the Government to continue to expand public transport services, including more buses and ferries in our area. I know that is a huge priority for our community, and I will continue pushing for increased investment in local public transport, including services the Government has already promised, such as the West Balmain and Annandale ferries and the restoration of the 445 bus service to the Balmain East Wharf.

The Government unfortunately failed to act on calls for additional real-time air-quality monitors for the Rozelle exhaust stacks. That is incredibly disappointing given the overwhelming evidence of the harms of road tunnel air pollution, and I look forward to when the chief scientist report into the issue is finally delivered in November after several delays. I will continue pushing the Government to install additional air quality monitors and to filter the stacks. While there have been some positive responses, there is still much more work to be done. As I continue to sit in congestion on the bus for a journey that used to be much faster, along with so many others in my electorate, I know the community wants and expects more to be done. There are still a lot of questions about the design process and the roles of key decision-makers that my community want answered, and I will continue to press the Government for transparency. I have raised a number of questions with the Minister for Roads relating

to the revolving doors between government, the WestConnex Delivery Authority and the Sydney Motorway Corporation, and the various iterations of those entities.

I will continue to raise those questions on behalf of my community until satisfactory responses are given. In the meantime, I will be actively following the Government's progress in implementing the recommendations from the parliamentary inquiry. My community deserves real solutions, and almost a year on we cannot afford further delays. Again, I thank the thousands of people in my community and across Sydney for joining our calls to fix the Rozelle interchange. My community's collective voice has been crucial in pushing the Government to consider and accept the committee's recommendations. We will continue to push for greater transparency and accountability for enabling the chaos that will be the legacy of that disastrous toll road.

GRANVILLE ELECTORATE TRAIN SERVICES

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (17:29): In the past week the new Sydney Trains timetable has come into effect. Unfortunately, I place on record that it does not address the concerns of people in the Granville electorate who want to see the return of express services. I look forward to the more comprehensive timetable that covers the entire Sydney Trains network, and I hope it reinstates express services from Granville station on the T1 western line. I will give members a bit of a history lesson. For 160 years Granville station was a major rail interchange until the 2016 timetable, when the former Liberal-Nationals Government stopped T1 western line services to the station between 6.00 a.m. and 10.00 p.m. on weekdays. That followed a decision in the 2013 timetable to stop express services from stopping at Granville station, making journeys to the city a lot slower. People in Granville now travel on the T2 line, which is far slower than the T1 line. In 2013, when I used to catch the express train to work in the city every day, the journey time was 28 minutes. Under the current timetable, that 20-kilometre journey time on the T2 line has almost doubled to 48 minutes.

One benefit of the new timetable for people in Granville travelling on the T2 line is that although the same number of services will be retained, they will be more evenly paced throughout the morning peak, meaning that services will run every eight minutes. That is a good thing, but locals want train services to the city that are much faster than 48 minutes when the more comprehensive new timetable is delivered. The new timetable is primarily intended to support the changes to the Bankstown line conversion for the metro project. Services from Bankstown to Lidcombe and then on into the city and services from Liverpool into the city are being increased in frequency. Essentially, the T2 and T3 lines are being merged. The sad fact is that will make services for people in Granville slower by about four or five minutes, making journey times 48 minutes pretty much all the time, which will be very irritating for everybody.

Since the reduction in services to and from Granville—and I note that it is a community full of people who bought their homes and settled in the area on the basis of its great train services—passengers have reverted to Parramatta station to get faster trains. It is not a great outcome that people are taking long bus trips or walking long distances to get to Parramatta when there is a perfectly good train station with a perfectly good, underutilised platform where they could catch a train into the city. I ask the Government to use Opal card data to crossmatch the postcodes where those passengers live. I think it will show a lot of people from 2160 and 2142 postcodes catching trains from Parramatta.

Another good thing about the new timetable is the big increase in the frequency of T5 Cumberland line services. Unfortunately, that will not benefit anyone in Granville, but it will help people in Merrylands, Guildford and Yennora who work in Parramatta, with services every 15 minutes during the morning and afternoon peaks. Those trains have only four carriages and are some of the most crowded on the network, so it is important that those services are doubled every hour. I look forward to the return of express train services to and from Granville in the longer term, but I express my disappointment that my community will have to wait for them.

WESTERN SYDNEY AIRCRAFT NOISE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (17:34): I bring to the urgent attention of my parliamentary colleagues and of communities across Western Sydney, south-western Sydney and the Blue Mountains—including, but not limited to, my electorate of Badgerys Creek—the disastrous and blatantly unfair effects of the existing Commonwealth Sydney Airport Curfew Act 1995. In doing so, I call on the Federal Labor Government to act with urgency and amend that legislation. I will write to the Federal infrastructure Minister and the New South Wales shadow Minister for Infrastructure to call for immediate action to amend the legislation, which will unfairly and unnecessarily burden Western Sydney residents with more aircraft noise and pollution than was originally expected after Western Sydney International (Nancy-Bird Walton) Airport opens.

Once the Western Sydney airport opens towards the end of 2026, the curfew Act will force all existing Sydney airport curfew-exempted flights, except air ambulance flights, to use Western Sydney airport instead. That will unnecessarily and unfairly affect hundreds of thousands of Western Sydney residents with additional noise

disturbance and sleep deprivation throughout the night, in addition to the existing flights that are already scheduled to land at Western Sydney airport throughout the night. In 2023 there were approximately 5,000 such curfew-exempted flights at Sydney airport—close to 100 per week—with up to 15 on any given night. They are predominantly overnight domestic freighters, although some international passenger jets arrive between 5.00 a.m. and 6.00 a.m. Those flights will be in addition to the flights that are separate to the curfew Act and would already be landing and taking off at Western Sydney airport throughout the evening and early hours of the morning.

That is a double whammy for the residents of my electorate and beyond. Decades ago the curfew Act was intended to address noise-related concerns from residents surrounding Sydney airport. However, analysis demonstrates that the legislation is now unwarranted. Upon the opening of Western Sydney airport, it will be detrimental to all of Sydney, beyond just Western Sydney, south-west Sydney and the Blue Mountains. It is vital to highlight that at Sydney airport, all curfew-exempted flights are required by law to operate over water—that is, Botany Bay—and not over residential areas. That would not be the case for night-time flights at Western Sydney international airport. The curfew Act would therefore shift flights away from non-residential areas, where they currently have almost no impact, to residential areas in Western Sydney, south-west Sydney and Blue Mountains communities, where they will have a huge impact. Whilst the legislation may have been politically convenient for the Labor Government at the time it was enacted, it makes no sense, either logically or in terms of fairness and equity for the residents of Western Sydney, for it to remain in place.

The effects of the plan are not limited to noise-related concerns for Western Sydney, south-west Sydney and Blue Mountains residents. Sydney airport flights containing medical supplies for many nearby hospitals, including those in Kogarah and Prince of Wales Hospital, would need to be trucked east if the legislation is not amended or repealed, and existing carriers and companies would have to re-determine how they move their product around Sydney. There will also be increased travel time and costs, increased road emissions, increased expenses for the taxpayer and the private sector, and a greater burden on our roads, meaning the State's struggling economy will suffer further.

If the curfew Act is not amended, the additional sleep disturbances that will affect Western Sydney, south-west Sydney and Blue Mountains residents will impact on students' learning, reduce people's quality of life and increase the negative health effects that studies have shown are associated with sleep disturbances.

To avoid those disastrous effects, the Federal Government must amend the Sydney Airport Curfew Act 1995 so that Sydney airport keeps its overnight domestic freight and international early morning arrivals, and to equitably share noise more fairly across the entire Sydney Basin. Considering the overwhelming logic and rationale in favour of amending the curfew Act, it follows that a failure of the Federal Labor Government to amend the Act must be as a result of its apathy or disdain for the communities of Western Sydney, south-western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. It means that the Australian Labor Party is trying valiantly to protect the electoral prospects of a failing Prime Minister and his Labor Government.

WORLD TEACHERS' DAY

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (17:39): Tomorrow is World Teachers' Day. I recognise the over 170,000 primary, secondary and early childhood teachers that we have in New South Wales. Normally we celebrate World Teachers' Day on 5 October, but as that fell in the school holidays, this year we moved it to 25 October. Some of my local schools, for example, Cobbitty Public School, will have a wear-a-hat day because the theme this year is "Hats Off to Teachers". I think that we can all point to a teacher in our lives who made all the difference and who treated us in a way that made us feel special and loved. For some of us, including me, they inspired us to become teachers.

I became a teacher a while ago, in 2001. I dare say that teachers are not made; they are born. We start to teach and if we remain passionate about teaching, there is no end to the relationships we create with students over our lifetime. A lot of teachers are recognised this year on the NSW Teaching Gems Map. I ask everyone to go to the Teaching Gems Map on the NSW Education Standards Authority website and celebrate a teacher they believe is a gem. I particularly note a few messages from my area. The first is from a student at Camden High School, who visited Parliament today. He wrote:

Mr SM inspires me. This teacher is your go to man for science, he inspires me to go on and create things to help mankind path their way towards the future. Thank you for everything you have taught me and to everything that you hopefully will Mr Mackenzie.

I love that. A student of Elderslie Public School wrote:

Mrs Paddock inspires me. Mrs Paddock build a love for school in her students. The impact she has on her students is everlasting!

When I was a teacher we used to have a folder in our staff room called the "Why we do it" folder. Every now and again, a teacher would get a little note from a student, and we would put it in the "Why we do it" folder. When we had a particularly tough day, we would open that up and read the little notes that students sent us. I guarantee all

those students that we read this stuff. We love it and we hold it close to our hearts. I still have some of those notes. Another message is from a student of Spring Farm Public School, which reads:

Mrs BR guides me and helps me. Thank you Mrs Rae for teaching me. You are the kindest teacher and I love how you teach us especially maths. Thank you Mrs Rae you are the best!

I share a brief story about one of my experiences as a teacher. One day, on a student-free day that we had at the beginning of a school year, our principal asked us to picture the teacher that inspired us to become a teacher. He asked us to write on a Post-it note what it was about that teacher that made us feel special. Everyone in the room diligently wrote down all the attributes about that teacher. Next he said to this room full of high school teachers, "If anything on the Post-it note had to do with the subject taught by the teacher, please stand up." We all looked at each other. Not one of us had mentioned their subject. That is because teaching is not about just the subject; it is about how we make children feel. It is about the safety and the love that they feel, and it is about the friendship in that moment.

There is so much more to teaching than the syllabus. We talk about the syllabus and how important it is, but the relationships and the anger management and the growing up to be someone are what drive us to become teachers. I urge everyone in New South Wales to nominate the teacher who made them feel like that, who helped them get up and go to school and made them into the adult that they are now. The other thing that principal said to us that day was, "Have you ever told your teacher?" So I say to Ms Rosemary Hughes that she was my teacher—the person who drove me. I hated maths, but I loved her. I urge every student to go and tell that teacher what they mean to them. Do it tomorrow.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (17:44): I acknowledge the fabulous member for Camden and her passion for education and for children. Some members in this place may have seen her wandering around with her guitar case. She is a music teacher, and I acknowledge the joy that she inspires. I thank her for her contribution acknowledging teachers, students and their families.

TED BICKFORD, OAM

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes) (17:45): I celebrate and recognise a local hero in the Myall Lakes, Mr Ted Bickford, OAM, known to many as the "Graffiti Buster". The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards, hosted by the Centre for Volunteering, are an annual celebration of volunteering in New South Wales. They recognise the community service of our State's volunteers, volunteer leaders and volunteer teams. Ted was recently named both Senior Volunteer of the Year and overall Volunteer of the Year at the Mid Coast Volunteer of the Year Awards—a very well-deserved recognition for his work.

When Ted first started voluntarily removing graffiti, he had limited equipment, relying on his pushbike and a backpack filled with cleaning supplies. That attracted the attention of the MidCoast Council and a local car dealer, who provided him with a brightly wrapped graffiti splattered buster truck and all of the necessary supplies to expand his efforts. He cannot be missed out on the road. For over 30 years now, Ted has patrolled the streets of the MidCoast every day, responding to reports of graffiti. But Ted does not just remove graffiti; he also connects with the community. Through his "graffiti hotline", which is supported by the MidCoast Council, residents can call Ted directly and report graffiti, allowing for its quick removal.

Ted educates young people in our area by getting involved with local schools. He speaks to students and encourages our youth to take pride in their town. This has led to an impressive 90 per cent zero-tolerance attitude towards graffiti among local youth. On Graffiti Removal Day, such is his effectiveness that Ted often finds that there is no graffiti left to clean in Forster-Tuncurry. Instead, he has come up with creative alternatives for his young volunteers, such as teaching them to apply protective anti-graffiti coatings to important public spaces like war memorials. These measures make sure that, if these sites are ever targeted in the future, the graffiti can be removed with ease.

Ted also works with the Corrective Services and the department of juvenile justice. He mentors young people required to do community service, teaching them graffiti removal techniques. Many of those young individuals stay in touch with him and continue volunteering even after their service is completed. Ted gives them a sense of responsibility and pride for their community and has a positive impact on their lives. Ted has a very innovative approach. He works with the council and local businesses to implement preventive measures such as anti-graffiti paint, improved lighting and strategic landscaping. His collaborations have reduced graffiti incidents across the region, even in high-risk areas like skate parks, which have remained graffiti-free.

One example is the competition-sized Tuncurry skate park. When it was first built there were a few problems with graffiti, but Ted approached the young people using the park and asked them what they thought would make the skate park better. They requested a few trees for shade, which were provided by MidCoast Council, and the young people planted them themselves. They also requested seating. The idea was to create a

sense of ownership among the young people, who would then act as the park's security against vandalism and graffiti. Since COVID, unfortunately, Ted has seen a slight increase in graffiti and call-outs, but he works hard to ensure that 98 per cent of reported graffiti is removed within seven days. Graffiti removal is not just a local concern; it is a major issue across New South Wales, costing the State Government and councils tens of millions of dollars each year.

Ted and his graffiti-buster volunteers play such an important role in keeping those costs down in our community. At 86 years old, Ted continues to serve our community every day undeterred even by health challenges. His daily work helps maintain the beauty of our public spaces, and he inspires pride in the community. He ensures that the Mid North Coast remains a place we can all be proud of. Ted Bickford is truly a local hero, and I congratulate him on his well-deserved recognition at the Mid North Coast Volunteer of the Year awards. Ted's story shows how one person can make a huge difference. I thank Ted for his decades of service and for all that he does within our community. We wish him all the best as he represents our region at the gala State ceremony in Sydney at the end of the year, where the NSW Volunteer of the Year will be announced across each category.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): Ted's fame has grown past the boundaries of the Myall Lakes electorate well into my electorate. I wish him all the best at the end of the year.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (17:49): I acknowledge the wonderful member for Myall Lakes for honouring some of the great people in her community. I imagine Ted also knows some of the fabulous volunteers at the Blue Mountains Graffiti Management Alliance. The member for Myall Lakes told some stories about people recognising Ted. His solid work deserves to be acknowledged in this place. I thank the member.

MENTAL HEALTH SHOWCASE

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (17:50): Yesterday, on Wednesday 23 October, many members, staff and visitors as well as organisations from across the State came together for the annual Mental Health Showcase held in the Fountain Court area of Parliament. The showcase is always an opportunity to spend a little time with people who work in the increasingly important and very complex area of mental health and wellbeing. We need to have more of these drop-ins and "ask me" style events set up like a marketplace, with representatives from different mental health organisations hosting display tables and chatting to people not only in the Parliament but also in every electorate across the State. Each organisation specialises in assisting and supporting people in hard-to-reach communities. I acknowledge our mental health Minister, Rose Jackson, and the new Mental Health Commissioner, Jennifer Black, who presented the 2024 Community Champion Awards. It was very moving and significant for individuals to be recognised. The parliamentary showcase is an important event during Mental Health Month. It reminds us that many people live with mental illness and many others work tirelessly to help them manage and improve their mental health and wellbeing.

I acknowledge the fabulous Mountains Youth Services Team, known as MYST, my electorate of Blue Mountains. It was great to have the team in Parliament. I give a shout-out to Jodie Rollason, the CEO; Kate Greenham, the manager of Outdoor Explore; Paige Thurlow-Want, the manager of the youth work team; and Reuben Elstub, case manager. They came to Parliament to talk a bit about what their fabulous organisation does. The Mountains Youth Services Team was established in 1992. It is very deeply connected with communities across the Blue Mountains and collaborates with a range of partners to develop and deliver a supportive constellation of services and activities for young people. It is committed to accessibility, inclusiveness and sustained engagement with young people in the Blue Mountains. Its partnerships and collaborations are vital to being it able to support young people, whether they need help occasionally or over many years, and it actively seeks new connections to help expand that reach.

The team is dedicated to supporting young people through therapeutic intervention, skills training and personal development, and to creating cultures of care where young people can flourish. Young people deserve environments that offer them opportunities for meaningful participation in which they feel valued and safe. MYST works with individuals, groups, institutions and communities to help young people and to create conditions where they can shine. I will focus on one of MYST's many programs, because I loved seeing it when I first moved to the mountains many years ago. Outdoor Explore is a youth development program based in the Blue Mountains that uses nature and the experience of adventure in a group setting to achieve a range of biopsychosocial outcomes. There is a whole range of adventurous activities for young people to try. Outdoor Explore facilitators consider individual experience, abilities and goals, as well as team objectives when selecting venues and difficulty of the challenge, ensuring that adventures are safe and inclusive.

It encourages young people to push their limits, grow in resilience and better understand their own social and emotional growth. At Outdoor Explore, young people can go rock climbing, abseiling, bike riding and bushwalking. Participants learn new skills and confront all sorts of challenges and fears in a supportive environment. As well as those activities, whilst participants are bushwalking or abseiling the program incorporates

discussion topics on personal development and mental wellbeing. Outdoor Explore participants graduate with a whole range of new skills and confidence and peer relationships in which they can lean on one another. And they have lots of fun. It was wonderful to see MYST at Parliament yesterday. I have told its team members that they should come back. I acknowledge the fantastic work they do with young people in the mountains.

WAKEHURST ELECTORATE BUS SERVICES

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (17:55): The NSW Bus Industry Taskforce final report was evocatively titled *The Forgotten Mode: a call to action for buses*. On the northern beaches, buses are not only the forgotten mode but indeed the only mode. We do not have a train line, a light rail or a metro; we just have buses as our only form of public transport. It means the reliability of our bus services is extremely important. In fact, bus service reliability is the single most frequently raised issue by constituents to the Wakehurst electorate office. I am a passionate advocate for taking every step possible to invest in and improve our bus services now and in the future.

Today I will talk about the B-Line, which is currently Sydney's only rapid bus route, running between the city centre and Mona Vale. Double-decker buses with lane and traffic signal priority run every three to four minutes in peak times, every 10 minutes off peak and half-hourly between midnight and 4.00 a.m. Since the B-Line's introduction in 2017, end-to-end travel times have reduced by at least 15 per cent. Research suggests the B-Line has been responsible for taking at least 5 per cent of regular commuting cars off the roads between the northern beaches and the city. The B-Line really is the golden child of bus services in our city. It has been a wild success and, as a regular passenger myself, I am absolutely part of the fan club. Indeed, I am proud to have been one of the many architects of that very successful service.

However, there is a risk the iconic B-Line could become a victim of its own success. Keolis Downer, the private operator of the buses on the northern beaches route—which, I might add, I have a very good relationship with—has raised serious concerns with me about the longevity of the B-Line fleet, given its very high mileage per annum. The majority of the buses have clocked in excess of 650,000 kilometres, operating on average 100,000 kilometres per annum, when they were only designed to operate 60,000 to 80,000 kilometres per annum. Keolis Downer anticipates the reliability of the service will become increasingly problematic as the fleet ages. It has informed me that it is starting to see some engine issues already due to the very high usage of the buses.

Procured in 2017, the double-decker buses have a life expectancy of 25 years, but Keolis thinks they could last for considerably less time. That concern from Keolis is consistent with findings from the Bus Industry Taskforce second report, which highlighted the systemic inadequacy of forward planning and forecasting in relation to bus fleet asset management. Recommendation 18 responded to this in proposing that Transport for NSW develop a 10-year bus fleet replacement plan. The final report from the NSW Bus Industry Taskforce also included this statement:

While buses carry well over 40 per cent of all public transport passengers, they are budgeted to receive only 2.6 per cent of Transport's capital expenditure in the years FY2019 – FY2027. This compares to 49.9 per cent for rail/metro over the corresponding period.

We simply must invest more in buses. That message was loud and clear from the taskforce, and I will make sure the Government does not forget it. On that note, in the event that two-way tolling is introduced on the Harbour Bridge, which I am 100 per cent opposed to for so many reasons, that money should be used to invest in buses to increase public transport options for northern Sydney.

Those options could include new double-decker B-Line buses as needed. I call on the New South Wales Government to undertake an independent and rigorous assessment of the fleet's condition and to take steps to invest in new diesel, Euro 6 emissions standard, double-decker buses as soon as possible. Keolis Downer is of the view that those buses could be sourced within 12 months. We must build contingencies into our bus fleet management system.

We must be able to respond to and fill service gaps quickly when they arise. That means scanning the horizon, anticipating problems and having the capacity in the system to respond. That need was demonstrated all too vividly in recent weeks when all the articulated bendy buses were taken off the road at short notice. Services were filled with other buses from across Sydney, but not without significant disruptions to commuters. Given all the B-Line buses were purchased at the same time, they will start showing age-related reliability issues at about the same time. Unlike other routes, there are no alternative double-decker B-Line buses to substitute them with. Losing B-Line capacity would be crippling for northern beaches communities, so replacing those buses in a staggered approach would minimise that risk.

I commend the Government for investing in electric buses. Brookvale will be the first to roll out those buses, but they will not replace the double-deckers or bendies. Northern beaches residents will be glad to know

that I will make a beeline for the Minister for Transport and the Treasurer on the matter. I have written to Minister Haylen explaining my concerns, and I look forward to meeting with her to discuss them further.

COMMONWEALTH BANK DOONSIDE BRANCH

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (18:00): The Commonwealth Bank branch in my home town of Doonside will permanently close on 29 November this year without any community consultation. The branch first opened 60 years ago on 21 September 1964—contrary to popular belief, that was before I was born. Its closure will exacerbate long wait times and other issues related to access to banking services given that other Commonwealth Bank branches have closed throughout the area. We have been told to go to branches in Blacktown, Mount Druitt or Plumpton. Similarly, St George Bank once had ATMs in Woodcroft, but those were closed down and replaced with private ATMs. In 2023 the four major banks closed 384 branches, of which the Commonwealth Bank closed 73. Doonside has become the latest statistic.

Customers will be forced to use Westpoint Blacktown, Plumpton Marketplace, Westfield Mount Druitt or Seven Hills Plaza, which are a fair distance away. In May this year the Senate handed down its report on the effect of branch closures on consumers and businesses. The committee recommended that the existing banking code of conduct be made mandatory. At the moment it is voluntary. Under the code, banks would be required to undertake meaningful consultation with communities before shutting down any branch, and fund transition and other ongoing services to ensure access to cash and essential banking services in the event of a closure. The Australian Banking Association will require its members, of which the Commonwealth Bank is one, to apply the code. The United States code says, "At least 90 days before the proposed closing date, the bank must mail a notice to customers of the branch."

I am in possession of some of the letters the bank sent to its customers. They are dated 18 October, which was last week, and the branch is set to close in 40 days. I will contact the Australian Banking Association chief executive, Anna Bligh, and the Finance Sector Union to ensure the Commonwealth Bank adheres to providing proper consultation. The Commonwealth Bank and Westpac stated publicly that they had extended their moratoriums on branch closures to December 2026. I am not sure why the Commonwealth Bank has shut down its Doonside branch during that moratorium period. I note the presence in the gallery of Deputy Mayor of Blacktown City Council Bob Fitzgerald, ward 3 councillor and Woodcroft resident Carol Israel, and siblings Emmanuel and Maria-Theresa Tolentino, all of whom are fighting to keep our bank branches open. The branch is important because postcode 2767 comprises Doonside, Woodcroft, Huntington Heights and Bungarribee. According to the latest data, the population of postcode 2767 is 23,284. Some 50.3 per cent of the population are women, and there are 6,223 families. Some 1,600 people with a disability live in Doonside, including 733 NDIS participants.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics census, in Doonside over 6,500 residents identify as having a chronic long-term health issue such as arthritis, asthma or lung disease, and almost 20 per cent of the population, or 4,500 people, are above the age of 60. It is difficult for that age group to get around. There has been strong community reaction to the branch closure. For a bank that in 2023-24 generated \$9.48 billion in profits, it is preposterous to shut down the Doonside branch, which provides services to so many people. In its correspondence, the bank said that customers can use the brand-new, larger Westpoint branch. There were two branches in Blacktown but they were merged into one smaller branch, which is atrocious. We, the people of 2767, will stand up and make sure that branch stays open.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (18:05): I thank the member for Blacktown for raising that issue in this place. I support him because it is important to acknowledge the distress felt by residents when banks close their branches. It is particularly difficult for many older residents and others who cannot use technology and like to do their banking in the old-fashioned way. I thank the member for Blacktown for sharing the anger that some in our community feel. Something similar has happened recently in the Blue Mountains. The ANZ closed its Katoomba branch after promising not to close any regional branches for three years. It has now closed two branches and there is no branch between Penrith and Bathurst. Shame on ANZ.

PORT MACQUARIE ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:06): I update the House on a number of recently or nearly completed infrastructure projects in Port Macquarie that were funded by the former Liberal-Nationals Government and that will bring significant benefits to our local community. The first dementia-friendly village in regional New South Wales was officially opened earlier this month in Port Macquarie. The Emmaus Retirement Village and Community Centre, operated by St Agnes' Catholic Parish, features a state-of-the-art facility offering transformational care, with accommodation for 94 residents in 12 homes, all set within a village-style environment. There are no wards in Emmaus village. Instead, it has the appearance of a regular suburb. Shops, a cafe and a cinema are staffed by carers. The former Government allocated \$5 million for the community centre in

that groundbreaking project, and the Commonwealth Government and parish provided additional funding for the village. The Mid North Coast has one of the highest rates of people living with dementia in Australia, so the new village concept is a welcome addition to health services in our area.

Another significant project that is getting close to opening its doors to the public is the new Port Macquarie Observatory. Recently I joined my Federal colleague the member for Cowper, Pat Conaghan, along with Port Macquarie Astronomical Association members to tour the new multimillion-dollar redevelopment. To say we were impressed is an understatement. The site has been transformed into a world-class astronomy and science centre thanks to a grant of \$4.86 million under the former Federal and State Coalition governments' jointly funded Bushfire Local Economic Recovery package. The centre will provide a world-class astronomical experience, particularly during significant events in our night skies, while also contributing to the local and regional economy by attracting locals and visitors alike. It will provide a wonderful opportunity for local students to learn about our solar system and beyond in a state-of-the-art education space. The astronomical society should be congratulated on pursuing the project from concept to construction, creating a facility that is out of this world.

Last month marked a milestone in environmental tourism in the Hastings, as Guulabaa reached the end of its construction phase and is almost ready to welcome visitors. Guulabaa Place of Koala in Cowarra State Forest will be a wonderful visitor attraction for the Mid North Coast region that will deliver significant outcomes for koala conservation, sustainable forest management, tourism, the arts, the sharing of Biripi culture and new timber product development.

It will boost our local visitor economy and is a testament to the strength of its diverse partnerships. The hub infrastructure is central to the development of Guulabaa, linking Koala Conservation Australia's wild koala breeding facility, Bunyah Local Aboriginal Land Council's cafe and gallery, WildNets Adventure Park and Hello Koalas' Big Koala.

The hub also provides for future expansion, with plans to incorporate an outdoor learning amphitheatre and expanded forest walks. The investment from the Government's Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Package, combined with funding from the Forestry Corporation of NSW and the North Coast's timber industry, will boost the local visitor economy through supporting koala conservation, showcasing local Biripi culture and extending the Mid North Coast's forest-based tourism experiences. In a first of its kind in New South Wales, the new multimillion-dollar PCYC within Hastings Secondary College is proving extremely popular with locals. The sport, recreation and community facility is the PCYC's sixty-seventh club and the first on an existing school ground. The shared-use PCYC includes two multipurpose sports courts, gymnastics facilities, several flexible rooms, a gymnasium and a new home for the Clontarf Academy, as well as other community spaces. The construction of the PCYC was undertaken by local company A W Edwards.

Our schools are important hubs in our local communities. With Port Macquarie being a growing regional city, it is critical that there be ongoing investment to meet the demands of our expanding student population. One of the most exciting aspects of the new development is that it provides a much-needed space for the growing Clontarf Academy, which has played such an integral part in ensuring that our students are engaged and connected. That was particularly critical during the challenges of COVID-19. The mentoring team continues to do an exceptional job of leading our young men from across Port Macquarie-Hastings. Undoubtedly, the team's dedication and encouragement have inspired them to achieve their best. Clontarf is a celebrated initiative that has worked for many years in partnership with Hastings Secondary College at both the Westport and Port Macquarie campuses, and the success of its students in completing school and securing employment is a testament to the focus and commitment of both the students and the leadership team.

I am pleased that the previous Liberal-Nationals Government was focused on investment in regional New South Wales and the needs of our growing population. It is accurate to say, however, that interest has waned since Labor has been in government, as evidenced by the delays in already announced projects and, in some cases, such as the planning for the Wrights Road intersection, the removal of funding by both the State and Federal governments. I hope that Ministers from the Labor side continue to visit Port Macquarie and that they know well that I will always make them welcome, so that we can continue to make sure that the issues important to my community remain the Government's focus.

ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (18:11): Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew visited Australia from 4 to 19 October to mark the 100th anniversary of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia. I was privileged to meet His All Holiness at Sydney airport upon his arrival, along with my Federal colleague representing the Prime Minister, Assistant Minister Matthew Thistlethwaite, the member for Kingsford Smith, who has a large Orthodox Christian community in his electorate. It was a huge honour to represent the Premier, the Government and the Parliament.

As I am from a Greek Orthodox background, it was a privilege for my family and me as well. I represent a large multicultural community, and the ecumenical patriarch has an interesting background. I know from talking to him and to His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia that he loves Australia.

It is an important anniversary. One hundred years ago the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia was established. His All Holiness participated in many events. Most importantly, he held a mass at the International Convention and Exhibition Centre where close to 12,000 parishioners from across New South Wales had the opportunity to participate, to see His All Holiness and to be part of a historic event. It was Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's second time in Australia as patriarch. He first came to Australia as patriarch about 27 years ago, when Bob Carr was the Premier, but he had also visited Australia prior to becoming patriarch. He is very well known. He resides in Istanbul and has served as the 270th Ecumenical Patriarch and Archbishop of Constantinople with the Eastern Orthodox Church since 1991. He is an influential religious leader of worldwide repute and is known not only for his stewardship of Eastern Orthodoxy but also for his efforts towards inter-religious cooperation by organising many forums across the world to bring together people of different faiths, including Muslims, Catholics and Hindus.

I met Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew a couple of times when he came to the Parliament at the Premier's invitation on the Wednesday of his two-week trip. It was fascinating to listen to him talk about bringing together the different religious leaders and working on peaceful dialogue. He is also very progressive when it comes to the environment. He has written and talked about the environment. He is wise and learned and has a huge intellect. I bothered to educate myself a little bit about his involvement with environmental issues, and it is absolutely fascinating. It was a special time for the Orthodox Christian community here in Australia. Many people flew here from across Australia. He visited Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra. The Prime Minister and the Federal Opposition leader met with him, as did our Opposition leader here. I hope he visits again. It was a special spiritual occasion.

NGURANG-GU YALBILINYA PROGRAM

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (18:16): It is an honour to speak about a remarkable initiative that is changing young lives in the Orange community: the Ngurang-gu Yalbilinya education program, locally referred to as NGY. The unique program is designed to support and uplift young Indigenous men, embedding them in a learning environment that values not only academic achievement but also cultural identity, connection to country and personal growth. NGY was established with the vision of creating a culturally safe and supportive educational space for Indigenous boys from years 7 to 10. It is coordinated through Canobolas Rural Technology High School in Orange and based at the scout camp near Lake Canobolas. The program grew out of a genuine need to address the disparities in educational engagement and outcomes experienced by Indigenous youth.

The program's foundation rests on the longstanding partnership between the local Aboriginal community, Canobolas Rural Technology High School, the Department of Education, NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations and Orange Local Aboriginal Land Council. Since its inception, NGY has provided students with an alternative learning pathway that values culture, fosters a sense of belonging and builds self-confidence. It is a place where young men are not only taught the curriculum but also equipped with life skills. At its heart, the intention of the NGY program is twofold: to enhance educational outcomes and to nurture a strong cultural identity among its students. It acknowledges that many students face systemic barriers within mainstream education, often leading to disengagement or underachievement.

The program aims to counteract those barriers by ensuring education is delivered in a way that resonates with the students' cultural experiences. It empowers students to take pride in who they are. By framing their culture as a source of strength, NGY builds a strong sense of self-worth in these young men, which contributes to their academic engagement. The benefits of the NGY program are far-reaching and multifaceted. From the individual students to the broader community, this initiative is making a positive impact. The program takes a holistic approach to education and recognises that the wellbeing of the students is just as important as their academic outcomes. The long-term benefits of the program cannot be overstated. By supporting these young men through critical stages of their development, NGY is helping to break the cycle of disadvantage that too often affects Indigenous communities. Graduates of the program are equipped to pursue further education, vocational training or employment, with the confidence and cultural grounding to succeed. It is having a huge impact on the local community and local families. These young men are seen as community leaders.

I pay tribute to the program educators and mentors, including Tim Bennett and Scott Sullivan. Without their hard work, genuine care and determination, NGY may not be where it is today. My office recently had the honour of being presented with didgeridoos by Tim Bennett. The didgeridoos, which are adorned with unique artwork, were traditionally handcrafted by NGY students. They are proudly on display in my office in Orange, a

reminder of the cultural pride and educational re-engagement of these students, and the success of the program. It is an inspiring example of how education can be used as a tool for empowerment and transformation. Recently, the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Education and Early Learning, met with educators, students and families. Everyone who engaged with the Minister truly appreciated her genuine interest and support. I acknowledge her enthusiastic and continued support for this unconventional cultural educational program. The Government's support is key to the program's longevity and its potential future expansion to include young Indigenous women.

BEXLEY NORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (18:21): I acknowledge and celebrate Bexley North Public School and its outstanding achievement of its centenary anniversary. I congratulate principal Danielle Scott, vice principals Maria Bajic, Lidia Cicala, Lauren Davis and Carmen Rice, teachers and staff on their outstanding achievements throughout the years. I acknowledge and congratulate the P&C on organising such a wonderful event on Sunday 20 October and their continued dedication and support to the school.

Historically, the school was a small part of land owned by James Chandler, who arrived in New South Wales in 1820 from Kent. Chandler was the one who coined the area "Bexley". The school's history dates back to 11 December 1915, when it was named the Bexley Boys' Home and opened by Commissioner James Hay, with 76 boys in residence. In 1924 the Department of Education turned it into a school, renaming it Kingsland Primary School. It was only with the introduction of Bexley North railway station, and the renaming of the area to Bexley North in 1942, that the school's name was changed to the one we all know and love, Bexley North Public School.

With a strong and proud history, Bexley North Public School has a rich and diverse community, with more than 73 per cent of students coming from multicultural backgrounds, with English as their second language. The school delivers a caring and supportive environment that provides stimulating curriculums while prioritising community engagement and fostering a true sense of belonging. Bexley North Public School encourages all students to develop their social and emotional capabilities through the You Can Do It! educational program, which has five foundations: confidence, persistence, organisation, getting along and emotional resilience. Every class engages in set lessons that teach the five foundations, building a strong sense of being from an early age.

Bexley North Public School also implements a whole-school practice that facilitates the long-term learning, wellbeing and safety of all students through the Care Continuum. The program is delivered in collaboration with allied health services, specialists, parents and carers to develop positive behaviours. The fantastic program focuses on children's individual needs and requirements. Once again, I congratulate Bexley North Public School on its centenary anniversary celebrations and thank staff and parents for supporting the community and providing exceptional educational outcomes for students past, present and long into the future.

RYDE ELECTORATE EVENTS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (18:25): Ryde is home to a number of outstanding community events and people, and I will speak about just a few of them from the past fortnight. I recognise Jack Young, who founded Ryde Running earlier this year. In such a short period of time, the run club has already grown considerably, and now is a regular fixture for people passing by Santa Rosa Park in Ryde. Starting with a Thursday evening run, the group quickly expanded and began hosting Saturday morning runs as well. For those who are extra keen, there is a 5.30 a.m. run on Tuesdays, and extra sessions in between from time to time.

Jack is a teacher and founded the group mostly out of a desire to create an accessible form of community activity, especially for younger professionals in Ryde. As he put it, he was going for a run anyway, so why not invite others to come along? Recently I was invited to join the club's Mental Health Day run, which included multiple local run clubs, first-timers like me and some corporate sponsorship thanks to Lululemon and Fishbowl in the Macquarie Centre. The run was all about the cause, and encouraged people to think about the many facets of life that can lead to declining mental health.

While Parliament sitting this past fortnight has meant I could not get back to run with the group, it has inspired me to pull out my old joggers and incorporate some more running in my own exercise regime. As the cost of living rises, and people continue to be more and more time poor, there are few sports that offer so few barriers to entry. I am grateful to Jack and Ryde Running for promoting the cause of mental health, creating a community activity for Ryde's growing young professional cohort, and giving me the nudge I needed to return to a sport that I enjoy. Ryde Running is a befitting example of what makes Ryde so great.

I recognise also Matt Mackay and the team at Royal Rehab Ryde. In recent weeks, I had the privilege of visiting the service again for my most comprehensive tour yet. The Royal Rehab Group is a not-for-profit institution with a rich legacy. In the spirit of this week's royal visit, I note that the centre once hosted Lady Diana, which I know they are very proud of. Royal Rehab has served the community for more than 125 years and is well

known as the place to go if tragedy strikes with a spinal cord injury or catastrophic brain injury. It has consistently offered support to individuals recovering from severe injuries and requiring assistance due to disability. Through the use of advanced robotics, cutting-edge technology and an unwavering focus on care for the individual, Royal Rehab is a marvel to explore. That is no more evident than in the LifeWorks wing, which is home to an exoskeleton, weight-bearing systems, immersive virtual reality experiences and a positive and warm visual outlook for those receiving care.

Royal Rehab employs more than 1,500 staff across Australia's eastern States and plays an active role in the local Ryde community through its collaboration with community organisations and physical presence on Morrison Road. In my previous work as a disability advocate, I was always struck by how warm and welcoming the sector was. I often remarked that I felt slightly out of place in the role. I do not have lived experience with disability, and neither do my immediate family. While I was employed to help others with disability, it was often them helping me understand life as a person living with disability, how it impacts families and carers, and how to navigate the complexities of accessing government support. That wonderful culture of inclusivity remains strong at Royal Rehab, and I hope this Parliament will work to ensure its ongoing sustainability and success if and when needed. I thank CEO Matt Mackay for his hospitality and again express my gratitude for another fantastic local organisation in Ryde.

I ask members to join me in acknowledging the success of the 2024 Granny Smith Festival. As I have previously mentioned in this House, it is the second largest event of its kind, behind the Sydney Royal Easter Show. Partaking in the grand parade, I was amazed by the extraordinary turnout of around 100,000 people in and around Eastwood. In particular, I acknowledge the sponsors of the event, without whom it could not have taken place. I thank gold sponsors Nongshim and Shin Ramyun; silver sponsors AFL Play, Hyundai Ryde, Link Wentworth, Optus, Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club, *Vision China Times*, Tracy Yap Realty and Woolworths; and bronze sponsors Ayam, Buffalo Vale, Club Eastwood, *Epoch Times*, EzyCom, Eastwood Koreatown, Macquarie Community College, Mr Puff and Triple S Group. It was an extraordinary event. Finally, I acknowledge all those in the community who took time out to attend, making the 2024 Granny Smith Festival a booming success.

ISRAEL-HEZBOLLAH CONFLICT

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (18:30): Today I address the deeply concerning situation in the occupied Palestinian territory and the escalating situation in Lebanon. These issues weigh heavily on the global community, including many of us here in Australia who are closely watching these events unfold from afar. Last week I had the privilege of meeting with Chris Sidoti, a member of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel. The commission has shed light on significant and ongoing violations of international humanitarian law and human rights.

The commission's mandate is substantial. Among its many tasks, it seeks to examine the broader patterns of violence and discrimination in the region and ensure that third-party states like Australia comply with international humanitarian law. That includes obligations under common Article 1 to the Geneva Conventions, which compels states to refrain from aiding or assisting in the commission of internationally wrongful acts, particularly in relation to occupied territories. The commission's findings highlight several key issues that demand our attention. Since its establishment in 2019 it has found that unlawful settlements, forced displacement and a range of human rights violations plague the region. In a statement released earlier this month the commission accused Israel of carrying out a "concerted policy" to destroy the Gazan health system. In the commission's own words:

Israeli security forces have deliberately killed, detained and tortured medical personnel and targeted medical vehicles ...

These ongoing breaches of international law cannot be ignored. They compel us as Australians to examine our role on the global stage. One of the central recommendations made by the commission is that third-party states, including Australia, ensure they are not complicit in these violations. That means taking concrete steps to avoid aiding or assisting in actions that contribute to unlawful settlements, forced displacements or other breaches of international humanitarian law. Respect for human rights is not a distant, abstract concept. It is fundamental to how we as a nation engage with the world.

The people of New South Wales and, indeed, Australia have long raised concerns about the treatment of Palestinian people and the lack of protection for international human rights law. We are also horrified by the actions of groups like Hamas, whose violent tactics exacerbate the suffering of both Israelis and Palestinians. Its deliberate targeting of civilians, use of human shields and disregard for the sanctity of human life further inflame tensions in the region and hinder the path to a peaceful resolution. Indeed, the commission has deemed the actions of Hamas on 7 October 2023 to be war crimes. If we are to genuinely stand for justice, we must condemn all forms of violence and demand accountability from all parties.

Across New South Wales, including in my own electorate of Leppington, many people feel frustrated at the perceived lack of action from Federal representatives on these pressing international issues. They want an assurance that Australia is not complicit in the violation of human rights, whether through the approval of military exports and components to Israel or through diplomatic inaction. The United Nations and organisations such as UNICEF have warned of the devastating humanitarian crises unfolding in both Palestine and Lebanon. These are not abstract concerns; they represent the real and ongoing suffering of millions of people. Australia has a role to play in ensuring that aid reaches those who need it most and that we support efforts to bring about a lasting resolution to these conflicts.

I emphasise that this is not about taking sides in a complex and deeply rooted conflict. This is about upholding universal human rights, international law and the dignity of all people. Whether it is condemning the illegal settlements in the occupied territories or denouncing the violent actions of terrorist groups like Hamas, we must be consistent in our pursuit of justice. Australia cannot afford to be complicit in these violations, and we must ensure that our actions reflect our values of fairness, respect and humanity.

MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (18:34): Tonight I talk about the Marrickville Legal Centre, which offers free legal advice and assistance to my community and those of the inner west and inner south-west. I acknowledge the extraordinary work the centre does providing its important service to people in my community. My electorate office makes a number of referrals to the Marrickville Legal Centre, and I appreciate the centre's responsiveness and accessibility. The centre is coming up to a very important anniversary. I put on record my congratulations but also my thanks to the wonderful young group of volunteer law students who in 1979 identified a gap in the legal system. They observed the need for access to the legal system by people of low socio-economic status and those from migrant and refugee communities, as well as women, students, people doing it tough and victims of domestic violence.

Those students did something very important 45 years ago. Through their strong will, their advocacy and their smarts, they were able to establish this free legal service. They had a little office at Marrickville Town Hall, and from that time on they were able to access government funding. I acknowledge the government of the day, which provided that first bit of funding to enable what the centre continues to do today. Particularly, I acknowledge and thank the community legal centres for their incredible work. I am always on their side. Whether to former Attorney General Mark Speakman, our current Attorney General or Federal Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus, I have always advocated to ensure that adequate funds are directed to community legal centres, including the Marrickville Legal Centre. All of them provide important free legal services to my community. I also acknowledge the centre's tenancy service and the support it has provided to victims of domestic violence over many years.

As I said, my electorate office and the Marrickville Legal Centre have a great relationship. I put on record my congratulations to those law students back in 1979. I acknowledge the governments since that time that have funded the Marrickville Legal Centre and Community Legal Centres NSW. Those centres represent something really important for our democracy. They enable people who do not have financial means to be represented by some of the best legal minds in our nation. Back in 1980 the government of the day was able to support four full-time solicitors. It also oversaw the establishment of the Children's Legal Service. I put on *Hansard* my thanks for the incredible work done by the current Marrickville Legal Centre CEO, Vasili Maroulis, and his solicitors, volunteers and staff, as well as the centre's chair and board. I thank the Marrickville Legal Centre for its 45 years of important work for my community.

TIMOR-LESTE INDEPENDENCE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (18:39): On 30 August I visited Timor-Leste for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the people's consultation, which is often called the referendum. The question in the referendum was: Do you want to stay incorporated into Indonesia or stand alone as independent Timor-Leste? They chose the latter. It was a real privilege to be in Timor-Leste during the referendum. I was there for a few days before the actual vote and a few days after as part of a team with the International Commission of Jurists. I was joined by Justice John Dowd, Andrew McLeod and a whole lot of other legal people. We were organised and deployed to certain areas, and we stayed a Friday night in Ulmera, which was where the voting booth was.

We arrived really early in the morning and the Timorese were queued in a very long line, turned out in their Sunday best. Everybody was dressed up, and it was a beautiful sight. It was the first time they had been asked for their view and the first time they were able to vote independently. It was really moving. I get goosebumps when I talk about it now. I rang now President José Ramos-Horta, who lived in Liverpool at the time. I told him it was a beautiful sight. I always remember his words. He said, "Welcome to my country." He was not allowed to live in his country because he was in exile. I said, "You will soon be back in your country", which proved to be true. It was a hairy day. All sorts of things were going on. I applaud the courage of the people because they knew

what was coming that night—it was no secret. They knew and yet they still came out and voted, knowing there would be not just chaos but killings, abductions and all sorts of horrors and war crimes.

That night our driver did not return because they were too scared. I had been dealing with the POLRI, the Indonesian police, all day as well as other officials. They had a truck so we returned to town in the truck. I had a satellite phone—very few people had them—that I left with Justice Dowd because we had to get other people back also. I returned in the truck with the POLRI and the votes—so I was a little apprehensive—to go back to Dili. I walked into the Hotel Turismo, which is a rather famous hotel in Timor, and then Australian ambassador John McCarthy was there. I said, "We have a situation out on the road." I cannot say what he said to me as it would be unparliamentary. But we got it sorted out.

It was not about us, but I am retelling my story. It was the day the Timorese got the right to say they wanted to govern themselves. When I was in Timor-Leste on 30 August it was a celebration. António Guterres, the United Nations Secretary-General, and Ian Martin, who headed up the UN mission in Timor-Leste, were there as well as a whole lot of old friends of mine. It was a real delight to be there 25 years after the referendum. It is a peaceful nation that is striving to be prosperous. It has had some ups and downs, but it is a democracy in our region and it is doing extremely well. It was a great opportunity to catch up with so many old friends and so many Timorese, and I feel very privileged to have been part of that event 25 years ago.

[*The Chair left the chair, pursuant to resolution, at 18:44. The House resumed at 21:40.*]

Bills

24-HOUR ECONOMY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (VIBRANCY REFORMS) BILL 2024

Messages

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council agreeing to the Legislative Assembly's amendment.

HEALTH INSURANCE LEVIES AMENDMENT BILL 2024

Returned

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill with amendments.

Consideration in Detail

Consideration of the Legislative Council amendments.

Schedule of amendments referred to in message of an earlier hour

No. 1 **GRNS No. 1 [c2024-215]**

Page 3, Schedule 1. Insert after line 18—

[3A]Section 20

Insert after section 19—

20 Data on contributions towards cost of stays in public hospitals

- (1) The Chief Commissioner must publish on a government website a report for each year that sets out the following information for the year—
 - (a) the total number of days that persons who are contributors to health benefit funds stay in single rooms at public hospitals in their capacity as contributors,
 - (b) the total cost of the stays,
 - (c) the percentage of the cost of the stays that is paid for by the health benefit funds to which the persons are contributors,
 - (d) other information prescribed by the regulations.
- (2) The Secretary of the Ministry of Health must give information to the Chief Commissioner for the purposes of publishing a report under this section.
- (3) The Chief Commissioner may direct the following persons to give information to the Chief Commissioner for the purposes of publishing a report under this section—
 - (a) a person who carries on the business in New South Wales of providing health benefits to contributors,
 - (b) a person prescribed by the regulations.
- (4) The direction may specify—

- (a) the information that must be given, and
 - (b) the time, form and way in which the information must be given.
- (5) A person given a direction must comply with the direction. Maximum penalty for subsection (5)—10,000 penalty units.

No. 2 **GRNS No. 2 [c2024-215]**

Page 3, Schedule 1[4], proposed clause 9(3), lines 27 and 28. Omit all words on the lines

Mr RON HOENIG: On behalf of Mr Ryan Park: I move:

That the Legislative Council amendments be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT BILL 2024

Returned

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): 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 an earlier hour

No. 1 **AJP No. 7 [c2024-197E]**

Page 8, Schedule 1[9]. Insert after line 18—

[731] Effect of consent

- (1) A consent continues in force while the tenant resides in the residential premises for the lifetime of the animal despite any change in the following—
 - (a) the landlord,
 - (b) the landlord's agent,
 - (c) the residential tenancy agreement.
- (2) This section is a term of every residential tenancy agreement.

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) (21:41): I move:

That the Legislative Council amendment be agreed to.

The purpose of reform is to make sure that we continue to deliver legislation that meets the needs of people in our community for how they live and embed themselves in our local area and for how our economy works as well. Through the Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill 2024, this Parliament is working for the 2.2 million renters in New South Wales—whose number is growing—making their lives easier, making their tenure in their property more secure and delivering for our economy to retain and attract the human capital we need to make sure that New South Wales continues to be this nation's premier State.

These reforms have been long in the making. The Government has worked extensively with all stakeholders within the sector, including landlords and tenants' advocates, and members across the Parliament as well. I extend my appreciation to all members who have been working with my office and the Government to deliver a package that is fair, balanced and measured to ensure that we have universal acceptance. We were never going to get perfection, but nevertheless this is a significant leap forward, a great paradigm shift in the signal we send to the market about how the relationship between renters and landlords should work now and in the future, with changing no-grounds evictions, making it easier for renters to have pets so they can call their rental properties their homes, closing loopholes to ensure that cost-of-living pressures are front and centre of this Government's reform agenda, and providing certainty, clarity and security for all involved in the property sector.

I thank all my colleagues in this House and the upper House for their collaboration and willingness to engage with the Government in the spirit of genuine sincerity to ensure we deliver a rental reform package that meets the needs of our community. I also thank the staff of NSW Fair Trading, who have worked so hard for so long, for the extensive consultations we have done with the community sector and stakeholders through one-on-one engagements and surveys. The response from our community has been extensive, which goes to show the importance of this reform and its ability to impact people's lives.

I thank Trina Jones, Diana Holy and the staff at Fair Trading for all their work in the development of this excellent and significant reform. I thank my own ministerial staff, particularly my chief of staff, Brooke O'Rourke, and policy director Alicia Sylvester, who have taken carriage of the reform from the start and worked with the Government, the crossbench and the sector. They were truly committed to this important piece of legislation, which will deliver great certainty for the sector and the people of New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (21:44): I congratulate the Minns Labor Government on delivering an end to no-grounds evictions in this State. I acknowledge that Minister Chanthivong has managed to achieve a reform that no previous fair trading Minister was able to—and I know they tried. I acknowledge this reform was won through a lot of effort and hard work. I thank the Minister's staff for the incredibly constructive way in which they have worked with The Greens. I express my appreciation for the fact that New South Wales has finally banned no-grounds evictions in this State. That is a very, very good thing.

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

Motion agreed to.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to resolution, at 21:45 until
Tuesday 12 November at 12:00 p.m.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

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

THE WIRADJURI HONOUR WALL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—The Narrundgera Wiradjuri Honour Wall recognises the contribution to our community made by local indigenous people of the Narrandera region. The official opening of this incredibly visual and alluring sculpture of living art to remind us of achievements from our past and to let us dream of what we can do in the future. I believe commemoration is a privilege bestowed on the living and that it is important we honour by remembrance. It is also important to inspire the community with recognition of those whose contributions are outstanding and continuing. The Honour Wall has been created with much dedication by a wonderful group of people, those who had the determination to create such a structure, those who assisted in the funding and I must commend the designers Mr Dean Ingram of Boompa Designs and Rai Geddes of SUNRAI Designs on the beauty and flow of the finished product. I hope the Wall is a place that is visited by many and congratulate Narrandera on creating this incredible space.

ROSES DELIGHTED JUDGES

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—It was a heartwarming experience to share a cup of tea and some delicious carrot cake with the wonderful residents and staff at Cooina Court in June. The warmth and camaraderie during our visit made us feel like part of the community. After speaking to residents, I was thrilled to learn about the remarkable achievements of one of their own at the Illabo Show. A resident and staff member of Cooina Court was recently awarded several prizes, a testament to their talent and dedication. Wilma Kanaley, a resident of Cooina Court for a few years now, has proven herself to have a green thumb. Her Double Delight Rose, a captivating blend of white and pink with a beautiful fragrance, not only won Wilma first prize but also earned her the title of Illabo Show Champion in Horticulture Exhibits, a remarkable achievement. However, it's not just the residents who enjoy their love for horticulture. Cooina Court staff member Kim Charlton came away with both a first and second prize for her One Steam Orchid, which was bursting with blooms. Thank you to everyone at Cooina Court for your hospitality and wonderful catch up.

TEMORA LOCAL BAKES ON THE NATIONAL STAGE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—Dimi Jayawardene, has a knack for crafting unique dishes bursting with flavour. Her culinary skills are a tribute to her parents, Shan and Dilini, the proud proprietors of Sugar and Spice, a vintage food caravan stationed at Lake Centenary in Temora. Dimi's baking journey began during her university days, where she often found herself 'procrastinating' by baking instead of tackling her numerous assignments. This diversion soon turned into a passion, leading her to where she is today. Dimi, an Early Childhood Teacher from Temora, has transcended local boundaries to make a mark in the culinary world. Her talent and dedication have earned her a spot on the national stage at The Great Australian Bake Off, where she's creating a culinary storm. The seventh season of The Great Australian Bake Off, which premiered on 18 September, has seen 12 home bakers take part in a bake-off to test their baking skills as they battled it out over

10 weeks to become the Australian Bake Off's best amateur baker. Dimi, I commend you on challenging yourself and always looking for growth opportunities and embracing your love for food and passion for creation.

HEROES OF THE NIGHT

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Monday night was anything but ordinary for the brave firefighters of Nambucca Valley. Their heroism was put to the test when they responded to two critical incidents: a major fire at Diggers Tavern in Bellingen and a bushfire near the Nambucca Heads Surf Life Saving Club. The firefighters of Nambucca Valley demonstrated extraordinary bravery and commitment as they tackled the serious blaze at Diggers Tavern in Bellingen. With unwavering teamwork and rapid action, the crew from station 221, supported by other Fire and Rescue brigades and the Rural Fire Service (RFS), quickly brought the fire under control, safeguarding a beloved community landmark that holds a special place in the hearts of many. Simultaneously, they responded to urgent calls regarding a fire near the Nambucca Heads Surf Life Saving Club. Upon arrival, they faced large areas of bush and grass ablaze. With expertise, the blaze was distinguished. Their actions preserved the fundamental community surf club. Confronted the uncertainty of potential danger, the firefighters demonstrated remarkable bravery and reinforced their essential role in keeping our community safe. I commend the important job they do. Their dedication truly makes a difference.

WORLD IRONMAN CHAMPION

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Today I rise to shine a spotlight on a remarkable local athlete and an inspiration in the water: Finn Askew from South West Rocks. Finn is living his dream of becoming an Iron Series competitor, and his journey is one that embodies hard work and determination. Under the expert guidance of Zayne Hamill at Surfers' Paradise SLSC, Finn made his debut in his first full Iron Series during the 2020/21 season. Competing against a fiercely talented field, he narrowly missed auto-qualification by finishing 12th. But rather than be discouraged, this setback ignited a fire within him. Since that initial challenge, Finn has firmly established himself in the Iron Series, achieving two consecutive 5th place finishes that highlight his resilience and skill. However, his recent crowning as the World Ironman Champion tops all previous achievements. Finn Askew continues to push the boundaries of the sport, embodying the true essence of perseverance and excellence in Ironman competition. Finn's story serves as a beacon of hope for aspiring athletes from small towns, proving that with dedication and support, dreams can become reality. I look forward to seeing what Finn will achieve next.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—The North Coast Academy of Sport hosted its 35th annual Academy Awards on October 12, an inspiring event dedicated to recognising the outstanding achievements of athletes, coaches, and staff from the past year. The day celebrated peak sporting talent, dedicated coaches, supportive staff, and enthusiastic community members for a day filled with celebration and reflection. This year's awards highlighted the extraordinary dedication and skill across various sports, focusing not only on on-field success but also on the vital qualities of sportsmanship, leadership, and personal growth. Among the honourees, Oxley shone brightly. Cass Notley was acknowledged as Coach of the Year for her exceptional work in netball. Cass has made a profound impact on her athletes, inspiring them with her passion and unwavering commitment. Cobie Truscott was awarded Most Outstanding for her remarkable performance as a netball umpire. Her dedication to excellence showcases the vital role officials play in the sporting community. Keneisha Lockwood whose infectious enthusiasm and determination was a source of inspiration to her peers was honoured the encouragement award. I commend the achievements of these three remarkable women and congratulate them on their well-deserved success.

GREG RAY

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—On Sunday 30 June in Wallsend Library, former long-serving Newcastle Herald journalist Greg Ray gave a fascinating talk focusing on Wallsend entitled "The Value of Old Photos" to an enthusiastic audience of around 25 people. Greg has links to Wallsend, having grown up in Rankin Park, going to school and playing soccer at South Wallsend. For over ten years, Greg and his wife Sylvia have collected and restored historically important glass negatives, old slides and photos of our region, publishing fourteen photo books on historical Newcastle. Greg showed almost 120 slides, including aerial photos from the 1960s (which proved to be very popular), speaking about the origin of the mining settlements of Wallsend and Plattsburg, Wallsend's role in the creation of the Newcastle Morning Herald and The Miners' Advocate newspapers and links to the industrial and political pragmatism of James Fletcher. Other topics included mine disputes, the coke industry, buildings and businesses, hotels, floods, sporting facilities, the racecourse, Crystal Palace, transport, steam and electric trams, the railway and buses – all topics being connected to our changing attitude to heritage. Thank you, Greg, for helping to celebrate Wallsend's sesquicentenary.

ADAM SCHILLI

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—On Thursday 18 July, Wallsend resident Adam Schilli was presented with a Newcastle City Commander's Certificate of Recognition by Acting Superintendent Steven Benson who said that Adam "undoubtedly saved a life that day". That day was March 22 when, driving along Sandgate Road, Adam saw a woman struggling in the swollen water at "Dark Creek", a stormwater drain in Birmingham Gardens. As the woman appeared to be going under, Adam removed his clothing, understanding that heavy wet clothes would make his task harder, and stepped into the murky-looking floodwaters. He searched for several minutes as he had lost sight of her in the moving drain water. Adam eventually found the woman and dragged her to the safety of the drain's bank. He stayed by her side, comforting her and offering first aid until the emergency services arrived. The woman was subsequently taken to hospital where she - thankfully - made a full recovery. Adam's bravery, selflessness and quick, decisive response illustrate those great qualities which we sometimes see in our community members. In the face of danger, you demonstrated remarkable bravery, Adam. Thank you for your heroic efforts.

DR BOB JAMES

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—On Sunday 19 May 2024 at Wallsend Library, local historian and researcher Dr Bob James spoke about 'Fraternal Societies at Wallsend', illustrating some of the unique features which local societies like the Odd Fellows, Ancient Druids, Freemasons and the Miners Association exhibited, and showing their great importance to Wallsend. Fraternal societies use or have used coded regalia, secret passwords, ritual and signs which have expressed and celebrated a philosophy of brotherhood and mutual aid, mateship and community spirit. They have been largely removed from our history books because they did not fit the modernist mythology on which the image of European Australia was built. Fraternal societies were numerous and popular, with an army of members – 'bretherin and sisteren' – and supporters preparing and painting banners, building floats and wearing costumes in community celebrations. They ran newspapers, went into parliament, fielded sporting teams, built hospitals and opened bridges. The first women's fraternal lodge in Australia was begun by Eliza Reynolds at Wallsend! She and husband Robert Craig were both strong figures in the Wallsend coal mining community. Thank you, Dr James, for your informative contributions to Wallsend's 150th!

ANNUAL QUILT AND CRAFT SHOW

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises a group of inspirational women from Gerringong. The 32nd Annual Quilt and Craft Show will be held at Gerringong Town Hall on Friday 8th and Saturday 9th November 2024. I would like to acknowledge Dawn Miller, Marg Weir, Edith Burgess, Mena Sharpe, Joyce Sharpe, Gwen Wishart, Suzanne St. Claire, Sue Dmetreson, and Barbara Donald. Their contribution to fundraising and flair for design is beyond compare. Their deep friendship, sense of fun, and commitment to medical research have made a lasting impact. I also acknowledge Life Members Kate Quinn and Marg Weir OAM. Special tribute is also due to Life Member Rhonda Bailey, who has been a key organiser of the Quilt Show and Jeans for Genes for over 34 years. This year's Quilt & Craft Show will be the last, marking the end of an era. Since its 1991 inception under the late Dorothy Hanbridge, the show has been a staple. The Jeans for Genes campaign, movie screenings, High Tea, Melbourne Cup luncheons, the CMRI Gerringong Committee has contributed an impressive \$2.3 million since 1959. A huge congratulations and well done to these incredible ladies.

BERRY WRITER'S FESTIVAL

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Berry Writer's Festival which will be held from 25th-27th October 2024. What do Jennifer Robinson, Gina Chick and Tim Minchin have in common? The trio, who all have ties to the South Coast, have helped put Berry Writer's Festival on the literary map. Robinson, the human rights lawyer who played a key role in freeing Julian Assange earlier this year, and Chick, star of the hit TV show *Alone*, grew up on the South Coast and are both Bomaderry High school graduates. Their "in conversation sessions" at this weekend's festival were quick to sell out. Minchin – a world-renowned actor, writer, comedian, musician and poet who has a home in Kangaroo Valley – was a late entry to the festival line-up. The Berry Writers Festival is a bi-annual celebration of writing and literature held over three days, across four historic venues. The first festival, in October 2022, featured fifty authors. More than 300 tickets have already been sold for this year's event, which features more than 80 authors and seven workshops. The 2024 Berry Writer's Festival will be a great event not to be missed.

ILLAWARRA LANDCARE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Landcare Illawarra and Bombo Headland Landcare volunteers. On Saturday 19th October 2024, Landcare Illawarra hosted its 2024 'Picnic for Nature' at Bombo Headland aiming to educate the community about their vital restoration

efforts in this local hotspot. This wonderful event included a beautiful picnic lunch, an optional swim or snorkel at Boneyard and a guided walk from Bombo Headland Landcare group member, and horticulturist, Carl Glaister with founding member Bob King. Various paintings by high school students were shared, and 38 years of work which has been dedicated to restoring Bombo Headland for our local communities to enjoy. Participants in the walk were also invited to take part in the famous Aussie Bird Count with a resurgence of birdlife and other wildlife at the headland since restoration began. Many birds have also started to use and live on the headland since this Landcare group started restoring. It is one of the most beautiful places in Kiama with its public open green spaces and forest. If you would be interested in getting involved, then please get in contact with Kiama Council or a local Landcare Illawarra coordinator today.

ROSIE WINGROVE JOHNSTON

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr speaker, the foresight, passion and unrelenting drive of Forbes artist Rosie Wingrove Johnston during the past decade has come to fruition with the official opening of the Sculpture Down the Lachlan in October. Rosie's visit to Sculpture by the Sea at Bondi many years ago set in motion a wonderful series of events that have now realised her dream of an inland version of this iconic installation with the final work 'Brumbies Run' by Brett Garling, set in place among the Lachlan's river gums. Moved by the ocean backdrop for the coastal sculpture path, Rosie envisioned a similar dynamic for this inland version which is framed by the terrain of the Lachlan River, firmly embedding art in nature. It follows a travelling stock route, adding to its authentic bush heart. The complete trail features 25 works over 100km from Forbes to Condobolin and has already been attracting visitors who enjoy the sometimes quirky works. While Rosie initiated this remarkable project, the support of the Forbes Art Society and the featured artists was invaluable. Thankyou Rosie for the vision and your work in bringing it to life. The result is a joy to behold.

PARKES CWA

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Combating adversity led to the birth of some amazing organisations in Australia and one continues to be a stalwart for rural communities. I speak of the Country Womens Association and today I wish to congratulate the Parkes branch on reaching its 100-year milestone. Formed within two years of the CWA's national launch in 1922, Parkes' founding members took the opportunity to come together for friendship and support. Tackling isolation for country women was a major goal for the CWA, but since then it has become a powerful lobby group for rural and regional Australians through wars, the Depression, natural disaster and the most recently, a pandemic. During its 100 years, the Parkes CWA membership has worked without fanfare to ensure its community was supported. It has linked with other service groups for the greater good on local and overseas projects. CWA branches, while upholding the national body's principles, are unique to their communities and have completed work accordingly – the Parkes CWA were there catering for the opening of the town's famous Radio Telescope. The Parkes CWA branch is a wonderful asset and I congratulate the ladies on their 100th anniversary.

PETER JOHNSTONE

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to congratulate Canobolas Rural Fire Service group captain Peter Johnstone on this year becoming a recipient of very deserved Australian Fire Service Medal. The AFS medal was established in 1988 to recognise distinguished service in the Australian fire services with eight people honoured this year. Mr Johnstone has been an RFS member for more than 50 years, spending much of that time as a Group Captain of the Canobolas District which is headquartered at Orange and which covers around 70 individual brigades from the local government areas of Orange, Cabonne, Blayney and Cowra. The district covers a massive 10,636 square kilometres. During that half-century Mr Johnstone has played a key role in many major fire incidents in and outside this area. Despite more than 50 years on the job, Mr Johnstone continues to respond to many emergency incidents as Group Captain of the Canobolas District, supporting and leading its volunteer members. He is a wonderful mentor, focussing his energy on supporting the next generation of RFS volunteer leadership. He also provides district management with sound rural advice. I thank Peter Johnstone for his service and congratulate him on this honour.

ANNUAL GALA ORGANIZED BY PAL BUDDHIST SCHOOL 2024

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—On 23 August 2024, I had the privilege of attending a special Annual Gala organized by Pal Buddhist School in Canley Vale. This year's event held particular significance as it marked the final year of the Founding Principal, Mr. Pal, before he embarks on his long-anticipated journey to ordain as a monk next year. The atmosphere was filled with warmth and gratitude as students, parents, and staff came together to celebrate Mr. Pal's remarkable contributions to the school and the community. His leadership has not only shaped the school's educational framework but also instilled values of compassion and mindfulness in the students. The event also highlighted Mr. Pal's dedication and vision, reminding us all of the profound impact he has made over the years. It was a touching farewell, filled with well-wishes for his new journey. I want to extend my

sincerest thanks for the kind invitation to this meaningful gathering. As Mr. Pal prepares for this significant transition, I wish him all the very best in his future endeavours. I hope to see him back in Sydney in the near future.

FOUNDATION STONE LAYING CEREMONY MINH GIAC MONASTERY

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—On 6 October 2024, I had the honour and privilege of attending the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony at the Minh Giac Monastery in Cabramatta. I was joined by many Venerables, Buddhist leaders, and representatives from temples in Cabramatta and the surrounding areas to mark the official beginning of the construction of the monastery. On this momentous occasion, I would like to acknowledge the Minh Giac Buddhist Association for their steadfast compassion, charitable spirit, dedication, and commitment to enhancing the lives of many Buddhist followers in my electorate and beyond. The Association provides not only a spiritual sanctuary for worship and meditation but also vital support for community members from disadvantaged backgrounds. It offers shelter for victims of crime, including domestic violence, as well as assistance for those experiencing homelessness. I congratulate Venerable Thich Hanh Hieu and Venerable Thich Thong Tue on this special ceremony and thank them for the kind invitation. I look forward to witnessing the fully completed monastery.

73RD ANNIVERSARY OF THU DUC MILITARY ACADEMY

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—On 4 October 2024, I had the honour of attending the 73rd Anniversary of the Thu Duc Military Academy. This annual event is significant for the Vietnamese community in my electorate, particularly for those who were involved in the Vietnam War, defending the South Vietnam state and democracy. The Thu Duc Military Academy was pivotal in producing skilled officers for the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, with graduates serving across major branches, such as the Infantry, Navy, Rangers, Air Force, and Artillery. Their role was instrumental in safeguarding South Vietnam's sovereignty. Each year, former graduates, officers, and their families gather to celebrate the Anniversary. They also honour those who gave their lives in defence of the Republic of Vietnam, and to remember those who perished during the perilous journey in search of freedom after the war. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the organising committee for their kind invitation. Special recognition goes to the outgoing President Mr. Xuan Lam for his wonderful work over the years. I also congratulate Mr. Vinh Phuc Le on his recent election as the incoming President.

TWEED REGIONAL MUSEUM WINS NATIONAL AWARD

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—THE Tweed Regional Museum in Murwillumbah has won a 2024 Australian Museums and Galleries [AMaGA] Award for its exhibition Supertonic in the prestigious Exhibiting Excellence Category. Supertonic explored contemporary music culture across the Northern Rivers and Gold Coast regions. National judges praised Supertonic, which ran from November 2023 until March 2024, for its innovative use of augmented reality technology, an interactive dance floor, participatory engagement and focus on accessibility. Tweed Regional Museum was also highly commended in the Social Impact Category for the Supertonic Songwriters Program which offered local musicians aged 12-19 years the chance to write, record and produce their own tracks and vinyl under the guidance of professional musicians. The Museum collaborated with Australian artists such as JK-47, The Sunnyboys, Budgerah, The Jezebels, Kate Miller-Heidke, Matt Corby, TORA, Amy Shark, Bobby Alu and Ocean Alley. Museum Director Molly Green is honoured to be recognised and thanks her team for the hard work and ability to reimagine the museum experience through a modern lens. "We hope to develop many more incredibly successful engaging bodies of work that are on par with what can be found in much larger cultural facilities nationwide," she says.

BUNDGEAM HALL'S ALL-WEATHER TENNIS COURT OPENED

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I Thank Kyogle Mayor Cr Danielle Mulholland for representing me at the opening of the Bundgeam Hall's new all-weather tennis court with lights, funded by a \$176,340 Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 5 grant. I advocated strongly for this project over several years as did Cr Mulholland, who had the honour of cutting the ribbon with Bundgeam Tennis Club President Jim Crawter. Cr Mulholland acknowledged local champions of this fabulous project – Jane Flower, Jim Crawter and Kraige Lavelle. I also acknowledge Jane's sister Ruth Flower who worked so professionally to help secure this much needed community sporting infrastructure. Bundgeam Hall, located in Terrace Creek, has been central to the social life of local communities of the Upper Richmond since it was built in 1937. A clay tennis court adjacent to the hall building was a popular social tennis club venue up until the late 1980s. Use was discontinued as the upkeep of the clay court became problematic for an aging population. In recent years, younger residents and their families have moved into Terrace Creek and the Bundgeam Hall Committee's plan is to make the hall a focus for healthy games and activities, including tennis.

FEDERAL VILLAGE MARKET HAS RETURNED

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—THE popular Federal Village Market rebooted last Sunday and will run on the third Sunday of every month, from 8am until 2pm. The market has been able to restart following the completion of Federal Drive, which had been closed for more than two years following major damage from the 2022 floods. The market took place in, and around, the Federal Community Hall with over 30 stalls, local vendors and a coffee cart. It offered baked goods and lunches, and a diverse range of goods, including local produce, local designed clothing, artisan food and drinks, locally-made jewellery, handmade crafts and vintage finds. Federal Village Market Manager Peter Cumberlege told The Byron Shire Echo that he was thrilled to see the market open again. "This is a beloved community event, and with the road open again, we expect to see more visitors than ever," Mr Cumberlege said. "Federal Market has long been a cherished event with a vibrant atmosphere, offering the community the chance to come together, enjoying the music from our locally-based musicians." Congratulations to Peter Cumberlege and all concerned for reinvigorating these markets which showcase the Byron Shire hinterland's bountiful offerings to locals and tourists.

JORDAN LIBER

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Jordan Liber, from Warilla High School, for receiving a nomination for his work to be included in this year's HSC Showcase for his Industrial Technology major work. SHAPE presents a selection of outstanding major projects by HSC Design and Technology, Industrial Technology and Textiles and Design students in NSW. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Jordan on this wonderful achievement and wish him well in his future endeavours.

WARILLA HIGH SCHOOL – GUNJI CUP

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Warilla High League Tag players who won the third annual Gunji Origin Reconciliation Cup at Myimbarr Community Park in Shellharbour on Monday 23 September 2024. There were eight teams in the competition including five high school teams - Warilla, Dapto, Lake Illawarra, Oak Flats and Albion Park – along with community, PCYC and police teams. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate the Warilla High School team on this this wonderful achievement.

STAND-UP PADDLE BOARDING SHELLHARBOUR

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Stand-Up Paddle Boarding Shellharbour for taking out the Excellence in Micro Business Award at the recent Illawarra Business Awards 2024. Stand-Up Paddle Boarding Shellharbour have also been named as a finalist in the Outstanding Visitor Experience category at the 2024 NSW State Business Awards which will be held at Sydney's ICC 30th October. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Stand-Up Paddle Boarding Shellharbour on this this wonderful achievement and wish them all the best at the 2024 NSW State Business Awards.

2024 TUMBARUMBA SPRING FLOWER FESTIVAL - A SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge the Tumbarumba Spring Flower Festival as it proudly celebrates its Silver Jubilee on October 26 and 27, marking 25 years of community engagement and horticultural beauty. I extend my gratitude to the Tumbarumba Garden Club, Tumbarumba High School, and the Octogenarian Gardeners for their invaluable contributions to this cherished event. The annual flower show is known for its stunning local blooms, with 12 open gardens. Special mention goes to June Gray, who in her 80's continues to inspire us by showcasing her garden and has been involved since the festival's inception in 1999. This year's event features an impressive lineup of activities, including competitions in sculpture, a photography exhibition, and a delightful colouring contest. The festival has evolved into a weekend-long celebration, with an estimated \$200,000 raised for charity over the years, a celebration that draws visitors from across the country. I thank the locals of Tumbarumba and the festival's volunteers, your support embodies community spirit and generosity.

2024 BUSINESS NSW AWARDS RIVERINA MURRAY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—On Friday, September 27, I had the privilege of attending the Business NSW – Riverina Murray 2024 Business Awards at the June Licorice & Chocolate Factory. This collaboration reflects our share commitment to recognising and celebrating excellence within the vibrant and thriving business community in our region. I congratulate the following outstanding award winners from Albury: Business of the Year: Zauner Construction; Excellence in New Business: Footsteps Podiatry; Excellence in Sustainability: Boschetti; Employer of Choice (20 Employees and Under): PRD Albury; Employer of Choice (21 Employees and

Over): Zauner Construction; Outstanding Business Leader (20 Employees and Under): Rebecca O'Brien (Bric Corporate); Outstanding Young Business Leader: Kiah Beaumont (Zauner Construction); Outstanding Micro Business & the Outstanding Visitor Experience: Ladbroke Distilling Co. I would also like to thank all the sponsors, including Visy, Pyrus, and Optus, for their invaluable support. A special acknowledgment goes to Charles Sturt University for sponsoring the Excellence in Innovation category. Congratulations to all the finalists for their remarkable achievements and contributions to the Riverina Murray region. Your dedication and success is inspirational and I eagerly await another year of continued growth and success!

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE – ALBURY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I proudly acknowledge the Australian Women in Agriculture [AWiA] for hosting the 2024 National Conference from September 24 to 26 in Albury, New South Wales. This year's theme, "Seed to Success", marked a significant milestone – 30 years of empowering women in agriculture. The conference provided an important learning and networking platform, featuring a diverse program that included education sessions on leadership, mental health in agriculture, and innovative farming practices from industry leaders and peers. Those who attended, had the opportunity to tour Woomargama Station, renowned for its sustainable practices in beef and wool production. A gala dinner was held at the Albury Entertainment Centre to commemorate three decades of achievements and honour the remarkable contributions of women in agriculture. I thank the efforts of Natalie Sommerville, AWiA President and the dedicated board and volunteers who worked tirelessly to bring this event to fruition. I honour the remarkable impacts women make in our agriculture sector and look forward to the continued growth and innovation that their shared experiences will inspire in future generations.

RUN THE PLAINS MOREE

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the community of Moree for staging the first running festival called Run the Plains Moree. The event was a huge success, attracting visitors from far and wide, to take part in the run across the black soils of the Moree plains. The run attracted 400 entrants, participating across six distances over the two day period. I congratulate those involved in combining to coordinate this event, with special thanks to Julie Rushby, Kelly James, Felicity Taylor, Casey Smith and Angela Druery for their tireless efforts in staging the run. Thank you to Moree Plains Shire Council [MPSC] for being the catalyst of the initiative, with a grant made available through the Events Partnership Fund and to their outdoor staff, for ensuring Moree was looking its best. Thank you also to the many business sponsors and volunteers for their support to this community activity. I commend all involved in this inaugural event, who have given their time and effort to ensure Run the Plains Moree 2024 ran smoothly and ensured it was a terrific day out for all to enjoy.

IVY PRITCHARD

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the achievements of New England Girls School [NEGS] student Ivy Pritchard, on her successful tour of America, where she placed first in a 5km cross-country event against over 100 other runners. I congratulate Ivy on this impressive win, adding to her many accolades. Ivy has represented NEGS at state level previously and it was this outstanding performance which was recognised by Sports Travel Australia. The organisation offers school-age athletes competitive opportunities and for Ivy this was a trip to America to compete with other athletes from Australia, USA and Canada. I commend Ivy on her hard work, practice and preparation leading up to the tour, for her commitment to the sport of cross-country and for being a wonderful ambassador for her school and country. Thank you to Ivy's family, school Principal Liv Van Genderen and staff, for enabling and encouraging Ivy to achieve her best at an elite level.

RECOGNITION OF SASCHA BAILEY

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the achievements of St Philomena's student Sascha Bailey, for excelling in the sport of Rugby, recently being selected to play at the 2024 Pasifika Youth Cup, for the under 12s Barbarians team in November. I congratulate Sascha on this selection, adding to her bow of sporting achievements. Earlier this year Sascha represented the diocese at state level for Rugby, playing in at the NSW PSSA Girls Rugby Championships and later in the year went on to represent the Central North Barbarians team, at the state under 11 Girls Rugby 7's Championships, held at Forster. I commend Sascha for the hard work and commitment shown to her chosen sport of Rugby. I thank Sascha's parents Matthew and Mellita, the principal and staff of St Philomena's School for their support and encouragement given to Sascha to achieve these wonderful accolades.

CARINGBAH HIGH SCHOOL 2025 STUDENT LEADERS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Caringbah High School's incoming 2025 student leadership team on their appointment. Audrey Wei and Dean Skropidis were elected as school captains, to serve alongside vice-captains Audrey Wei and Hugh Darley, and prefects Jack Baker, Adele Beydoun, Frederick

Fordham, Jett Souvleris, Stephen Toovey and Angelique Vassiliadis. Being elected to student leadership is a fantastic opportunity for those fortunate enough to be given the chance. Being a student leader can ingrain listening and communication skills, teamwork, and the value of leadership. These skills are vital not just in a school environment, but also in the workplace and life more generally. I wish the new leadership team the best of luck in their new leadership roles, as well as in their Year 12 studies next year.

TAYLOR LOCKLEY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Taylor Lockley for being awarded the Central Coast Academy of Sport Rising Star Award in the Indigenous Program. 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. Taylor is a shining example of dedication and talent within the Central Coast Academy of Sport. Their commitment to excellence in the Indigenous Program has been evident throughout the season, as they have consistently demonstrated remarkable skill, resilience, and a strong work ethic. Whether in practice or competition, Taylor has shown that they are not only a formidable competitor but also a true sportsperson, inspiring their peers and coaches alike with their unwavering dedication. Congratulations Taylor. Your award is truly well-deserved, and I eagerly look forward to witnessing your continued growth in the upcoming season.

LUKE CHANDLER

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Luke Chandler for being awarded the Central Coast Academy of Sport Rising Star Award in the category of hockey. 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. Luke is a shining example of dedication and talent within the Central Coast Academy of Sport. His commitment to excellence in hockey has been evident throughout the season, as he has consistently demonstrated remarkable skill, resilience, and a strong work ethic. Whether in practice or competition, Luke has shown that he is not only a formidable competitor but also a true sportsman, inspiring his peers and coaches alike with his unwavering dedication. Congratulations Luke. Your award is truly well-deserved, and I eagerly look forward to witnessing your continued growth in the upcoming season.

AYDIN HOPE

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter)—Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Aydin Hope for being awarded the Central Coast Academy of Sport Rising Star Award in the category of tennis. 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. Aydin is a shining example of dedication and talent within the Central Coast Academy of Sport. Their commitment to excellence in tennis has been evident throughout the season, as they have consistently demonstrated remarkable skill, resilience, and a strong work ethic. Whether in practice or competition, Aydin has shown that they are not only a formidable competitor but also a true sportsperson, inspiring their peers and coaches alike with their unwavering dedication. Congratulations Aydin. Your award is truly well-deserved, and I eagerly look forward to witnessing your continued growth in the upcoming season.

ENCORE

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to take this opportunity to recognise three outstanding Year 12 Music students, Banjo Munday, Chloe Knight, and Jack Richards from Ulladulla High School. Banjo, Chloe and Jack have been nominated for ENCORE, which showcases the remarkable talents of New South Wales' top HSC Music students and culminates with a performance at the Sydney Opera House on Monday 24 February 2025. Banjo, Chloe, and Jack's hard work, dedication, and passion for music have earned them this well-deserved recognition and their nomination reflects not only their individual talents, but also their commitment to excellence in their craft. Being recognised at this level is a significant accomplishment, and it highlights the dedication and countless hours they've invested in perfecting their performances and I have no doubt this is only the beginning of their musical success. This achievement is also a testament to the strong support they've received from their teachers and families and the wider school community. Well done, Banjo, Chloe, and Jack—you've made your school, families, and our community extremely proud.

KEELE BROWNE

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise Keele Browne who after a 10-month stint on the sidelines of the NRLW has made her long-awaited return to the pitch after injury. Healing well after damaging all the ligaments in her right ankle, Keele is excited to re-join the strong team culture at the Dragons led by head coach Jamie Soward and Captain Raecene McGregor. Keele, a Milton Ulladulla Bulldogs junior, started playing rugby league at 16 and made her NRLW debut for the St George Illawarra Dragon while still a teenager in 2021. Keele, who is still studying at university, hopes that other young people from the South Coast will follow in her footsteps. As an athlete from a regional area, Keele's parents certainly racked up the kilometres on road trips for Keele to chase her dream and it's wonderful to see her continue to flourish at the elite level. Hope you and the team have a great season Keele – and thank you for being such a great role model for young girls in sport.

NOWRA WALKIE TALKIES

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—**Mr. SPEAKER:** I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Nowra Walkie Talkies Group on reaching a remarkable milestone as part of the Heart Foundation's walking initiative. Meeting regularly for 15 years, the Nowra Walkie Talkies have demonstrated the long-term benefits of consistent exercise, from improving cardiovascular health to boosting mental well-being. The 'Walkie Talkies' group has shown incredible dedication to improving their health and well-being through regular walking sessions, making a positive impact not only on their own lives but also within the Nowra community. Walking together provides an opportunity for members to stay physically active while also enjoying social connections, which is vital for maintaining overall health. These regular walks foster a sense of community, helping to build strong friendships and offering support for one another. The group's commitment to promoting an active lifestyle aligns perfectly with the Heart Foundation's mission to encourage healthier living. I commend the Nowra Walkie Talkies for their ongoing dedication and for being an inspiration to others to stay active and connected for many more years to come.

CUMBERLAND CITY COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR SUMAN SAHA

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations Suman Saha on being re-elected as Councillor of Cumberland City Council, Wentworthville Ward. Suman's passion for community motivated him to join local government as a Councillor in 2017. He was elected Deputy Mayor in September 2022. Suman served as Deputy Mayor with diligence and integrity for a year, whilst continuing to support our community in the Wentworthville Ward. An accountant, Suman prioritises strong economic management and strives to keep community assets with the community. He advocates for road safety improvements, improved service delivery, local parks and playground upgrades. Suman is a thoughtful leader who champions others. With Cumberland City Council the second largest culturally and linguistically diverse community in NSW, Suman's celebration of multiculturalism fosters an inclusive, connected community where everyone is welcome. As a first-generation migrant, Suman's genuine understanding of lived experiences informs considerate, meaningful decision-making. Suman is an inspiration to the Sub-Continent Diaspora who call Western Sydney home Congratulations again Suman. It's been a privilege to collaborate with you on a professional and personal level for many years. I have no doubt that you will continue to serve our Western Sydney community to the highest standard this term.

BLACKTOWN CITY COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR SUSAI BENJAMIN OAM

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations of the Parliament of New South Wales on the re-election of Councillor Susai Benjamin OAM to Blacktown City Council. First elected in 2012, Susai is returned for a fourth term as Councillor to Blacktown City Council with a deep passion for social justice and equality. He has been a strong and influential voice for our local community over many years, and he is currently Honorary Director of Toongabbie Legal Centre, a free community legal service established in 2005 and based in the heart of our local Prospect Electorate. A solicitor and barrister as well as a migration agent, Susai understands the local area and is eager to support Blacktown constituents, to provide even more public open spaces and parks for our Western Sydney residents to work and live. He has a profound commitment to multiculturalism in our local area, previously serving on the Australian Multicultural Advisory Council and the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW. I would like to personally congratulate Susai Benjamin OAM on his re-election, which is a fantastic and promising appointment for our local Blacktown and Prospect Electorate community.

CUMBERLAND CITY COUNCIL – COUNCILLOR DIANE COLMAN

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations of the Parliament of New South Wales on the re-election of Councillor Dr Diane Colman to Cumberland City Council. First elected in 2021, Diane is returned as Councillor to Cumberland City Council with a deep passion for social

justice and equality. A lifelong Western Sydney local and mother of two daughters, she has been a strong and influential voice for our local community over many years, particularly for Cumberland residents who are also State constituents within our local Prospect Electorate. A lecturer in international relations and global politics at Western Sydney University, Diane understands the local area and is eager to support Cumberland constituents, to provide even more opportunities for our Western Sydney residents to work and live. During her first term on Cumberland City Council, she proudly helped to establish a service hub in Greystanes, a senior connections service, as well as domestic violence and youth employment initiatives into our local area. I would like to personally congratulate Dr Diane Colman on her re-election, which is a fantastic and promising appointment for our local Cumberland and Prospect Electorate community.

LILLI PILLI PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Lilli Pilli Public School on winning a Wakakirri National Story-Dance Award for its performance "Longing for Belonging". Wakakirri is a word from the Aboriginal Wangaaypuwan people meaning "to dance". Wakakirri is the largest performing arts event for schools in Australia. Lilli Pilli was presented the award for "an outstanding story-dance on the theme of belonging, raising awareness, and excelling in the performing arts". The award, presented by the Wiggles, is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the 80 students from years 3 to 5 who participated in the performance. School principal Jane Shepherd said that developing the performance brought the entire school community together, and involved many students who previously were unsure about the performing arts, building confidence and creativity among students. I congratulate the school students for their wonderful performance and hope to see the school represented at next year's awards.

BAY FM 99.9 - YOUNG LEGENDS - FLOOD STORIES OF MAIN ARM

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—I congratulate Bay FM 99.9 for winning the Excellence in Community Engagement Award at this year's Community Broadcasting Association of Australia [CBAA] Awards. Special recognition goes to Ms. Rasela Torise, Ms. Lealah Shostak, and Ms. Monet Shortland for their impactful work on the trilogy, Young Legends: Flood Stories of Main Arm. This award-winning project was produced in partnership with Byron Youth Service and Main Arm Public School and aired powerful stories from local children, sharing their personal experiences of the devastating 2022 floods and landslides in the Northern Rivers. Through podcasting, these young voices were supported by trained youth workers, building resilience and offering a cathartic space for storytelling. Funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice and the Community Broadcasting Foundation, this project exemplifies the vital role community radio plays in amplifying voices and strengthening local communities. The producers and participation dedication to telling these deeply personal stories has not only been recognised but has also touched hearts, showing the profound impact of youth-led media. Bay FM's continued commitment to excellence is a source of pride for the Byron Shire.

RODNEY WALLACE

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today, I recognise the remarkable achievements of Lennox Head resident Rodney Wallace, who was crowned the winner of the Melbourne Marathon in the 75+ age-grade category. A much-loved member of Byron Bay Runners, Rod completed the 21.1km marquee race in the impressive time of 1 hour and 54 minutes exactly. To put this in context, a sub-2-hour half marathon is a benchmark that runners of all ages often strive for. Sharing the road with Olympians and Australian record-holders, Rod crossed the line ahead of more than 70% of the assembled field. Rod is no stranger to the podium. His 13th October success in Victoria is not his first taste of gold in the past 12 months; he is also the reigning age-grade champion at the HOKA Runaway 10km and the Brisbane Marathon. Showing no signs of slowing down, Rod is a hugely popular local figure and an inspiration to the sporting community in Ballina Shire and beyond.

LEXI CODLING

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise Lexi Codling, a 13-year-old from Forster, for her initiative and environmental efforts through the Return and Earn program. Lexi, a Year 7 student at Great Lakes College, Forster, has raised \$400 for a family trip to Japan by collecting and returning bottles and cans. She is now saving for a cruise to New Zealand in 2025. Lexi is driven by a desire to protect wildlife and reduce plastic pollution in our oceans and rivers. Despite facing the challenges of autism and a mild learning disability, she has embraced this activity with enthusiasm, developing valuable life skills and independence. I commend Lexi for her efforts and look forward to seeing her continue to succeed. I wish her all the best in saving for her holiday next year.

MADI DARCY

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise Madi Darcy, who was recently named the 2024 Young Woman of the Year at the Taree Show. Madi, an 18-year-old Year 12 student from

Tuncurry, entered the competition with her friend, Dani Altham, as a way to meet new people and have fun. To her surprise, Madi was sashed the winner, while Dani was named runner-up. Madi, the first generation of her family raised on the coast, has a strong interest in agriculture, particularly agronomy. She has completed work experience with agronomists and plans to study rural science at the University of New England next year, following her move to Armidale. Madi sees this opportunity as a way to further explore her passion for agriculture and contribute to the industry. The next stage of the contest will take place in Kempsey in March 2025, and I wish Madi all the best as she continues on this exciting path, congratulations on this well-deserved recognition.

MARGARET GEORGE OF MARGARET'S UNDERFASHIONS

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to acknowledge Margaret George of Margaret's Underfashions in Taree, who after 31 years is passing her business to a new owner. Margaret, now 87, opened her store in the Pulteney Arcade after Dahdahs closed, where she had worked for more than 20 years. Since then, she has built a thriving local business known for customer service and quality products. Despite challenges, including significant flood damage in 2021, Margaret's resilience has kept the store going. She's also supported breast cancer patients by partnering with Penny from Advanced Breast Care for prosthesis fittings. Margaret's long-time employee, Karen Rojo, will now take over the business, continuing its legacy. Margaret's role as a mentor and her presence in the store will still be felt as she enjoys a well-deserved slower pace. Congratulations to Margaret on her incredible career and contribution to our community.

2024 BEACH TO BROTHER TRAIL RUNNING FESTIVAL WINNERS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Congratulations to the organisers and winners of the 2024 Beach to Brother Trail Running Festival Winners held on 22nd September in the Camden Haven. Showcased annually, the Beach to Brother Trail Running Festival comprises of a five, 10, 21 and 42 kilometre run and team relay with participants ranging from experienced athletes, fitness enthusiasts, joggers, walkers and tourists all enjoying the beautiful coastline and atmosphere of a running festival on the beautiful Mid North Coast. Funds raised go towards Hastings Little Wishes, a local charity in our region which aims to support families with seriously ill children and teens up to 17 years experiencing hardship. Congratulations to all the winners: Men's Marathon: Aaron Eichner, 3:38:10. Women's Marathon: Camilla Lyttle, 04:15:33. Team Relay: "Runstable Angina", 4:19:39. Men's Half Marathon: Chris Noble, 1:58:51. Women's Half Marathon: Leisl Major 2:11:06. 10km: Trent Alley, 00:51:41 and Monika Ludriks, 00:59:08. 5km: Hunter Pociask, 00:41:09 and Mia Wheeler, 00:47:40. Of course, all of this would not be possible without Beach to Beach's major sponsor Coast Cardiology and the many volunteers who supported the participants along the trail.

THE NURTURED VILLAGE HAMPERS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise a registered charity which offers delicious, home cooked meals and essential items for new mothers and families experiencing perinatal and financial hardships. The Nurtured Village Hampers are an Australia wide program designed to support families during early parenthood as they manage the unexpected challenges often faced with the birth of a child. Our local Branch in Port Macquarie is run by Casey Whitehouse, Chloe De Vries, Cheryl Condie and Ellie Hughes. Together they form a formidable and determined team focussed on doing what they can to support new mothers and families in our community. The Branch was formed in 2020 after seeing a gap in services and a need, providing encouragement and care during a time that is often difficult for new parents. It is interesting to note the uptake in hampers since 2020. In one year, the Nurtured Village donated 1,383 hampers to families experiencing hardship in its various forms. The way Casey, Cheryl, Ellie and Chloe identify the families in need are through a nomination system, generated through social media. Items are sourced from donations from local businesses and the wider community. A wonderful initiative, deserving of recognition and praise.

PROFESSIONAL VOLUNTEER COMMENDATION – MARINE RESCUE PORT MACQUARIE MEMBERS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Congratulations to our courageous Marine Rescue Port Macquarie volunteers who were recently acknowledged for bravery and heroism after saving a vessel and its crew caught in turbulent seas two nautical miles offshore. On the evening of the 16 October a distress call was sent to Marine Rescue Port Macquarie headquarters from a 12-metre yacht damaged by rough winds and taking in water. Marine Rescue volunteers responded and at 10 pm were at the scene securing a tow line to retrieve the vessel. I thank the members for selflessly facing the elements and the ferocity of the seas which saved the lives of the crew trapped off the coast of Port Macquarie. The next day, after a harrowing night at sea, eight Marine Rescue members were awarded the coveted Professional Volunteer Commendation at the 2023-24 Australian Search and Rescue Awards. Congratulations to Skipper Leonard Smart, Rob Britten, David Withers, Warren Gowing, Bruce Lee, Michael Ranson, Brooke Mason and Ian Pascoe on your well deserved accolades. Heroes of our waterways, thank you for your enduring service to our community.

MENTAL HEALTH FORUM - SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On 20 October I was delighted to attend the South Asian Wellbeing Forum hosted by Haathi in the Room. This event had a pivotal focus to reduce mental health stigma in the South Asian community, along with fostering open conversations. The event also featured the launch of mental health stories, which highlighted various mental health issues through compelling narratives. These stories provided a platform for individuals to share their personal experiences, shedding light on the diverse challenges faced by those dealing with mental health issues. The narratives were powerful and moving, offering insights into the daily struggles and triumphs of individuals within the community. Throughout the forum, various participants engaged in meaningful discussions about mental health. These conversations brought to light the ongoing struggles faced by the community, facilitating better understanding and encouraging dialogue. The forum served as a catalyst for change, inspiring attendees to continue these important conversations in their own circles and work towards a more inclusive environment. Overall, the South Asian Wellbeing Forum was a significant step towards breaking down the stigma surrounding mental health in the South Asian community, promoting awareness, and fostering openness.

CROWS NEST FESTIVAL 2024

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker Last Sunday, the North Shore Community spirit was on full display, with thousands of locals flocking to the 2024 Crows Nest Festival. Each year I am impressed by the amazing community turnout, and this year was no different. It was a glorious Spring day, which saw a turnout of over 40,000 people wandering the streets of Crows Nest. With over 200 market stalls and delicious food alleys, there was no shortage of fun activities on the day. My own stall was there amongst a throng of other local offerings. The North Shore community truly is so vibrant, and the Crows Nest Festival is an embodiment of the local spirit and culture. I acknowledge the incredible work of Crows Nest Mainstreet, the dedicated organisation behind this fantastic festival. Their hard work is evident in every detail, and once again, this year's festival was a smash hit. It takes a lot of work to pull off these events, and it was another terrific day enjoyed by all. Finally, thank you to all the Crows Nest community for making this event such a success.

HIGH ACHIEVERS AT NORTH SYDNEY BOYS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker I want to acknowledge the fantastic achievements of a number of North Sydney Boys High School students. The North Sydney Boys students have been excelling across various fields, both sporting and academic. I want to congratulate Andrew, who represented North Sydney Boys at the NSW Combined High School Sports Association Tennis State Championships. Andrew took home a silver medal and was incredibly awarded the title of Best Number 5 Player. Andrew won all of his singles matches and five out of six doubles matches. Congratulations Andrew on this outstanding achievement. I congratulate Niall, Brendan, Ryan, Sean, and Hugo who won silver in the NSW Combined High School Sports Association Squash State Final. Well done boys, what a wonderful performance. I congratulate Benjamin, who recently participated in the Jack Newton Junior Golf Competition. Benjamin won the Year 7 Boys Net Division. Congratulations Benjamin. And finally, I want to congratulate Alex, who competed in the 36th International Olympiad in Informatics, which was held in Egypt. Incredibly, Alex won a silver medal. What an amazing accomplishment. Congratulations Alex.

NORTH SHORE LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS 2024

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker I want to congratulate all the winners of the coveted North Shore Local Business Awards. This year's ceremony was held at Norths Cammeray in August, and recognised the fantastic achievements of local businesses from across the North Shore. Small businesses form an integral part of the fabric of our community. I especially congratulate the hardworking businesses from my electorate who were recognised with an award on the night. Congratulations to Mark Slaven, managing director of Speaking Schools Australia, who won Business Person of the Year. Congratulations to Jordan Sloan from ProgressDNA, who won the sought-after Youth Award. Other businesses from my electorate who took home awards include Brow Rituals Mosman, Garage North Sydney, C3 Education Group Cremorne, Nadi's Bridal & Alterations Studio, Walker Street Doctors, Dracakis Jewellers Mosman, Hummingbird Music & Vocal Studio, Pet Medical Milsons Point, TerryWhite Chemmart Mosman, and La Capannina Italian Restaurant. I sincerely congratulate all of these businesses and the dedicated teams behind them for their success. Thank you to the Local Business Awards team for helping shine a light on the achievements of some of our most hardworking and trusted businesses.

PANI HOPOATE AND NARRAWEENA HAWKS JUNIOR

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst)—Today I applaud Pani Hopoate from the Sydney Roosters NRLW team and her junior club the Narraweena Hawks. Pani helped the Roosters claim victory in a very close

game against the Cronulla Sharks for this year's premiership. The Narraweena Hawks Junior Rugby League Club is an awesome community-oriented club based in my electorate. Our local clubs like the Hawks are fostering formidable players who have what it takes to go pro. And it's clear to see given Pani's skill at the game and a near 93% tackle efficiency after just 3 seasons playing first-grade with the Roosters. The Hawks also had great success in the 2024 season with four teams winning grand final matches in August and September. There is certainly a new generation of sporting legends coming through the ranks who may one day be representing their city in the big leagues just like Pani. To Pani and the Narraweena Hawk's I offer my congratulations on the grand final wins and I wish your teams more success in the seasons to come.

BREAKING BARRIERS DISABILITY SERVICES

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)— Congratulations to Breaking Barriers Disability Services in Wyong for being awarded the prestigious Outstanding Community Service Award at the 2024 Central Coast Local Business Awards. The awards night recognises exceptional local businesses across the Central Coast and the service stood out for their wide selection of service programs, dedicated staff with their unwavering commitment to individuals with disabilities and to ensure the best care and support are developed for people between 7 and 65 years old. Directors Lonestar Makoni and Ruvi Makoni brought Breaking Barriers to life in 2020 to strive for each participant to find the right carer to suit them. The wide range of services includes supported independent living, community access, community nursing, support coordination, daily personal activities, and transport. The organisation extends beyond direct service provision and actively engages with local businesses, schools, and community groups on the Central Coast to foster a culture of understanding and inclusivity. The community outreach program includes The Blue Haven Public School Citizenship Award presented to a student for their stellar school achievement. The organisation has also worked with Gosford CBD Community Hub donating blankets, towels, socks, hygiene products and groceries worth more than \$500.

VOCAL EVENTS

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)— Congratulations to Vocal Events for being named a finalist in the following three categories Celebrant, Wedding DJ, and MC in the 2024 Australian Bridal Industry Awards. Jamie Cartner began Vocal Events with his wife Stephanie Cartner in 2000 providing service such as Kids Entertainment, Trivia Host, Jammus the Mad Magician, MC/DJ Services and Wedding Celebrant. Mr Cartner has been entertaining and delighting audiences across the Central Coast NSW, Sydney, Newcastle, and Hunter regions for over 20 years. Recently, Vocal Events added a new service Wedding Celebrant which reflected Mr Cartner's skill of being a man of many talents and experiences. His experience in the wedding and event industry has made him to be known for his friendly, energetic, engaging, professional, and respectful approach. Vocal Events ceremonies are created with the clients input making it unique and personalised to reflect individual stories and preferences. I wish Mr and Mrs Cartner all the best in the wedding industry.

RODNEY TAYLOR - CURLWAA

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Madam/Mister Speaker, Today I would like to recognise Rodney Taylor, a dedicated horticulturist from Curlwaa, the first irrigation settlement in NSW. Rod has been a driving force in the Curlwaa Fruit-growers and Progress Association, where he led negotiations with all levels of government on irrigation and land tenure matters, including essential irrigation reforms. His work resulted in the replacement of the old open channel system with one of the most advanced irrigation systems in the state by 1981-82, setting a benchmark for NSW and achieving significant environmental benefits by reducing drainage and evaporation losses. Rod's leadership extended further through his involvement with local water reform efforts. As a founding director of Western Murray Irrigation, he oversaw the privatisation of irrigation services in Curlwaa, Coomealla, and Buronga during the 1990s, transforming water management in the region. In retirement, Rod remains a valued community member, serving as president of the local museum group and aero club. I congratulate Rod on his vision, dedication, and enduring contribution to the community and thank him for his many years of service to the region.

WYN SCOTT - BALRANALD

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Madam/Mister Speaker, Today I would like to acknowledge and recognise Wyn Scott for her remarkable service to the Balranald community. Wyn, a dedicated nurse for 45 years, has been a pillar of care since her arrival in Balranald in 1987. She has provided exceptional palliative care services, going above and beyond for patients and their families. Her role as Patient Liaison Officer with the Balranald branch of Can Assist ensures essential financial support stays within the community, benefitting local

cancer patients. In addition to her healthcare contributions, Wyn chairs Balranald Inc., a not-for-profit organisation focused on improving the town through numerous projects. For 35 years, Wyn has been an active member of the Balranald Pony Club, promoting youth engagement and enhancing the club's offerings. Wyn's community spirit extends further—she has volunteered with Meals on Wheels and MacKillop Services, providing invaluable support to people with disabilities. I sincerely thank Wyn Scott for her unwavering dedication and tireless efforts in enriching the Balranald community.

NATIONAL CARERS WEEK

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—The 13th to 19th October 2024 marked National Carers Week and I take the opportunity to recognise, celebrate and raise awareness of the many carers in my electorate of Badgerys Creek who provide care to a family member or friend. More than 10% of Australians are carers and they represent a diverse range of backgrounds and responsibilities. What they do share in common is their commitment and dedication to their roles as carers to their loved ones, whilst still having to fulfill the other daily roles and responsibilities that we all face, such as work, study, financial commitments and maintaining physical and mental health. The value of carers extends beyond those they care for and benefits the whole community and economy. On behalf of my electorate of Badgerys Creek, I thank all carers for their outstanding and important service and I wish them and the people they care for the very best.

SAMARITAN'S PURSE – OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I thank and commend Christian organisation Samaritan's Purse and all, including my son Harry, who participated in the project 'Operation Christmas Child.' The operation is a hands-on way for people to bless a child in need across the world by filling shoeboxes with toys, hygiene items, clothes, school supplies and fun gifts. It offers a tangible way for children in need around the world to experience God's love. I am so proud of Harry who excitedly ran around his room offering to give many of his toys to this project - even a massive submarine! I did have to remind him that everything (clothes, shoes, school supplies, toys, hygiene products, etc) had to fit inside a shoebox! I thank my family and staff who have donated many bottles and containers for recycling, which is how Harry has helped to pay for the postage of the shoeboxes. A special shout out to Damien Sexton at Aitken Real Estate for offering their business as a drop off location for the shoeboxes.

ANTI-POVERTY WEEK 2024

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—The 13th to 19th October 2024 marked National Carers Week and I take the opportunity to thank and commend The Salvation Army and the many people and organisations in my electorate of Badgerys Creek who work to raise awareness about the causes and effects of poverty and inspire and take meaningful steps towards its eradication. I recognise and thank the hardworking volunteers of these organisations who dedicate their time and effort to supporting others and alleviating poverty. I encourage anyone in my community suffering from financial hardship to reach out to The Salvation Army or any other organisations and support services who assist people in our community that are struggling. On behalf of my electorate of Badgerys Creek, I extend my gratitude to all involved in the important initiative of working to alleviate poverty and I wish them the very best as they continue this important mission.

LOCAL SMALL COMMITMENTS ALLOCATION PROGRAM

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)—The NSW Government's Local Small Commitments Allocation [LSCA] program is designed to help fund small projects that are intended to enhance community well being and provide overall benefits to the community. Therefore, I am pleased to inform the house of the two schools in the Illawarra who have been successful is receiving funding for their small projects. Figtree Heights Public School will be receiving \$75,000 to go towards the construction of a multipurpose sports court and Mount Keira Demonstration School will be receiving \$50,000 to allow for the construction of a new school playground. Both projects will provide students and the local community with a brand-new space for various sports and physical activities, along with promoting a focus on healthy bodies and healthy minds. I am proud to be a part of a government that is investing in, and will continue to invest in our local schools and provide them with the opportunity to deliver the highest quality education both in and out of the classroom. As the Member for Keira, I am delighted to see that our schools are receiving these upgrades, and I will continue to strive to deliver for our community.

STEPS FOR SAFE HOMES TO AID THE HOMELESS

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I would like to acknowledge the Bankstown community for participating in the Steps for Safe Homes initiative to raise funds for the homeless. Residents walked 122,000 steps during National Homelessness Week which was held on the 6 -13 August to support the

homeless to find a safe place for them to stay. During the 'Steps for Safe Homes' initiative, participants could walk fast or slow, solo or in a group to help change lives. In the Canterbury Bankstown electorate, in the 2021 Census, there are 2,695 people listed as homeless, coming a close second to the City of Sydney. A marked 27 per cent of these people were aged under 19. I would like to thank Mission Australia – Canterbury Bankstown Youth Service program manager Lucy Klianov who raised \$300 but hopes, with the help of the rest of her team this year, to hit a goal of \$70,000. Mission Australia also provide emergency relief such as food, clothing, blankets, and dignity packs and operate an Oz Harvest grocery service at Bankstown PCYC that everyone is welcome to access. Thank you and keep up the excellent work.

AUSTRALIAN MIDDLE EASTERN CHURCHES PRAY FOR PEACE IN LEBANON

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—Bishops, Priests, monks and nuns from Australia's Middle Eastern Churches gathered in Strathfield to pray for peace in Lebanon and the world. His Excellency Antione-Charbel Tarabay, Maronite Bishop of Australia, New Zealand and Oceania, hosted the esteemed guests at Beit Maroun Chapel for the one-hour prayer session. The call to prayer is in response to the ongoing crisis in the Middle East and other conflict zones around the world. Many faith leaders in our community attended including Bishop Robert Rabbat of St John the Beloved Melkite Catholic Church, Greenacre, Father Superior Assaad Lahoud of St Charbel's Monastery, Punchbowl and Fr Hanna Gad of St Demiana & St Athanasius Church, Punchbowl. For the people of Lebanon, this is one of its most distressing times in their modern history. Over 50,000 people of Lebanese Ancestry live in the City of Canterbury Bankstown. These families are worried, mourning or praying for their family's safety. During these difficult times in our community, it is always heartwarming to see religious leaders coming together to pray for our families back home. We hope for a better time for the people of Lebanon.

CLUB MOUNT LEWIS APPOINTS MATT CAVANAGH AS CEO

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I would like to congratulate Matt Cavanagh on being appointed as the new CEO for the Mount Lewis Club. Matt grew up in my electorate of Bankstown and understands what the locals love about the Mount Lewis Club. With a proven track record in leadership roles within the community and hospitality sectors Matt brings a wealth of experience and fresh ideas to the role. His commitment to building positive relationships and creating inclusive environments aligns seamlessly with the Club's mission to serve their members and the broader community. The Mount Lewis Club is well known for its bowls, and it amazing work in putting on events for the community. The Club is all about being inclusive and making sure the community can enjoy bowling. Matt aims to enhance member engagement and strengthen the ties to the Bankstown local area. He envisions innovative programs and initiatives that will enrich the lives of the Club's members and promote partnerships with local organisations. Matt's strategic approach to management, coupled with his passion for community service, promises to create a vibrant atmosphere at Club Mount Lewis. Congratulations Matt Cavanagh on your appointment.

BENNETT SURF PRESENTS - SURF, HOPS AND HISTORY FESTIVAL

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, Manly is a place which perhaps more perfectly than anywhere else captures Sydney's relationship with the ocean. It should therefore come as no surprise that 60 years ago in 1964, it was Manly Beach that hosted the world's first ever Surfing World Championship. Today, I recognise Bennett Surf, an institution of the Manly Electorate and the surfboard building industry who on October 25-27 will be hosting the 'Surf, Hops and History' Festival to celebrate this milestone and Manly's rich surfing history. In partnership with McTavish, Tracks Magazine, Surfcraft Brewing and the Brookvale Arts District, this 3-day festival will be packed with activities, ranging from live music, film screenings and panel discussions with surf historians and competitors from the 1964 event. Throughout the festival, the Brooky Surf Club will be serving a selection of locally-brewed beverages from 4 Pines, 7th Day Brewery, Freshwater Brewing Company, Bucketty's Brewing Co, Dad & Daves, Nomad, Broken Bay Brewing Co. I wish Bennet Surf every success for the event and I thank them for the important role they continue to play in promoting Manly's colourful and historic surfing heritage and culture.

BONDI TO MANLY ULTRA 2024

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—This coming Saturday, ultra marathon runners from around the world will embark on the Bondi to Manly Ultra – an epic 80km run along Sydney's stunning coastline. Commencing at Bondi Pavilion, runners will make their way along Sydney's coastal clifftops, past iconic beachfronts and through national parkland, before crossing the finish line at Manly Beach. It is arguably the world's most visually stunning ultra, showcasing the blend of Sydney's unique natural and built environment. The Bondi to Manly Ultra is a not-for-profit event with all proceeds being donated to the 'Bondi to Manly Walk Supporters' who reinvest this

money into preserving and enhancing this iconic walking track. Runners will have the options of tackling the full 80km or competing in the Relay, which sees the run split into four legs of roughly 20km. They say that 'it's not how you start, but how you finish'. This is applicable in life, but also in this event. For those lacing up this Saturday, I can't think of a better post-run reward than crossing the finish line at the greatest beach in the world. Good luck to all the competitors; I look forward to seeing you out there!

MOVEMBER 2024

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, as we approach the month of November, I wish to acknowledge Movember – a powerful, annual movement which encourages men all around the world to grow a moustache to raise crucial awareness and funds for men's health. Considered a taboo subject by many, men's health remains a serious issue and one which so many of us do not take seriously enough, often neglecting to seek regular check-ups and maintain a healthy lifestyle amid the busyness of everyday life. Movember seeks to correct this. Each Movember campaign raises over \$140 million annually, with more than a million people participating each year. However, Movember is not just for men. Women also play a vital role during Movember by encouraging the men in their life to get involved and seek help where necessary. I wish to use this opportunity to acknowledge all the organisations, businesses, clubs and individuals in the Manly community who are taking part in Movember this year so that our dads, brothers, sons and friends live happier, healthier and longer lives. I thank them for their efforts and I encourage everyone in this place to get involved and donate to this important cause where possible.

DIANNE VAN DER VELDEN

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Congratulations to Dianne Van Der Velden for 26 years of service to the Rural Fire Service. Dianne joined the Lithgow Communications brigade in 1998 and during her time in the brigade she has held the rank of, Communications Senior Deputy Captain, Communications Captain and currently holds the rank of Communications Deputy Captain. Dianne has also been the Brigade Treasurer, Vice President as well as serving as the current Brigade Secretary and Brigade Training Officer. Dianne has been a member of the Chifley/Lithgow Training Committee for numerous years and she has been awarded the Long Service medal 20 years, National Emergency Medal as well as Life Membership to the Lithgow Communications Brigade. Dianne is very much in her element in the Communications room from using the radio, scribing or Communications Room Supervisor, Dianne has contributed greatly to the smooth running of disaster responses with her efficient and effective worth ethic. Dianne is an invaluable asset to the RFS community and a worthy recipient of the National Medal and First Clasp. Thank you for your service to the RFS.

ADRIAN GRABHAM

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Congratulations to Adrian Grabham from Eglinton Rural Fire Service for 24 years of service. Adrian joined the Eglinton Brigade in 1999, since joining the Brigade he has become an invaluable member of the Brigade, he held the position of Deputy Captain for 16 years and has been President since 2023. Adrian has also held the positions of District Duty Officer for three years, Deputy Group Officer for three years, and a valuable Chifley Lithgow Training Committee member. Adrian attends the majority of dispatched incidents, Community engagements and planned brigade activities over his 24 years as well as taking part in most training activities held by the brigade. Adrian has been actively involved in multiple major fire events including Gosper's Mount, Billy's Fire, Gowan and State Mine, to name a few. Adrian seeks to actively impart his wealth of fire and service-related knowledge while mentoring new and developing members through training. Adrian's passion for training, dedication and commitment to the RFS makes him a worthy recipient of the National Medal. Thank you for your service to the RFS and your community.

KINGSLEY PICKER

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Congratulations to Kingsley Picker for an incredible 42 years of service to the Rural Fire Service. Kingsley has diligently served the Eglinton community and the Chifley Lithgow area for the past 42 years. During his years of service, Kingsley has held the positions of Brigade Secretary, Vice President, and Deputy Captain. Kingsley has been actively involved in declared S44 events, including Gosper's Mount, Billy's Fire, Gowan and Alpha Road, to name a few. During the Gosper's Mt Fire Kingsley opened and maintained the station nearly every day, restocking appliances as they returned from the fire ground, he was pivotal in controlling and maintaining logistics for the Eglinton station. Kingsley actively mentors new members imparting his wealth of knowledge through training and community engagement events. Kingsley's dedication and commitment to the RFS makes him a worthy recipient of the National Medal, National Medal 1st and 2nd Clasp. Thank you for your service to the RFS and the community of Eglinton.

RESCUE BY WANDA SURF LIFESAVERS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I recognise the efforts of a group of Wanda Surf Life Saving Club members who came out of the crowd at the recent Coolangatta Gold event to rescue three children. Troy Burke, Chris Jessop, Otis Jessop, Noah Sutton and Maddix Burke were watching the elite ironman event at Queensland's Kirra Beach when they spotted three children around five to seven years old getting swept around the rocks of the groyne at Kirra Point. Wanda president Fiona Sutton says the five club members "acted swiftly and decisively and, without a second thought, rushed in to ensure the children's safety". She said, "their quick thinking in a critical situation reflects the very best of our club and the lifesaving community". I congratulate Troy, Chris, Otis, Noah and Maddix on their selfless response in a serious situation. The actions of these five Wanda members are what we've come to expect from the dedicated surf lifesaving volunteers in our Shire clubs. I thank our local surf lifesavers for their service and wish them a safe and enjoyable summer as they protect our community over the beach patrol season.

GDSFA PRESENTATION NIGHT

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—The Granville & Districts Soccer Football Association Annual Presentation Gala Dinner is when the oldest soccer association in Australia celebrates its sporting talent and volunteers. Congratulations Craig Balcombe on receiving the Phillip Williams Referee of the Year Award, Gyeonghak Kim from the Lidcombe Waratahs on receiving the Alan Garside Golden Boot Award, Ibrahim Eris from Auburn FC for the Golden Boot Award, and Sarah Bernard from the Holroyd Rangers for the Alan Garside Golden Boot Award. The Fred Barlow Male Player of the Year was shared between Gyeonghak Kim and Andrew Forster. The Fred Barlow Female Player of the Year Louise Horgan from the Holroyd Rangers. Hiroki Fujiwara from the Lidcombe Waratahs was presented the Billy Henderson Golden Gloves Award and the Eric Mobbs Golden Gloves Award was awarded to Taylan Durust from Auburn FC. Congrats to the Toongabbie Demons for the Fair Play Award, Holroyd Rangers for the Social Media Award, the Challenge Shield for Lidcombe Waratahs and the Cottam Cup for the Granville Kewpies. Congratulations as well to Noel Dona and Vince Wyatt for receiving Service Recognition Awards for your support for the club together with a combined 80 years of service.

2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—Congratulations Councillors on your election at the 2024 local government elections. A big congratulations to those returning to represent the City of Parramatta - Cameron Maclean – Deputy Lord Mayor, Sameer Pandey, Steven Issa, Georgina Valjak, Kellie Darley, Martin Zaiter – the new Lord Mayor - and Dr Patricia Procriv. Having lived in Rosehill for over 40 years, Patricia has always displayed a deep commitment to Parramatta with a passion for the creation and evolution of Parramatta Artists Studios alongside the provision of great public spaces as her number one priorities. Patricia has achieved a great deal for her community and despite the loss of their family home to fire in June, she secured the election of Newington local Michael Ng as her number two in Rosehill Ward. Dr Hayley French and Manning Jeffrey are the 2 new councillors for North Rocks Ward. Anthony Ellard and Tanya Raffoul will be representing Dundas Ward. Sreeni Pillamarri joins fellow newcomer Charles Cheng as Epping Ward councillors while Judy Greenwood will be the third councillor in the Parramatta Ward. The future of the City of Parramatta is bright, and I can't wait to see what the new councilors deliver for Parramatta.

CELEBRATING THE MOON FESTIVAL WITH CASS

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I would like to recognise the Chinese Australian Services Society [CASS] for their continued commitment to service in our local community. I recently attended a Moon Festival celebration with the Disability Activity Group at CASS, and as I say time and time again, we are very privileged to live in a multicultural society where celebrations like this promote greater harmony in our community. CASS has provided social and community services to the multicultural community since 1981, supporting over 7,000 families weekly. I have worked alongside CASS for over 10 years and the work they do has always been so valuable to our local community. Celebrations like the Moon Festival foster a spirit of unity and gratitude that I look forward to every year and celebrating it this year with the Disability Activity Group at CASS was an honour. I would like to congratulate CASS on hosting this fantastic event and thank all staff and volunteers for their ongoing service to our local community. I look forward to continued engagement with CASS and their amazing work well into the future.

SOUTHERN SYDNEY JOBS AND SKILLS FAIR

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to attend the Southern Sydney Jobs and Skills Fair hosted by the St George Business Chamber in Jubilee Stadium Kogarah, earlier this year. The Southern Sydney Skills & Jobs Expo is a unique opportunity for job seekers, students, and community members to explore potential job opportunities and career paths. The event featured a diverse range of businesses and

government agencies showcasing their industries and provided attendees with valuable insights into the skills and qualifications needed for various roles. As the Shadow Minister for Jobs and Industry, I emphasise the importance of upskilling our local workforce. By equipping individuals with the necessary skills, we can attract high-quality, well-paying jobs to our community. Investing in education and training not only enhances employability but also strengthens our economy, ensuring a brighter future for everyone in our community. I would like to thank the St George Business Chamber, all organisers, and stallholders for putting together the amazing event. It's initiatives like this where together, we can build a skilled workforce that meets the demands of a rapidly changing job market.

SYDNEY N SCALE MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, there has evidently been a lot of recent buzz around trains since the opening of Sydney's new metro line. But, right in my community, the Sydney N Scale Model Railway Club celebrates the traditional sounds of historic trains. The club is dedicated to promoting N scale modelling and welcomes anyone interested in this hobby, regardless of prototype or era. This social club is now based in Rockdale and fosters an inter-generational exchange of skills, ideas, and fun among its diverse mix of members. They also offer clinics for specific skills, and members can gain practical experience in building layouts, including benchwork, track laying, wiring, and scenery. The club's long history dates back to its first meeting in 1971 and has since been working on different building layouts and exhibitions. Their newest project is 'The Cascade Union' which is being built under a seven-year plan, and when completed will operate across three levels, with each level representing a different portion of North America. I look forward to seeing the wonderful projects that will emerge from the N Scale Railway Club and congratulate them on their community-minded spirit.

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF 2CR CHINESE RADIO

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I would like to acknowledge the 30th anniversary of 2CR Chinese Radio, Australia's first 24/7 Chinese radio station, which I had the privilege of attending on Thursday 26 September 2024 at The Eight Chinese Restaurant in Haymarket. Since its establishment in 1994, 2CR Chinese Radio has become an essential part of the local Chinese Australian community, including many listeners across the Willoughby electorate. For three decades, it has delivered crucial news, informative content and engaging entertainment. 2CR has played a significant role in promoting Chinese cultural heritage, connecting the community and supporting new Chinese immigrants in their integration into Australian society. Their program schedule covers a wide range of topics, from lifestyle to current affairs and with a growing digital presence, 2CR now reaches over 280,000 followers. Their contribution to keeping the community connected and informed is remarkable. I would like to extend my congratulations to 2CR Chinese Radio on this significant milestone and thank the organisers for inviting me to be part of such a special celebration. I look forward to seeing their continued success in the future.

CELEBRATING THE SMALL BUSINESS EXPO SYDNEY

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I had a fantastic experience at the Small Business Expo Sydney, organised by the NSW Small Business Commission. It was truly inspiring to witness the energy, focus and dedication to supporting small businesses which are the backbone of our economy. I want to extend a huge thank you to the many organisations and agencies involved in showcasing their passion and hard work, including Service NSW, NSW Fair Trading, SafeWork NSW, Realise Business and local chambers of commerce, particularly the Chatswood Chamber of Commerce. Their commitment to helping small businesses thrive was evident throughout the event. Small businesses are vital to our community and it is our responsibility in parliament to create the conditions that allow them to succeed. Whether through policy or support services, we must continue to ensure that small businesses have every opportunity to grow and flourish. Let's continue to back our small business community, providing the resources and support they need to drive economic growth and build thriving sustainable communities.

FAREWELL TO CHATSWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPAL ALEX MONTGOMERY

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I would like to acknowledge the departure of Alex Montgomery, who has served as Principal of Chatswood Public School for 5 years. During her tenure, Alex demonstrated unwavering commitment to the development of her students, always prioritising their academic and personal growth. Alex has been a dedicated leader and under her guidance, Chatswood Public School has flourished. Not only has she nurtured the next generation of learners but she also oversaw the development of 60 new and upgraded classrooms. These state-of-the-art spaces provide children with the best possible environment to learn and thrive, a legacy that will benefit the Chatswood community for years to come. Her leadership and dedication to the school's growth and improvement have been instrumental in making Chatswood Public School a centre of excellence in education. I thank Alex Montgomery for her years of service and her outstanding contribution to the Chatswood community. I wish her the very best in her future endeavours.

TWIN TOWNS DAY VIEW CLUB

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—I recently had the pleasure of calling into a meeting of the Twin Towns Day VIEW Club, a wonderful organisation that fundraises to support the education of young disadvantaged Australians, including seven Smith Family Learning for Life students. VIEW stands for Voice, Interests and Education of Women and the Twin Towns Day Club was established back in 1968. VIEW provides women with the opportunity to meet regularly with other women, establish long-lasting social connection and help disadvantaged Australian children through support for The Smith Family. I commend the women of the Twin Town Day VIEW Club for all you do in supporting those who need it most. This Club is a wonderful example of the beating heart of the Tweed, where people come together to provide support and advocacy in making a difference.

PRESTONS PUBLIC SCHOOL SPRING FAIR 2024

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—On Saturday, 19 October, Prestons Public School hosted its highly anticipated Community Spring Fair, bringing a day filled with fun, excitement, and entertainment for all ages. The event featured carnival rides, a dedicated kids' zone, which offered pony rides, face painting, and a petting zoo. Visitors also took part in creative art activities and were treated to performances by roving entertainers and live acts, giving students and young community members the chance to showcase their incredible talents. The fair also boasted a variety of stalls with handmade jewellery, crafts, and local art, providing something for everyone to enjoy. I would like to extend my congratulations to Prestons Public School for successfully organising this wonderful community event. It was a massive effort from all those involved, and the fair's success reflects the dedication and hard work of the entire team. I look forward to attending next year and seeing the event grow even bigger.

26TH LIVERPOOL ART SOCIETY EXHIBITION

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—The 26th Annual Liverpool Art Society Exhibition, in partnership with Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, showcases the outstanding creative talent of our local community and has been proudly hosted at the venue since 1998. I had the pleasure of attending the launch and award ceremony on 12 October, I was impressed by the high calibre of artwork on display. This year's exhibition features a diverse range of works by Liverpool Art Society members across multiple mediums, including painting, drawing, ceramics, sculpture, photography, and mixed media. The exhibition highlights the rich artistic vibrancy of our region and provides local talent with a platform to share their creativity with a wider audience. Running until 10 November 2024, it's a wonderful opportunity for the community to come together, show support to and appreciate the dedication and passion of our local talented artist.

INGHAM INSTITUTE

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—The Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research, based at the Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct, is renowned for its world-class research. The Institute focuses on improving health outcomes for common medical conditions in collaborative action with universities, hospitals, and healthcare providers. I would like to mention some of the world's leading researchers working at the Ingham Institute. Professor Ken Hillman's introduction of Medical Emergency Teams [MET] to prevent patient deterioration, an innovation now saving thousands of lives worldwide. Professor Minoti Apte leads groundbreaking research on pancreatic cancer, identifying the conditions that promote its spread. Professor Ian Harris developed the national arthroplasty registry to improve outcomes in joint replacement surgeries. Professor Michael Barton has established best practices for radiation cancer treatment, influencing care both in Australia and developing nations. The Institute's global impact extends to Professor Lynn Kemp's Maternal Early Childhood Sustained Home Visiting [MECSH] program, improving maternal and child health. Professor Afaf Girgis has implemented a multilingual cancer support program for patients and families. The Ingham Institute's research continues to revolutionize healthcare locally and internationally.

GRADUATION OF BEDE WOODLAND

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Bede Woodland on his recent graduation from Marist College Eastwood. Having attended the ceremony in person, I witnessed the culmination of Bede's years of dedication and hard work. Completing Year 12 is an impressive achievement, and he should be incredibly proud of this significant milestone. I am hopeful that he is pleased with his Higher School Certificate results, and wish him every success as he moves into the next phase of life's journey. The HSC is a demanding time for all students, and I commend Bede on his continued determination to succeed. Undoubtedly, his perseverance and commitment will serve him well in all of his future endeavours. On behalf of the Ryde community and this House, I extend my best wishes to Bede and congratulate him on this exceptional achievement. May the future be bright and prosperous for him and his family.

GRADUATION OF ADAM TRIPODI

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Adam Tripodi on his recent graduation from Marist College Eastwood. Having attended the ceremony in person, I witnessed the culmination of Adam's years of dedication and hard work. Completing Year 12 is an impressive achievement, and he should be incredibly proud of this significant milestone. I am hopeful that he is pleased with his Higher School Certificate results, and wish him every success as he moves into the next phase of life's journey. The HSC is a demanding time for all students, and I commend Adam on his continued determination to succeed. Undoubtedly, his perseverance and commitment will serve him well in all of his future endeavours. On behalf of the Ryde community and this House, I extend my best wishes to Adam and congratulate him on this exceptional achievement. May the future be bright and prosperous for him and his family.

GRADUATION OF CONNOR WILLS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Connor Wills on his recent graduation from Marist College Eastwood. Having attended the ceremony in person, I witnessed the culmination of Connor's years of dedication and hard work. Completing Year 12 is an impressive achievement, and Adam should be incredibly proud of this significant milestone. I am hopeful that he is pleased with his Higher School Certificate results, and wish him every success as he moves into the next phase of life's journey. The HSC is a demanding time for all students, and I commend Connor on his continued determination to succeed. Undoubtedly, his perseverance and commitment will serve him well in all of his future endeavours. On behalf of the Ryde community and this House, I extend my best wishes to Connor and congratulate him on this exceptional achievement. May the future be bright and prosperous for him and his family.

GLEBE ART SHOW

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today, I bring to the attention of the House the Glebe Art Society with my congratulations on another successful Glebe Art Show just last week. The 2024 Glebe Art Show took place at the Tramsheds in Forest Lodge. The show is a non-selective, non-acquisitive art show held since 1997, that aims to support and encourage both emerging and established artists currently living, working or studying within the City of Sydney and Inner West Council boundaries. This year I was pleased to sponsor the new 'Green Horizon' prize, awarded for a work that explores the positive responses being made to address the damaging environmental impacts we are making on our communities. The winner of the Green Horizon prize this year went to a work called Upcycle, a very good print of an up-cycled pallet produced by Angela Jursevics. Congratulations to all the volunteers in the Glebe Art Show Committee, including President Peter Griffen and Secretary Carol Yuen, all prize winners and entrants, and to everyone who participated and attended this year's show.

GALLUZZO'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today, I would like to acknowledge the 90th birthday of Galluzzo Fruiterers on Glebe Point Rd, Glebe. Galluzzo's was opened in 1934 on the same site it trades on today by Salvatore Galluzzo, an Italian migrant, in the midst of the Great Depression. Since then, it has passed through generations of Galluzzos selling fresh fruit, vegetables, and expanding to include a deli in 2014. It was great to get along to the fantastic 90-year celebrations last week with very generous offerings of free coffee and cannoli and prizes. Our community in Glebe loves Galluzzo (I'm very lucky to have it up the road from my office) and it's fantastic to see it still going strong after 90 years. Whilst the business may have changed hands recently, this milestone is a huge testament to the Galluzzo family's hard work and dedication to our community. Congratulations and happy birthday to long standing former Galluzzo family owners Damian & Joe Galluzzo; to their long-term employees; the new owners Joshua and Daniel Flamminio; and to their families, friends and many regular patrons.

ALL SAINTS COLLEGE VISIT

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—It was a real pleasure to welcome students from All Saints College, Maitland, to Parliament recently. The group of Year 10 Commerce students, along with teachers Nicholas Wall and Elizabeth Crawford, were able to watch question time in action while visiting Australia's oldest parliament observing democracy at work. Many of the students will go on to select other branches of HSIE such as Legal Studies and Economics in Year 11 so its great they get to hear where decisions affecting communities are made. All Saints' College, and I quote their website, has a long and proud history of providing Catholic education to the families of Maitland and surrounding areas for over 175 years. The school boasts many alumni who have made their mark in the world – actress Abby Cornish, fashion designer Luke Sales and, of course, the NRL Johns brothers, to name just a few. The tours of our NSW Parliament relate to the education curriculum where students engage in civics and citizenship education and learn about parliamentary procedures. I encourage all schools to take advantage of the tours.

BUS NSW CONFERENCE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—It was a real thrill to attend the recent Bus NSW Conference and personally hand out so many well-deserved awards. Eliza Baldwin from Baldwins Buses Tocumwal received the high achiever award in recognition of her exceptional leadership and management of the iconic Riverina family business. Matthew Geary was named inaugural apprentice of the year recognising his outstanding commitment, advocacy and mentoring work. Kinetic took home the environment and innovation award for its leadership in reducing emissions and participation in the Zero Emissions Bus trials. I note these trials have now been expanded to Armidale and Tweed Heads clocking up more than 64,000 kilometres and over 25,000 passenger journeys. Buses are the biggest mode of public transport in NSW. Thank you to the dedicated owners, operators and employees who provide this critical transport service to our communities. Your work, commitment to safety, passion for improving services and willingness to adapt and innovate are reasons why passengers choose you to get around. Every day I hear stories of the positive impacts your work is having on communities statewide. I congratulate the inspirational bus and coach industry representatives honoured at the Bus NSW Conference. Thank you!

MATTHEW TRANTER

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—I wish to acknowledge Tranter Lawyers founder and managing director Matthew Tranter who is celebrating 25 years as a solicitor. His firm is also marking 24 years in business this month. Mr Tranter's milestone was acknowledged with a certificate from the Law Society of NSW during their recent visit to the Hunter Region. After being in the industry for a short time Mr Tranter decided to go into business for himself when he and his wife Kerriann decided to start a family. The decision enabled him to choose the hours he worked so he would not miss out on his children's school events. Something that is very important to him. Family has become a core value at Tranter Lawyers. They are a family firm, where those values are conveyed to his staff, striking the perfect balance between work and home life. Tranter Lawyers' first ever employee, Kim Jones, still works for the firm as does its first employed solicitor Melissa Enright – a testament to the high standards maintained by Matthew and his team. Congratulations Matthew on your success.

EASTERN SUBURBS POLICE AREA COMMAND AWARDS

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)—I would like to acknowledge the dedicated police force in the eastern suburbs who keep our community safe. This year they have shown exemplary service under the leadership of Detective Superintendent Jodi Radmore. Recently I attended the 2024 Eastern Suburbs Police Area Command Awards [ESPAC] at the North Bondi RSL. On the day police officers were recognised for their 'dedicated long service' and 'ethical and diligent police service'. Awards included the National Medal, the National Medal Clasp Set, the National Police Service Medal, the NSW Police Medal, NSW Police Medallion, Commissioner of Police Commendation for Courage, Certificate of Commission, Region Commander Unit Citation, the Commander's Certificate of Appreciation and the Certificate of Service. We are all beneficiaries of their service, and our community is deeply grateful.

WILL NEMESH WAVERLEY MAYOR

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)—I would like to congratulate Will Nemesh on being elected Mayor of Waverley Council at the 2024 Local Government Elections. Mayor Nemesh was first elected to Council in 2017 and has lived in the Hunter Ward almost his entire life. He is passionate about preserving the unique heritage and natural amenity of our local area. Will is also very well known in our local community through his work on Council, commitment to volunteering and his professional endeavours. As a former Director of Emanuel Synagogue, and through working with the Jewish Board of Deputies, Will brings an important perspective to the Mayoralty for our large Jewish community. With qualifications and experience in planning and housing, he is uniquely placed to provide strategic input to Council on sensitive local development, and I commend him on his commitment to delivering housing opportunities for those currently priced out of the market. Waverley is fortunate to have Will as their Mayor and I look forward to working closely with Mayor Nemesh to deliver for our community. Congratulations!

KEEPING YOUR COOL IN NORTH TURRAMURRA

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Monday 4 November, "Keeping Your Cool" community seminar series is being held in North Turramurra. It will be led by Matt Boulton, who is the author of "Changing Tools" and the "Circuit Breaker" program; and a former relationship and anger-management counsellor. Matt understands the pain and embarrassment a bad temper can cause, and will share his experience, that will no doubt, help others. I recognise and thank Matt Boulton for sharing practical tools and strategies he's been using for over 24 years to

help people control their temper, resolve conflict and find new levels of peace, trust and intimacy in their relationships. I encourage everyone to attend this seminar.

A ROCK'N'ROLL PARTY IN SUPPORT OF CANTOO

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Friday 23 November, there's a Rock'n'Roll Party, raising awareness and fundraising in support of CanToo in West Lindfield. All proceeds go to the CanToo Foundation for cancer research. CanToo's mission is twofold embracing the motto, "Challenge yourself. Challenge cancer". Firstly, to inspire individuals to achieve personal health and wellbeing goals; and secondly to fund innovative early-career cancer research. Since its establishment in 2005, CanToo has raised over \$33 million. This is an amazing organisation. I recognise Vicky Kvisle OAM and Glynis Stow for organising this fundraiser. On behalf of people of the Davidson electorate, I say thank you.

CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC CHURCH ST IVES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Sunday 27 October 2024, I will attend the 50th anniversary mass of Corpus Christi Catholic Church in St Ives. The anniversary will mark 50 years of the parish bringing people together with the milestone being a testament to the community's faith and resilience. I know the mass will be a joyous occasion for all attending. The celebratory mass will be followed by an international food feast to celebrate the diversity within the church. There will also be a treasure hunt for the children, a musical performance by the Corpus Christi school band; and Josephine Edwards will play the piano following the band. I recognise parish priest, Father Gregory Chee for his local leadership. I am thankful to be invited to such a wonderful and happy occasion. It is a truly wonderful community of love, family, and inclusiveness. I look forward to the next 50 years of the church's contribution to our community.

AAVASH PANDEY

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills)—Congratulations to Aavash Pandey from Panania on his appointment to the NSW Youth Advisory Council, following an extensive recruitment process that saw over 301 applicants compete for just 12 positions. The Youth Advisory Council plays a crucial role in ensuring the voices of young people are heard when decisions are made that will shape their future. His appointment is not just a testament to his hard work, but also a reflection of the bright and talented youth we have in the East Hills electorate. The Council meets regularly throughout the year to monitor and evaluate policies that affect young people. The contributions of members like Aavash will be invaluable to improving the welfare and wellbeing of children and young people across NSW. Congratulations again to Aavash on this incredible achievement. I look forward to seeing the positive changes you help bring about for young people, not just in East Hills but across the state.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TAYLOR 'CHIP' HANSON

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—For more than a decade, Chip has been a key figure at Wollondilly Leisure Centre where his kindness, patience, and infectious enthusiasm have earned him a special place in the hearts of students and colleagues alike. His approach to teaching—marked by energy, compassion, and a personal touch—creates an inclusive space that fosters confidence and growth in all of his students. Chip's contributions have been recognised with being named Swim Teacher of the Year at the 2024 Aquatic and Recreation Institute NSW Awards of Excellence. He is the first person with Down Syndrome to receive the award and the award highlights Chip's remarkable dedication to swimming. His passion for the sport has been evident since his early days in Learn to Swim, and his success at the Down Syndrome National Championships in 2016 and 2017 are just a few examples of his hard work and talent. With the guidance of his mentor Steph Barnes, Chip has continuously developed both as a swimmer and a teacher, becoming an irreplaceable member of the Wollondilly and Belgravia Leisure teams and made a positive impact on so many

COMMUNITY LINKS WELLBEING AGM

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Community Links is dedicated to supporting the local community by offering a wide range of services, programs, and resources. Their mission is to promote social inclusion, empower individuals, and strengthen community connections. From counselling services and family support to youth programs and emergency relief, Community Links addresses the diverse needs of people in the Wollondilly region. The organisation also focuses on building skills, providing workshops, and fostering a sense of belonging. With a compassionate and proactive approach, Community Links plays a key role in enhancing the wellbeing of the community. As they head into their AGM this week, I would like to recognise their returning board members and thank them for their service over the years. Their guidance and strategic oversight has positively impacted people's lives today, as well as the lives of those in the future. Thank you to Chairperson Lyn Bright, Treasurer Thomas Goodman, and Directors Mark Bensley, Tony Jagicic, Nicole Sharp and Ashlie Rogers.

GOOD LUCK TO HSC STUDENTS

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—As HSC exams approach, I want to extend my best wishes to all students currently navigating this milestone in their education journey. The Higher School Certificate is a significant achievement that requires dedication and perseverance. While the pressure may feel overwhelming at times, it's important to remember that there is life beyond high school and the HSC. I encourage all students to simply focus on doing their best and to approach their exams with confidence and determination, and reassurance that you will get through this. I would also like to take a moment to express my gratitude to the parents, carers, mentors, and teachers who have supported these students throughout their educational journey. Your guidance, encouragement, and understanding have been invaluable, helping students navigate both the challenges and triumphs of high school. The effort that teachers put into preparing and supporting their students does not go unnoticed; it truly makes a difference in the lives of young learners. Best of luck to everyone—your hard work will pay off, and a bright future awaits.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Sutherland Shire Council's recently elected councillors. To be democratically elected by your local community is quite the achievement and incredibly humbling, and I am confident that the elected councillors will bring energy, dedication and commitment to their roles in serving the residents of the Sutherland Shire. Whether it be supporting local businesses and community groups to thrive or ensuring the basics of roads, rates and rubbish are handled effectively, these elected councillors have an incredibly important role to play in ensuring our community in the Sutherland Shire remains vibrant, connected and resilient. I acknowledge the elected councillors, namely Mayor Jack Boyd, Deputy Mayor Laura Cowell, Marcelle Elzerman, Kal Glanzig, Carol Provan OAM, Melanie Gibbons, Joanne Nicholls, Jen Armstrong, Carmelo Pesce, Haris Strangas, Meredith Laverty, Diedree Steinwell, Peter Tsambalas, Mick Maroney OAM and Stephen Nikolovski. I look forward to working with the newly elected council to ensure that our community receives its fair share and remains the best place to live, work and raise a family.

MAHASH PRASAI

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport)—I'd like to recognise Mr. Mahash "Max" Prasai for his achievements and contributions to the Rockdale community. Recently, the NSW Premier Chris Minns and I had the privilege of attending the official launch of the newly refurbished "Country Fresh Rockdale." This event was to celebrate Max's success as both a businessperson and community leader. The launch was also attended by the Consulate General of Nepal to NSW, Sanjeev Sharma, outgoing Consulate General Deepak Khadka, NRNA Australia President Anil Pokhrel, local Nepalese leaders, and community members. Originally from Nepal, Max came to Australia at 23 on a student visa. After working a range of jobs, he took a bold step by investing his savings into opening "Country Fresh Rockdale", which has since become a beloved local business. Max also serves as the CEO of Lukla TV Australia, a media platform for the Australian Nepalese community. In addition to his business accomplishments, Max is deeply committed to giving back. He volunteers extensively with multicultural groups in the St George area and founded Vision for Motivation, a not-for-profit supporting international students and new migrants. Max's resilience, generosity, and dedication to the community are truly commendable, and I wish him continued success.

FERRAGOSTO COLOURING COMPETITION FINALISTS

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to congratulate the finalists and highly commended submissions to the 2024 Ferragosto Colouring-in Competition. This year we received outstanding artworks displaying incredible creativity and talent from so many young artists. I would like to sincerely thank everyone who participated in the competition, it was very difficult to pick this year's winners because we have so many talented young people in our community. The Ferragosto Street Fair along Great North Road is a celebration of the Italian culture and heritage we are so cherish in our community. I would like to congratulate Finalists Eliana and Maria for their wonderful entries. I also wish to acknowledge our fantastic Highly Commended submissions by Lucas, Livia, Zeta, and Zari. I am thrilled to recognise their talents and appreciate the time they have taken to enter the competition. Congratulations to all of this year's finalists and highly commended entrants to the Ferragosto Colouring Competition. Keep being creative and inspiring others!

TEXAS CHARCOAL CHICKEN

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge a cherished local dining hotspot, Texas Charcoal Chicken, located on Great North Road in Five Dock Texas Charcoal Chicken first opened in 1986 and has become renowned in our local community for their delicious chickens, salads, burgers, rolls and wraps, and smoked beef brisket. This business prides itself on flavour, customer service and quality ingredients and at a

reasonable price point. I want to sincerely acknowledge the owner of Texas Charcoal Chicken, Milad Alizadeh for his dedication to business and for providing beautiful food and outstanding customer service. The continued success of Texas Charcoal Chicken is a testament to Milad's vision and passion for quality food. Milad has been working hard to launch a new-menu item and this shows his commitment and that of his staff to ensure Texas Charcoal Chicken innovates to offer the very best for our community. I extend my gratitude to all staff at Texas Charcoal Chicken. Thank you for your warm and welcoming customer service experience that our community really appreciates. Congratulations Texas Charcoal Chicken, and to Milad and his family and staff. I wish you all the very best.

ITALIAN OPERA FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge the work of the Italian Opera Foundation Australia in supporting a new generation of talented opera singers. The Italian Opera Foundation is a charitable organisation established in 1997 by Nick Scali to provide scholarship opportunities to Australian opera singers to study abroad in Italy. Opera is a pivotal piece of Italian culture, and I acknowledge Mr Scali for his contributions to ensure people are given the opportunity to nurture their talent and learn about Italian arts, culture, and heritage. As a hardworking migrant and businessman, Mr Scali has shown the value of giving back to the community, and many have benefitted from his vision. I sincerely thank Italian Opera Foundation Chairman Dr Joseph Rizk AM, Treasurer Fred Scali, and board members Lyndon Terracini AM, Alfredo Bovier OAM, John Caputo OAM, Paul Signorelli OAM, Kevin Salerno, Dr Frank Alafaci, Dr Luca De Leonardis and Allan Micallef. The continued success of the foundation is a testament to your dedication and passion for the arts. I thank everyone that has made the Italian Opera Foundation Australia what it is today. Your work is truly commendable, and I wish you all the very best.

HUNTER RENTERS' FORUM

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—I'd like to acknowledge the recent Hunter Renters' Forum, which gave local renters the chance to come together, share their stories, and discuss rental reforms. Hosted by the Hunter Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service and the Tenants' Union of NSW, this event was such an important opportunity to really listen to the experiences of those who rent in our community. It was wonderful to hear that the NSW Rental Commissioner, Trina Jones, and her team from Fair Trading NSW were there to share insight into much-needed rental reforms. Participants at the forum were particularly grateful for progress towards ending no-grounds evictions, capping rent increases, and making sure tenants have fair, fee-free ways to pay rent. This forum represents a critical step toward a fairer rental system, addressing issues like access to home, affordability, and the impact of energy climate. I would like to thank everyone involved, especially those who shared their personal experiences—it's conversations like these that help us build a better future for renters across our community.

LAKE MACQUARIE EMERGENCY AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES EXPO

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—I'd like to recognise the Lake Macquarie Emergency and Essential Services Expo, hosted by Lake Macquarie Police District, an event that highlights the incredible work our local emergency services do to keep us safe. This weekend, teams from NSW Police, Fire and Rescue NSW, Marine Rescue, the SES, the Rural Fire Service, and NSW Ambulance will come together to showcase their vehicles, equipment, and life-saving skills. It's a chance for us to appreciate the dedication and expertise these organisations bring to protecting our community. Beyond the displays, this expo is a reminder of the importance of being prepared, especially as we approach fire season. Learning how to assemble a home emergency kit and what steps to take during an evacuation could make all the difference in an emergency. This event not only celebrates the amazing work of our emergency services but also helps bring our community together, promoting safety and readiness for whatever comes our way. I can't wait to drop in this weekend and see all the amazing work being done to keep us safe!

TOP SEAFOOD PRIMARY PRODUCER

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—Congratulations goes to owner of Yamba Fisheries, Troy Billin, who has been named the best Primary Producer at the 2024 National Seafood Industry Awards. The National Seafood Industry Awards reward excellence within the Australian seafood industry while showcasing the industry's value to the economy. The awards also aim to show the industry's commitment to supplying high quality seafoods to not only local and national markets, but international markets too. Yamba Fisheries sells premium, fresh, sustainably caught seafood direct to fish markets, local wholesalers and retailers, and many top restaurants in Australia. Winning this award reflects Troy's excellence in sustainable production and his valued contributions towards a positive public profile for the industry. This well-deserved accolade comes after Troy was

named 2024 Sydney Fish Market Seafood Excellence award winner in the Primary Producer category in April. Congratulations Troy, and I wish you all the best for the future of Yamba Fisheries.

NORCO CO-OPERATIVE

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I acknowledge Norco Co-operative, a proud Australian and farmer-owned dairy company based in the Northern Rivers, for their outstanding success at the 2024 Northern Rivers Business Awards. Norco's CEO Michael Hampson was awarded the prestigious title of Outstanding Business Leader (36+ years with 21 employees and over), a true testament to the exemplary leadership that has driven Norco's continued success in the Australian dairy industry. In addition, Norco Co-operative was also recognised for their commitment to environmental stewardship, taking home the Excellence in Sustainability Award. Since its founding in 1895, Norco has remained steadfast in supporting Australian farmers and producing high-quality dairy products. Their dedication to innovation and sustainability is evident through initiatives such as packaging circularity, sustainable farming practices, and their ongoing leadership in environmental protection. Norco's ability to balance economic success with social responsibility is a testament to their deep-rooted values as a 100% farmer-owned cooperative. Norco's commitment to sustainability and leadership in the dairy industry not only strengthens our local economy but also inspires others to pursue environmentally responsible business practices. Congratulations to Norco Co-operative and their CEO for these remarkable achievements and thank you for your continued contributions to the Northern Rivers and beyond.

CONGRATULATIONS MISTY FISHER

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to congratulate Misty Fisher for undertaking her Graduate Diploma in Radio and Podcasting with AFTRS (the Australian Film, Television and Radio School.) Misty's keen interest in radio began in high school when she completed a short course at the local radio station. After moving to Sydney, theatre and music were of interest. Misty returned to Grafton with her husband before her children were born and enjoyed being involved in local community radio. When Misty learned that AFTRS had started offering radio courses online, she jumped at the opportunity. The radio and podcasting course provides the skills, confidence and network building required to pursue a career in the industry. When a position became available at the local radio station, Misty successfully applied and currently hosts the Bigger Brighter Breakfast show on 2GF daily between 6-9am. Misty's story shows that dreams can come true if you set your mind to your passion. Well done Misty, I wish you all the best for your career.
