

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday 14 November 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

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (WESTERN SYDNEY AEROTROPOLIS) BILL 2024

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mrs Judy Hannan, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (10:18): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I speak in support of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Western Sydney Aerotropolis) Bill 2024, which aims to fix the concerns and frustrations I have regarding the restrictions of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Precincts—Western Parkland City) 2021, or Western Parkland City SEPP, and the effect this SEPP has on many residents in Wollondilly. To quickly summarise and allay some fears, this amendment is not about pushing for mass development or trying to intensify land use. Anyone can already subdivide in some of those areas. This is about the rights that landowners had prior to the SEPP 2021 coming into existence to build granny flats in their own backyards.

We are not talking about tiny blocks, not 400 metres squared or even the old half an acre. Many of these properties, some of which are 20 or 30 acres, cannot have a granny flat built on them since the introduction of the policy in 2021, but they can still have a 20-bedroom home right now, today. These restrictions, enforced as a ban on any new noise-sensitive developments—including residential secondary dwellings, as informed by the Australian Noise Exposure Concept [ANEC] contour mapping of the draft environmental impact assessment—have resulted in significant consequences for residents and the local economy.

The impacts of the SEPP restrictions have already been felt by the residents of Wollondilly in suburbs such as Silverdale, Warragamba, Werombi, Wallacia, Theresa Park and Orangeville. Since it was enacted, individuals have been unable to construct secondary dwellings on their properties. Some of them bought their properties specifically to build a dwelling for themselves and a granny flat for their parents. The SEPP was literally introduced overnight with absolutely no warning to people who had plans drawn up ready to submit. This also has had a cascading effect on local tradespeople, who find themselves with reduced opportunities for work in the area and amounts to what I have previously labelled in this place a "tradies tax". Locals in Wollondilly have long distances to travel already. Forcing them to travel out of the area for work is unfair and unsustainable.

To give members an idea of the area size I am talking about, Wollondilly council area is as big as the entire Sydney metropolitan area. The area that this SEPP covers is a circle with a radius of about 30 kilometres. If we applied that to Sydney airport, it would take up all areas of the city and over the harbour. Imagine only one dwelling on each parcel of land there. The restrictions on secondary dwellings also represent a missed opportunity in not allowing second residences to be built as well as limiting truly affordable housing options and alternatives in an area where the population is growing rapidly. Due to Wollondilly's location and potential, it can provide some of the housing to meet some of the needs of a growing Greater Sydney population. Infill housing of smaller dwellings such as granny flats in well-located, developed areas with existing infrastructure is an opportunity to meet some of the housing goals to deliver a range of housing, and the SEPP restrictions make no sense at a time when there is a great need for housing.

Secondary dwellings can allow young families to save, grandparents to downsize and help look after children, and assist on small-acreage properties with onsite living—to name but a few benefits. The restrictions of the SEPP currently have one exception at 6 Walmsley Crescent, Silverdale, where a single secondary dwelling

has been permitted. An amendment to the Wollondilly Local Environmental Plan Amendment (Precincts—Western Parkland City) 2022 grants this one individual address within the restricted area an exemption, while all others have been subject to the restrictive planning policies. If the SEPP was able to be reversed by the head of the department of planning—as it has been in this one instance—then, given the far-reaching benefits of allowing secondary dwellings, the same right to build could be granted to all residents as a matter of urgency.

Since being elected in March 2023, I have spent my time working with the Government on this matter. Unlike some members, I do not seek to introduce many bills or move amendments in this place. The Government and the Opposition know and understand my position. I am here to work with any and all parties for the long-term best interests of Wollondilly. My age, my previous career in politics and how I have acted regarding Government amendments should show that this is only as a last resort. Unfortunately, other work I have done with the Government since has not led to much progress on this issue. I have had many meetings with the planning Minister about the matter. It was referred to Federal Minister King, who said she had no real responsibility for or opinion on the matter.

We then had the Premier visit Lisa Osborn of Silverdale. The Osborn family appreciated his visit as it allowed him to see the situation they were caught in. He sat next to her shed and caravan, where two families live, which are on a massive block of land, cleared of previous farming activity. The Premier said that he had the will to fix the matter as soon as possible if he could. I understand that will is probably still there, but the family and I are yet to see any action. I have been told that this has something to do with the Western Sydney City Deal. Having been the lead mayor on the negotiations around this deal, I assure all members that it has nothing to do with the imposition of this SEPP on some of my community.

The Osborns sold their previous home to live with their sons on the same property, to build two brand-new forever homes and to enjoy everything Wollondilly has to offer. I am sure they had hoped by this stage to have planted gardens and to be continuing to work on the bushland and their property. Instead, they are waiting for the slow wheels of government to turn. They live in a shed and a caravan, waiting patiently but with incredible and growing frustration. And they are but one example. I have been told consistently throughout this process that we need to wait for the final mapping of flights to and from the airport. That will not make any difference at all. The airport is being built, the runways are in place, trial flights are happening and the homes are still there. In case some members think this is being stopped because of noise, I might add that that is incorrect because none of these particular homes or dwellings are part of programs for noise abatement alterations.

To add insult to injury, just over the border the Luddenham Village—which is much closer to the airport—has protection, with a line allowing for additional dwellings; my villages do not. This has to be due to the laziness of former members or the sloppiness of contact with the council. I do not know who is to blame. Ultimately, my community, Lisa Osborn and I do not really care. We just want this matter fixed. I have written to the public and parliamentary inquiries at both State and Federal levels about the issue. Again, my community, residents like Lisa Osborn and I wait. My suggested amendments to this SEPP also include a full list of localities affected by the same restrictions, including Silverdale, Warragamba, Werombi, Wallacia, Theresa Park and Orangeville, and would be in keeping with the other limited localities covered by the same SEPP. However, the difficulties in sub-localities means it is easier to mention the full council area. I am happy for others to ask for the inclusion of their own affected council areas. As an Independent MP, my focus is on my own community; I do not see that it is my place, or purpose, to make amendments for others.

There is also a lack of consideration for financial compensation or support in areas where SEPP restrictions are applied. Specifically, the current mapping used to enforce the construction restrictions differs from that used to indicate financial compensation for measures such as double glazing to mitigate noise impacts on affected properties. It is perplexing that individuals who have been restricted from constructing secondary dwellings, supposedly due to the mapping and the noise, are not afforded the benefits of any compensation for noise reduction measures. This inconsistency in the application of policies seems unjust, especially considering the broader economic and social impacts on the affected residents. The Government maps showing the ANEC 20 boundary line as the outermost coloured line on the flight path maps, indicating residences that are eligible for treatment for noise mitigation, contrast greatly with the area impacted by restrictions on building secondary dwellings, which apply to the entire 30-kilometre radial zone surrounding the airport—except Luddenham and that one specific address.

It is time to lift the SEPP restrictions in Wollondilly, taking into account the hardships faced by property owners and the local workforce. While I understand the planning Minister's position on fundamentally not supporting private members' amendments to SEPPs—he has told me that—anyone can see that this matter needs to be fixed in some way. The conversation about the airport will last for generations, and now is not the time to shut the door. Additionally, I recommend reconsideration of the allocation of financial compensation for noise mitigation measures, ensuring a fair and equitable distribution of benefits for all affected parties. That is outside

the scope of this amendment but something I am looking to have some impact on. I cannot wait to hear from the Federal candidates in the new bellwether electorates in the Macarthur region about what they are doing with noise mitigation for residents in our area.

Wollondilly has all the downsides of the new airport but none of the employment opportunities, as the distance to travel for residents is unrealistic for a daily commute. It is over a bridge that floods regularly, which makes access impossible. All of those new jobs are sitting just over the bridge. Furthermore, returning to the SEPP, the restrictions that defer development until the completion of information regarding the new airport have no end date. It is interesting to note that the affected properties will not be able to construct attached dwellings; boarding houses; dual occupancies; group homes; hostels; multi-dwelling housing; residential flat buildings; rural workers' dwellings; secondary dwellings, commonly known as granny flats; semi-detached dwellings; seniors housing; or shop-top housing.

As I stated, the flight paths have now been released, and it is not viable to hold off all development within the SEPP-identified area beyond the local vicinity for the estimated 30 years that it will take to complete for the full capacity. Further studies will not find some magic solution, and the information based on building requirements and planning could be put in place today to allow for the development. Landowners had these rights until 2021, and removing the rights of landowners to submit applications will favour large enterprises that will landlock small owners, who are then likely to be forced out while waiting to build their own home. It will inevitably lead to housing that is not in keeping with the strategy to consolidate growth, and it is not supported by Wollondilly Shire Council. However, additional dwellings are not opposed by councillors, and it is not an issue that metropolitan councils are facing with neighbour conflicts.

The very large block sizes in Wollondilly in rural settings could easily accommodate additional small dwellings such as secondary dwellings, seniors housing and attached dwellings. There is a need for this change, as residents are being restricted and there is no end point to when the restriction will be lifted. I have pointed this out to the Government, acknowledging the concerns of both the New South Wales and Federal governments, particularly their concern that additional dwellings and development within the area could potentially cause a negative impact to residents. If it is "intensification" that the Government does not want under the airport, there is a grave misunderstanding that additional dwellings means mass development. That is not the case. However, the limitation for the New South Wales Government and what I have requested to be lifted is technically defined as "secondary dwellings". It is not "residential intensification", as referred to in Minister King's letter.

The reference in the response that new owners or renters could be affected assumes that there are new blocks. There will be no new blocks. The Minister is mistaken and does not recognise the limitations of the SEPP on current owners and that my request was not for additional subdivision rights to be restored. "Residential accommodation" and "additional dwellings", as defined in the SEPP, affect both potential new blocks as well as current, which removes the potential rights that were in place for those owners. In effect, the SEPP has stopped someone with a consent from building a secondary dwelling—as we know, commonly known as a granny flat—on their property.

Residential accommodation, as defined within the SEPP, has the same meaning as in the standard local environmental planning instrument prescribed by the Standard Instrument (Local Environmental Plans) Order 2006. That instrument defines residential accommodation to include attached dwellings, boarding houses, co-living housing, dual occupancies, dwelling houses, group homes, hostels, multi-dwelling housing, residential flat buildings, rural workers' dwellings, secondary dwellings, semi-detached dwellings, seniors housing and shop-top housing. It does not include tourist and visitor accommodation or caravan parks. The list is permissible on blocks with consent and is limited to a single or one additional dwelling through the secondary dwelling path. That was allowable until the SEPP came into play.

Whilst I again acknowledge the concern of the Federal Minister in raising experiences with overflight noise in both Brisbane and Melbourne, that is not a question for the blocks that are under the flight paths in my electorate. My request is not to remove the restriction for subdivision potential. Rather, it is the restoration of the rights for additional dwellings as defined above, allowing the construction of a granny flat on a rural block instead of restricting an owner to build a larger, unsightly home or to live in a shed without consent. In both instances, the people are the same and the number of rooms is the same. Therefore, there is no concern with potential renters or new owners.

The Minister has noted that there is a large number of potential secondary dwellings. These blocks have rights to extend their homes to the same size as a granny flat. This would also require the same type of council consent. The limitation that has been set by the SEPP forces landowners to not have the same right as all other landowners in New South Wales. It has affected my residents because they are unable to build affordable additional dwellings for elderly parents or children on their blocks. Now that the flight paths are released, the restrictions for the SEPP should be lifted to allow additional-dwelling applications to be lodged. With the

Government requiring housing, it makes no sense to prohibit smaller landowners in Wollondilly from building an additional dwelling such as a small, two-bedroom granny flat on a 20-acre block. However, they are allowed to build a single dwelling such as a 20-bedroom house if there is no housing on the block. As I said, lifting the SEPP would cover some of the housing supply issues in the State and Wollondilly.

Noise is not the issue; a 20-bedroom home could be built today. Water is not even the issue. We have capacity problems in the eastern side of my electorate that limits any construction in many areas, because apparently it is okay to approve developments there without a sewer connection. But one cannot build a granny flat 20 minutes from the airport. This shows an inconsistency, and I cynically question why only major developers seem to get approvals. Why is it that 10,000, 15,000 or 20,000 homes can be approved with the click of someone's mouse and a signature on paper but private owners with existing rights who want to build two dwellings instead of one are treated with contempt? It does not pass the pub test. I hope that the Government considers this issue very carefully. I ask all members to support the bill to fix the concerns and frustrations caused by the introduction of the State environmental planning policy and halt the unfair, unjust effect on the residents on the northern end of the Wollondilly electorate.

Debate adjourned.

DAVID BERRY HOSPITAL AMENDMENT (PROHIBITION OF SALE) BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 21 June 2024.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (10:37): I speak on behalf of the Government to oppose the David Berry Hospital Amendment (Prohibition of Sale) Bill 2024. The member for Kiama stated that he would withdraw the bill if the New South Wales Government ruled out the sale of the David Berry Hospital site. The Government did that on 7 August 2024. The Government reiterates that, although the David Berry Hospital site is no longer suitable for its original purpose, the site will continue to remain in public hands. As approved by the former Government, the services at David Berry Hospital will relocate to the \$438 million redeveloped Shoalhaven hospital, which is due for completion in late 2026.

The relocation of services will allow the community and patients to continue to access palliative care and rehabilitation services at the new facility. The layout of David Berry Hospital is outdated and cannot appropriately accommodate contemporary clinical requirements. The site would require substantial funding to ensure that it is fit for purpose when a position is made on its future use. NSW Health has already made significant investment to meet the palliative care and rehabilitation services as part of redeveloping the Shoalhaven hospital. It is important that consultation for the future of the David Berry Hospital site aligns with the previous outcomes of the Shoalhaven hospital consultation process.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The member for Kiama will come to order.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND: The Government recognises the historical significance, connection and importance that David Berry Hospital has in the community with its delivery of health care for more than a century since it opened in 1909. The Government also recognises the impact the site has had on the Aboriginal community and local Elders in relation to the Stolen Generation and the pending Aboriginal land claim. I thank the community for engaging in the first phase of community consultation via the Have your say survey, which received 1,200 responses. It is great to see so many people engaged in this first phase of the consultation process.

Some early key themes from the "Have your say" survey responses were that most respondents valued the role that David Berry Hospital has played in community health care, most respondents would like to see the site continue to provide health and wellness services, most respondents supported partnerships with community organisations to provide services, and most respondents supported mixed-use partnerships that balance public and community needs that align with community values, including preserving the heritage and green spaces and natural environments. The initial feedback gathered during the first phase will inform and enable the development of more focused discussions, working groups and other consultation options. The second phase will commence at the end of March 2025 and will continue to involve local residents, clinicians and staff, the Aboriginal community and local Elders, environmental and heritage groups, and other interested parties.

The David Berry Hospital site is also governed by legislation dating back to 1906, and the Government will carefully consider options for future use in consultation with the community, stakeholders and other interested parties as part of phase three of the consultation process.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The member for Kiama will come to order.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND: The Government will return with legislation in due course, which will be informed by extensive consultation. The Government will not be developing legislation without taking into account the views of the community, stakeholders and other interested parties. I reiterate that the Have your say survey only forms initial consultation for future options for the David Berry Hospital site. Further consultation will continue in early 2025. In the meantime, the community can be assured that they will continue to receive safe, high-quality care from the dedicated healthcare team at David Berry Hospital until services are relocated to Shoalhaven hospital.

Mr Gareth Ward: Why isn't the Minister here? Where is the Minister?

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND: Madam Deputy Speaker, do I have to take a point of order under Standing Order 52 to stop being interrupted?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The member for Kiama will cease interjecting.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND: Again, this private member's bill is premature because it does not consider the extensive consultation that is required to consider the future use options for the site. It would also be premature and inconsiderate to support a bill that has been developed without engagement with the community or other stakeholders who have been invested in this site.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (10:42): I support the David Berry Hospital Amendment (Prohibition of Sale) Bill 2024. I thank the member for Kiama for bringing this private member's bill to the House and congratulate him on his advocacy for his community and their health services. In 1889 David Berry died, leaving a bequest of £100,000 for the purpose of "erecting and endowing a hospital ... for the benefit particularly of the inhabitants of Broughton Creek"—now Berry—"and the district of Shoalhaven". The hospital was opened in 1909 and is governed by the David Berry Hospital Act 1906. However, this Act includes provisions for the Government to sell or lease the land on such conditions as it sees fit. Today's bill will put an end to this conversation once and for all.

The bill is not controversial. It should receive bipartisan support. It is in alignment with the original wishes of David Berry and his family. In 2022 the former Government and Minister Hazzard ruled out the sale of David Berry Hospital. Under questioning from the member for Kiama, Minister Hazzard said, "As to the closure, I can tell you that, at this time, there are no plans to close the David Berry Hospital." In May this year the then shadow health Minister reaffirmed our position and ruled out the sale of David Berry Hospital. I stand in the Chamber today in solidarity with previous health Ministers and shadow health Ministers to say that the current New South Wales Liberals and Nationals will not sell off the David Berry Hospital and the lands upon which it is built.

Ms Anna Watson: It was never for sale.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE: If the Government is of the same position, then it should have no concern about the bill because it provides reassurance to the community.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): I call the member for Kiama to order for the first time.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE: I note the Government is not supporting today's bill. It should have nothing to fear from the bill. Labor is yet to decide on what it will do with this essential community asset as the hospital transitions away from David Berry Hospital to the new Shoalhaven hospital, including its important health care such as palliative care and rehabilitation services.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The Clerk will stop the clock. All members will cease interjecting. The member for Vaucluse will be heard in silence.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE: Instead, the Government is leaving the community in doubt by running a "Have your say" survey. It has not released the quantitative data, but I note the top-line results from the Minister's press release on 29 October, which include:

- Most respondents valued the role David Berry Hospital has played in community healthcare
- Most respondents would like to see the site continue to provide health and wellness services
- Most respondents supported partnerships with community organisations to provide services

Ms Anna Watson: Madam Deputy Speaker—

Ms KELLIE SLOANE: Is my time up?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Vaucluse is leading for the Opposition. Therefore, she has unlimited time.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE: The people of Berry and the surrounding area have spoken. They want this hospital to stay in the hands of the community and they want it to keep delivering essential health services. These services should remain to cater for the local population that has enjoyed them for over 100 years. I commend the bill to the House and encourage all members to rule out the sale of David Berry Hospital and the lands upon which it stands.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Kiama will cease interjecting. Members will come to order.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (10:46): I contribute to debate on the David Berry Hospital Amendment (Prohibition of Sale) Bill 2024. Because it is so close to the end of the year and I am feeling the love in the room, I start by wishing a merry Christmas to the member for Kiama and extend those wishes to everyone in the gallery from beautiful Shoalhaven and everyone listening and watching from home today. I congratulate the member for Kiama on his new role as the real mayor of Shoalhaven City Council. He has great plans for the council, including sacking 500 hardworking staff.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for Kiama will come to order. The member for Leppington will not start interjecting as soon as he walks into the Chamber.

Ms ANNA WATSON: The real mayor of Shoalhaven City Council has plans for the new council, including sacking over 500 hardworking staff.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: Madam Deputy Speaker, not even you could possibly consider this to be within the universe of relevance. My point of order is taken under Standing Order 76. The member for Shellharbour is being totally irrelevant. If she wants to have a debate about her mismanagement of Shoalhaven City Council, I am happy to have it.

Mr Nathan Hagarty: To the point of order: Was that a point of order or an attack on the member for Shellharbour?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I uphold the point of order. The member for Shellharbour will return to the leave of the bill.

Ms ANNA WATSON: I now move to why I do not support the bill, which will be obvious. Members opposite are keen to gag any criticism of their former Liberal Minister, just like they did on his last private member's bill. Since it opened in 1909 the David Berry Hospital has served its community for more than a century. Unfortunately, it cannot appropriately accommodate contemporary clinical requirements. This is about patient safety. The introduction of this amendment bill without any extensive consultation with the community, healthcare professionals or relevant stakeholders is both alarming and unacceptable.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The Clerk will stop the clock. I call the member for Kiama to order for the second time.

Ms ANNA WATSON: He might have to be thrown out. Doctors, nurses and administrative staff possess invaluable insights into the hospital's operations and the community's healthcare needs. Excluding them from the conversation absolutely neglects their expertise and could lead to uninformed policy decisions. But that is not what the member for Kiama is concerned about. Without seeking any input from those on the front lines of patient care, we risk implementing changes that could inadvertently harm service delivery and patient outcomes. That could happen and will happen.

The bill attempts to solve a problem that just does not exist. The only person who has raised a potential sale of David Berry Hospital is the member for Kiama with his mate Graeme Day from 2ST. This is what they do. I know why he brought this bill to the House. It is so he can pretend to solve a problem that never existed and then take credit for it. We have seen all this before. There is a real pattern of behaviour. This is what he does, and he is very good at it. But it is simply not true. The community needs to understand that the member for Kiama has a history of inventing problems and then solving them on Facebook.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: If the member for Shellharbour wants to move a motion to attack me, she can bring it on. But this is not the time for such comments. They are not relevant to the debate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for Shellharbour will return to the leave of the bill. I do not want to remove the member for Kiama from the Chamber during debate on his own bill. He should take a chill pill. He will remain silent and not be incited by the member for Shellharbour.

Ms ANNA WATSON: This is clearly shown by the social media posts made by the member for Kiama on 7 August 2024. He stated:

... in Parliament today the NSW Government has finally backed down from any possible sale of David Berry Hospital.

That is what he said on 7 August. Keep that in mind. He even had a staff member knock up a graphic of him smiling with the words "Massive win! David Berry Hospital sale ruled out!" That is simply not true.

Ms Kellie Sloane: Point of order: My point of order is on relevance. The comment by the member for Shellharbour is entirely unrelated to the content of the bill. It is purely a personal attack on the member for Kiama and should be ruled out of order.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: To the point of order: The member for Shellharbour is talking about the substance of the bill, which is the privatisation of the hospital. The member for Kiama himself posted outside this Chamber that the Government has ruled it out, so her comment is in order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for Shellharbour will return to the leave of the bill.

Ms ANNA WATSON: In all honesty, hand on my heart, this is relevant to what we are discussing.

Ms Kellie Sloane: No, it's personal.

Ms ANNA WATSON: No, it isn't. The Facebook post appeared on 7 August 2024. So why are we debating this bill today? According to the member for Kiama, he has saved the day again. Why has he not pulled the bill? Why are we debating it if he has already saved the day and stopped the sale? As I said, it is just another stunt by the member for Kiama. Once again, the member for Kiama has hijacked a community-driven campaign for his own benefit. Over the past 13 years, his electorate, which neighbours mine, has seen this shameless tactic time and again.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: Madam Deputy Speaker, I appreciate that the member for Shellharbour has an unhealthy obsession with me, but are you seriously going to allow this Parliament's time to be used to attack me in this way? There is a bill before the House. If the member for Shellharbour wants to have a debate about what I have done for my electorate versus the nothing that she has done for hers, I am happy to have it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I understand the point of order. The member for Kiama and the member for Shellharbour will tone it down.

Ms ANNA WATSON: I will be seeking an extension of time because members opposite are taking up my time with pointless points of order. It is important to consider the broader context of the actions of the member for Kiama. The member previously backed the former Government's plans to privatise five State hospitals, including Shellharbour hospital. He could not get into the Chamber quick enough to vote for privatisation.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: The bill is not about Shellharbour Hospital. It is about David Berry Hospital. I refer to Standing Order 76. The member for Shellharbour is being nowhere near relevant. I ask you to ask her to resume her seat if she has nothing to say about the bill.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I will direct the member for Kiama to leave the Chamber if he continues to behave in a disorderly manner. Members will tone it down. I apologise to the visitors in the gallery.

Ms ANNA WATSON: This is all in the context of what we are talking about today. The member for Kiama also supported the privatisation of Port Kembla without transparent communication during election campaigns. It is also reasonable for us as members of this House to contemplate why the member for Kiama did not save David Berry Hospital while the Liberals were in government. Why did he not do it then? He did not do it because he did not think of the campaign then. In February 2022 the former Liberal Minister for Health was asked by the member of Kiama to rule out the closure of any hospital in his electorate. That is on *Hansard*. Former Minister Hazzard replied:

Sometimes once the new hospital is built those things change a little, so we will see how we go once we get the new hospital well and truly underway and have a feeling from the staff and community.

That is a sensible reply from the former health Minister. The statement "we will see how we go" should have prompted the member for Kiama to start his campaign then, but he did not. He did nothing. He waited until Labor came to power to start a shameless fear campaign for his personal benefit. We have seen this time and again. It is a tactic that he is well versed in: scaring his community into thinking they are going to lose a hospital. The Minns Labor Government has made clear commitments to keep David Berry Hospital in public hands. I hope the shadow Minister for Health heard that statement and will reassess her speech.

We have already initiated a series of consultations with community members, healthcare workers and other stakeholders to discuss the future of David Berry Hospital, with over 1,000 contributors to the Have your say survey online. More in-depth consultation will follow early next year. We have no plans to sell or privatise David Berry Hospital. The consultations are designed to gather diverse perspectives to inform a comprehensive

plan that meets the community's needs. We have the best health Minister we have ever had in this State. Minister Park has said time and again that it is not the intention of the Government to sell off David Berry Hospital. But that does not stop the member for Kiama from running scare campaigns across the Shoalhaven.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: I know that Cabinet members are filing into the Chamber and the member is doing a matinee performance for a Cabinet posting, but this debate should not be used to attack me. It should be used to debate the bill.

Mr Nathan Hagarty: To the point of order: My understanding is that when a member seeks to take a point of order they stand up, the Chair calls them to the lectern and they take their point of order. They do not come charging up to the lectern screaming, "Point of order!" I ask that the standing orders be enforced.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I agree with the member for Leppington. The member's time has expired.

Ms Anna Watson: I seek an extension of time to finish my contribution.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The question is that the member for Shellharbour be granted an extension of time.

The House divided.

Ayes50

Noes30

Majority.....20

AYES

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

Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Hoenig, R
Holland, M
Kaliyanda, C
Kamper, S
Kirby, W
Leong, J
Li, J
McDermott, H
McGirr, J
McKeown, K
Mehan, D
Minns, C
O'Neill, M
Park, R

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

NOES

Anderson, K
Cooke, S
Coure, M
Cross, M
Crouch, A (teller)
Davies, T
Di Pasqua, S
Henskens, A
Hodges, M
James, T

Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D
Moylan, B
Petinos, E
Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Singh, G
Sloane, K
Speakman, M

Taylor, M
Thompson, T
Tuckerman, W
Tudehope, M
Wallace, J
Ward, G
Williams, L
Williams, R
Williamson, R (teller)
Wilson, F

Motion agreed to.

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

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I extend a warm welcome to guests of the member for Keira, students from the Holy Spirit College legal studies class. There are more lawyers in the making—that is just what we need! We can never have enough lawyers. I welcome to the Chamber guests of the member for Upper Hunter, students from St Joseph's High School, Aberdeen, and their teacher. I also welcome guests of the member for Orange from the Central NSW Joint Organisation, including Mr Mark Dicker, Mr Ross Gurney, Mr Greg Tory, Mr David Waddell, Councillor Marg Applebee, Councillor Cassandra Coleman, Councillor Bruce Reynolds, Councillor John Medcalf and Councillor Phyllis Miller. Finally, I acknowledge guests of the member for Kiama, Reverend Craig Langstaff and Mrs Corinne Langstaff.

*Announcements***LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS**

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that a staff member of the Legislative Assembly has been authorised to take photographs during question time today.

DANNY HELDAL

The SPEAKER (11:08): I acknowledge the retirement of a long-serving member of the Department of the Legislative Assembly, Mr Danny Heldal. This is Danny's last sitting day with us. He has been on leave for a little while. Danny has been with the Parliament of New South Wales since 2 May 2000—for more than 24 years—and is a familiar face to all members and to most people who visit the Legislative Assembly. As well as the excellent support he gives us in the Chamber, Danny is a welcoming presence at the Legislative Assembly front desk. Danny has a big heart, is generous to a fault and always goes the extra mile for anybody who comes here, whether a member of this House or a member of the public. Danny, I understand that Simon Johnston made a reference to your *Gilligan's Island* experience, heading off for a three-hour tour. I truly get the reference, but I think it is a bit more of a magical mystery tour with you.

Danny, I think you can see that you have the affection of this House and its best wishes in your retirement. You said that working in Parliament House was never boring. But I think with your leaving there is a risk of it being boring at times. Congratulations. With your indulgence, I will pass over to you a small token of my appreciation as the Speaker and on behalf of the Speakers you have served in the past. Mate, somebody will get you a glass of water soon. I give the member for Blue Mountains leave to approach and give you some water with hops in it. Danny, you have served us proudly. Thank you very much.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

*Question Time***HOUSING AFFORDABILITY**

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (11:12): My question is directed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. After nearly 20 months in office, housing approvals and commencements are the worst in 12 years and still going backwards. Housing affordability is worse than ever. When will the Minister accept personal responsibility for these failures?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (11:13): I stand to be corrected, but I think that this is the first time during this term of the Parliament that the Leader of the Opposition has actually asked about housing. So I might give him a refresher. He is an avid reader, so he would have seen the planning system that his Government left us, which we have been trying to—I will just wait.

The SPEAKER: Opposition frontbench members will come to order. Their behaviour is disorderly.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Thank you, Mr Speaker—

Mrs Leslie Williams: You have had two years. What have you done in two years?

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Not even two seconds later, the most negative member of the front bench, the member for Port Macquarie, chimes in. I have never heard in this place anyone more negative than she has been in recent question times.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: I might give the Leader of the Opposition a few other facts about housing in New South Wales: 72,000 homes are under construction right now; 38,000 applications for homes have been put into the planning system in this financial year alone; and 8,400 new social homes have been committed to under the budget.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Landcom is back in the housing game, where it belongs, after two budgets where we have put more than \$750 million into it, to make sure there are homes for essential workers and key workers. The members opposite had set it up for privatisation because they were addicted to privatisation. We are delivering homes. The Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading delivered the biggest reforms to the rental market in the history of New South Wales in two years, after 12 years of inaction on housing under members opposite.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: I can understand why the Leader of the Opposition is so concerned about housing. It has just occurred to me that he has a nice rental property, and he may want some more. I understand that he receives \$2,825 weekly.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat while I hear from the Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

Mr Mark Speakman: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, direct relevance. The Minister's answer is a wonderful attempt to deflect from his miserable failure for 20 months.

The SPEAKER: That is not how to take a point of order.

Mr Mark Speakman: That is what the question is about. The answer needs to be directly relevant.

The SPEAKER: I understand that the point of order is about direct relevance. I uphold the point of order.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: He might be woke, but he is not broke with that rent.

ROAD TOLLS

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (11:16): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the New South Wales Government's work to deliver a fairer tolling network?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:16): That is a good question, which is not surprising from a Western Sydney MP who is concerned about the rising cost of tolls on the families of Western Sydney. Why did that happen? It is because the previous Government sold off a toll road monopoly previously owned by the taxpayers of New South Wales. A ridiculous situation where one company owns all or part of—I will see if I can remember them—the M2, the M4, the M5, the M5 East, the M7, the M8, the Cross City Tunnel, the Eastern Distributor, NorthConnex and—

Mrs Sally Quinell: WestConnex.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: WestConnex. I got there. One company owns all or part of them. That meant Sydney had become the most tolled city on the face of the earth under the Liberals and Nationals. We all remember the 2019 election. Before that election, did the previous Government mention that it would privatise that asset? No, it did not. Straight after the election, it was sold off to the highest bidder, and now we have a 100 per cent privately owned toll road monopoly in the most tolled city on the face of the earth. No wonder Western Sydney families believe that the Liberals and Nationals smashed their home accounts, their personal bank accounts, their back pockets. The reason is that they did. You cannot argue with these facts. Sydney motorists are on the hook to pay a minimum of \$123 billion in tolls to a private company by 2060. The toll bill on WestConnex alone is \$64 billion—

Ms Felicity Wilson: Labor is the one who signed the concession. Labor signed the longest tolling concessions in the world.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Of course, the member for North Sydney does not care. Why would she care? She could not care less about Blacktown, about Penrith or about Riverstone.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The member for North Sydney thinks it is all gravy days. Actually, it is interesting that the member for North Sydney interjects. Let me tell the House what the tolls were in 2008.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: In 2008, a workday peak hour route from Liverpool to the city was \$8.80.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: In 2023, under the Liberals and Nationals, it was \$24. What about North Sydney? In 2008, the toll was \$4. In 2023, the toll was \$4! They were smashing Western Sydney families like it was going out of fashion. It was a joke. Families, businesses and logistics firms had to hear that ding every time they drove to their workplaces because of Felicity and her mates. This Labor Government has introduced a toll cap.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Point of order: If the Premier wants to make comments about me, Standing Order 73—

The SPEAKER: I will hear from the member for North Shore. She does not require any assistance from the member for Swansea.

Ms Felicity Wilson: If Government members had been listening they would know I did say Standing Order 73. If they were not speaking over me, they would have heard that. Under Standing Order 73, if the Premier wants to make offensive comments and reflect on me as a member, he can do so by way of substantive motion. I ask the Premier to do that, if he wishes.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Premier will not make personal remarks and will address members by their correct titles.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The member for North Shore cannot escape her history of smashing Western Sydney families. I do not need to move a motion to make that point. [*Extension of time*]

The member for North Shore and her colleagues are guilty of smashing the families of Western Sydney. There is no excuse for it and it does not require a motion to be moved in this House. It is a fact. How else can they explain the unequal treatment of Western Sydney motorists compared with their constituents? Their constituents came first, and the thousands and thousands of families of Western Sydney were a distant, distant second. This Government introduced a toll cap in New South Wales of \$60 a week. Motorists do not pay more than that. That was opposed by the Liberal-Nationals. The top 10 postcodes that benefit from that change are: Auburn, Lakemba, Wiley Park, Narwee, South Granville, Narellan, Mays Hill, Cheltenham, Merrylands, Punchbowl and Regents Park. It can be revealed today as a result of the Fels inquiry—and this may come as a surprise—that if the previous Government won the election, it would have considered a congestion charge for the CBD—a London-style congestion charge for people travelling into their own city.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I refer members to *The Sydney Morning Herald*. It states:

The former Perrottet NSW government considered slapping cars travelling through Sydney's CBD with a congestion charge ...

...

A London-style congestion charge aimed at motorists travelling through the CBD could lift speeds and reduce the number of cars in the inner city ...

That would be great for Volvo drivers such as the member for Cronulla, but terrible for Sydney families.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

Mr CHRIS MINNS: He drives an Audi—sorry everyone!

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Mark Speakman: I drive a 2013 Honda Jazz. It's the best car I've ever had.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: He is on the headline. Poor old Speakman is struggling to make ends meet. Only one party can be trusted by the families of Western Sydney, and that is the Labor Party.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order taken by the Leader of the Opposition relating to his Honda Jazz.

GLEBE ISLAND PORT

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (11:23): Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hawkesbury will be heard in silence.

Ms ROBYN PRESTON: I acknowledge the nurses in the public gallery. My question is directed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Will the Minister listen to the construction industry about cost blowouts and rule out closing Glebe Island port?

The SPEAKER: The Premier will come to order. The Minister is capable of answering the question without assistance.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (11:24): I will try to clear up the confusion of Opposition members on the front bench. Simultaneously, we are doing nothing and something about housing. That is how I understood those two questions; I did not misunderstand.

The SPEAKER: The Premier will come to order. The Minister does not need any help.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Simultaneously, we are doing too little and too much when it comes to housing. There has been no decision about the Bays precinct. However, we have included the Bays West precinct as one of the accelerated transport oriented development precincts. That will go through a master planning process, which the other accelerated precincts are going through. I remind members opposite that their great efforts down there led to a huge proposed dwelling outcome of 250. We think that when it comes to a multibillion-dollar investment in transport infrastructure, we should probably put a few more houses around it. Stay tuned. The Government has more announcements when it comes to housing. I will recap a couple so far. It is important, in the context of the confusion of members opposite, to understand where we are at when it comes to housing. We introduced the biggest rezoning in the State's history, with more homes around transport infrastructure.

Ms Robyn Preston: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was whether the Minister will rule out closing Glebe Island port?

Mr PAUL SCULLY: That was a paraphrased version of the question.

The SPEAKER: The question was whether the Government will listen to the construction industry. Members will come to order. The Minister understands the question.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Let me go to the heart of the matter. When it comes to addressing housing pressures in New South Wales, we have to boost supply. What happened when we rezoned the areas around 37 train stations in New South Wales, where there are existing capacities in transport, water and wastewater infrastructure? The Opposition opposed it.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: The Minister has not once mentioned the construction industry or Glebe Island port. The question was specifically around cost blowouts and whether the Minister will guarantee that the port will not be closed.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order. The member for Dubbo will resume his seat or he will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: I appreciate that the soon-to-be former Leader of The Nationals does not listen.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Every time we have made a move to expand housing supply, we have been opposed by members opposite. It is time for bipartisanship on this matter. It is time for the Opposition to be true to its word and get behind our housing agenda.

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

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (11:27): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the Minns Labor Government's work to ensure that children and families across the State have access to a quality free public education no matter their postcode?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:27): I thank the indefatigable member for Lismore for her important question. Yesterday the Premier spoke about the work we are doing to support our wonderful public school teachers and the results and green shoots we are seeing. The number of merged, cancelled or collapsed classes has dropped by 50 per cent. We are very proud of that and will continue to drive that number down. The member for Lismore asked an important question about supporting children's education no matter where they live in New South Wales. Importantly, in regional New South Wales, we are seeing really great results in the reduction of teacher vacancies. I am proud to announce to the House that from term 3 last year to term 3 this year, teacher vacancies in regional

New South Wales dropped by 24 per cent. That makes a big difference to schools. Members from regional, rural and remote New South Wales know that there is a range from very, very small schools to schools in bigger towns that have a lot of kids enrolled.

The Minns Labor Government prides itself on taking on its responsibility to provide free quality public education to children wherever they are in New South Wales. The best way that we can do that is by providing our students with a qualified, supported teacher in their classroom. The evidence shows that is what works, and now the data shows that our interventions to support that workforce are giving more and more kids access to teachers in rural, regional and remote New South Wales. We are proud to say that vacancies are down 35 per cent, when compared against data from two years ago—which is the last time the data was measured under the previous Government. But we must keep going. We will not give up. My predecessor often bragged about being a Minister from the bush. She said in what is now an infamous quote, "Look, it's really hard. Sometimes we do have challenges getting professionals out to regional New South Wales, but it's not something I'm overly concerned about." Does that seem appropriate? *[Extension of time]*

Does that seem like a Minister who cared about getting teachers to the bush? We know that was not the case, and the evidence and the data all show us that it was not. Last week the Cabinet was proud to visit Broken Hill in the Barwon electorate. I spent some of my time over those few days meeting with principals and teachers in parts of the electorate. I am pleased to inform the House that vacancies are down 27 per cent in that electorate. That will make a hell of a difference in those communities. In other parts of New South Wales such as in Tamworth vacancies are down—wait for it—50 per cent. How can anyone argue with data that shows our efforts are actually working?

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Deputy Premier will resume her seat. I need to hear the point of order of the Leader of the Opposition. That is how it works.

Mr Mark Speakman: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister has asked how anyone can argue with the data. How can the Minister argue that point when there are 200 fewer permanent and temporary teachers under the Minister's watch?

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition knows that is not how to take a point of order. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time. The Deputy Premier will resume her answer.

Ms PRUE CAR: I get that members opposite want to drown me out on this issue, because we are succeeding, but the numbers do not lie.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: Members opposite are getting very sensitive, but the numbers do not lie. In Myall Lakes, vacancies are down 30 per cent, and they are down 22 per cent in Dubbo. In fact, last week the media ran stories about how Victorian teachers are coming to rural and regional New South Wales.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: Those teachers are working in places like Albury, where the local member said that our pay deal was not good policy and that it was not good government. He should tell that to those teachers. Our policy has brought more teachers to schools in that electorate. The policy is having an impact. It is putting more teachers in front of our kids, which is better for our future.

BRIDGETTE "BIDDY" PORTER

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (11:33): My question is directed to the Attorney General. Noting the Attorney's response to the petition regarding the murder of 10-year-old Biddy Porter, will he exercise his ministerial discretion under section 28 of the Coroners Act 2009 and write to the State Coroner requesting an inquest?

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (11:33): I thank the member for Orange for his question. We have been talking about this issue together for a few months now. I have facilitated some meetings between the member for Orange and government and independent statutory stakeholders. I respect the fact that the member is working hard on behalf of his constituents to get the best outcome for them, as he always does. I am profoundly sorry to hear and read about the continued distress that the Porters have experienced as a result of the horrendously tragic loss of their daughter and the challenges that they have faced, and continue to face, as victims of crime. No parent should ever have to experience the heart-wrenching grief of losing a child, and the circumstances of their child's death are horrendous.

The Minister for Mental Health, the Hon. Rose Jackson, met with Biddy's mother, Rebekah Porter, last year to get a better understanding from her about the individual challenges that people face when interacting with the mental health system and forensic proceedings, which is often very difficult. We hear and understand the concerns and calls for improvements to be made across our mental health system. As the government of the day, we always strive to look at ways to improve the system. We also hear the concerns and calls directed towards the Mental Health Review Tribunal. I will work with the Minister to improve the procedures and processes of the Mental Health Review Tribunal and to improve the experiences of victims of crimes and their families.

It is unfortunate that the criminal justice system can be tough on victims and their families. By its nature, the system necessarily involves the re-telling and re-experiencing of traumatic events that are known about—sometimes for days and weeks on end—and then details that are not known can come up in the course of trials. We continue to try to improve that system. People may simply wish that those tragic circumstances are never visited upon them in the first place, and no-one likes to hear about the continual difficulties experienced with the criminal justice system. As a government, we recognise the importance of having reforms guided by those lived experiences, and we continually try to improve the system. *[Extension of time]*

I pay regard to the work of the former Attorney General on things like the Child Sexual Offence Evidence Program. We are working with the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault to improve the experiences of people impacted by domestic violence. In response to the request from Dominic and Rebekah Porter, the State Coroner has asked a senior member of the coronial team, a police advocate, to review the coronial file. The police advocate is a member of the coronial investigation team and also an employee of the NSW Police Force. Those advocates play an important role in the Coroner's Court due to their lived experience and the experience that they bring to the inquisitorial coronial system from their knowledge of how evidence is gathered and used in prosecution and defence in court trials. I thank them for their work.

Section 3 of the Coroners Act 2009 allows the Coroner "to investigate certain kinds of deaths or suspected deaths in order to determine the identities of the deceased persons, the times and dates of their deaths and the manner and cause of their deaths". I am advised that the State Coroner expects the review of the prior decision to dispense with an inquest into the circumstances surrounding the death of Biddy Porter to be completed within weeks. At this time, it would be premature of me to direct the State Coroner to hold an inquest into the matter before the results of the review are at hand.

I have tabled the statutory review of the Coroners Act, which includes many suggestions for reform of the coronial system. The Government is taking its time to carefully consider those recommendations. While we are doing that, I advise the House that I have already acted on one of the recommendations of the statutory review. I have approved the engagement of two additional solicitors to assist the Coroner to quickly assess cases that may not require an inquest so that we can speed those matters up for families who are waiting, in terrible circumstances, for answers from the Coroner.

HOUSING TASKFORCE

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (11:39): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Will the Minister please update the House on the work of the Minns Labor Government Housing Taskforce to unlock more homes across the State?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (11:39): I am very happy to answer that question because housing has been a bit of a popular topic today. For the last couple of months a group of dedicated staff across government have been working to unblock housing proposals stuck in the planning system. We have seen the snakes-and-ladders process map of the planning system that we inherited from members opposite. It is a system that is as confused as it is confusing. But people looking for a home to either rent or buy, or those looking to make investments in new developments, want to get rid of all that mess.

As members are aware, almost every development proposal needs the tick of approval from multiple agencies. That has led to proposals being lost in the system because of lengthy referrals creating delays and costing time. It has also led to conditions being placed on proposals that are either unnecessary or, in the worst case, directly conflicting with one another. That has caused more delays to resolve. The conditions are from government agencies or councils that happen at the end of the development application process before it is approved, but they have to be resolved before construction can start. For instance, a 300-unit apartment building is approved with requirements imposed by one government agency to minimise earthworks so as not to disrupt heritage artefacts; that is fair enough. But then at the same time, a requirement from another government agency is to pour tonnes of concrete into the site to stabilise old mine workings.

Builders get stuck on a merry-go-round trying to resolve those things. We have intervened to coordinate agencies so that this madness does not keep happening. In early September this year, the Premier and I set up the

Housing Taskforce as an initial pilot to tackle some of those questions of post-consent conditions and requirements that result in developments being bogged down in the planning system. This is a whole-of-government effort to fix a problem created by all parts of government. I thank all the Ministers who have got on board with this and directed their agencies to be active participants in the taskforce, because that means we are not only fixing problems but also developing the policy solutions that means those problems are not repeated.

This area historically has had no oversight, no guidance and no-one to cut through, and the taskforce is getting results. Within just two months, the taskforce has helped to unlock over 13,000 homes by resolving these kinds of delays in the system. That means that councils should be able to quickly approve the projects and, importantly, those projects should be able to quickly be built by the private sector. I recently visited the taskforce, and they are not only doing great work but also really excited about finally being empowered to work together to fix the system and unblock the projects. Their enthusiasm for unblocking projects is infectious. [*Extension of time*]

They are going line by line through projects that are clogged in the system and resolving outstanding issues to get the projects moving. Let us look at some examples. A housing development in Newcastle that sat in the system for 865 days was unblocked within a week after the taskforce worked with Heritage NSW to get some additional information and complete the assessment. The taskforce has resolved issues for a residential building in the Sydney CBD to get approval from metro for construction to get underway. By focusing on the post-approval conditions and resolving conflicts, we get more homes moving from approval to construction, which ultimately means more keys in doors. We recognised the problem and are acting to fix it. In an area that industry groups have been suggesting required attention, we agreed, and we are giving it that attention. It saves time, it will save money and it will remove blockages so that there are not any excuses left for not getting on with the job of getting projects out of the ground.

The Government wants to see every stage of the planning system working as efficiently and effectively as possible to deliver homes and deliver jobs. Builders, first home buyers and families do not want to hear how two government agencies cannot see eye to eye on a housing development. They want solutions in minimum time and with minimum fuss. That is why we are refreshing this approach to planning. In terms of two people not seeing eye to eye, I note the Leader of the Opposition yesterday on multiple occasions offered bipartisan support on planning reform. He is nodding his head at the moment, which is great to see.

We have some more reforms coming because we know we need more homes, not just in the next few years but long into the future in Sydney because people want to live in New South Wales. I trust the Leader of the Opposition will be true to his word and join with us. He can start by convincing his mates in Ku-ring-gai Council to drop their legal action against transport oriented development and join with the 12 councils that are already host to those sites to get on with the task of delivering more homes.

PORT OF NEWCASTLE PROTESTS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (11:44): My question is directed to the Premier. Last year, the police Minister applauded a protest that blocked the Port of Newcastle and resulted in over 100 arrests. This week, the police Minister said that it would be "happy days" if protesters next week paddle out on the Port of Newcastle. It is a criminal offence to block entry to the Port of Newcastle. Will the Premier sack the police Minister for supporting the protests?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:45): There is a lot of inference and a lot of assumed facts in that question. The House will forgive me for questioning those facts from the member for Wahroonga. He has a little bit of a history of gilding the lily, wouldn't we say? Those confidential sources, how are they going?

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: This is the same bloke who levelled wild accusations against a public planning official with no information. It was rebutted by ICAC, and he said, "Don't worry about it. I'm going to go speak to my confidential sources. I'll be back." That was six months ago. Where are the confidential sources? Come on, mate. Where is deep throat? We want to know where his confidential sources are. Members of the House will forgive me for not taking him at his word—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

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

Mr Alister Henskens: It is direct relevance. It is a good deflection, but the question relates to the Port of Newcastle and the police Minister flouting the law.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Premier will continue.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I make the point as a preamble that we cannot take at face value suppositions that the member for Wahroonga makes in questions because his credibility is completely shot. I have not seen a member of this Parliament start with such a lofty reputation and self-immolate as quickly as the member for Wahroonga. He came into Parliament and made unsubstantiated allegations. I make the point that the police opposed the form 1 application.

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Goulburn that she is on three calls to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I know that it is inconvenient for the Opposition's argument today, but the fact remains that the police opposed the form 1 application, and the Supreme Court upheld the application.

The SPEAKER: If the member for Goulburn continues to interject, she will be removed from the Chamber.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism has made it repeatedly clear that she supports that application and that members should not defy the courts, and on top of that we have introduced legislation to make it more difficult for people to protest on that line, presumably opposed by the Opposition.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Wahroonga rises on a point of order but the Premier has concluded his answer. I call the member for Wahroonga to order for the second time.

RESPIRATORY VIRUSES

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (11:47): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health. Will the Minister please update the House on the work of the Minns Labor Government to protect the community from respiratory viruses?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (11:47): I thank the member for Auburn for her important question, and I thank her for her advocacy for a number of hospitals in her local area, particularly Auburn Hospital, which is much loved by the community and staff. I acknowledge the nurses and midwives in the public gallery today. I acknowledge the association they belong to and the work they do across the New South Wales health system. Respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, is of significant concern to me and to Dr Chant and Dr McNulty from NSW Health. This year we have seen a big increase in the number of RSV cases. To date, around 70,000 cases of RSV have been reported. Being a respiratory virus, RSV can have catastrophic outcomes for very young children. The vast majority get through the illness with minor cold and flu-like symptoms, but a good number find their way into hospitals or, worse still, into intensive care units [ICUs].

Over the past 18 months I have been tracking the situation and working with Dr Chant around the big concerns I have with the upswing in RSV. As I have said already, there have been 70,000 cases this year. Ninety per cent of children under the age of two experience RSV. Of the presentations to hospitals, 77 per cent are children under the age of two and 80 per cent are children under the age of one. Those in the Chamber who have very young children, or who are grandparents or carers to young children, know that spending time with a sick child in an emergency department, particularly when they have a respiratory virus, is extremely concerning. They have difficulty breathing and regulating their cold and flu-like symptoms and they can crash extremely quickly, given the nature of the illness. It is particularly important that the Government invests in this now. There are essentially two programs running. There is the Commonwealth-funded National Immunisation Program, which provides a maternal RSV vaccination for women as they go through pregnancy. [*Extension of time*]

This normally occurs between 23 to 28 weeks gestation. However, gaps need to be filled where the mothers have not been able to get the vaccination, they may have given birth under two weeks after receiving the vaccination and the antibodies have not been produced to challenge the disease, the child presents with RSV symptoms at birth, or the mother has immunosuppression. The Government's \$16.5 million investment into an RSV prevention program will fill these gaps. As a result, we believe that the entire infant population will be covered, having a massive effect on the health of the youngest children and babies in the system and in our community. But the program will also have another effect. The Government hopes to see emergency department presentations reduced. In turn, ICU clinicians and paediatricians say this will have a real benefit in reducing the number of children experiencing these catastrophic and dangerous symptoms.

This significant investment is a reform that comes after careful and methodical work. I have raised this issue a number of times at the Health Ministers' Meeting, which meets every couple of months. Vaccination rates in this country have gone down and we need to get them up. Vaccination is one of the key ways we can address public health issues, particularly for our most vulnerable—in this case, some of our youngest human beings.

REGIONAL CRIME

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (11:53): My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. Last week there were four consecutive nights of severe crime in Dubbo, including a significant car accident involving minors following a high-speed chase and a violent stabbing. The latest crime statistics show that regional crime is rising, with 7,000 more major offences in the past year. When will my community receive a targeted response?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (11:53): As we know, and as has been acknowledged in this place, police are working around the clock to fight these crimes and arrest offenders. I thank them publicly for their tireless work in our communities to address this problem. It is no secret that there is a lot of youth crime in our communities, the member is quite right. I have been to his electorate to speak directly with the police and stakeholders and we all share the view that we want to see better outcomes. The Government wants to get to the bottom of these complex problems and seek solutions to tackle escalating violent crime in all our communities. I understand where the member for Dubbo is coming from, and I visited his electorate for that reason.

The Government is doing so much to help our regional communities. The regional community safety inquiry complements the significant work already being done to keep communities safe, including the Government's \$26.2 million package to help prevent regional crime. The best way to prevent crime from happening in the first place is to focus on, and try to fix, the root of the problem, which is the approach this Government is taking.

Ms Prue Car: Yes.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I acknowledge that interjection from the education Minister, because we talk about this regularly. Her department is fantastic and I applaud them.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. I want to know about my community. I know there are plenty of others and a response has been provided for Moree, but when will my community receive a targeted response as well?

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order. The Minister is being relevant.

Ms Kate Washington: It is not a new issue.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: It is not a new issue, as the Minister for Families and Communities says. However, that being said, there is cause for concern. As a government we are working very hard. The police are also working extremely hard to keep our community safe, and I thank them for that. Getting more boots on the ground will have a significant impact. I encourage the New South Wales police to accept the agreement that was put on the table this week so that we can get more officers into regional areas across New South Wales. I thank the Premier for being so supportive. This week is so important for the police. The Government will get more boots on the ground to address crime across New South Wales.

RAIL NETWORK INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (11:56): My question is addressed to the hardworking Minister for Transport. Will the Minister update the House on the Government's plans to minimise the impact of protected industrial action on our train and light rail networks?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (11:57): I thank the member for Cabramatta, who I know understands the importance of reliable public transport services, not only for his community in Cabramatta but also for south-west and Western Sydney—people who rely on public transport each and every day. This gives me the opportunity to update the House and the travelling public about what is going on with our rail network and about the industrial action that is taking place. With respect to heavy rail, there are two bans in particular that threaten services for passengers across New South Wales. Those bans come into force today. The first ban says that there should be no services unless the Government agrees to run 24-hour services. The second ban says that train crew—our drivers and guards—must reduce the number of kilometres and hours they can work.

Clearly, these two bans are contradictory. The first insists that the Government runs more services at a time when there are fewer passengers and the second says that we should have fewer trains and guards to run those services. These are clearly irreconcilable propositions. It is my responsibility as the Minister for Transport, along with Sydney Trains and the Government, to continue to provide services for the travelling public and to minimise disruption for passengers to keep them moving. The train timetable is not a plaything. We are going to provide short-term, around-the-clock services to keep our network afloat, but it is important for people to understand that

these two bans are like a boa constrictor on our train network. We can survive for a short time, but they will eventually strangle our network and make it harder and harder to run trains.

The simple fact is our train network is not designed to run 24 hours a day. In fact, the biggest operation for Transport for NSW every year is New Year's Eve. Planning for that 24-hour service started months ago. Another example is when we had to move 80,000 people over four nights to Sydney Olympic Park for Coldplay. It was a very successful operation.

Mr Jihad Dib: Yay!

Ms JO HAYLEN: It is good to see they have a fan. The member for Bankstown is obviously one of the 300,000 people who went to Sydney Olympic Park on public transport—well done! The fact is, planning for that event started a year ago. [*Extension of time*]

The other pressing issue we need to be aware of is that maintenance cannot take place on our network when it is running 24 hours a day. That means our possessions have to be cancelled, that longer program works cannot get done, which means we will have to take more serious interventions down the line. Today, we have already seen the impacts on our network. On the T1 and T5 lines, passengers are now on rail replacement buses between 10.30 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. today on the Blue Mountains and Richmond lines, as the impacts of these bans start to take effect. So calls for 24-hour running, the declining availability of train crew and the cancellation of long-term maintenance mean that services are progressively degraded and cancelled.

The situation is not as one union representative represented yesterday. They said their industrial action is always about causing headaches for the Government. They said, "It is never about disrupting the travelling public." That is clearly wrong. They cannot have it both ways. The actions that we are now confronting cause hardship to commuters—ordinary people who just need to get to work, get home to their families and get to the services that they need—not to politicians and the Government. That is why our Government will continue to do everything it can to minimise the disruption for passengers, because its objectives are to look after the travelling public and to reach agreement with our rail union before Christmas. I am pleased to see in the union's communication that that is its shared objective too. But I would say to it: Do not let passengers be the victims. Do not put bans in place that are not to do with pay and conditions. Instead, let us get back to the bargaining table and sort this out, because we need to keep Sydney moving.

MINISTER FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (12:02): My question is directed to the Minister for Small Business. Does he agree that after nearly 20 months he has failed as small business Minister to provide—

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. The member for Willoughby will complete the question.

Mr TIM JAMES: Does the Minister agree that after nearly 20 months he has failed as small business Minister to provide any meaningful cost-of-business support to small businesses?

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Willoughby will resume his seat. The member for Canterbury will cease interjecting. I will hear the point of order from the Leader of the House.

Mr Ron Hoenig: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 128 (2), which provides that a question should not contain an imputation. The first part of the question contains a clear imputation. The member can either rephrase the question to remove the imputation or it can be ruled out of order.

Mr Alister Henskens: To the point of order: It is a simple question without an imputation. The member for Willoughby asked whether the Minister agrees. The question is conventional, and the Leader of the House should not be so sensitive.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Mr Speaker, I am not offended by ignorance.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat while I rule on the point of order. I understand the concern of the Leader of the House. However, the question was not so egregious that it should be ruled out of order. Clearly, the Minister is willing and able to answer. The Minister has the call.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (12:05): I was so excited by the question, I was thinking about a run-up. Can members believe that the member for Willoughby has been here for so long as the shadow Minister for Small Business? I do not know what files have been transferred over time. He obviously has not had much to read because there was no activity in terms of anything to do with small business over the past nearly five years.

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

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: There has not even been a conversation in this House.

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

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: When he asked for the files that were supposedly transferred across to him, they were empty boxes! And straightaway he has gone into, "This must be a conspiracy. Something has gone wrong. Something has happened here. I should have some information."

Mr Tim James: Point of order: Nothing relevant has been said in answer to the question.

The SPEAKER: The member for Willoughby will resume his seat. I would uphold the point of order if it were not for the fact that the nature of the question gives the Minister a lot of latitude in how he answers it. The Minister has the call.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It was not a conspiracy.

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

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Those opposite have done nothing for many years. Members just have to listen to the feedback from industry and business groups about how refreshing it has been for them to have a Government that understands small business and has set up a business bureau that properly represents the business community. That is what the business community wants. They want to be able to cut through red tape.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Goulburn to remove herself from the Chamber until the end of question time.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Goulburn left the Chamber at 12:07.]

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I will hear from the Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

Mr Mark Speakman: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, direct relevance. The question is not about more bureaucrats. The question is whether this Minister has done a single thing to help with the cost of business.

The SPEAKER: I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time. I have already indicated that the Minister is being given a lot of latitude due to the nature of the question. I do not uphold the point of order. The Minister has the call.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That point of order goes to the core of the problem.

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

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Any effort to support the business community those opposite will call "greater bureaucracy".

Mr Mark Speakman: You have done nothing! Zero!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No, there has been enormous support and there are so many examples of it. I could stand here for seven hours going on about it and the praise that we have received from the industry.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will cease interjecting. I direct the member for Ryde to remove himself from the Chamber until the end of question time.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Ryde left the Chamber at 12:08.]

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The Leader of the Opposition has been scared to get the member for Willoughby to ask a question for however long he has been the shadow Minister. He hides when he is at a business event because he has no face and he stands for nothing. His whole party stands for nothing.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: They should take some advice from the member for Barwon on how to conduct themselves in the House.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has completed his answer. There is no point of order. I note that the member for Willoughby was on his feet. Was the member seeking an extension of time?

Mr Tim James: Yes, I was.

The SPEAKER: I will not grant an extension of time. The member for Willoughby will resume his seat.

VETERANS

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (12:09): My question is addressed to the Minister for Veterans. Will the Minister update the House on what the New South Wales Government is doing to recognise and pay tribute to veterans in New South Wales this November?

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) (12:09): I thank the member for Campbelltown for his question. The member for Campbelltown served in the Royal Australian Regiment of the regular army in both foreign and domestic operations. He served as a paratrooper and a marksman. While he does not like to go into detail, he was also a sniper. I think all members of this House would join me in acknowledging and thanking him and all others, like the member for Auburn, who have served our nation with distinction. The New South Wales Government is committed to honouring and recognising our veterans and service personnel and their families. Remembering and recognising service should be a 365-days-a-year responsibility, but November is a significant month in the veteran calendar. It is important to ensure that their sacrifices are never forgotten. This month there have been several events, and their legacy remains undying.

As we all know, on Monday the nation paused to remember the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month and mark Remembrance Day. This year marked 106 years since the armistice was signed, the guns fell silent across the Western Front and the war ended. I had the pleasure of hosting the Remembrance Day sunrise service, with the Sydney Opera House poppy projections lighting up the harbour, with RSL NSW President Mick Bainbridge and Robin Park from the Australian Army Band Sydney. Throughout the day, services were held across the State in all of our communities, including the Remembrance Day service at the Sydney Cenotaph in Martin Place, hosted by the Premier. The Anzac Memorial also hosted a Remembrance Day service on the northern forecourt as well as special tours throughout the day.

On Sunday I was also fortunate to attend the Remembrance Day commemorative rugby match between Sydney Combined Forces Rugby Football Club and Burraneer Seniors Rugby Club, which was supported by Southern Districts Rugby Club and Cronulla RSL sub-Branch. Ben Haime, the coach of Burraneer, helped organise the match. The club was formed by three veterans, Chief Petty Officer James Manderson, Chief Petty Officer Mark Newman and Warrant Officer Class 2 James Grey. James works at the Anzac Memorial. All three identified that current and ex-serving members have trouble easily connecting with mainstream community organisations and/or become disassociated from the extended veteran community. They organised that day to bring their current and former colleagues together. However, the Government does not just use days of significance to recognise veterans; the Government continues to roll out funding to ensure that the sacrifice of servicemen and servicewomen is acknowledged. On Monday applications for the Anzac Community Grants Program officially closed. *[Extension of time]*

The program provides grants of up to \$3,000 for a range of projects that commemorate and educate New South Wales communities about the service and sacrifices of current and former military servicemen and servicewomen. Projects that support activities that benefit the New South Wales veteran community are also eligible for funding. Last year the Government provided 90 projects throughout New South Wales with funding. I anticipate that a similar number will benefit from the \$100,000 in funding available this year.

Another way that the Government is continuing to honour veterans is through the Community War Memorials Fund. Last week, together with others from Cabinet, I was in Broken Hill, where I had the pleasure of announcing the 15 projects from across the State that have received government funding from round one of the 2024-25 Community War Memorials Fund. Whilst we were in Broken Hill, I had the opportunity to see the Broken Hill Great War Memorial, more commonly known as "The Bomber", which is going to benefit from conservation through this round of funding, including the cleaning of the bronze; removal of staining; sealing with a protective wax treatment; stone surface treatment to remove or mitigate various marks and stains; and re-pointing mortar joints.

Importantly, later this month, on 24 November we will celebrate the ninetieth anniversary of the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park. The memorial is New South Wales's principal war memorial and is a monument to honour servicemen and servicewomen from the Great War and all conflicts since. To commemorate the historical day, a special open day is being arranged, with events, exhibitions and lectures throughout the day. Along with that, there will be an opportunity to visit the newly opened *Treasures of the Anzac Memorial* exhibition and purchase

the *Ninety Treasures – 90 Years* publication. It is crucial that we continue to honour and recognise the service of our veterans. We know that there is a continued desire for that to happen.

REGIONAL CONTACTLESS TICKETING TRIAL

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (12:15): My question is directed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Noting the strong support in my electorate for cashless public transport, will the Minister update the House on the progress of the regional cashless ticketing trial and, further, advise when Wagga Wagga might receive that important initiative?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:15): I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for the question. He is a tireless advocate for his community. It is important to ask the question, because we are all committed to public transport in the regions. This Government has rolled out services in areas that have not had buses for years, if ever, including the Tumut service that has been extended. Just last week, in Broken Hill, with the member for Barwon, the Government announced a bus service that will go from Broken Hill to Mildura. That will pick up Pooncarie, Wentworth and Sunset Strip and help those communities. That is a strong commitment. Before I continue, are the mayors still in the gallery? They have just left. It was good to talk to them. I have some knowledge about this issue from before I was in Parliament. Back in 2010 or 2011, when the last Labor government was in power, Opal was rolled out. Those opposite claimed credit for the Opal card.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. I direct the member for Oatley to remove himself from the Chamber until the conclusion of question time under Standing Order 249A.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Oatley left the Chamber at 12:16.]

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I was in the industry and I remember the discussions. Just because those opposite happened to come to government and fall over an initiative does not mean they came up with it. When Labor came to government 12 years later, what had those opposite done with Opal? Had they rolled it out beyond the outer metro? Had they rolled it out to Wagga Wagga? No. Had they rolled it out in any regional areas, like Barwon or Ballina?

Mr Paul Scully: They just had the durries and doughnuts card.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: That is right. They had given up on public transport and cashless ticketing in the regions. At the time, the "Minister for Bathurst transport and roads", the aspirational candidate for Calare, rolled out a trial in Bathurst. He did not roll out the one that he promised in Dubbo. This Government had to do that, and we had two trials. I am pleased to report to the House that the trials have been very successful. I was excited to be in Dubbo at Victoria Park to roll out the trial. In both Bathurst and Dubbo. Customer satisfaction is at 92 per cent. *[Extension of time]*

The payment uptake is 42 per cent. Members will remember that during COVID, those communities had no access to electronic ticketing. While the rest of the world was being told, "Don't use cash on buses", they had no other option, but we have got there. Patronage has also reportedly increased by up to 20 per cent in those cashless ticketing trial sites. These trials are delivering other benefits.

Mrs Leslie Williams: Will you roll out the 16 cities program?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I acknowledge the interjection from the member for Port Macquarie about 16 cities. That is another one of those "gunna" projects from those opposite. They were going to roll out 16 cities but only funded 11. Every time they say, "Great idea, we're going to do it."

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

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: The former Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, the member for Bathurst, is telling everyone now that he was going to do the Bathurst Bullet extension to Orange but he did not quite get there.

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

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: To the question asked by the member for Wagga Wagga, I say that the Government is determined to deliver more cashless transport ticketing options to regional communities. I am pleased to report that Transport for NSW is already on the case. Discussions have begun with regional bus operators about how they can do this. While I am not in a position to make any announcements today because that would not be appropriate, we will have more to say on this topic. I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for his

advocacy for ensuring that people in the bush get the same opportunities as people in the city. Afterall, we are the party of the bush.

REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND ROADS

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (12:20): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on the Minns Labor Government's work to improve regional roads and transport in the State's Central West?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:20): I thank the member for Granville. Her home town is Canowindra. I was there recently. The chair of the Central West Joint Organisation was in the gallery earlier and we spoke to him earlier today. It has seen some great results. We have been working on clearing out rivers that were left in a disgraceful state by Opposition members after the 2022 floods. We are clearing them out, but there is more to do. I was in the Central West region of the State last week at the renewable energy zone round table in Dubbo. I note that the Leader of The Nationals and the shadow Minister were there as well, which was great.

Mr Paul Scully: Big supporters of renewable energy.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: Yes, they are—or maybe not. They attend. That was a really good opportunity to talk to regional councils in that part of the State about how we are going to help them through that transition on their road network. Transport is doing that well. Since we came to government, we have put those planners into Transport and come up with a memorandum of understanding with EnergyCo. We are working with local councils to improve their road networks and we are also working on the State road network as well. Natural disasters are also a serious issue in the Central West. We have betterment funding—not promised by members opposite—that we are close to announcing with those councils for their resilience projects. We know that, for every dollar that we spend in betterment, we save \$10 in recovery.

There is a big risk for the Central West. The Minister, who was at the round table on the Orange bullet—we will have to find out the name for that—was telling people that he was all for it. Members opposite had 12 years to deliver an improvement. He was the Minister from 2021 and he could have started these conversations and moved them forward. The advocacy from the member for Orange on this issue has been exemplary. He brought a petition to this place. We held a Community Cabinet and the Premier and I went to Orange to talk to people in the community. We worked hard to make this happen. I thank everyone involved. Do not vote for Sam!

COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTRE WORKERS

Mr RON HOENIG: By leave: Pursuant to Standing Order 131 (7), I table a written response from the Premier to a question asked by the member for Kiama during question time on 12 November 2024.

Business of the House

BUSINESS LAPSED

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that in accordance with Standing Order 105 general business notices of motions (general notices) Nos 1929 to 1958 have lapsed.

Bills

DAVID BERRY HOSPITAL AMENDMENT (PROHIBITION OF SALE) BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:24): I thank the House for the extension of time. I note the Opposition members who voted against the extension do not want to hear about how the member for Kiama has taken them and his community for a ride on this issue. It is very disappointing to hear from the member for Vacluse that she believes that the previous Liberal Government ruled out the sale of David Berry Hospital. I wonder who is telling her porky pies. This was pure spin from the member for Kiama. I encourage the member for Vacluse to read *Hansard* herself, rather than relying on the propaganda prepared by those who are clearly not happy with her obvious leadership ambitions. I thank the Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine from the other place for her tireless work.

Mr Gareth Ward: Who?

Ms ANNA WATSON: The Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine. She has been keeping the community informed of these tactics by the member for Kiama. On 13 August 2024 the Government's duty MLC for Kiama, the Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine, said in the other place about the member for Kiama:

The best he could do—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order! The member for Kiama will come to order.

Ms ANNA WATSON: The Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine said:

The best he could do was get the health Minister Brad Hazzard to say in February 2022, "at the present time there is no intention to close it".

That is what he was told. There was no promise for the future, there was no commitment to legislating to save it and there was no certainty for the community for whom it was so important.

Mr Paul Scully: Didn't he back privatisation in Shellharbour?

Ms ANNA WATSON: Correct. I note the interjection from the member for Wollongong. The member for Kiama did come to this place and put his hand up for the privatisation of Shellharbour Hospital and Port Kembla and a whole bunch of other things. There is a laundry list of the privatisation agenda of the member for Kiama. As I was saying before question time, we have already initiated a series of consultations on the future of David Berry Hospital, and there will be more in-depth consultation early next year. That is what a good Minister does. That is a sign of a fantastic Minister who is doing the right thing by his community day in and day out right across New South Wales.

These consultations are designed to gather diverse perspectives and inform a comprehensive plan that meets the community's needs. The shameless introduction of the bill undermines the Government's ongoing efforts and sends mixed messages to the public. Proceeding with the bill creates inconsistencies with government policy, which can lead to confusion and uncertainty among constituents. But that does not seem to matter to the member for Kiama. It seems that he is suffering from some sort of deprivation syndrome. But that is easily treated. He just needs to pick up the phone to Graeme Day at 2ST. I am sure that Graeme will pump his tyres up in no time.

Involving the public and the relevant stakeholders in decision-making is not only good practice but also essential for good governance. When the public is involved in decision-making processes, they are much more likely to uphold outcomes. Policies developed through consultation are more reflective of the electorate's will, enhancing their legitimacy. The member for Kiama knows that when the public is involved in the decision-making process, they are more likely to support and uphold its outcomes. I oppose the bill by the member for Kiama, who is shamelessly losing this battle. He uses this place and this beautiful building that we are standing in for political pointscoring. We are not surprised. He was a big part of the razor gang in New South Wales, slashing and then burning, and then slashing some more, putting his hand up at every opportunity to privatise everything that was not nailed down.

[A Government member interjected.]

That's right. Then he comes into the Chamber with this bill of misinformation, while the people of New South Wales are still feeling the effects of the previous Liberal Government that was a part of this slash-and-burn mentality. Again, I will oppose this bill from the member for Kiama. I acknowledge our dedicated Minister Park for his hard work in his portfolio—and he is an extraordinary human being to boot. I encourage the people of the electorate of Kiama and the broader Shellharbour region to ignore the quasi-mayor of Shoalhaven city, sitting in the Chamber controlling everything that he can. He loves local government. He has nothing better to do these days than throw himself into local government. It is a bit of a shame. He wants to sack 500 workers from Shoalhaven City Council, and he should be absolutely ashamed of himself for that.

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (12:29): I make a contribution to debate on the David Berry Hospital Amendment (Prohibition of Sale) Bill 2024. I support the member for Kiama. He moved a motion in this place a number of months ago that I had the privilege of speaking to and drawing on some reflections from a similar story in my electorate, where the government, as part of its efforts to look at everything, would not take off the table the proposed development of a mental health hospital. I found that concerning and wanted to speak to the motion. In fact, the David Berry Hospital story extends so far that I was in a line waiting to vote at pre-poll in the local government election when a constituent of mine came up to me and thanked me for having spoken on that motion. They said how good it was that the Opposition had done so much work to stand up for David Berry Hospital. This extends well beyond the South Coast region, and that is why I speak in the debate today.

I cannot think of anything more important or anything that can provide more clarity to an issue than to pass a piece of legislation to protect something from future sale. That is why I support the bill of the member for Kiama. I hear Government members repeat themselves over and again about how they have given commitments and said they are not going to sell or develop it. The simple question is then why on earth would they not support this bill, which seeks to do nothing other than put that into legislation and make the point exceptionally and abundantly clear? It is the clearest thing they can do.

Ms Anna Watson: Because we're consulting with the community first.

Mr JORDAN LANE: I acknowledge the interjection about consulting with the community. Again, it sounds as though the Government has predetermined the outcome. It wants to say that it is going to save the hospital, but then it wants to go through the consultation. By that logic, why would Government members not support legislation that will provide the very protection of the asset that the people clearly want? The people clearly want that outcome. Previously the entire gallery was filled to the brim with people who had made the long trip into Sydney to support the member for Kiama and the members who supported his motion.

Government members should take some of their own advice about listening to residents. They should listen to the people who have turned up and who have supported the motions that have been moved in this place. They should do a very simple thing and support a piece of legislation that would be the clearest indication that the Parliament, the Government and the Minister could give that they do not want to sell or develop David Berry Hospital. That is what people want. That is what people across most electorates want, including in my electorate of Ryde. Had we been able to give that clarity to my community just over a year ago, we would not have had the debate and the furore we did when they wanted to put the Macquarie mental health hospital under the hammer for the latest development application that the Minister, who is in the Chamber, was so eager to push through. I am happy to support the member for Kiama and the bill. I encourage all members to give the clarity the people want, protect the asset and support the bill.

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (12:33): I voice my concerns regarding the David Berry Hospital Amendment (Prohibition of Sale) Bill 2024 introduced by the member for Kiama. The bill is a prime example of the member for Kiama disregarding the essential process of community consultation in favour of political pointscoring. In fact, the member for Kiama has told me that running fear campaigns like this garnishes email addresses for him.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: That is an adverse reflection and the member for South Coast should withdraw it. That is absolute nonsense.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I have not given the member for Kiama the call. He will resume his seat. The Clerk will stop the clock. I will now hear from the member for Kiama on his point of order.

Mr Gareth Ward: Mr Temporary Speaker, I ask you to direct the member for South Coast to withdraw that inaccurate statement.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The member for South Coast will resume her contribution. She may withdraw the statement if she wishes to do so.

Ms LIZA BUTLER: I will not retract the statement. In June 2022, under the previous Coalition Government of which the member for Kiama was a part, it was determined that health services provided at the 118-year-old hospital could be more appropriately and effectively delivered in a modern setting at the \$438 million redeveloped Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital, which is due for completion in late 2026. David Berry Hospital currently provides palliative care and rehabilitation services, but it is not fit for purpose for the delivery of modern health care. The services currently provided at David Berry Hospital will transition to the new facility once complete, and the lands on which the hospital sits will be subject to a scope and feasibility assessment to determine best future use options. We are not selling it.

The private member's bill has a critical oversight by not including community consultation and engagement in its proposed amendments. Such actions not only risk uninformed and potentially harmful decisions but also undermine the voice of the community. Consultation with healthcare professionals, patients and community members provides invaluable insights about the appropriate use of the David Berry Hospital site and feasible options for its future use. Future uses of the site need to be guided by input from the community, and that is exactly what the Government is doing. It is deeply concerning that the member for Kiama has proceeded with the bill without engaging in broad consultation. The Government has already initiated consultation with the community for the future use of David Berry Hospital, with over 1,000 responses to the "Have your say" survey and a broader consultative process to follow early next year.

The consultation process will assist the Government in making a more informed decision and in identifying potential opportunities and priorities. I thank the local community and other interested parties for taking the time to answer questions and share their suggestions, stories and feedback as part of the first phase of the survey. I will be clear: The only person suggesting a potential sale of the David Berry Hospital site is the member for Kiama. Spreading unfounded concerns creates unnecessary fear and distrust within the community. As representatives, we must not undermine our health services or incite fear among constituents. It is our duty to facilitate informed discussions, not to bypass them for political expediency. I reassure my community and the wider community of

the South Coast about the future of David Berry Hospital and healthcare services in our region. Essential services will continue to be provided at David Berry Hospital until they are transitioned to the redeveloped Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital in 2026.

The Government is investing \$438 million in the Shoalhaven hospital redevelopment, demonstrating its commitment to enhancing healthcare infrastructure on the South Coast. We are committed to conducting extensive community consultation to determine the future use of the David Berry Hospital site. Phase two of the process will include targeted, in-person consultation with specific groups who registered their interest as part of the "Have your say" survey, as well as extending this opportunity to others who did not take part in the first phase. NSW Health will engage further to assess communication and engagement activities and the forums that would be most beneficial and welcomed by the community and other groups. It will provide updates and recommendations to progress future use options.

That process will ensure that any decisions made will reflect the needs and wishes of the community. We encourage the community to take part in phase two of the consultation process to help inform the Government on how the site can be best used to serve the residents of Berry and the surrounding parts of the South Coast. I suggest to South Coast residents to join the Voice of David Berry Hospital website to stay informed and get an accurate source of truth, not the fearmongering news of the member for Kiama. I call on the member for Kiama to reconsider this premature bill and to join us in engaging with the community to determine the most beneficial future for David Berry Hospital. Let us work together to ensure that our actions enhance, rather than hinder, the health services upon which our communities rely.

Ms KOBİ SHETTY (Balmain) (12:39): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the David Berry Hospital Amendment (Prohibition of Sale) Bill 2024, which we support. The object of the bill is to prohibit the sale or disposal of the lands on which David Berry Hospital stands. The hospital is a much-loved facility that opened its doors 115 years ago in Berry on the South Coast. It provides palliative care and rehabilitation services in a leafy spot, where it is easy for friends and families to visit their loved ones. It is a place for locals to die with dignity and in peace. Those services are being relocated to the redeveloped Shoalhaven hospital. The Government has insisted that palliative care services will be enhanced at the new facility.

The Greens stand with the local community, who do not want services to be relocated. People want to die in peace in that beautiful local facility. We know how important it is for people who are dying to be in close proximity to home. We also recognise that whatever happens to clinical services at David Berry, the site must remain in public hands and be used for public good. The site was gifted to the community, and we should expect it to remain a community asset forever. Fortunately, the Government has indicated that it will not sell off the site and that it has been consulting with the community on its future use.

I understand that phase one of a community consultation process is nearing completion, and over 1,000 submissions to a "Have your say" survey have been received from members of the community. That is a significant achievement, and the community is to be commended for that extraordinary level of engagement. It is a positive action to save a much-loved facility. A significant majority of those submissions sought to recognise that the site plays a public health and green space role, and that must be maintained. That is the community's voice and action. I cannot help but notice the similarities between David Berry Hospital and Callan Park in my electorate of Balmain.

Callan Park was the site of one of Sydney's first purpose-built mental health facilities following reforms to treatment in the 1870s. Callan Park later became a military hospital during World War I, beginning a century of veteran care and an enormous investment in infrastructure and services by the repatriation department. The buildings and grounds of the facility remain within the grounds of Callan Park, following a decades-long campaign by local community advocates to save Callan Park from being sold off and redeveloped. A key milestone in the campaign was the introduction of the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002. One of the objects of the Act is "to ensure that the whole of Callan Park remains in public ownership and subject to public control". Callan Park is now described as a picturesque mix of rolling lawns, remnant bushland, historic buildings and sporting fields.

A plan of management is being developed and its various sites are slowly being restored and reintegrated for community use. I was pleased to assist the Leichhardt Community Men's Shed in its recent relocation to one of Callan Park's unused buildings, which took significant investment from the New South Wales Government. It was finally assured by the former Coalition Government on the back of tireless advocacy from my predecessor, Mr Jamie Parker. That was backed by the strong community campaign led by the Friends of Callan Park, and much remains to be done. Even now, the jewel in the crown, the historic Kirkbride Precinct, remains vacant and is in need of a tenant.

When in government, the Coalition ran an expression of interest process in 2021 to find a tenant. A fantastic proposal was put forward by We Help Ourselves to host a consortium of non-government organisations and create

a community NGO hub to breathe new life into the precinct, while maintaining its historical ties to community health and wellbeing. But that was not pursued because the government of the day would have preferred to see it privatised. I certainly hope the intention of the current Government does not go in that direction. It has engaged with me in conversations on the future of Callan Park and Kirkbride. Certainly, there were reports of strong advocacy from private interests to privatise Kirkbride. The only thing standing in their way was the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002, which came under attack with the establishment of the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust.

That attack was admirably held off again by my predecessor Jamie Parker and the local community, led by the Friends of Callan Park. Today the Act stands to protect Callan Park and Kirkbride from whatever other plans a government of New South Wales may have for it in the future. It is good legislation and, should the need ever arise again, we will continue to defend it. The David Berry Hospital would do well to have a similar protection. I recognise the importance of that site to the community. We stand with the community of the South Coast, who wants to keep that critical hospital in public hands so that it can continue to be a health facility into the future. The Greens support the bill.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (12:44): I contribute to debate on the David Berry Hospital Amendment (Prohibition of Sale) Bill 2024. I oppose the bill, and I am sure that comes as no surprise. The only member who is talking about the potential sale of the site is the member for Kiama, who introduced the bill. At no point has any member floated the idea that the site would be sold. It is clear who the party of privatisation is. The party of privatisation is made up of members on the other side of the Chamber. In fact, the member for Kiama has a very distinguished track record when it comes to privatisation.

Mr Paul Scully: Hospitals in particular.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Hospitals in particular. Let us go over that. The member for Kiama backed the plan to privatise Shellharbour Hospital and four other State hospitals. He supported the privatisation of Port Kembla, even though he did not say a word about it to members of his electorate prior to the election campaign. Again, the member for Kiama said one thing before the election and another thing after the election just to whip up fear in the community. He supported the privatisation of Port Botany and its 100 per cent lease for 99 years, as well as the privatisation of the Eraring, Mount Piper and Wallerawang power stations.

He supported the privatisations of the Port of Newcastle, Green State Power, Bayswater, Liddell, Hunter Water, Colongra Power Station, Vales Point Power Station, Transgrid, the Kooragang Island Advanced Water Treatment Plant, Home Care NSW, Brown Mountain Hydro Power Station, Cochrane Dam, Ausgrid, the Construction Services Group, NSW Public Works, Pillar Superannuation Administration, Land and Property Information, Endeavour Energy, the Sydney Motorway Corporation, Property Exchange Australia and, let us not forget the biggest one of all, WestConnex—the one that they told us before the election they would not privatise.

Mr Paul Scully: And the State Office Block in Wollongong as well.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: And the State Office Block in Wollongong. The member for Kiama has an extensive record of supporting privatisation. By contrast, one of Labor's first actions upon coming to government was to enshrine Sydney Water into the Constitution so that it cannot be sold.

Mr Paul Scully: How did members opposite vote?

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: They voted against it. We have a clear record of who is for and against privatisation. What are the chances of the Government privatising the hospital? Zero, nought, duck egg—or, for those in Kiama watching at home, doughnut. We know they are very well known for doughnuts down there.

Mr Gareth Ward: In Berry.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: In Berry, yes. They are lovely doughnuts. I always pop in. I have been going down there for 40 years. It is a great part of the world, despite the local member. I encourage people to enjoy all the areas of our South Coast, including Bega. It is a great part of the world. But back to the topic of the David Berry Hospital, which was gifted by the Berry family to the Berry community, and it will stay that way. But community consultation is important to ensure that, however that the site is repurposed, it reflects the needs and priorities of the community. As we know demographics change, and people come and go. Therefore, the needs of the community change. The Government has made a commitment to ensure that the community and other key groups will continue to be involved in what the future of that site will look like.

We all know the member for Kiama is committed to privatisation. In fact on 7 August 2024 the Minister for Health, and Minister for Regional Health announced in Parliament that he would introduce legislation to the Parliament to ensure that we engage with the Shoalhaven community first about what the community feels is needed. David Berry Hospital will continue to deliver safe and high-quality patient care to the community until

services are relocated to the almost \$500 million redeveloped Shoalhaven hospital. In fact, services are being upgraded and expanded in the region. There will be a brand-new hospital and more community services on that site. We appreciate that local residents and other groups have a vested interest in seeing the site used in a way that benefits the community, because it is a community facility and it should stay in public hands and also because of the historical significance of the site.

A "Have your say" survey was open for six weeks and invited the public to answer questions, provide feedback and share their stories, through various formats, on how they would like this important heritage landmark to be used in a way that benefits the community. The Government is undertaking an in-depth analysis of that feedback. The feedback will inform the second phase of consultation, which will drill down with in-person interviews, focus groups and other sessions scheduled to start in the new year, around March 2025. I am sure the local community is looking forward to that. This is where the member for Kiama could be a constructive member of this Parliament. He could be out there, promoting that, telling the community, "It is in safe hands. We will do some consultation. I encourage you to come down. Here is where it will be." Instead we get fearmongering and an attempt to whip up a conspiracy theory about this place having a "For sale" sign.

But the people of New South Wales know there are no "For sale" signs on public assets, because that is how they voted in March 2023. They decided they had had enough of privatisation and that it needed to be ended. They wanted to take off the "For sale" sign and chuck it in the bin. They knew that the Minns Labor Government would put an end to privatisation. There is no clearer example of that than at David Berry Hospital. I will leave it at that. This bill is really a waste of the Parliament's time. We have more important things to talk about, things based in fact and grounded in reality. I will be opposing this bill.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (12:51): In reply: Before I begin my speech in reply on the David Berry Hospital Amendment (Prohibition of Sale) Bill 2024, I acknowledge in the advisers' area the Reverend Craig Langstaff and his wife, Corinne, and thank them very much for being here today and seeing the work of Parliament. The Good Book says that we should pray for our enemies. Having listened to that speech from the Opposition Whip, I am pleased the book is silent on what we have to pray for, because what was just reiterated in the Parliament by the Labor Party was a total rewriting of the facts as they relate to this hospital.

I will remind members—particularly members of the crossbench, given that this is a minority Government—of what we are voting on. I received a letter, which I am grateful for, from the Parliamentary Secretary for Health, who, I note, is in the Chamber and spoke in debate on the bill. The letter said that the services at David Berry Hospital will be closing in 2025 because the hospital was no longer fit for purpose. I did what any good local member should do. I came into this House and asked a question of the Premier. He said, "We are considering all options." I then asked a question of the health Minister and got the same response: "considering all options". What does "all options" say to you? That includes sale.

I then moved exactly the same motion that Bob Harrison, the former Labor member for Kiama, moved in 1994, to rule out privatisation. To his credit, he proposed that motion. I proposed the same motion. What happened? The member for Ryde mentioned what happened. The gallery was full. People came all the way from Berry to hear the debate. One person who did not appear in the Chamber for that debate is the same person who has not appeared in the Chamber for this debate. He is not only the Minister for Health but also the so-called Minister for the Illawarra. You would think that, if you were the Minister, you would send the organ-grinder's monkey rather than the monkey-grinder's organ down here to actually have a debate about this issue. Instead we have had Labor Party backbenchers—good members, people who had bright potential careers—come in and mortgage their political futures. I feel sorry for the member for South Coast because, when her constituents find out she is voting against a bill to prohibit the sale of David Berry Hospital, they will vote against her in droves, cutting short a promising parliamentary career.

I am disappointed about the impact this will have. I thank those members of the public who travelled two hours all the way from Berry and two hours all the way back to listen to the debate. The one person who could not come down one floor to address them was the Minister for Health. Did he come to the public meetings that were held in Berry with hundreds of people, including Irene Birks and the Voice of David Berry Hospital Committee—

Ms Anna Watson: Point of order: I will not sit in this Chamber—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): That is not a point of order.

Ms Anna Watson: —and listen to that rubbish from the member for Kiama about a Minister in this place.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The member for Shellharbour will resume her seat or she will be removed from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A.

Mr GARETH WARD: In fairness, that is the best contribution I have heard from her in a long time. The Minister did not attend any of those public meetings. Hundreds of people came because the Government refused to rule out selling the hospital. It had the opportunity to rule it out and say, "No, we are not selling it." If the Government had done that, there would not have been the concern. Then we get to the survey, which was mentioned by some members in the debate. It included options for turning the site, which was given to the people of Berry by the Berry family, into housing.

Ms Liza Butler: Rubbish!

Mr GARETH WARD: It is in the Government's survey. Clearly, the member for South Coast only reads the talking points provided to her by the Government, rather than listening to her constituents. I will enlighten my friend the member for South Coast, whose brilliant political career has tragically been cut short. The Minister, on the day he announced the consultation, said on the radio that housing was a consideration. The people of Berry have turned out in masses. They have stood up to this Government, which has sinister motives when it comes to David Berry Hospital, and said they want it to continue as a health facility. I do too. I acknowledge the long list of things that my friend the member for Leppington read out earlier in relation to privatisation—

Mr Nathan Hagarty: We are not friends.

Mr GARETH WARD: He is probably right. I will correct the record. He read a long list, but he has the opportunity to vote for a bill that deals with that right now. I need to correct the record on something the member for Bega said. He said that I would withdraw the bill if the Government ruled out sale. That is not what I said. I said I would withdraw the bill if the Government brought its own bill. The Government has said it will do that, but it has not done that yet. It has said it is consulting. I will address that. We have not seen all of the data for all the questions that were put forward to the community and the responses received. The Minister has released only the data he wanted to release rather than all the information in response to questions put to the community. There are people in my electorate, in Berry in particular, who do not trust this Government when it comes to David Berry Hospital. The Government could not rule out sale and eventually said it would consider other options like housing. People are concerned about the future of the site.

Another thing that concerns me is that the Government has said that the hospital is not fit for purpose. What does that say to the patients who are there now? Are they in a hospital right now that is not fit for purpose? I want the site to continue as a medical facility. If it is the case that the Government has plans for new medical facilities and services, let us have that conversation. But let us have that honestly and from the point of view of supporting the community's resolute call to make sure that the site remains in public hands, given that David Berry gifted the hospital for that express purpose.

The hospital has served the community well. I would like to see it continue as a rehabilitation and palliative care facility. So many people have said precious last goodbyes to family members there. Because of this Government's cuts to palliative care across the Illawarra and the South Coast, we have a huge demand for beds, which David Berry Hospital provides. Suggesting that the building is not fit for purpose because it is too old is ridiculous. We stand in a building that was the senior surgeons' quarters for Sydney Hospital, which was built in 1810. David Berry Hospital was not built until 1906. The very suggestion that the Government cannot invest in the hospital and bring it up to standard is absolute nonsense.

This bill seeks to do one thing. If the Government is, as it says, committed to preventing the privatisation of David Berry Hospital, that can be put beyond doubt right now. But members of the parliamentary Labor Party, when this comes to a vote, will walk through the lobbies, sit on the Government benches and vote against a bill that is an anathema to everything they claim to support. Even The Greens came into this Chamber and said they will be supporting the bill. I have many things to say about The Greens, but at least they are being ideologically consistent. I thank local members of The Greens who have written to me and expressed their support for this bill, because this is not about politics; this is about an outcome.

As a local member of Parliament who did not get a clear response, rather than wait and rely on a government I do not trust, I came to this Chamber with a simple request. This is a very simple bill and even simpler to vote for. If members believe all the windy rhetoric we have just heard from Government members about privatisation, they should vote to make sure this hospital is not privatised. In fairness, I trust the Minister. I have known him for a long time. I trust him when he says that he will not privatise it. But that does not mean that future Ministers will not. By putting it into the law of the State, it will be beyond doubt.

Ms Anna Watson: Why didn't you do it when you were in government?

Mr GARETH WARD: I acknowledge the interjection from the member for Shellharbour. I did not do it because it was never going to be sold when I was in government. It was never on the chopping block. It never

would have happened because the area has a good local member. Perhaps the member for Shellharbour should try it some time.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order! The member for Shellharbour has had her opportunity to contribute to the debate.

Mr GARETH WARD: I thank the members representing the electorates of Bega, Vaucluse, Shellharbour, South Coast and Balmain for their contributions. I acknowledge Irene Birks and the Voice of David Berry Hospital. I acknowledge Councillors Peter Wilkins and Selena Clancy, who have been outspoken in their support, and the wider Berry community. Members, particularly crossbench members who are thinking about how to vote on the bill, can listen to the Government. They may have their own arrangements with the Government. But as I understand it, those arrangements relate to confidence and supply. This is not about any of that. This is about protecting an asset that was gifted forever by David Berry in his will. I ask independent members to think very carefully about whether, if they had a hospital in their communities and there was talk about considering all options and discussions of sale, they would do the exact same thing and introduce a bill to protect that hospital in perpetuity.

This is not about only this Minister, but also the future of this site. I thank the people from my community who have supported me to bring this bill to Parliament, particularly the people who have come to Parliament House. I thank my office staff, in particular James Vernon, for their work, and the Parliamentary Counsel for assisting with the bill. I am trying to achieve not just what Bob Harrison, a former Labor member, tried to do in 1994, but also what David Berry intended back in 1889—that is, to protect this health facility from any sale and make sure it continues as a health facility. I do not trust this Government, given what it said on the survey and the fact it has not released the results. That is another indication that this Government is not being honest with my community. This bill does exactly what it says it does. It is not about who said what or who will do what. It is about the text of this legislation. I firmly commend the bill to the House.

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

The House divided.

Ayes39
Noes49
Majority.....10

AYES

Anderson, K
Ayyad, T
Cooke, S
Coure, M
Cross, M
Crouch, A (teller)
Dalton, H
Davies, T
Di Pasqua, S
Hannan, J
Henskens, A
Hodges, M
James, T

Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D
Leong, J
McGirr, J
Moylan, B
Petinos, E
Preston, R
Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Shetty, K
Singh, G
Sloane, K

Smith, T
Speakman, M
Taylor, M
Thompson, T
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Tudehope, M
Wallace, J
Ward, G
Williams, L
Williams, R
Williamson, R (teller)
Wilson, F

NOES

Aitchison, J
Atalla, E
Bali, S
Barr, C
Butler, L
Car, P
Catley, Y
Chanthivong, A
Cotsis, S
Crakanthorp, T

Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Hoenig, R
Holland, M
Hornery, S
Kaliyanda, C
Kamper, S
Kirby, W
Li, J

Piper, G
Quinnell, S
Regan, M
Saffin, J (teller)
Saliba, D
Scruby, J
Scully, P
Stuart, M
Tesch, L
Vo, T

NOES

Daley, M
Davis, D
Dib, J
Donato, P
Doyle, T
Finn, J
Hagarty, N (teller)

McDermott, H
McKeown, K
Mehan, D
Minns, C
O'Neill, M
Park, R

Voltz, L
Warren, G
Washington, K
Watson, A
Whan, S
Wilkinson, K

Motion negatived.

RETURN OF PROCEEDS OF CRIME (GAMBLING COMPANIES) BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 24 October 2024.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (13:08): I lead for the Government in debate on the Return of Proceeds of Crime (Gambling Companies) Bill 2024. I thank the member for Murray for introducing this bill to the House and for raising these important issues in the Parliament. The New South Wales Government acknowledges that for people who suffer from a gambling problem, the harms impact not only them but also their loved ones, their friends and the wider community. I thank the member for Murray for her obvious intent to protect the members of the community who do have a gambling problem from gambling-related crime and the community at large from the proceeds of that crime being spent. For reasons that I will outline shortly, the New South Wales Government will not support the bill. However, we will continue to work with stakeholders and experts to deliver gambling reforms that will protect people's privacy, reduce harm, address money laundering and support local communities.

Our Government has committed \$100 million to harm minimisation and gaming reform. In July 2023 our Government established the Independent Panel on Gaming Reform to oversee a cashless gaming trial in pubs and clubs, and to recommend an implementation road map for gaming reform in New South Wales. The panel is due to provide its road map to the Government by the end of this month. We have also already introduced a range of gaming reforms, including reducing the input limit from \$5,000 to \$500 for all new gaming machines from 1 July 2023; banning political donations from clubs with gaming machines from 1 July 2023; banning all external gambling signage in venues from 1 September 2023; requiring Responsible Gambling Officers in venues with more than 20 gaming machines from 1 July 2024; requiring gambling incident registers and gaming plans of management for all gaming machine venues from 1 July 2024; and strengthening requirements to ensure cash-dispensing facilities, such as ATMs, are not located in areas that have gaming machines from 1 January 2025.

In addition to what we are doing in New South Wales, we look forward to working with the Commonwealth Government, and other States and Territories, on next steps following the "You win some, you lose more" report from the Australian Parliament's House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs. Recommendation 22 of that report says:

... national regulation include provisions to prevent the proceeds of crime from being used to fund online gambling. A legal taskforce should be established as soon as practical to develop these provisions.

Our Government awaits the Commonwealth Government's response to the report and will continue to work, both within New South Wales and with the Commonwealth and other State and Territory governments, to tackle gambling harm and money laundering activities.

I now turn to the provisions of the bill. Part 2 of the bill proposes to introduce offences that require gambling businesses to refuse service to any persons they suspect, on reasonable grounds, will be gambling with stolen money, and to report to the Commissioner of Police if the business has reasonable grounds to suspect that a client is gambling with stolen money. Both offences carry a maximum penalty of \$10 million. Part 3 of the bill proposes to require courts to order gambling businesses to pay compensation to the victims of offenders who used money they stole from the victims to gamble.

Our State already has strong offences that target money laundering and failures to report certain information to police. Section 193C of the Crimes Act 1900 makes it an offence to deal with property where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the property is proceeds of crime. The offence operates alongside a number of other offences that directly target money laundering, including offences that carry maximum penalties of up to 20 years imprisonment. Under section 316 of the Crimes Act 1900, it is also an offence for a person to fail to give police information that might materially assist in the apprehension, prosecution or conviction of an offender who

has committed a serious indictable offence, where the person knows or believes that offence has been committed by the offender and they do not have a reasonable excuse for failing to report to police. Dealing with the proceeds of crime is a serious indictable offence.

In addition, an extensive legislative regime already provides for orders to be made regarding the proceeds of crime. The Criminal Assets Recovery Act 1990 targets organised crime by enabling the Supreme Court to make orders to confiscate criminal assets, including from persons who derived proceeds from the illegal activities of another person, in some circumstances. Section 27 of the Criminal Assets Recovery Act 1990 enables the NSW Crime Commission to make an application to the Supreme Court for a proceeds assessment order, which requires a person to pay to the Treasurer of New South Wales an amount assessed by the court as the value of the proceeds derived by the person from an illegal activity or illegal activities. Subsection (2A) provides:

- (2A) The Supreme Court must make a proceeds assessment order against a person (other than an individual who is under the age of 18 years) if the Court finds it more probable than not that—
- (a) the person derived proceeds from an illegal activity or illegal activities of another person, and
 - (b) the person knew or ought reasonably to have known that the proceeds were derived from an illegal activity or illegal activities of another person, and
 - (c) the other person was, at any time not more than 6 years before the making of the application for the order, engaged in—
 - (i) a serious crime related activity involving an indictable quantity, or
 - (ii) a serious crime related activity involving an offence punishable by imprisonment for 5 years or more.

The construction of section 27 (2A) is such that it allows for an order to be made against a third party if that party knew or ought to have known that the money was derived through illegal activities, even if by someone else. That would allow for an order to be made against a gambling business. It is also important to note that references to "serious crime related activity" for proceeds assessment orders do not require a conviction for the relevant conduct. Under section 6 of the Criminal Assets Recovery Act 1990, "serious crime related activity" is anything done by a person that was at the time a serious criminal offence, whether or not that person has been charged, tried, acquitted or had their conviction quashed or set aside. Determination as to whether conduct is a serious crime related activity is made on the civil standard or the balance of probabilities.

Section 32 of the Criminal Assets Recovery Act 1990 also provides that a portion of the funds go to the victims support fund. The Confiscation of Proceeds of Crime Act 1989 allows sentencing courts to make orders confiscating the proceeds of crime from persons convicted of a serious offence or imposing a pecuniary penalty for benefits derived from the offence. In relation to compensation for victims of crime, section 97 of the Victims Rights and Supports Act 2013 authorises a court that convicts an offender to direct the offender to pay compensation to a person who has sustained loss through or by reason of the offence for which the offender was convicted.

In addition to the existing New South Wales legislative framework, the gambling sector is also already subject to obligations under the Commonwealth Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-terrorism Financing Act 2006, including obligations to monitor the transactions of customers and to retain records that can assist with the investigation of financial crime, and reporting requirements for certain matters to the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre. Any additional measures to target money laundering and compensate victims of gambling-related crime must be considered in the context of the extensive framework already in place at both the State and Commonwealth level. With every respect to the honourable member, that is the Government's primary concern with this well-intentioned bill.

The measures must also be developed following careful consultation with stakeholders, including those in law enforcement and regulation of the gaming industry, and with particular attention paid to the challenges in this area. By way of example of those challenges, the bill in its current form may give rise to jurisdictional issues and a limited ability for New South Wales to regulate some of the entities sought to be captured, because some gambling businesses provide services to New South Wales residents online or are based and licensed outside of the State. Careful consideration needs to be given to whether the proposed provisions would have, or would seek to have, extraterritorial application.

The bill as currently drafted is also not clear about whether "stolen money" as currently defined includes anything other than physical cash, potentially carving out a whole cohort of victims who have lost money via electronic or other means. The offences in the bill also currently provide only a blanket, singular penalty and do not contain any threshold or tiers of maximum penalty based on the amount of money involved. That is inconsistent with, for example, some of the existing offences that directly address money laundering and may give rise to disproportionate penalties.

I do not point out the issues with the bill as criticisms of the member for Murray or the laudable intent of the bill. I point them out to demonstrate the complexities associated with legislating in this area, and the importance of careful consideration of the interaction with the existing legislative framework at both a State and Commonwealth level. The New South Wales Government acknowledges the important issues raised by the member for Murray and will work to address gambling harm through evidence-based policy and careful stakeholder consultation, with measures that get the balance right. But, with respect, for the reasons I have already stated, the Government does not support the bill.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (13:19): On behalf of the Opposition, I contribute to debate on the Return of Proceeds of Crime (Gambling Companies) Bill 2024. The New South Wales Opposition will not support the bill. The bill seeks to make it an offence for a gambling business to allow use of its gambling services to be paid for with stolen money or to fail to report that use. It also requires a court to make orders to compensate a person whose money was stolen and used to access gambling services. Gambling businesses, as defined by the bill include a betting service provider, a licensee who conducts a lottery, the operator of a casino, the operator of a registered club and persons that offer like services.

The bill is a duplication of Commonwealth and New South Wales legislation. It also duplicates reporting requirements for gambling providers. Dealing with the confiscation of proceeds of crime is already covered by the Crimes Amendment (Money Laundering) Act 2022 No 40 section 193C. The provisions are regularly used by law enforcement. Furthermore, the Commonwealth's Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 already establishes a scheme for authorities to confiscate the proceeds of crime and allows for confiscated funds to be used for community benefit. Interaction between this proposed bill and the Commonwealth legislation is undefined.

The bill does not take into account existing financial crime regulation, such as anti-money laundering and counterterrorism financing provisions whereby all gambling companies are required to report suspicious matters to Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre. The Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act 2006, or the AML/CTF Act, and the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Rules, or the AML/CTF Rules, aim to prevent money laundering and the financing of terrorism by imposing a number of obligations on the financial sector, gambling sector, remittance—money transfer—services, digital currency exchange services, bullion dealers and other professionals or businesses, known as reporting entities, that provide particular services, known as designated services. These obligations include collecting and verifying certain "know your customer" information about a customer's identity when providing those services.

The bill also seeks to create an offence for a gambling business to provide gambling services to a person suspected of paying for the service with the proceeds of crime. That offence does not and would not apply to any similar businesses. There would be no legal expectation of recovery, for example, if the money was proven to be spent on luxury travel, fine dining or personal services as opposed to at a gambling business. The New South Wales Opposition undertook wide consultation on the bill to ensure that our position was well considered. Harm minimisation continues to be a priority for the industry, and the bill will do nothing to address problem gambling.

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (13:23): I make a brief contribution to debate on the Return of Proceeds of Crime (Gambling Companies) Bill 2024. I commend the intent of the member for Murray; she is always an advocate for her community and the betterment of New South Wales as a whole. However, I cannot support the bill because it is redundant. The main functions of the bill are to refuse service to any persons it suspects on reasonable grounds will be gambling with stolen money, and to report to the Commissioner of Police if the business has reasonable grounds to suspect that a client is gambling with stolen money. While I commend the member for Murray for her intention to address those harms, the bill is redundant as it is already covered by pre-existing law.

In regard to the point of the bill legislating to refuse service to any person gambling with stolen money, section 193 of the Crimes Act 1900 provides for an offence of dealing with property suspected to be proceeds of a crime. The bill is attempting to mandate reporting suspected gambling with stolen money, when it is already legislated for in section 316 (1) of the Crimes Act 1900, which makes it an offence to conceal a serious indictable offence. Additionally, the Criminal Assets Recovery Act 1990 and the Confiscation of Proceeds of Crime Act 1989 legislate that orders can be made regarding the proceeds of crime. Through those acts, we already work to ensure that stolen money does not make its way into gaming rooms in our pubs and clubs.

The Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Act 2006 ensures that gambling services are subject to obligations to prevent money laundering. That includes mandating identity verification for customers who are engaging in gambling, understanding of a customer's possible risk profile, and monitoring of transactions completed. The anti-money laundering Act provides for the creation and retaining of records that could assist with the investigation of financial crime, and also requires all suspicious matters and cash transactions of \$10,000 or more to be reported to the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre.

The Minns Labor Government is fully committed to taking significant reform in relation to gambling. In the first year of government, we have already installed an independent panel to implement a cashless gaming trial that will be reported on later this month. The trial shows our commitment to dealing with the issue of gambling with stolen money, and our efforts in working towards fixing the problem of money laundering in gambling. While the bill reinforces the importance of legislating to deal with stolen money within gambling systems in New South Wales, the provisions it discusses are already accounted for in existing legislation. Therefore, I cannot support the bill.

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) (13:26): I contribute to debate on the Return of Proceeds of Crime (Gambling Companies) Bill 2024 in my capacity as the Minister for Gaming and Racing. I acknowledge the Attorney General's contribution to the debate outlining the specific legal issues with this bill. I appreciate the member for Murray's interest and passion for preventing and reducing gambling harm. As other members have noted, the Government is committed to undertaking significant gaming reform, particularly in relation to electronic gaming machines, and a lot of that work is being driven through the recommendations of the NSW Crime Commission report.

Electronic gaming machines are the highest risk gambling products for consumers, which is consistently demonstrated by population surveys in New South Wales. That is why we have established the independent panel of experts to oversee a trial in New South Wales to provide a gaming reform implementation road map for the State. That independent panel is also looking at a range of other recommendations when it comes to not just harm minimisation but also anti-money laundering strategies, and we are also in constant contact with Ministers from around Australia talking about consistency across jurisdictions. The NSW Crime Commission inquiry in 2022 made some very important observations about potential money laundering in pubs and clubs. We refer back to that report on a regular basis in terms of looking at strategies that we think will work to reduce money laundering and harm in the community.

The Government has already implemented a number of reforms that help both with harm minimisation and money laundering. One of the most important is to reduce the input limit for machines from \$5,000 down to \$500 for all new gaming machines from 1 July 2023. I note that the Crime Commission report stated that someone would have to feed money into a machine for 40 hours straight to successfully carry out money laundering. The Crime Commission noted in its report that the higher likelihood is that people are spending the proceeds of crime. I understand that is what the member's bill is attempting to control and I recognise we are all aiming to do that.

We are continuing to talk across different jurisdictions. The recommendations of the "You win some, you lose more" report from the Australian Parliament's House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, chaired by the late Peta Murphy, MP, have already been mentioned. Recommendation 22 recommends national regulation and a legal taskforce to look into proceeds of crime funding online gambling. This can also be applied to local gambling. One issue is that some people who are involved in gambling, particularly those using online apps, are not registered in New South Wales, so there are some jurisdictional issues around what we can do. However, as the Attorney General outlined, there are existing laws that address those issues.

I am very committed to the use of facial recognition technology, which we have already released draft guidelines for. This will go a long way in helping to control crime in venues. As we talk with industry about whether facial recognition will become mandatory, particularly in terms of helping with first- and third-party exclusion, we have the opportunity for wide public consultation. In fact, during budget estimates I committed to Ms Cate Faehrmann that, as part of that process, we would carry out public consultation on the use of facial recognition. Venues do not necessarily know who criminals are when they walk into their venues, particularly if they are spending the proceeds of crime. If there were a database linked to facial recognition, that would certainly improve the situation for everyone. Such a model is in place in our casinos, and it is something we are looking at very carefully.

There is a way to go with facial recognition because we must make sure that the technology works and that its implementation protects people's privacy. With cybercrime and a range of other things, we all worry that the more data these systems collect the more is put at risk of being stolen. So there is a way to go on that, but the Government is certainly working very hard on it. We await the Federal Government's response to the report of the Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs. Once we have that report, we will look at further strategies that can be implemented at a State level.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The time for consideration of general business orders of the day having 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***COST OF LIVING****Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (14:30):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Calls on the Government to provide additional cost-of-living support to assist families who continue to suffer hardship due to increasing costs of living.
- (2) Notes the failure of the Government to help families and businesses suffering from rising cost-of-living pressures.
- (3) Condemns the Government for its lack of support to reduce the pressures on the household budget.

The failure of the Minns Government to reduce cost-of-living pressures impacting society has been addressed on many occasions in this House. The continual failure of Government to address the cost of living is the reason the Opposition has to move this motion. It is in the hope that Government members will finally understand that our communities are suffering. SEC Newgate's most recent Mood of the Nation report of September 2024 said that 41 per cent of Australians were experiencing financial difficulties in paying bills and covering basic expenses. By moving the motion, it is the hope of my community—and perhaps of all communities—that the Government will take some action because it understands that people are suffering.

Communities are suffering anxiety and depression as a result of the financial mismanagement of the Minns and Albanese governments. Throughout the term of the Minns Government, the media has commented on numerous occasions about the cost-of-living pressures facing our community. There is little doubt that the media hopes the Government will listen and take action. Sadly, the Government has not been listening. If the Government understood the issues, it would have taken action to reinstate some of the wonderful cost-of-living measures introduced by the former Government such as Active Kids, Creative Kids, First Lap and Back to School vouchers and others.

It has been 18 months since the Minns Government was elected. Over the past 18 months, the policies of the Minns and Albanese governments have resulted in rises in the prices of basic items. Food and non-alcoholic beverages are up 5.8 per cent; alcohol is up 9.81 per cent; housing is up 7.35 per cent; health costs are up 5.1 per cent; education costs are up 6.35 per cent; and financial insurance costs are up 9.93 per cent. That final figure is prior to the most recent Health Insurance Levies Amendment Bill 2024 being passed, which will no doubt greatly increase the cost of insurance.

On 5 March 2024 *The Daily Telegraph* reported on the cost of running school canteens. It reported that an analysis of 20 schools across Sydney and regional New South Wales shows that prices rose between 10 and 50 per cent for schoolchildren. This is caused by the Minns Government. The most expensive meat pies are found in North Kellyville. I understand the member for Kellyville will make a contribution, and he may talk about how the cost of pies have increased in his electorate. Interestingly, there is a record privatisation of school canteens. Over 500 public school canteens are now operated by independent private contractors. This Government says it does not like privatisation, yet it is allowing school canteens to be privatised at record levels, and communities are suffering a significant amount.

On 6 November *The Daily Telegraph* reported, "What planet are they on?" Presumably it was talking about the Minns Government because families are bearing the brunt of soaring grocery bills. Fairfield single mum Norma Lopez-Perez said she is under greater financial pressure than ever before. She said, "Every single item has been increasing in price." That obviously puts a lot of pressure on people like her. As I said, health insurance is also increasing. On 24 October 2024 Private Healthcare Australia released a media statement about the Government's Health Insurance Levies Amendment Bill. Its CEO said:

This policy is a kick in the teeth for the millions of people in NSW who are contributing to their own healthcare in a cost-of-living crisis ...

The Government's unwillingness to engage with the amendment—

which were opposed by the Opposition—

shows the tax is all about raising money from people with health insurance for general revenue to fix the government's budget black hole.

Small businesses are also hurting. There is a record number of small businesses who are in fact going bust. One of the problems for small businesses is red tape. This morning the Minister for Small Business made a comment during question time. Though most of his comments were indecipherable, one of the comments he made was, "What the business community wants is a cut through red tape." Of course that is right; red tape compliance costs money. The *2024 Small Business Conditions Survey* reported:

82% of small businesses said that red tape is having either a major or moderate impact on their operations.

...

50% of small businesses said they were spending more time and money on red tape than they were 12 months ago.

So what is the Minister for Small Business doing? Obviously nothing. He knows businesses need to have red tape sorted out, but he is obviously doing nothing because businesses are telling him that they are doing more than they were 12 months ago. Prior to the last election one Coalition commitment was to appoint a Small Business Commissioner to slash red tape, and it would have done that. Perhaps the Minns Government might want to have a look at that policy and help small businesses rather than hinder them.

The bottom line is this Government is doing precious little to help our community. It is failing our community, which is experiencing rising costs of living and expenses. Members opposite are doing absolutely nothing to help them and they should be ashamed. They should introduce policies that will help our community. Perhaps they might want to have a look at some of the policies we had to help the community such as Active Kids, Creative Kids and First Lap vouchers. We are moving into the Christmas period and families are hurting. Many families will not be able to spend money on normal Christmas goods and dinners because of members opposite. They are not helping our communities, and I can assure them that at the next election the communities will punish them at the ballot box. I know that because my community is telling me that every single day of the week. I ask members to support the motion so we can send a message to this bad Minns Government to let it know that it cannot continue to behave in the way it has been behaving.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (14:37): The Government acknowledges the genuine challenges people across this State are facing in trying to keep up with the cost of living. I thank the member for Castle Hill for moving the motion. He has eloquently articulated the challenges being faced by our community. It is a shame, though, that his colleagues on that side of the House did not turn their minds to cost-of-living pressures when they had a chance to. We heard a lot about what they were going to do, but they did not do it. I will make a couple of points. First, inflation was not a problem when those opposite came to government in 2011, but it was certainly a big problem inherited by this Labor Party when it came to government in 2023. This Government is constrained by the largest debt ever passed from one government to another in the State's history. We are dealing with both the debt and the cost of living as we try to improve the circumstances of the people of this State.

The Minns Labor Government understands those struggles and has responded with carefully targeted policies to help households manage their costs, while being cautious with government spending to avoid adding fuel to the fire. That is what makes the motion so foolish. This Government has done far more to help the people of New South Wales with cost-of-living support than those opposite ever did. All they talk about is what they were going to do. My second point is that the 2024-25 budget allocated \$8.7 billion in targeted assistance, specifically aimed at helping families and individuals to handle the rising cost of living. It is not "what we were going to do"; it is what is actually being done on the ground.

We have helped 40,000 people to buy their first home. We are helping families pay their energy bills, in concert with our Commonwealth colleagues, who have collectively enabled us to lower energy bill costs for every household across the State. We have capped tolls. That was a huge endeavour and commitment by this Government. Today the Premier spoke about how toll relief has eased cost-of-living pressures on families in Western Sydney. The Government has incentivised doctors to bulk-bill more. It has changed payroll tax arrangements in this State, again working in concert with the Commonwealth to improve bulk-billing rates across the country—rates that collapsed under those opposite and their colleagues in the Commonwealth Parliament.

We are helping families with young children to get fee relief for the cost of pre-school. My friend mentioned back-to-school vouchers. Let us talk about vouchers, because that is interesting. On 22 June 2022 Damien Tudehope, the shadow Treasurer in the Opposition these days, made it clear that the back-to-school voucher was a one-off voucher. It was not a continuing voucher. It disappeared with the change of government. The Minns Labor Government is supporting families with permanent relief with the means-tested Creative Kids and Active Kids vouchers so that, each year, eligible families will be entitled to \$50 twice a year for active and creative activities in their area.

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

Mr DAVID MEHAN: I have heard members opposite say, "Bring it back." Are they going to bring it back? Ben Fordham spoke to the Leader of the Opposition about it on radio on 29 January 2024. Ben Fordham said:

So the vouchers are back if you're in power?

The Leader of the Opposition said:

Well, the vouchers will be back. At the moment, three years down the track, I don't know what the budget is going to look like.

Ben Fordham said:

So you're not even promising to return them?

The Leader of the Opposition said:

Well, I'm not going to promise three years out what the budget, what the Labor budget will look like. But what I'm saying is, at the moment, we wouldn't have squandered money on a union wage deal that, again, Chris Minns breached his promise on. He promised at the election that all these wage deals would be funded by productivity offsets. It wouldn't cost the taxpayer one cent. And instead, we're looking at a \$9 billion blowout in the budget over the next four years.

Those opposite are not promising to bring back Active Kids vouchers—or any other vouchers, for that matter. I segue to wages. I want members to digest that this Government's wages policy is fully funded. Minister Houssos undertook a comprehensive expenditure review. There is \$13 billion worth of savings reaped from the budget that we inherited from those opposite. The Government is investing in the cost-of-living measures that I have spoken about, but also in public services. A 10.5 per cent wage rise is baked into the budget over the next three years for our hardworking public servants across the State—more if bargaining savings can be found.

Finally, I turn to the budget itself and talk about the budget position. The budget puts it all together. When it comes to cost-of-living support and action on inflation, the answers are in the budget. The main answer to members opposite, when talking about inflation pressures and what the Government is doing, is expenses growth. The Government inherited an expenses growth of 9.7 per cent from those opposite. In the 2022-23 forward estimates, 9.7 per cent was the trend that the Government inherited. The Government has got it down to 1.7 per cent in the forward estimates for the next four years. Revenue is at 3 per cent or so. That is a sustainable budget position but, more importantly for today's debate, it is a position that takes pressure off inflation across the whole State. It means that there is a sustainable budget for the people of New South Wales that targets cost-of-living support for those who need it the most while investing in public services. The motion should be rejected.

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (14:44): I am proud to contribute to debate on the motion moved by the member for Castle Hill. I bet there is a bit of debate in the Chamber about whether the member for Castle Hill is one of the best members for Castle Hill. I do not know what the member for Kellyville would think about that, but he is one of the best members for Castle Hill. The member moved an important motion about what many in our communities are talking about. They email me, they contact me, about the rise in the cost of living. The rising cost of living is highly concerning. It has impacted the entire economy. There are three paragraphs to the motion. The second paragraph particularly gets my interest. It says:

(2) Notes the failure of Government to help families and businesses suffering from the rising cost of living pressures.

The member for The Entrance gave me a wonderful segue into what I want to talk about, which is government expenditure, particularly government net debt. An interesting book was released by none other than Princeton University Press. I am sure we all know some alumni from Princeton University. The book is called *The Fiscal Theory of the Price Level*, written by John H. Cochrane. It is a comprehensive account of how government deficits drive inflation. It says:

Where do inflation and deflation ultimately come from? The fiscal theory of the price level offers a simple answer: Prices adjust so that the real value of government debt equals the present value of taxes less spending. Inflation breaks out when people don't expect government to fully repay its debts.

That is the theory from Princeton University Press, but what has been said in commentary in the media? Earlier this year, in February, Shane Wright wrote an interesting article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* headlined "States' debt to hit \$600 billion, putting pressure on inflation". He wrote:

The Victorian and NSW governments are driving a state borrowing binge, double the size of the federal government's borrowings, that one of the world's key ratings agencies warns is adding to inflationary pressures across the economy.

The article goes on to mention S&P Global. It says:

... the combined debt carried by the states and territories would this year reach \$600 billion for the first time in Australian history.

That is driving inflation, which is driving higher cost-of-living pressures. I turn to the New South Wales budget—the Labor budget. It says that in 2023-24, in Labor's first budget, there was \$96 billion of net debt, which is 11.9 per cent of the gross State product [GSP]. In 2024-25, there will be \$110 billion of debt. It has increased. There is also an increase in the percentage of GSP, to 12.8 per cent. I could go on and on about that. By 2027-28, New South Wales will hit the highest level of debt recorded in the history of the State, at \$139 billion, with an increase in the percentage of GSP of 14.2 per cent. The largest amount of net government debt ever recorded in New South Wales is happening under the Labor New South Wales Government. That debt is causing higher inflation. If the Minns Government wants to do something about cost of living, it needs to get in control of its budget—it has completely lost control of the budget—and reduce its net debt.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (14:48): Yet again, we have a motion from those self-appointed intellectually superior yet sanctimonious drones, otherwise known as the New South Wales Liberal Party. Ludwig van Beethoven had a better chance of hearing the message that the people of New South Wales sent to the Liberal Party at the last election. Those opposite ran the joint into the ground. They flogged everything off. They would sell their own mothers. It is an absolute, classic joke, yet again and again they stand up in the Chamber and provide us with the opportunity to tell the people of New South Wales about the dramatic failings of the Liberals and The Nationals. They accumulated record debt of over \$182 billion. They privatised everything—\$72 billion of public assets were sold off. The Premier was right on 7 May last year when he said:

We've seen what 12 years of privatisation of our electricity network, ports and toll roads has done – it's led to people having to pay higher prices to pay for services they used to own. This ends this week. Under Labor there will be no more privatisation of our essential assets.

Mr Ray Williams: Point of order: I am loath to take a point of order because this is such an important debate, but the member has strayed very far away from the motion, which is about the cost of living. Mr Assistant Speaker, you need to bring him back to the motion at hand.

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

Mr GREG WARREN: Privatisation has a direct economic impact on the cost of living.

Mr Ray Williams: Point of order: There is a motion before the House—

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

Mr GREG WARREN: We have seen the privatisation agenda of members opposite. We cannot ignore the economic facts that have directly correlated to the cost-of-living crisis for the people of New South Wales. I do not know where members opposite have been for the past decade, because this has been bubbling away. I will talk about what this Government is doing. We have the Portable Rental Bonds Scheme and stamp duty concessions for first home buyers. We have increased rebates for energy, easing energy costs for families. We have introduced fee relief for young children in preschools. We have introduced a \$60 weekly cap on tolls—toll roads that members opposite sold off for the private sector to profit from. Members opposite talk about us having union mates. Yes, we have union mates, but we are on the side of the worker. We do not care whether somebody is part of a union or not. If they get out and have a go, then NSW Labor and particularly the Minns Government has their back. We will always stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves. Therefore, I move:

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

- (1) Notes that the Government is providing additional cost-of-living support to assist families who continue to suffer hardship due to increasing costs of living.
- (2) Notes that recent rising cost-of-living pressures were made much worse by a wage cap that resulted in real wages going backwards in New South Wales between 2011 and 2023.
- (3) Condemns the previous Liberal-Nationals Government for leaving the largest ever budget deficit handed over from one New South Wales Government to another.

They are the three key points about the economy in New South Wales. Members opposite are immune to it, and that is why they will stay in their rightful place on the Opposition benches for a long time to come.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Kellyville) (14:52): I delight in being able to contribute to debate on this very important motion. I assure the House that I will remain within the realms of the motion, which is about cost-of-living pressures. I will not stray into things that Labor members would prefer to talk about that have absolutely nothing to do with the motion. I imagine that the reason they do not want to talk about the cost-of-living pressures in New South Wales is because things are getting quite dire. We heard comments yesterday by the Minister for Housing that she believes a reasonable amount of rent for a two-bedroom unit in Sydney is about 200 bucks. I think that was her response. The Minister for Housing is out of touch with how hardworking families are doing at the moment because the cost of living is excessive.

I highlight a few facts and figures. New South Wales is behind every State in this country. I said a long time ago when we were on the front benches that Labor would do everything it could once it got back into government to make New South Wales number eight again. It only took 18 months. Under the previous Liberal-Nationals Government, New South Wales led on every level. We had two successive triple-A credit ratings and our budget was in check. At the time of the 2018-19 budget, we had net negative debt of \$11 billion. That means our budget was in surplus as far as the eye could see and we had \$11 billion in the black to spend. Then COVID hit and we drifted into uncertain and unsure times, and we assisted many businesses and people to stay employed throughout those costly times.

We also put in place several measures—I sat around the Cabinet table, and I am happy to give up these confidences—like the Active Kids and Creative Kids rebates, First Lap vouchers, and Back to School vouchers. Those initiatives were put in place because families were doing it tough. Contracts for toll roads were originally introduced by the previous Labor Government, every one of them, apart from WestConnex and NorthConnex. Every one of those privatised roads was built by the private sector and contracted by the private sector under former Labor governments. We followed on and wrote additional contracts to those when we were in government. We knew we could not adjust those contracts and we had to abide by the terms of the contracts, but one thing we could do was provide cost-of-living measures to help families. Things are absolutely dire. Our housing Minister believes a two-bedroom apartment will cost "a couple hundred bucks" to rent. The Labor Government must be so embarrassed by the Minister's comments at a time when families cannot put food on the table, go to the doctor or rent a two-bedroom unit, which costs on average \$750 a week in New South Wales.

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (14:57): I acknowledge that many families are doing it tough in my community. Inflation is making the already difficult task of managing a household budget even tougher. That is why this Government's efforts have focused on helping with the cost of living while avoiding putting pressure on inflation. My colleague from The Entrance talked about the programs in this Government's budget. It is important to list what we have done to help people with the cost of housing, the cost of energy, the cost of sending kids to preschool and the cost of road tolls.

Housing is one of the largest financial burdens families face, and this Government has introduced key initiatives to provide relief. For renters, a new Portable Rental Bonds Scheme is being developed, allowing renters to transfer their bond when they move instead of having to pay a new bond up-front. For aspiring home owners, there has been a substantial increase in support. The Government has made it possible for anyone purchasing a first home under \$800,000 to pay no stamp duty at all, and homes up to \$1 million qualify for a concession. Since July 2023 more than 40,000 first home buyers have benefited from significant stamp duty savings, averaging more than \$20,000. That is in contrast with the former Government's requirement that first home buyers must choose between an up-front stamp duty or being shackled with a lifetime land tax.

Energy costs are also a major expense for households. This Government has responded by increasing energy rebates. The Family Energy Rebate and the Seniors Energy Rebate increased to \$250, while the Low Income Household Rebate and the Medical Energy Rebate increased to \$350. For those with life support needs, rebates can now be as high as \$1,639 per equipment type. These measures are a direct response to rising energy prices, offering immediate financial relief to households and helping them afford essentials without the fear of falling behind. The Government is also supporting families with young children by continuing preschool fee relief. Parents and carers of children aged three to five in community preschools can receive up to \$4,220 per year in fee relief, while those in eligible long day care centres can access up to \$2,110 per year. Over 200,000 children across our State will benefit directly from that fee support this year alone. The investments aim to ease the pressures on family budgets while ensuring that our children have access to valuable early childhood education—something every parent wants.

For those commuting in Sydney, tolls are another significant expense. It is a fact that we are the most tolled city in the world. The Labor Government has capped tolls at \$60 per week, a policy launched in January this year and funded by a \$561 million investment over two years. The cap is benefiting over 720,000 motorists, putting real money back into the pockets of daily commuters, including residents in my electorate of Penrith. It is galling to come into this Chamber and see those opposite—who spent 12 long years in government continually undermining and suppressing the wages that people rely on to pay their bills—now crying crocodile tears and moving hypocritical motions such as this. How disingenuous. Shame on them.

Mr JORDAN LANE: I seek leave to make a contribution to the debate.

Leave not granted.

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (15:01): In reply: I thank the members who contributed to debate: the member for The Entrance, the member for Davidson, the member for Campbelltown, the member for Kellyville and the member for Penrith. I also thank the member for Ryde for attempting to add to the debate. I am sure he would have made an excellent contribution and pointed out all the problems of this Government, which has continued to fail our community. The debate is really about the fact that the community continues to suffer. We are coming into the Christmas period and many members of my community are telling me—and no doubt many members of your community in Strathfield are telling you, Mr Assistant Speaker—that they are suffering from the rising cost of living. They are suffering because the cost of housing is going up.

Members opposite are not doing anywhere near enough. Community members are telling me that the Government is doing absolutely nothing at all to help them. The cost of schooling has gone up. The Government is doing precious little to help our community. It has lost control of the budget with its wages policy. As the

member for Davidson correctly indicated, forward estimates show that under this Government in 2027-28 the State will have the highest net debt it has ever had. There will be \$139.5 billion of net debt. Clearly, Government members do not know how to manage the budget. Historically, only Liberal-Nationals Coalition governments have been able to manage the budget—and they will continue to do so. The Government does not know how to solve the matter. When those opposite came to government, our communities were doing very well with all the vouchers that we made available to help them, particularly during COVID. There was First Lap, Active Kids, Creative Kids—to name a few. Those opposite stated that what the shadow Treasurer said in the upper House in June last year—

Mr David Mehan: He made it clear they were not funded.

Mr MARK HODGES: The reality is that those opposite are in government. The fact of the matter is they need to take a stand, protect communities and make the lives of our community members a lot better. But they are failing to do that. They have consistently failed to do that historically. Communities are suffering because of their behaviour. I ask them to reconsider their policies and to help the community.

Ms Charishma Kaliyanda: My community got nothing for 12 years, so do not come into the Chamber and tell us we are worse off now.

Mr MARK HODGES: It is not just me saying it. Members of the press and the community know that those opposite are letting everyone down.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): Members will come to order. It is turning into a shouting match. The Clerk will stop the clock. I prefer to be relatively relaxed in these sorts of debates and allow a bit of banter. But if members behave in a disorderly manner, I will be more strict—which I think detracts from the fun of debate. I encourage members to relax so the debate does not get out of control.

Mr MARK HODGES: This is what happens whenever Government members know they are in the wrong. They speak up. They interject. The real problem is that the community is suffering. Everyone in this House wants community members to have better lives. We on this side of the House have policies. Those opposite have none.

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

The House divided.

Ayes50
Noes35
Majority..... 15

AYES

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

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

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

NOES

Anderson, K
Ayyad, T
Cooke, S

Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D

Taylor, M
Thompson, T
Toole, P

NOES

Coure, M
Cross, M
Crouch, A (teller)
Dalton, H
Davies, T
Di Pasqua, S
Henskens, A
Hodges, M
James, T

McGirr, J
Moylan, B
Petinos, E
Preston, R
Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Singh, G
Sloane, K
Speakman, M

Tuckerman, W
Tudehope, M
Wallace, J
Ward, G
Williams, L
Williams, R
Williamson, R (teller)
Wilson, F

PAIRS

Harris, D

Provest, G

Amendment agreed to.

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

The House divided.

Ayes50
Noes35
Majority..... 15

AYES

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

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

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

NOES

Anderson, K
Ayyad, T
Cooke, S
Coure, M
Cross, M
Crouch, A (teller)
Dalton, H
Davies, T
Di Pasqua, S
Henskens, A
Hodges, M
James, T

Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D
McGirr, J
Moylan, B
Petinos, E
Preston, R
Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Singh, G
Sloane, K
Speakman, M

Taylor, M
Thompson, T
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Tudehope, M
Wallace, J
Ward, G
Williams, L
Williams, R
Williamson, R (teller)
Wilson, F

PAIRS

Harris, D

Provest, G

Motion as amended agreed to.**PORTABLE RENTAL BONDS SCHEME****Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (15:16):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Government on its announcement to develop and deliver the nation's first Portable Rental Bonds Scheme.
- (2) Notes \$6.6 million will be invested in the Portable Rental Bonds Scheme, which will allow eligible renters to transfer their existing bond to their new rental home so renters are not carrying the financial burden of two bonds for several weeks.
- (3) Commends the Government for providing cost-of-living relief to renters moving homes in the electorate of East Hills.

I am proud to support this important initiative, which is part of the Minns Labor Government's comprehensive plan to support renters across New South Wales. I thank Minister Anoulack Chanthivong for his work on the rental reforms, which will help many people in my community of East Hills. People need to move home for many different reasons, whether it is upsizing to accommodate a growing family, or moving to a new suburb for lifestyle or employment reasons. The Portable Rental Bonds Scheme will make it easier for renters and also benefit landlords. The new scheme is the first of its kind in Australia, and it reflects our commitment to addressing the challenges faced by renters, especially at a time when the rental market is more difficult than ever before.

There are 2.3 million renters in New South Wales, which is one-third of our population. There are over one million rental properties, owned by more than 620,000 landlords. New South Wales is the largest rental market in the nation, which means it is vital that our rental market strikes a fair balance between the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords. In line with its responsibility, the Minns Labor Government has been delivering on its promise to reform the rental market in ways that will make a real difference to people's lives. Just last month, we introduced the most comprehensive rental reforms in over a decade with the Rental Tenancies Amendment Act 2024.

Those reforms address some of the biggest issues renters face. They include banning no-grounds evictions, giving renters a fairer shot at securing long-term stability; limiting rent increases to once every 12 months, providing predictability in an unpredictable market; easing restrictions on pet ownership in rentals, so families can make a home with the pets they love; removing fees for background checks; and ensuring that renters have free options to pay their rent. These changes are not just about policy; they are about addressing the real-life pressures and challenges that renters encounter every day as they try to make a home in a costly rental market.

To further support renters, we have appointed New South Wales' first ever Rental Commissioner, Ms Trina Jones. She is an advocate for renters and leads the Rental Taskforce, a team dedicated to enforcing rental laws and tackling poor rental conditions. In our recent budget, we invested \$8.4 million in the taskforce, enabling it to hire inspectors and support staff members who will actively monitor and address serious rental breaches. This taskforce is dedicated to improving standards and will help renters to feel secure in the quality of their homes. That is not all. We are delivering the nation's first Portable Rental Bonds Scheme. This initiative represents another bold step towards a fairer and more affordable rental market for New South Wales. When renters need to move, it can be hard to find the cash up-front to pay for a bond on their new home before they have received the refund for the bond on their existing property.

In East Hills, for example, the median new rental bond is \$3,400. This means many people are forced to keep enough funds for two bonds at once, which is a huge financial strain that simply adds to the stress of moving. With the Portable Rental Bonds Scheme, we are removing that burden. Over 7,000 rental households in the East Hills electorate alone will benefit, not needing to find an additional \$3,400 every time they move. This scheme will make a real impact, putting more money in renters' pockets during one of the most expensive times in their lives, and allow them to focus on the other costs associated with moving. The development of this scheme is being led by the commissioner and is designed to make renting easier without compromising landlords' access to bonds. Enhancements to our existing Rental Bonds Online platform will enable seamless transfers between rental properties, ensuring that landlords retain their rights to bonds while renters gain much-needed flexibility. The vendors for the IT build have been selected, and work will commence shortly, bringing us one step closer to delivering this new scheme.

This Government was elected with a clear mandate to modernise our rental market. In a few short months, we have passed legislation, launched new programs and redefined what it means to rent in New South Wales. We are delivering on our promise to support renters while ensuring a balanced, fair approach for landlords. The

Portable Rental Bonds Scheme is the cornerstone of this modernisation agenda, making renting not only fairer but also more affordable. It is a vital part of building a rental system that works for everyone. This Government will continue to act on the needs of our community and uphold the principles of fairness and accessibility that renters deserve. I urge all members to support these vital reforms for renters in New South Wales.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (15:22): I am pleased to address the motion brought by the member for East Hills, and it will not surprise the House to know that I propose to amend the motion. I move:

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

- (1) Notes that the proportion of rental housing accessible to a median income earner in New South Wales has fallen from 35 per cent in 2022-23 to 28 per cent in 2023-24.
- (2) Notes that the Government dragged its feet on progressing rental reform, including establishing a portable rental bonds scheme.
- (3) Notes the Minns Labor Government abandoned its pre-election promise to end secret rent bidding.

I am pleased to speak to the amendment. I think the key point to be made here is that we have a government seeking to congratulate itself on an announcement—"Isn't that fantastic? We have said we are going to do something."

Ms Charishma Kaliyanda: And the passage of legislation. Was the member not there for that bit?

Mr TIM JAMES: The motion is on the announcement to develop and deliver. The Government has announced it. It has not been delivered. There is no timeline. No consumer has benefited. Nothing is actually in place in relation to this scheme, and here those opposite are, seeking to back slap and cheer lead and celebrate. There is something very wrong about that. It is actually really offensive to the renters of New South Wales that those opposite would commit their time to celebrating something that does not exist. So they might just think twice before they bring forth such a motion in future. The reality is that there is a rental affordability crisis in this State. Across the State, families, young professionals, low- to middle-income earners and many others are bearing the brunt of rising rents, the limited supply of housing that is affordable, and outdated structures like the current bonds scheme. To suggest that those opposite should be congratulated for their hollow and hopeless words, which have come to naught, is really quite offensive. There has been no action taken, no scheme in place, no consumer assisted. There is not even a timeline.

Ms Charishma Kaliyanda: The member has a low threshold for offence.

Mr TIM JAMES: Is it coming in before Christmas? When will the scheme be ready? Tell us. Is it going to be ready by March next year, maybe 1 July next year? No-one actually knows. They cannot even tell us when it is coming in. But they want to congratulate themselves. That is the purpose of their motion—"Congratulations to us, Labor. We're so good! But we haven't actually done it yet, and we can't even tell you when we are going to do it, and chances are it's going to be delayed because we're hopeless at implementing anything anyway." This is really hollow and hopeless stuff. Therefore, we have sought to help the Government here by inserting some facts around the affordability of rental housing, which has dropped for a median income earner in New South Wales from 35 per cent last year to 28 per cent.

So rents are going up—I think by about 13 per cent—and affordability is going down. As you know, also building approvals are down 12 per cent on the year. So at every measure in every sense the rental market is getting more difficult. This is about real people. It is about families, adults, essential service workers and many other people who are doing it tough just to get a roof over their heads. But here those opposite are, congratulating themselves on an announcement. It is really quite stunning. Secondly, yes, to be fair, some rental reforms have recently been passed in this place. But they took a heck of a long time to arrive—almost two years to come, after a long period of apparent listening and consulting.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: After 12 years of nothing, New York.

Mr TIM JAMES: We did a great deal in government. Do not worry about that. We did a great deal. We can talk about our record on rentals and what the market realities were, what affordability was, how much was built and so on and so forth. We are very happy to talk about that any day of the week. But the reality is here. Labor's reforms, recently passed, do not address the core of the problem—namely, supply of properties that are available for people to rent.

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

Mr TIM JAMES: Yes. They should just settle themselves. They do not like the truth in this place that they are congratulating themselves on something in respect of which conditions are getting worse for the people of this State. That is the tragic irony of what is going on here. Real people out there are doing it tough. Labor is making matters worse, and they are too busy in here trying to back slap and congratulate and celebrate. It is just

really downright embarrassing. The fourth point to be made is that the Premier himself on four occasions in his social media in the lead-up to the last election campaign projected four social media tiles and made a range of statements about how critical it would be to address secret rent bidding. I just want to reflect on that for a moment, because what the Minns Labor Government did on secret rent bidding was to present a bill that, clearly, had been crafted in a ham-fisted fashion because every stakeholder, from the Tenants' Union, to owners, investors—

Mr Matt Cross: Young Labor Left.

Mr TIM JAMES: Even Young Labor Left. Every single stakeholder said that it was actually going to make matters worse and would have, in effect, created a big public Dutch auction for properties, and so they sent the bill off to a committee. I was the sole but proud representative of the Coalition on that committee. The committee's findings were overwhelmingly that the bill, insofar as secret rent bidding was concerned, was an abject failure. So then they pulled it from the bill, and here we are now, almost halfway into the term of this Government, and what have those opposite actually done on secret rent bidding promised by the Premier no less than four times? What have they actually done? Nothing. And yet here they are, congratulating themselves on something that has not even been done.

They really should take a good long hard look at themselves and say, "What are we to be congratulated for because what have we actually done?" And the answer is "made matters worse for the renters of this great State". Their goal should be, as ours would be, to make the rental market more fair, accessible, sustainable and ultimately successful for everyone concerned. But, on that score, they have failed, and to seek to congratulate themselves is just offensive and embarrassing, and they should not proceed to do so. I commend the amended motion to the House.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (15:28): That was the most non-event debate contribution I have ever heard.

Mr Jordan Lane: You better make this better. I'll hold you to it.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA: I promise. The former Coalition Government was very well known for celebrating announcements and media releases, whether it was for schools, hospitals or roads. Time and again, the former Government announced media releases—

Mr Tim James: Give us one example.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA: Let me go with Rouse Hill hospital. It is very rich for the member for Willoughby—or New York, New York, as he is known in this place—to come to this Chamber and talk about celebrating media releases because he was part of a government that did that yet delivered very little infrastructure, particularly for communities in Western Sydney. If he wants to talk about celebrating media releases, he should doorknock in Liverpool, where people were waiting for infrastructure throughout the 12 long years of the Coalition Government. I congratulate my colleague the member for East Hills for moving this motion about an incredibly innovative approach to resolving some of the cost-of-living and housing issues that so many people in our community face.

As the member outlined, more people than ever before are renting in New South Wales. The figure is approximately 2.3 million people, which is about one-third of our population. In Liverpool, that number is even higher, with 41 per cent—or 12,500 households—renting. In other areas of Sydney, including some electorates represented by Opposition members, the number is closer to 50 per cent. The Minns Labor Government is getting the balance right on rental reform by providing security for renters and certainty for landlords. As everyone who has delivered genuine reform knows, getting the balance right may take some time. We need to get the balance right, consult with stakeholders and roll it out, rather than rushing.

Mr Tim James: When are you rolling this out?

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA: The member for Willoughby cannot have it both ways. On the one hand, he says the Government is apparently doing nothing. On the other hand, he says, "Why don't you wave a magic wand and fix this situation overnight?" You cannot have it both ways, my friend. The Minns Labor Government is committed to making renting fairer for tenants and owners, which is why the Government has set a comprehensive rental reform agenda. As the member for Willoughby rightly pointed out, just last month the Government passed legislation to implement the biggest rental reforms in more than a decade. The former Government sat on that issue for 12 years. Opposition members could have done something while our community was suffering the beginning of a housing crisis.

Mr Tim James: We did.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA: I acknowledge the interjection of the member for Willoughby. He says he did. That is exactly what he did—absolutely nothing. I remember the joy and pride reflected on the faces of members the night those reforms were passed. Very few Opposition members were in the Chamber when those reforms were passed.

Mr Matt Cross: I was.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA: I am glad the member for Davidson was here. Opposition members took the approach, "We thought it was a good idea." They had 12 long years in government, but they did absolutely nothing. The legislation that we recently passed banned no-grounds evictions, limited rent increases to once every 12 months, made it easier to have pets in rentals and ensured renters have free ways to pay their rent. I could go on, but I have run out of time. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (15:33): I thank the member for East Hills for moving the motion, but I like the amendment moved by the member for Willoughby better. I will back in the member for Willoughby. His extremely sensible amendment holds the Government to account, particularly paragraph (3), which states, "notes the Minns Labor Government abandoned its pre-election promise to end secret rent bidding". As the member for Willoughby rightfully pointed out, even Young Labor Left NSW saw the writing on the wall about what an extremely bad policy it was. The New South Government gets its inspiration from the Young Labor Left. I do not support the motion as moved by the member for East Hills because it is celebrating the Government making an announcement. What about real reform? What about passing legislation? What about actually doing something stated in the budget? This motion just celebrates an announcement.

I have plenty of announcements that I might start moving motions on. I am very happy to make an announcement that Labor is overseeing the largest debt ever in the history of New South Wales. I am very happy to make an announcement that the number of housing approvals is the lowest it has been in 12 years. I am very happy to make an announcement that transport oriented developments simply do not create supply. How about an announcement that the Minns Labor Government is making New South Wales number eight again? My favourite announcement would be—and I note that the member for Coogee is in the Chamber—that the bus taskforce found that there was a COVID bus driver shortage. It took a whole taskforce to work that out.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Point of order: I bring to the attention of the House that the amendment moved by the member for Willoughby is out of order because it falls outside the scope of the original motion.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): I thank the member for Coogee. I will consult with the Clerk. The Clerk will stop the clock. Standing Order 160 states that amendments must be relevant to the motion. I note that paragraph (3) of the original motion deals with cost-of-living relief for renters moving homes. The amendment is broadly cast. Therefore, I do not uphold the point of order.

Mr MATT CROSS: I have made all the announcements I wish to make today. Yesterday radio presenter Hamish Macdonald asked a Minister, "What do you reckon is a reasonable price to pay in rent for a two-bedroom flat in Sydney?" A certain Minister replied:

Well, I mean, it kind of depends where in Sydney. I mean, Sydney's a big city. I mean, a couple of hundred bucks, right?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): Members will come to order.

Mr MATT CROSS: What do members think about that? *ABC News* released an article titled, "NSW Housing Minister Rose Jackson underestimates Sydney rent prices". Leo from the Tenants' Union is a good friend of mine and of the member for Newtown. He stated:

Data analysed by the Tenants' Union of NSW found that only 23 two-bedroom places out of 25,000 in Greater Sydney were rented for \$200 or less since July.

What else did the commentary say? Sky News—I stress that this is Sky News before dark—ran the headline "Couple of hundred bucks: NSW Housing Minister Rose Jackson assumes bizarre rental price in Sydney amidst dire housing affordability crisis". Finally, my favourite one was "Minister is slammed for being 'out of touch' after jawdropping answer to ... question".

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (15:39): I speak in debate on the motion moved by the good member for East Hills. Firstly, I commend the Minns Labor Government for fulfilling our election promise by rolling out comprehensive rental reform, including legislating the nation's first Portable Rental Bonds Scheme. The transformative reform will deliver impactful change to over one-third of the population in New South Wales. That accounts for 2.3 million renters across the State, including 7,766 in my electorate of South Coast alone. The Minns Government is getting the balance right on rental reform by providing security for renters and certainty for landlords. Last month we successfully passed legislation that will enact the most significant rental reform in a decade. The Rental Tenancies Amendment Bill 2024 prohibits no-grounds evictions, limits rent increases to once

per year, makes it easier for renters to have pets, ensures that tenants have free payment options for rent and eliminates the need for renters to pay for background checks. As the State with the largest rental market in Australia, New South Wales must ensure there is a fair balance between the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): It being 3.40 p.m., the time for debate has expired. I set down resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later time. The House will now proceed to Government business.

Bills

JUSTICE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CHILDREN) BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 13 November 2024.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (15:41): On behalf of Mr Michael Daley: In reply: I thank the following members for their contributions to debate on the Justice Legislation Amendment (Children) Bill 2024: the member for Wahroonga, and shadow Attorney General; the member for Campbelltown, and Parliamentary Secretary for Western Sydney, and Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier; the member for South Coast; the member for Leppington, and Government Whip; and the member for Liverpool. As commented on by members, the bill reflects the Government's ongoing commitment to good governance through the regular review and update of legislation in response to identified needs. The bill makes necessary amendments across the Justice portfolio to make sure that legislation is kept up to date and is responsive to developments in the community and the New South Wales legal system.

I will briefly address some matters raised during debate on the bill. Firstly, schedule 1 to the bill is necessary to clarify that the disclosure requirements set out by proposed new section 36C (1) of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 apply to prescribed criminal offences. The amendment will clarify the application of the uncommenced provision and allow it to operate as intended. Schedules 2 and 3 will amend the Children (Community Service Orders) Act and the Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act to give the Children's Court express power to take no action, vary or revoke conditions, impose further conditions and revoke an order in response to breaches of bond, probation orders and community service orders. They will also give the Children's Court the power to take no action or to revoke an order releasing a person on condition that the person complies with an outcome plan, if the court finds the person breached the outcome plan. The amendments will address uncertainty following the recent Children's Court decision of *R v Kai* and allow the prior common practice of the Children's Court in respect of breaches of court orders to continue unimpeded.

In conclusion, it is critical that legislation be used to support and meet the community's expectation of good and effective governance. The bill is an example of an efficient and appropriate mechanism through which discrete and sometimes minor but very necessary reforms can be put in place. The bill ensures legislation across the Justice portfolio is fit for purpose and suitable to support the systems of governance that are in place across the New South Wales judicial system. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: On behalf of Mr Michael Daley: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

WESTERN SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (15:45): Is it a bird? Is it superman? No, it is the first test flight in and out of the Western Sydney international airport. In early October residents of south-west Sydney witnessed the first plane take off and land at our new airport. The Piper PA-30 Twin Engine Comanche was tasked with taking off and landing at both ends of the runway in daylight, dusk and night-time conditions to ensure that the airport's 3,000 aeronautical ground lights, or AGLs, were fit for purpose ahead of the 2026 opening. Construction began on the airport's single initial runway in 2022 and is nearing practical completion. The runway is expected to be capable of catering for around 10 million passengers per year from day one. The milestone comes after another in July, with the completion of the terminal's roof. At 80 per cent completion, with internal works

proceeding, the new international airport is certainly taking shape and the people of Leppington are very excited. I look forward to the opening and thank the thousands of local workers who have brought the airport to life each and every day.

COOPER LAMBERT AND JENSON MEDCALF

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (15:46): I recognise two exceptionally talented year 9 futsal champions from Hastings Secondary College Port Macquarie Campus. Cooper Lambert and Jenson Medcalf have displayed their skills with the ball, coupled with speed and fitness on the futsal court, to secure positions in the East Coast Eagles. The powerhouse team were then successful in securing second place at the National Futsal Championships, which were held in Brisbane. The boys represented far north New South Wales in the under-15s team, playing against State representative teams from across the nation. What a fantastic achievement! The small amount of space on a futsal court means that players must have great technique and skill. Teams have only five players on the pitch at any one time, with a ball that is smaller and harder than a soccer ball. It is a game that emphasises control, improvisation, creativity and technique. It takes hours of practice and extreme skill and fitness to reach this level of expertise. In closing, I commend the leadership, commitment and dedication of coach Mr Phil Baker, who has trained Cooper and Jenson, in addition to fulfilling his regular Human Society and its Environment teaching load. Congratulations!

PADSTOW CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (15:47): I had a wonderful time at the twenty-sixth annual Children's Festival in Padstow. It was truly a special occasion, and I had the pleasure of joining my friends, family and some incredible guests, including the Premier, Minister Dib, the member for East Hills—who is the local State member—and the mayor and councillors. I extend my congratulations to the Children's Festival Organisation, its founder Mr Thuat Nguyen, Dr Maria Tran and the entire organising committee on reaching this remarkable milestone. It was a wonderful occasion to celebrate 26 years of building harmony and celebrating diversity, starting with our amazing children, who are the future of our community and our State. The event was a beautiful reminder of the importance of coming together to promote understanding, inclusivity and a shared sense of belonging. I thank everyone involved for creating such an impactful and inspiring event that continues to make a difference in the lives of so many.

PIPER BAMFORD

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes) (15:48): Today I recognise Piper Bamford, a young athlete from Forster. Piper has been selected to join the Talented Sports Program for swimming at Endeavour Sports High School in Sydney. This fantastic opportunity shows just how dedicated she is to the sport. Starting in term 1 of year 10 in 2025, Piper will train under one of New South Wales' Olympic pathway programs, setting her on a course to pursue her dreams in competitive swimming. Piper has worked very hard for this achievement. Her consistent effort, day after day, has brought her to this moment. We are all cheering her on from afar as she takes the next big step and moves to Sydney. I congratulate Piper on this very well-deserved recognition. We are so proud of her, and we look forward to following her on her journey.

ULLADULLA MILTON COMMUNITY TRANSPORT AID

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (15:49): I recognise and congratulate the team from Community Transport Aid [CTA] Ulladulla and Milton districts for their outstanding work. It was a pleasure to visit this remarkable independent, self-funded organisation, which is dedicated to supporting residents of the lower South Coast, from Bandalong to Durras North, who face challenges accessing transport for medical appointments. The CTA team provide a vital service, offering comfortable and affordable door-to-door transport to major destinations such as Sydney, Canberra, Batemans Bay, Wollongong, Nowra and anywhere in between. Their efforts make a significant difference in the lives of many in our community, ensuring that those in need have reliable access to essential medical care and transport. I deeply appreciate their dedication and commitment to providing such a wonderful service to our local residents. Once again, I thank the entire CTA team for their incredible contributions.

CASTLE HILL HIGH SCHOOL

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (15:50): I commend the students of Castle Hill High School for their outstanding participation in the Castle Hill High School prefects' HopeStreet Christmas food drive. One of the school's focus charities for 2024 has been the BaptistCare HopeStreet Foundation, which aims to support those vulnerable members of our communities experiencing difficulties such as homelessness and financial hardship. With the Christmas food drive underway, all goods donated will be delivered by the school to HopeStreet Foundation in Woolloomooloo. My heartfelt thanks goes to those students who have volunteered their time and efforts in this noble cause. I thank William Go, Elyssa Tedesco, Elizabeth McShane, Joshua Scott, Farhaj Ali, Hayden Armstrong, Isaac Browne, Chloe Chen, Vihaan Mehta, Pranav Pratap and Alvaro To. My special thanks

and congratulations go to the Castle Hill High School food drive coordinator, Layla Wright. Through their collective efforts, the students are making a real difference in the lives of those in need this holiday season. I commend them for their generosity, compassion and diligent work.

BANKSTOWN CITY NETBALL ASSOCIATION

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (15:51): I congratulate this year's Netball NSW award winners, especially two exceptional women from the Bankstown City Netball Association. Nicole Oram was honoured with the Dot McHugh OAM Administrator Award, named after Dorothy Dot McHugh, who played a pivotal role in shaping netball administration at every level. Dot dedicated her life to netball, serving as New South Wales vice-president, secretary, treasurer and more. Her legacy, cemented by her life membership of Netball NSW, lives on through the award, which recognises individuals who show exemplary leadership and commitment. Nicole's dedication has undoubtedly earned her this well-deserved recognition. Margaret Stone, another Bankstown star, received the Margaret Corbett OAM Coach of the Year Award. Margaret Corbett is a coaching legend who has had a profound impact on netball. Her dedication and expertise have inspired many and elevated her to Netball NSW legend status. The award celebrates coaches who excel and inspire within Netball NSW competitions. I thank Nicole and Margaret for their leadership and passion, and I congratulate them again.

SGT MATTHEW LOCKE MG MEMORIAL GOLF DAY

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (15:52): The Sgt Matthew Locke MG Memorial Golf Day at C.ex Urunga celebrated the memory of Sergeant Locke, an Australian hero, and raised essential funds for The Grub Club, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to providing educational resources to children in Timor-Leste. The Grub Club originally began by supporting Afghani children in the Uruzgan province where Sergeant Locke served with the Australian Special Air Service Regiment. Since his passing in 2007, the organisation has expanded its mission, now focusing on educational aid in Timor-Leste, a cause close to Sergeant Locke's heart. With each swing, participants helped supply books, paper and school supplies to kindergartens and schools in need, embodying Sergeant Locke's legacy of service and dedication to uplifting communities. The day was a beautiful blend of camaraderie and generosity, and the community turnout underscored their shared commitment to education. A heartfelt thanks goes out to the volunteers, organisers and everyone who made the event possible. Together, they have created a legacy that not only honours Sergeant Locke but makes a lasting impact on less fortunate children's lives abroad.

BLACKTOWN RSL SUB-BRANCH

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (15:53): Blacktown RSL Sub-Branch has held its annual Remembrance Day service. This year marks 110 years since the start of World War I, where many brave men and women made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country and their fellow Australians to preserve our freedoms against tyranny. Since then, over 102,000 Australian service men and women have been killed in action over 30 wars, conflicts, crises, operations and interventions, not to mention peacekeeping missions and natural disaster responses. The Blacktown RSL Sub-Branch has a diverse membership of service men and women from different deployments, and witnessing their camaraderie and solidarity regardless of their period of service is inspiring. I thank president Brad Lawless, secretary John O'Brian and the dedicated team of the sub-branch for hosting a solemn commemoration at the war memorial on the grounds of Club Blacktown. Lest we forget.

WINGECARRIBEE SHIRE COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT TEAM

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (15:54): The Wingecarribee Shire Council environment team has been nominated for the 2024 Local Government NSW Excellence in the Environment Awards for their work on the Southern Highlands Koala Conservation Project. The project Future Proofing Southern Highlands Koalas is up for an award in the Natural Environment Protection and Enhancement category. Ensuring the continuing of healthy and thriving koala colonies in Wollondilly is a matter I will always fight for, and the team is highly deserving of their nomination. This recognition comes as they celebrate their 10-year anniversary, with highlights including restoring koala habitats, conserving private lands, reducing vehicle strikes and engaging the community. The team has worked hard to protect koalas from threats like habitat loss, vehicle collisions, disease and climate change, and I am grateful for their dedication. The Southern Highlands Koala Conservation Project is a partnership between the council and the New South Wales Government, focused on koala research, monitoring and habitat conservation. The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony on Wednesday 4 December. I wish them the best of luck and thank them for their work.

LIVERPOOL IRAQI FESTIVAL

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (15:55): Several months ago, representatives from the Iraqi community approached me with the idea of organising a festival to celebrate Iraq's rich history and cultural diversity. My office assisted the organisers, and it was wonderful to see the Iraqi Festival come to life in Liverpool

over the weekend. With traditional dances, art exhibitions, literature and coffee, the festival allowed our wider community to gain a greater understanding of the heritage of Iraq and the rich history and achievements of the country over many centuries. It also allowed us to celebrate the contribution of various members of the Iraqi community in Australia. I am so proud of the unique reflection of Mandeian, Assyrian, Yazidi, Chaldean and other Iraqi influences on south-west Sydney. I congratulate Laith Al Uboudi and all the other organisers on their commitment and passion. It was particularly wonderful to see the involvement of young people keeping the Iraqi culture alive.

TALDUMANDE YOUTH SERVICES

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (15:56): I congratulate Taldumande Youth Services, which has been working with Beach Reach on the Northern Beaches. Taldumande supports, encourages and empowers young people and their families through crisis response and specialised casework. Beach Reach is a night mobile outreach service that aims to assist in reducing antisocial behaviours in the community through assertive engagement, strengthening relationships between police and the local community. Experienced Taldumande staff attend with local police during busy times in specific areas where there may be an increased presence of young people, and their role is to positively engage with them and free up valuable police resources. This year, Taldumande's after-hours response team engaged with 540 at-risk teens, providing food, water, emotional support and safe adult supervision. Additionally, almost 50 young people were safely transported home, received initial first aid or were sourced paramedic services in cases of intoxication. I commend Taldumande for its important community work.

NSW INDO-CHINA CHINESE ASSOCIATION

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (15:57): The NSW Indo-China Chinese Association Incorporated is a prominent cultural organisation dedicated to fostering intercultural understanding and preserving Chinese heritage for the many thousands of Chinese people living in our State. Over decades, the association has strengthened cultural understanding and community cohesion through a wide range of initiatives, from cultural festivals and charity events to educational programs. Of note, that includes the Mazu Pilgrimage Parade and Double Ninth Festival, which are celebrated annually. I commend the dedicated leadership of the executives, president Mr Henry Wu, honorary president Mr To Ha Huynh, honorary president Mr Michael Su, honorary president Mr Xiongming Xie and executive president Ms Lily Cheng.

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN SMITH

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (15:58): I take a moment to remember Brian Smith, who recently passed away at the age of 91. Brian was a vital member of my community who made remarkable contributions in many areas, including the St George Men's Shed and the local pharmacy guild. Brian moved his growing family to Oatley in 1965 where he worked in the pharmacy industry for over 49 years. During his time over many years at the Men's Shed, and as an active member of the community, Brian enjoyed socialising, repairing items and organising Bunnings fundraiser barbecues. The Men's Shed has worked on several projects for the local community. The work its members do is second to none. Brian made considerable contributions to many of the projects in his time as treasurer since 2013, where he remained in that position until his recent passing in June this year. I shared many laughs and great memories with Brian and remember his generous spirit. I pass on my condolences to his wife, Marcia, family and grandchildren. Brian's significant contributions to the community are greatly appreciated and have left a legacy for the St George Men's Shed.

PAUL LOEMKER

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (15:59): I congratulate and thank Mr Paul Loemker, a volunteer with the Mission to Seafarers in Port Kembla for the past 50 years. Paul was introduced to the Mission to Seafarers when he was 16 and has been a volunteer driver with the organisation since he got his licence aged 18. He has spent thousands of hours transporting visiting seafarers to and from their ships, helping to connect them to important services during their stay. His contribution to the welfare and support of visiting seafarers is immeasurable. He even visits seafarers who have been hospitalised whilst on their journeys, showing them compassion and keeping them company during tough times. Anyone who is lucky enough to know Paul will be aware of his kind and caring nature. The consideration and empathy that he continues to show after 50 years is testament to his wonderful character. It is people like Paul who make Wollongong such an incredible place to live. I thank him for his ongoing dedication to the wellbeing of visiting seafarers over the past five decades.

THUNDERBOLTS FESTIVAL

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands) (16:00): I recognise the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Uralla Thunderbolts Festival. The event aims to unite the local community whilst honouring the legacy of the

legendary bushranger Captain Thunderbolt. Celebrations this year included a bush poets breakfast, a street parade, market stalls, live music, street performers, art, antique machinery displays and many children's activities, with the theme being loud shirts and hula skirts. I congratulate the Rotary Club of Uralla on hosting and staging the event. I give special thanks to the organisers, including Bev and Bruce Stubberfield, Leanne Doran, Michael Batt, Clare Mailler, and Tom O'Connor for all their work in bringing the festival together. I commend all involved for the success and longevity of the festival and thank everyone who gave their time and effort to ensure that the significance of New England history remains for future generations.

OUR LADY OF MERCY COLLEGE PARRAMATTA

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (16:01): Parramatta is full to the brim with sporting talent, and the students of Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta exemplify this again and again. I congratulate the following students on their recent sporting excellence: Lucie Francis from year 12, who represented Australia at the 2024 World Triathlon Duathlon Championships in Townsville, finishing second in the junior division; Matilda Webb from year 10, who competed in the Australian Junior Track & Field Championships, winning gold in the under-16 three-kilometre walk; Chelsea Gomez from year 9, who represented Australia at the 2024 World Taekwondo Junior Championships in South Korea, finishing in the top 16; Iris Chen from year 8, who competed in the Australian youth archery championships, winning silver in the under-14 division; and Alina Onis from year 8, who competed in the Australian Gymnastics Championships in the junior international rhythmic gymnastics division in hoop and ribbon, winning bronze. I commend them for their dedication and for representing their school, State and country.

TRIBUTE TO JACK HACKETT

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove) (16:02): I thank Lane Cove Council and the Lane Cove RSL Sub-Branch for organising the annual Remembrance Day ceremony in Lane Cove Plaza. The sub-branch uses this important event as an opportunity to pay tribute to a local veteran. This year it was World War I soldier Private Jack Hackett. Jack served with the 15th Australian Infantry Battalion and 42nd Australian Infantry Battalion along the Western Front. He sustained injuries that he would carry with him for the rest of his life, sustained in the service of his nation and his beliefs. It is important that the sacrifices made by thousands like Jack Hackett are acknowledged and commemorated. I thank Lane Cove Council and the Lane Cove RSL Sub-Branch for remembering his sacrifice.

BROOKLYN STOKES

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (16:03): I sing the praises of Brooklyn Stokes, a stage two student at Galungara Public School, for her remarkable initiative. Recently, Brooklyn borrowed a book from the school library entitled *101 Small Ways to Change the World*. Inspired by the suggestion to hold a fundraiser, she was determined to make it a reality. Brooklyn diligently set about planning a fundraiser for a charity very close to her heart, the National Breast Cancer Foundation, with breast cancer having impacted several members of her extended family. On Saturday October 26 Brooklyn held a successful sale at her home, meticulously organising every detail. She sought donations of household items, created and displayed posters around the community, shared information with her classmates, and baked delicious treats to sell. The event was a wonderful mix of a garage sale, bake sale and sausage sizzle, all with a festive Halloween theme. Her hard work paid off, as she single-handedly raised over \$800. I express my admiration for Brooklyn's commitment, compassion and determination to make a difference. Her parents, Rachel and Trent, could not be prouder of her generous spirit, and I share in that pride. Well done to Brooklyn. I give a heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported her efforts.

SEVEN HILLS RSL CLUB

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills) (16:04): Earlier this week I attended the Remembrance Day service at the Seven Hills RSL club, supported by the Seven Hills-Toongabbie-Wentworthville RSL sub-branch. The ceremony was a profound tribute to the many Australians who lost their lives during the First World War and a heartfelt acknowledgment of all those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. The service provided an enriching commemoration of the anniversary of the end of World War I. It was particularly uplifting to see many local school students in attendance, including those from Toongabbie Public School, Toongabbie West Public School and Vardys Road Public School. Their presence signifies the passing of remembrance to younger generations, ensuring that the sacrifices of our servicemen and servicewomen are never forgotten. I also acknowledge notable members of the board of directors, including President Barry Wilson, Vice-President Graham Black, and the distinguished directors, whose dedication made this moving ceremony possible. Their commitment to honouring our veterans and educating the community is deeply appreciated.

SIENA CAMILLERI

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (16:05): Mount Annan Christian College student Siena Camilleri has been awarded the prestigious New South Wales Youth Community Service Award, presented by the Governor of New South Wales, Margaret Beazley. Siena was one of only 26 students across New South Wales honoured at a special ceremony at Government House. A passionate advocate for youth mental health in sport, Ms Camilleri developed Siena's Sport Stigma, an online program aimed at combating stigma and online bullying faced by athletes. Her initiative earned fame as the winning project in the New South Wales round of *Shark Tank* and even went so far as earning third place nationally. The program went viral on socials, getting over 40,000 views on TikTok alone. Nominated by her teachers and headmaster for her dedication and leadership, Siena, who just started year 12, has been praised as a role model. Dr Frank Kelleher, the award convenor, applauded her as an inspiration to her peers, highlighting her selfless volunteer work while preparing for her HSC. Congratulations, Siena. We are very proud of you.

HANDS OFF GLEBE

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (16:06): I bring to the attention of the House the important work of the advocacy group Hands Off Glebe, which advocates for better planning, the defence of public housing and tenants' rights. The group works for broader community appreciation of the role of public housing to provide safe, affordable homes for individuals and families, reduce homelessness and support social equity. Hands Off Glebe recently hosted a picnic for public housing, calling on the Government to deliver much-needed public housing at the former Camperdown dive site. At a time when over 60,000 households are on the waitlist for social housing, the work of Hands Off Glebe is essential. I was delighted to attend the picnic for public housing and continue to support Hands Off Glebe's important work. I congratulate them and thank Emily Bullock and Denis Doherty for organising the picnic, and for their years of dedicated advocacy for the residents of Glebe.

TRIBUTE TO FRANCIS "FRANK" CHARLES HAY

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (16:07): I pay tribute to the life well lived of the late recently passed Francis "Frank" Charles Hay, who passed on 11 November. Frank was, and will remain, a much-loved father to Elizabeth, known as Liz; Emma; James; Daniel; Patrick; and Sally. Frank was, and will remain, a much-loved grandfather or "Poppy" to Harry, Lily, Tom, Isobel, Leo, Eva, Declan and Matilda. Frank was, and will remain, a much-loved partner to Christine. In the words of Frank's family in his funeral notice, he was a mate to many. That is so true. My husband, Jim, was one of them. Frank was a wonderful public servant. He was the manager of the Commonwealth Employment Service and served in other meritorious roles. I say bring the service back, and so would have Frank. He was an activist as well. He helped and mentored many, including the Indigenous community. His grandson Harry who I mentioned is Harry Gregg, who is known to members. He reminds me so much of his grandpa Frank.

HOLSWORTHY CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (16:08): I recognise the incredible submissions made by year 3 students across my electorate for the Holsworthy Christmas card competition for 2024. Well done to all the participants. I thank them for the time and effort they put into the artworks. In particular, I congratulate Alanna from St Joseph's in Moorebank, who won this year's competition, as well as joint runners-up Mila from Wattle Grove Public School, Mitchell from Prestons Public School and Chloe from St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School Lurnea. The creativity and enthusiasm displayed by the young artists in this competition highlight the immense talent within my community. I am incredibly proud of all the year 3 students who participated. I look forward to seeing their continued contributions to my community in the years to come. Well done!

PIPING AND DRUMMING STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (16:09): I congratulate all the participants in the New South Wales State championships for piping and drumming, which were held in Maitland recently. What an impressive line-up of the very best in pipers and drummers from across our State—particularly the City of Maitland Pipes and Drums, who beat United Mineworkers. It was very exciting. I thank all of the volunteers who helped the day go smoothly. I especially thank City of Maitland Pipes and Drums, particularly president and pipe major Robbie Cheetham and secretary Greg Queenan, who secured the event and worked so hard to make it a success. We are hearing good things about future events being held in Maitland. It was lovely to welcome chieftain Graham Adams and Pipe Bands New South Wales chair Bill Wynn, as well as the rest of the bands, adjudicators and supporters to Maitland. I thank the many sponsors, the volunteers, including those from Rotary, the Country Women's Association and Lions Club, and co-patrons Norm Burton, OAM, and Hilton Gurgeon, AM. As usual, Stephen Clarke did an excellent job as town crier.

MICHELE GOLDMAN

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (16:10): I recognise the appointment of Michele Goldman as the CEO of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies. Michele commenced in the role in June, bringing extensive leadership experience in both the not-for-profit and for-profit sectors, including Asthma Australia, School for Social Entrepreneurs, Mission Australia and Nestle. Having met with Michele, I know that she cares deeply about our Jewish community and how it is represented. When appointed to the role, Ms Goldman noted, "Whilst this is undoubtedly a difficult period, it is also a period of great opportunity for the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies", and she looks forward to starting in the role. I look forward to working closely with Michele to deliver for our local Jewish community. Again, I congratulate Michele.

CARL DUNCAN ROBINSON AND KIM-DUNG ROBINSON

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (16:11): I recognise and acknowledge the NSW Vietnamese Elderly Friendship Association for organising the Vietnamese Family Day 2024. On this occasion we also recognised and celebrated the fiftieth and more wedding anniversaries of a number of the members. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Mr Carl Duncan Robinson and Mrs Kim-Dung Robinson on their fifty-fifth wedding anniversary. The 50-plus years of marriage has truly stood the test of time, as two individuals came together to share responsibilities and build a life as one. This significant period established the foundation upon which everything else was built. The remarkable journey of love, mutual respect, resilience, sacrifice and countless other virtues demonstrated by our respected seniors serve as a true inspiration to us all. On this special occasion, I wish them all continued happiness, love, health and fulfilment in the years ahead.

MURRAY BRAUND

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:12): It is my absolute honour to congratulate Murray Braund of Avoca Beach Surf Life Saving Club on his upcoming induction into the NSW Hall of Champions. On 25 November at the Champions of Sport Ceremony, Murray will join the prestigious ranks of New South Wales sports legends like Sir Donald Bradman, Dawn Fraser and Louise Sauvage—a truly remarkable achievement. Throughout a career spanning from 1969 to the mid-1980s, Murray has set the standard for excellence in surf ski paddling. His accomplishments are nothing short of extraordinary, with three world, seven Australian and 13 New South Wales titles. In 1972-73 he became the first to win both the open single and double surf ski titles in a single Australian championship, an achievement he repeated the following year. Beyond competition, Murray's dedication to surf lifesaving has saved lives and inspired future generations. His heroic rescue and resuscitation of a young girl at Collaroy Beach earned him the Royal Humane Society's bronze medal. As the founder of the Australian Surf Ski Challenge, Murray continues to contribute to the sport. I congratulate Murray on this well-deserved honour.

HANA DAW AND ALEX RAFIE

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (16:13): Parliament congratulates Hana Daw and Alex Rafie, who celebrate 17 years of marriage in December. Alex shares these heartfelt words:

My dearest Hana,

Seventeen years ago, when we first met, I could never have imagined the incredible life we would build together. I envisioned so many different futures, but the reality we've created is far beyond anything I ever wished for or deserved. Our journey has been filled with both triumphs and challenges, and through it all, my love and admiration for you have only grown deeper.

As we celebrate our 17th anniversary, I find myself reflecting on the countless moments that have shaped our life together. We've shared laughter and tears, successes and setbacks, and each experience has strengthened the bond we share. Your unwavering support, kindness, and love have been the foundation of our relationship, and I am endlessly grateful to have you as my partner and soulmate.

Looking ahead, I am filled with excitement and curiosity about the future. I still have the same passion for our journey and am eager to see what new adventures and memories we will create together. I am committed to continuing this beautiful journey with you, hand in hand, heart to heart.

Here's to many more years of love, laughter, and endless possibilities.

I congratulate them both.

*Private Members' Statements***RETIRED COMMISSIONED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION**

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove) (16:14): Today with great pride I inform the House about the Retired Commissioned Officers Association of New South Wales, of which I have had the honour of being patron for the past few years. As this House is aware, I had the great privilege to be the Minister with responsibility for Corrective Services. During that time, it was my pleasure to meet many great men and women who served in Corrective Services, past and present. For the first couple of centuries of our penal history, when an officer would

retire from the service, ending his or her association with the Corrective Services department, they would also find their connection with the many friends with whom they worked suddenly severed.

The nature of the job being as it is, many retiring officers found it difficult to suddenly have to relate only with "civvies" or the community in general, particularly given that they spent most of their adult life working in the same harsh surroundings, dealing with the same hardened people and following a regulated regime. It was therefore common that they would keep to themselves and have very little, if any, interaction with others. Sadly, many were just left isolated, with subsequent poor health issues. The end result is that many officers died within five years or so of retirement.

In 1985 a small group of retired commissioned officers met with the aim of forming a forum to ensure the continued association between old workmates after retirement. The group proposed the formulation of an association, the Retired Commissioned Officers Association, or RCOA, at which members could meet at an annual reunion. In the early days members met annually for a formal dinner. Later the reunions were extended to include an informal get-together on the Saturday morning, including outings like a cruise for members. These days the formal reunion is extended over a whole weekend.

After an accord was met between the then New South Wales Premier and the current RCOA president in 2012, the last Friday in November was determined as the permanent Remembrance Day upon which the annual remembrance services are to be held. In addition to the association's annual reunion, the members enjoy local get-togethers on a regular basis, and many sub-branches meet monthly or quarterly. Additionally, the association endeavours to hold a formal regional reunion at a country location midyear, and it is open for partners, adult family members and serving officers to attend. Regardless of which reunion or get-together held, the environment is always the same: a warm, friendly one, with a real sense of belonging for all.

The association's prime goal is to help each other enjoy life by maintaining that true mateship experienced by them all for many years, despite the harsh environment in which they worked. On mateship, many of the association members act in a welfare role on a voluntary basis to assist ill colleagues, giving a helping hand to those unable to accept assistance from external sources. Another important function performed by the members of the association is their advertisement and attendance in conjunction with the honour guard staff at funerals of deceased members and serving officers. The importance, apart from seeing a mate off, is the support given to the family members of the deceased.

The association has a quarterly newsletter, which is sent to every member and to many of the spouses of now sadly deceased members. This has proved another vital tool to keep members informed, connected and socially active. We have seen the association grow from a small gathering one night a year, to a registered incorporation with a large membership holding regular gatherings and reunions. The even better news is that next year's reunion will mark the fortieth anniversary of the association and its great work.

Having given this history and background, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the hardworking members of the committee: president David Carruthers, OAM, a dear friend of mine; incoming vice-president, Richard Battersby, BM; outgoing vice-president, Alan Hird; and secretary/treasurer, Ray O'Connor. The committee also includes members Gordon Wade, OAM; Paul Genner, ESM; and Louis Oosthoek. In the lead-up to next year's celebrations, I congratulate the Retired Commissioned Officers Association on maintaining and developing that heartfelt bond built through respect and care for old workmates. To conclude, I offer a heartfelt thanks to it for allowing me to be its patron.

MAITLAND ELECTORATE SCHOOLS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (16:18): I acknowledge the wonderful teachers, librarians, learning support staff, educators and those in administration roles in our schools, TAFEs, preschools and all learning facilities in Maitland. When I first stood in this place to discuss issues that I was dealing with in education—which included things like bullying, harassment and covert surveillance on teachers in our schools—teachers were working and students were learning in environments that were well below twenty-first century standards. We had teachers who had had no real investment in their wages, who were casual and were never getting permanent work, as well as students who had many classes cancelled. We had maintenance backlogs and growing cities of demountables on school sites.

Together with the Teachers Federation and Parents and Citizens Associations across the Maitland electorate, we have worked to improve Maitland's education system from the ground up. From Opposition benches, we saw significant upgrades to Bolwarra Public School, Rutherford Technology High School, Rutherford Public School, Tenambit Public School and Gillieston Public School. We are working on new state-of-the-art preschool facilities at Tenambit and Gillieston public schools alongside their redevelopments.

The Minns Labor Government has invested in educators. It scrapped the wages cap, a cap introduced by those opposite to ensure that teachers were not paid what they deserved for 12 long years. As a result of the Government's changes, teachers in Maitland will have highly competitive salaries, receiving a 3 per cent pay increase annually for the next three years, as well as improved workplace flexibility for attraction and retention, including opportunities for job-sharing, part-time employment, and full-time and part-time leave without pay. The Government is capping regular after-school meetings at one hour a week, with after-school events to be planned in consultation with teachers with reasonable notice given. There will be additional school development days, with a focus on explicit teaching strategies and the curriculum.

That agreement follows the once-in-a-generation pay rise given to teachers last year, which saw starting salaries lifted from just over \$75,000 to \$85,000 per year. Salaries at the top of the scale will increase from just over \$113,000 to over \$122,000 per year. The Government has converted more than 16,000 temporary teachers and school support staff to permanent roles; banned mobile phones in public schools to improve student behaviour and focus in the classroom; expanded the School Admin Reduction Program trial to streamline the non-classroom work required of teachers; and reduced teacher vacancies to a three-year low of just over 1,600, with New South Wales public schools reporting 24 per cent fewer vacancies at the start of term 3 than at the same time last year.

While the Government has rightfully prioritised the staffing crisis in schools that was left by those opposite, it has also invested in school infrastructure. In addition to the Gillieston and Tenambit upgrades, Huntlee will see a new public preschool, primary school and high school, which will cater to residents in the western areas of Maitland and take pressure off the largest high school outside of the Sydney metro area, Rutherford Technology High School. The Government is spending \$5 million on maintenance projects over the coming 12 months. At Maitland Grossmann High School, there will be a block D kitchen upgrade, concrete cancer treatment and facade refurbishment, in addition to the extensive asbestos remediation that has been done. Francis Greenway High School will have gutters and downpipes replaced on block E, and stormwater repairs. Maitland High School will have its technical and applied sciences facilities refurbished, including new carpet and equipment. Telarah Public School will get retaining walls and covered walkways as part of the preschool refurbishment.

Maitland East Public School will have building A's roof fixed. Maitland Public School will have the external sections of C block repainted. Tenambit Public School will get new carpet and painting in many of its blocks, work done to its carpark gates and covered walkway post replacement. Hunter River Community School will have new carpet installed. Morpeth Public School will get a wall in its demountable and a roof replaced. Thornton Public School will have vinyl and carpeting work completed. The Government is working with that school on its future expansion proposals. Lochinvar Public School will receive electrical upgrades. All of those projects are being undertaken as a way of addressing the significant backlog in education infrastructure in Maitland. That is in addition to the announcement of the Hunter TAFE centre of excellence, a \$60 million investment to establish the Hunter Net Zero Manufacturing Centre of Excellence in Newcastle, which will help all of those young people who prepared so well throughout school to have a great TAFE experience.

WESTERN SYDNEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (16:23): Education is a vital, important right in every child's life. As a mother of two, I watched my sons and their friends as their worlds expanded, as they benefited from all that their schools had to offer them from kindergarten through to year 12. School has an enormous impact in shaping lives and setting the foundations for the future. That is exactly why the Minns Labor Government is committed to rebuilding public education in New South Wales. An important part of that is investing in schools in Western Sydney. I am extremely pleased that that includes the Parramatta electorate.

The 2024-2025 budget is delivering record funding in education. It is dedicating \$3.6 billion for new and upgraded schools in Western Sydney. In fact, the Minns Labor Government is delivering upgrades to schools in my electorate that have long been neglected by the former Liberal-Nationals Government. Some 350 students attended Dundas Public School in 2023, with 68 per cent of students coming from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The Minns Labor Government is delivering an upgrade to that wonderful, culturally diverse and high-achieving school. It will replace six current demountables with a brand-new building, which will include six classrooms, two multipurpose spaces, two learning common areas, amenities and a covered walkway connecting the new building to the existing school. Currently in the design phase, there will be a drop-in information session at Dundas Public School about the current designs on Wednesday 4 December. I encourage everyone in the community who has an interest in Dundas Public School to attend.

In *Questions and Answers* paper No. 47, dated Friday 11 December 2015, the then Minister for Education, Adrian Piccoli, stated that "Wentworth Point Public School is expected to open in term 3, 2017". In 2016 the then Liberal-Nationals Government announced Wentworth Point Public School for the sixth budget in a row but still failed to turn a sod. Finally, Wentworth Point Public School opened its doors in 2018 but, despite the suburb being one of the fastest growing in the country, and with original plans to build the entire school with a full-sized football

field, the government of the day, in its wisdom, decided to just build stage one. Unsurprisingly, since its opening the school has experienced a massive increase in enrolments—from 522 students in 2020 to 661 students in 2023. As a result, the Minns Labor Government has taken action and provided the funding to deliver stage two, which will commence construction in 2025.

Wentworth Point is the highest density suburb in Australia and one of the most diverse. Therefore, Wentworth Point Public School needs the upgrade. It will receive an upgrade that includes 26 additional modern, fit-for-purpose permanent teaching spaces with shared common areas and multipurpose spaces to meet growing enrolment demand in the area; a ground floor support unit with three classrooms and dedicated amenities; a reconfiguration of the library to better suit the needs of the school; and the removal of demountable classrooms to open up play space for students. As part of the project to upgrade Wentworth Point Public School, I was pleased to confirm that our Government will build a new raised wombat crossing outside the school on Ferry Wharf Circuit. The crossing was requested by the school community during early consultation on the upgrade and will provide an additional safe crossing point for students and families to walk safely to and from school.

Early works have also commenced on the adjacent Wentworth Point peninsula park. The Minns Labor Government is delivering on the promise of providing a park to the residents of Wentworth Point, which, again, the former Liberal-Nationals Government previously promised for 10 years and failed to deliver. The peninsula park works include the development of the road and car park next to Wentworth Point High School, along with preparations for a future playing field behind the school. That is just some of what is happening in the Parramatta electorate to support the growing population. Parramatta is taking some of the highest growth in the State when it comes to housing, and it needs the infrastructure to support the communities of today as well as the communities of tomorrow. The Government is not letting those people down. It is delivering for them today and for the future.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): Before I call the member for Myall Lakes, I welcome to the Parliament members of the National Regulators Community of Practice, who are participating in a seminar conducted by the Parliamentary Education and Engagement Team. You have come at a nice part of the day. Unfortunately, you have missed question time, but it is a lovely part of the day when members talk about their communities.

MANNING RIVER AND FARQUHAR INLET

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes) (16:28): I speak about a longstanding issue affecting the Myall Lakes community: the urgent need to secure a permanent opening for the Manning River and Farquhar Inlet. Those waterways are central to the local economy, impacting many businesses, industry and trade, as well as visitors, who depend on them for economic and recreational purposes. The Manning River faces recurring issues with sand shoaling, which compromises water quality, increases flood risk and threatens marine life. When the waterways close, the impact on the region is profound. Industries such as tourism, fishing and oyster farming suffer and, with them, the wider economy of our community. This is not a distant concern; it is affecting livelihoods and safety on a daily basis.

The effort to secure these openings has not lacked local advocacy. In fact, it has been a 100-year conversation. Groups like the Manning River Action Group and community members including my predecessor, the late Stephen Bromhead, have fought and worked hard to bring this issue to Parliament. Stephen Bromhead's petition in 2021 called on the New South Wales Government to fund a permanent, navigable entrance between Harrington and Manning Point, and to further construct a breakwall or training wall at the southern entrance to Farquhar Inlet to create a permanent opening at that location. The petition received nearly 14,000 signatures—a clear indication of the community's strong support for this project—and bipartisan support when debated in the House. In March 2021 the New South Wales Government announced funding for the development of a strategic business case [SBC] to look at options for a permanent entrance to the Manning River. The purpose of the SBC was to provide decision-makers with information that will help make an informed decision on whether the project should progress to the next phase, which would involve preparing a final business case.

Transport for NSW completed the initial strategic business case and identified that a safe and reliable river entrance would bring significant benefits to the region, including an additional 30,000 boating trips per year; an increase to local economic activity of \$33 million per year in the tourism, maritime, agriculture and aquaculture sectors; the creation of 160 new jobs in the region; improved safety and reliability for commercial and recreational vessels; increased opportunities for coastal development and aquaculture industries; improved water quality and waterway health; and mitigation of risks associated with catchment flooding, coastal erosion and inundation to public and private property. Following the petition's debate in August 2022, funding was allocated by the previous Coalition Government in the amount of \$16 million to make this longstanding goal a reality. However, it was disappointing to learn that this funding was withdrawn shortly after the 2023 election, stalling progress on what is such an important project for our region.

I urge the Minister for Transport once again to reconsider and reinstate this pivotal funding. Establishing a 10-year dredging strategy, as successfully implemented in other regions, would provide a sustainable approach, preventing the administrative lags and bureaucratic red tape that leave our waterways at risk of closure. This is not just about keeping the Manning River open. A permanent solution would support flood mitigation and help to protect residents and businesses along these waterways from the severe impacts of rising water levels, which we have seen cause devastating damage in the past. Our Manning River is underutilised. By investing in this infrastructure now, we secure the future of the Manning and create stability that supports growth for years to come. I thank the Manning River Action Group for its continued efforts in keeping this issue at the forefront, and I assure my community that the fight is far from over. Just as Stephen Bromhead was, I am determined to see that these inlets remain open, safe and accessible, providing lasting benefits to the Manning and Myall Lakes region.

DOONSIDE COMMONWEALTH BANK BRANCH

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (16:32): I talk about the closure of the Commonwealth Bank in Doonside and report to the Parliament that next Monday 18 November at 10.00 a.m. there will be a rally on the steps of the bank. It is ridiculous that the Commonwealth Bank has decided at the last minute to shut down a branch in Blacktown that has been around for 60 years, without any community consultation. The branch opened on 21 September 1964. Instead of celebrating like they did for its golden jubilee, unfortunately the community is now facing golden misery. Too many bank branches across the nation are closing down.

Over the past couple of weeks my office has been inundated with emails. People have also been turning up at the bank, crying. Elderly and disabled people are breaking down, trying to work out how they are going to access their banking services. It may be simple for the bank head office at Barangaroo in the Sydney CBD to say, "Just go five kilometres or eight kilometres down the road between Doonside and Blacktown", but how do elderly or disabled people get there? Closing down bank branches is almost cost shifting to the NDIS or Federal Government aged-care packages because those people may have to ask their relatives to take a day off work just to help them do their banking. I will read some of the emails received by my office. Anne said:

Three generations of my family have lived in Doonside and we all have banked with the Commonwealth Bank. Customer service at the Doonside branch is exceptional, with great management over many years.

That is exactly the same for me; three generations of my family have banked with the Commonwealth Bank. Miriam said:

The Doonside branch is convenient for people, especially busy mums like me and elderly people that live around the community, not needing to go to the CBD and queue for a long time.

Louise, a nurse, said:

Our area is home to a large number of disabled and ageing people who all utilise and rely on this service greatly. It is the only one of its kind in the immediate area.

Louise is so right. Some 24,000 people live in Doonside and the surrounding suburbs with a postcode of 2767. The Commonwealth Bank closed its branches in Rooty Hill, Quakers Court and Marayong, each time telling people to keep on moving to the next one. It is atrocious. Anne also said:

The CBA used to be the family bank, but they have lost their vision of customer service. We entrust them with our money and hard-earned savings and they just disrespect the people who help them make their enormous profits.

Is that true? In 2022 the chief executive of the Commonwealth Bank, Matt Comyn, said, "As Australia's largest bank, we have an important role to play in supporting our customers and communities to build a brighter future." Instead, they are disrespecting the community by shutting down branches without providing any support. In 2024 Matt said, "CBA has the largest branch network in Australia and we are proud of the role these branches play in the communities we serve." Do they really serve us when they are shutting down without consulting anyone in the area?

The Commonwealth Bank over the past five years has shut down 258 branches. One in four branches are gone—one every eight days. That is just one bank. Yet the bank's last profit was \$9.5 billion. Over five years it has made something like \$47 billion. That is \$1 million every hour of every day of every week over the year. Does the bank come and talk to us? I am happy that tomorrow in Parliament I will meet with representatives of the Commonwealth Bank. They need to open up. There are alternatives to closing branches. Keeping branches open is not only important for the people who need to use them but also for the many people who are employed by them. Banks are the fifth largest employer in the Doonside area. Instead of coming into head office, employees could work from local branches—not even from home. Banks should support our local seniors. They could buy a bus to transport seniors to the branches. So much can be done. The bank needs to take people seriously.

HEATHCOTE ROAD UPGRADE

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (16:37): The communities in the northern Heathcote electorate must no longer endure 12 years of neglect and empty promises regarding the duplication of Heathcote Road. Historically, Heathcote Road has been fraught with danger, particularly east of New Illawarra Road and over the Woronora River. One incident alone in 2021 resulted in five serious injuries. Almost a dozen other motorists were involved in accidents resulting in moderate injuries and many others in less serious incidents. Any road, let alone a major arterial road, should be safe and fit for purpose. The Minns Labor Government is committed to ensuring the safety of both the community members who travel on this vital throughfare for work, school or accessing essential services and the wildlife that lives in Heathcote National Park, which encompasses either side of Heathcote Road.

I will make certain that our commitments are seen through and not relegated to empty gestures to secure votes. When the Minns Labor Government promises something, we work exceptionally hard to make sure it comes to fruition. We deliver. Last year, NSW Labor committed to investing \$180 million on top of existing funding for double road capacity along key sections of Heathcote Road. We are putting that funding to good use, as the Minister for Roads, the Hon. John Graham in the other place, and I work on delivering an upgrade to that road. The upgrade will also consider delivery of improved koala safety mitigation and infrastructure, which I am very delighted to see.

I have been championing the safety of our koalas in the Heathcote electorate, especially those at risk because they dwell near Heathcote Road. They are one native animal that I am particularly passionate about protecting, preserving and promoting. We are fortunate in the Heathcote electorate to be home to a healthy local population. I have lost count of the number of deceased koalas I have seen on the side of Heathcote Road over the past 50 years. But under this Government, the future of koalas has never looked brighter. I previously worked with the Minister for Roads to secure six new permanent koala warning signs along the road as well as four large temporary digital signs to alert motorists of koalas that are particularly transient during mating season. It was a pleasure to see the reduction in harm done to koalas in my local community thanks to those measures.

Looking to the future, the Minister for Transport, the Minister for the Environment in the other place, Transport for NSW and I have been working to implement koala fences along Heathcote Road. One such fence has been proposed to be built at Deadman's Creek on Heathcote Road. That 1.5-kilometre-long fence will lead to an increase in koalas using the wildlife crossing underneath the bridge and decrease the number of koala fatalities on the road. I will continue to work to make our roads, especially Heathcote Road, a safer space for our native koalas to live. A safe and upgraded Heathcote Road will not just benefit the thousands of motorists who travel on the road daily; it will benefit the unique and treasured Australian wildlife who call the surrounding bush their home. I take the opportunity to thank Minister Graham and Minister Sharpe from the other place and their hardworking staff for their work and support on such a priority.

CROWN RESERVES IMPROVEMENT FUND

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (16:41): I am concerned and dismayed by the Labor Government's recent modifications to the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund, also known as CRIF, and the Government's deliberate de-prioritisation of rural and regional communities. Any MP worth their salt knows that the CRIF program is gold for community facilities, particularly regional facilities where Crown lands are managed by trusts, not businesses, which consist of local volunteers looking after the public land in their community. Labor's decision to once again slash funding for the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund—the lifeline for regional communities—is nothing short of unbelievable, but it does not end there. Labor has slashed \$8 million from the \$18 million program in the two short years it has been in government. The program now amounts to a measly \$10 million.

This program is repeatedly oversubscribed and immensely popular across regional New South Wales because it is one of the few grants programs that has been allowed some kind of life under the Labor Government. But it is clear that Premier Minns is bent on suffocating this program too. Applications are being made and regional applicants are being told by the department, "Don't bother". Because the funding criteria relies so heavily on attendance numbers, the regional facilities have no chance. Under this year's CRIF guidelines, a reserve's likelihood of success hinges on high utilisation rates. The assessment framework awards the maximum points only to reserves attracting more than a million visitors. If a reserve sees fewer than 10,000 visitors annually—a reality for many rural areas—it scores zero.

Imagine suggesting that any regional site should attract visitors in the hundreds of thousands to qualify for funding. Well, Labor imagined it. It even used a fantasy scenario to explain how this fundamentally flawed framework will work: the example of a one-day campdraft held twice a year with 30,000 visitors. Australia's largest campdraft event in Tamworth, with 5,500 attendees over nine days, does not come close to this fantasy

example of how a regional area could be successful in their CRIF application. Not even the Sydney Royal Easter Show—if it was hypothetically on a rural Crown land facility—would have scored perfectly this year for utilisation. And that is based on attendance numbers even in the middle of Sydney—considering the population nearby.

Any facilities that qualify for CRIF funding must have those kinds of attendance numbers, despite any regional facility unlikely to have even 10 per cent of the connections to public transport. Let alone water, power and, importantly, sewerage facilities to manage such utilisation. Those are all important elements that the Government has failed to consider when these ridiculous guidelines were approved. And Labor wants to be known as the party of the bush. The Government's funding cuts and cooked books are nothing short of an insult to regional and rural New South Wales. Crown land in our communities is not just space; it is where our communities gather for life's important moments in the country. Showgrounds, footy grounds, picnic races, community halls and nature reserves are not just patches of land for the Labor Government to squeeze rent from; they are the lifeblood of our communities, central to our social fabric, economic resilience and heritage.

There are Crown land facilities in Goulburn with organisations that have been operating for over 150 years—like the Goulburn Rugby Club. There are Crown land facilities that have been taken over to be managed in the past five years—like Marchmont, where they have turned a paddock that was a dumping ground into a vibrant community space. Many of those facilities are entirely managed and maintained by local volunteers who invest thousands of hours every year in those spaces. That is in addition to the hundreds of thousands of dollars that are spent on facility improvement from funding that is acquired through local sponsorship, fundraising and—in former years under the former Government—grants.

But now, thanks to the callous decision to cut the funding and spin the criteria to benefit metropolitan areas, those volunteers are being told that their hard work does not matter by the Labor Government. This is absolutely gutting resources from rural and regional areas to benefit high-density regions like Sydney and the coast—areas that are, more likely than not, populated by Labor voters. The Government's disdain for the regions is painfully evident in its CRIF funding. The ministerial officers that have approved those guidelines either have no understanding of the realities of regional life or no interest in seeing the country benefit. But the Minns Government has sent a clear message: Regional New South Wales is simply not a priority for it. Labor calls itself the party of the bush. That is a bit of a laugh.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (16:46): I begin my contribution by acknowledging the lived experience of victim-survivors of domestic and family violence. Too many lives have been lost and too much trauma has been inflicted by this scourge. Sadly, my electorate of Penrith is not immune. In fact, as recently as last week Penrith featured in the media for all the wrong reasons. For too long, successive governments have failed to turn the tide on rates of domestic and family violence. But the Minns Labor Government is determined to draw a line in the sand. We cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of the past. To date, government efforts to address domestic and family violence have been overwhelmingly focused on crisis response. Investment in those services is critically important, and must continue, but there is a missing piece of the puzzle: stopping violence before it starts. We know that domestic and family violence is gender-based violence. That is why the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is so important. It is an annual campaign that takes place from 25 November to 10 December. The 2024 theme for 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence is about respect.

Misogyny and harmful gendered stereotypes are significant drivers of this violence. That is why we must focus on initiatives that work to address toxic attitudes and behaviours that exacerbate violence. If we do not do that prevention work, those attitudes, and the cycle of gendered violence, will continue for generations. Today it is my pleasure to inform the House about a pioneering respectful relationships program called Walk the Talk. It is a program that I am proud to say has involved local Penrith students from Kingswood High School and St Dominic's Catholic College. Walk the Talk is a training program provided at high schools, involving a local women's community shelter, to increase awareness about domestic, family and sexual violence and to build young peoples' capacity to advocate.

The goal with Walk the Talk is to educate teenagers in a meaningful way that moves beyond theory and token gestures and into purposeful, informed action, empowering them to be the agents of change and create the world they would like to live in. The program uses a two-pronged approach: phase one is the in-school education workshop, educating young people and their communities about domestic and family violence and respectful relationships; and phase two is the service-learning journey, which encourages young people to provide practical support to their local community shelters through fundraising, volunteering and awareness raising. This year the program reached its major milestone in educating over 15,000 students in years 9 and 10 about relationship abuse, domestic and family violence, consent, seeking help and being an ally.

Each school also adopts its own local women's community shelter, supporting them in numerous ways throughout the year. Overall, the program has made a significant contribution to date, and that is captured in the 2023 impact report. Workshops have been run at 26 schools, with 4,049 students participating. These programs have supported eight women's community shelters, providing an estimated \$184,290 in value to the community so far. However, that is not the final total; there are still more events to be held. Recently an annual awards night was held at Parliament House. Students from St Dominic's Catholic College, Kingswood and Kingswood High School were recognised for their participation.

Students at St Dominic's have undertaken activities such as creating 60 welcome packs for young people arriving at local women's shelter The Haven in Penrith, while students at Kingswood High School have undertaken activities such as holding an awareness day and a community bake-off. I congratulate the Walk the Talk team, women's community shelters, and local school students and teachers, and thank them for embracing the program and making a real impact on our community. I encourage every high school in Penrith to expand the Walk the Talk program further. For those who have ever asked themselves what they can do to end the scourge of domestic and family violence, I suggest starting by participating in that very worthwhile program.

REGIONAL CRIME

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (16:51): Every day members of my community in Oxley tell me about their fears. Locals are afraid to walk down their own street, they fear going to sleep at night and they are terrified of walking down the mall—they are worried that they might be the next victim. The impact of crime has devastated lives. These are real people with real stories. We live in the best area in a wonderful town, but it has a few issues. Marilyn Figgett comes to mind when I think about victims of crime. Marilyn is a 75-year-old woman from Kempsey who worked in the social services area of alcohol and drug dependence for more than 25 years. Recently she was given the tag of "most targeted victim in New South Wales" by a fellow resident and police officer. Marilyn has suffered 17 home invasions—17 times an intruder has entered her home, robbed her of feeling safe and removed her dignity.

She has woken to the shock of a flashlight in her face. She has been forced to lie still and pretend to be asleep to keep as safe as possible while an intruder roams freely through her home. The essential feeling of safety during her twilight years and her dignity have been stripped from her time and time again. Stories like Marilyn's keep coming. In South West Rocks, where the police station does not operate 24/7, a local shop owner told me that young offenders are "holding our town to ransom because they know the police take 40 minutes to get here" and that she had been "damaged by break and enters and crimes that have been soul destroying". A local from Crescent Head told me that the escalation of violent crime is "so serious and having such a negative impact. What about the home invasion of a profoundly ill and disabled man, who was threatened with his life."

A couple who had their home broken into and their belongings stolen told me, "We are feeling very unsafe in our own home and unable to sleep properly at night." Another resident asked, "Why do I have to lock myself in my bedroom? I lost my wife, and now I've had a 30-centimetre knife held to my throat during daylight, threatened with my life four times, and had my car and possessions stolen. I now have to segregate myself within my own house. I have to lock myself in my bedroom for my own safety." It seems like every day we hear another story of a crime being inflicted on our community. We cannot continue down the path of inaction or merely reacting to the consequences of crime without addressing the root causes.

The regional crime inquiry came to Kempsey last month, and I am very thankful that it did. I support the committee and the Minister who made that happen. This is a major turning point for Oxley. This is a chance for us to address the escalating crime. After months of frustration and fear, the community finally had the chance to share their stories and hopes for change directly with the committee. I specifically thank the victims of crime who bravely shared their stories with the committee. Their resilience in speaking on behalf of their community, in the face of repeated victimisation, is admirable. They demanded to be heard, and the inquiry would not have been possible without their strength and courage. The inquiry did not stop at hearing those shocking stories; it also brought in organisations that work directly with youth—often the youth who find themselves entangled in cycles of crime.

Those organisations gave us insights into the factors that drive kids, sometimes as young as eight, towards criminal behaviour. No child starts out wanting to harm others. During the inquiry we heard about the heartbreaking reality that many of those young kids come from broken homes—homes filled with violence, drugs and neglect. For many of them, the streets feel safer than their own homes. We also heard the undeniable truth that our response to youth crime has been reactive, not proactive. The inquiry should offer us a clear framework to break that cycle, to address the root causes of crime in our regional communities and to finally get ahead of the challenges.

I urge the Labor Government to pay serious attention to the regional crime inquiry. The outcomes must not be shelved; they must serve as a road map for decisive legislative action in Parliament. My electorate cannot afford to let another young person feel they have no other option but to resort to crime. We cannot afford to let another family suffer the trauma of having their home violated. We cannot afford to wait for the full report of the inquiry. Premier Minns and the Labor Government must act now. Do not hang us out to dry. Do not place our community at the risk of vigilantism. Support those who contribute to Oxley and help us deal with youth crime. My community needs support now.

DARYL MELHAM, AM

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (16:56): I pay tribute to an extraordinary leader and true champion of social justice, Daryl Melham, AM, a well-known name throughout East Hills, across Parliament and among the Labor family. After an incredible 44 years with the Revesby Workers' Club, Daryl recently announced his retirement as club president, marking the end of an era defined by his unmatched dedication and service. Daryl has been a steadfast member of the Labor Party since 1974. He served as the Federal member for Banks from 1990 to 2013. His influence on our community and the Australian Labor Party is profound and lasting. Daryl's career with the Revesby Workers' Club began humbly in 1974, when he worked as a casual barman and tray steward while he supported himself through university.

He formally joined the club in 1976, was elected to the board of directors in 1980 and became vice-president in 1982. Daryl's commitment to the club and its values only grew from there. In 2010 he took on the role of club president, continuing his legacy of innovation, inclusion and community focus, which saw the club reach new heights. Under his stewardship, the Revesby Workers' Club transformed into an inclusive, community-centred institution, actively enhancing the lives of countless people. Under his leadership, the club has consistently supported local schools and students through school subsidy and tertiary scholarship programs. His commitment to education extended even further by supporting the Whitlam Institute's What Matters? writing competition, which fosters civic engagement among young Australians.

Inspired by the memory of former club president Pat Rogan, Daryl championed the club's annual donation to the Asbestos and Dust Diseases Research Institute. Through his advocacy, the Revesby Workers' Club continues to provide support for cancer research and Biyani House Revesby Women's Shelter, which I am very proud of bringing to life. It was only with the support of the club and through Daryl's strong advocacy that we could provide our community with a safe haven for survivors of domestic violence. Beyond the club, Daryl's dedication to public service shone through his work in the Australian Labor Party. Over nearly four decades, he held significant roles that underscored Labor's mission of social justice and equity.

Daryl served as chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, contributing to reforms that strengthened the integrity of Australia's democratic processes, ensuring that every voice could be heard. Known for his staunch advocacy for Indigenous rights, Daryl championed policies aimed at improving outcomes for Aboriginal Australians, notably as a representative on the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. Thanks to Daryl, Revesby Workers' Club displays many profound local Aboriginal stories throughout the clubhouse, which is much appreciated by many in our community. His commitment to fairness and inclusion resonated throughout his parliamentary tenure, during which he mentored emerging Labor members, generously sharing his insights and vision for a more equitable nation.

In 2017 Daryl's decades-long service to our nation was officially recognised with his appointment as a member of the Order of Australia. Beyond Parliament and the club, he continued his work for the broader community, co-founding the New South Wales Society of Labor Lawyers and serving as patron of the Bankstown District Cricket Club. His lifelong commitment to fairness, community wellbeing and social justice reflects the best of Labor's values. I commend Daryl Melham for a lifetime of service to the community, the labour movement and the countless people he has inspired along the way. His legacy is woven into the fabric of Revesby Workers' Club and the Labor Party, and his contributions will resonate throughout my electorate of East Hills for generations. I thank Daryl for everything he has done, for his mentorship and for his thoughtful and guiding words but most of all his friendship. His legacy stands as a testament to his vision of a fairer and stronger community.

WESTERN SYDNEY SERVICES

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (17:01): In question time today I asked the Premier about the toll mania faced by Sydneysiders and how the Government is making the toll system fairer, especially for those in Western Sydney. Time after time, Western Sydney felt the brunt of the former Government's poor decisions and indifference to their effects on the community. Be it toll roads or health care or education or schools or public transport or parks or sporting fields, in every department that falls within the responsibility of the State Government, the Coalition let down the people of Western Sydney for 12 long years. The disconnection between

the privileges afforded to those in the east of Sydney versus Western Sydney even extends to the beer on offer in stadia.

The battle of east versus west is a tale that goes back generations. Whether it is about legends of rugby league such as Tommy Raudonikis and the iconic Fibros versus Silvertails, or in modern times the Wanderers taking on the Sky Blues, Western Sydney always feels like the underdog. On or off the pitch, we always have to fight a little harder, dig a little deeper and yell a little louder to get what we want. With the upcoming east versus west Sydney Football Club versus Western Sydney Wanderers derby game at Moore Park's Allianz Stadium this weekend, eagle-eyed fans might notice a difference in the experience compared with the first derby game, which was played on 19 October at Western Sydney's CommBank Stadium. The physical differences are obvious. The 42,000-seat Moore Park stadium came with a \$828 million price tag, with solar panels, water-harvesting systems and noise complaints, compared with the \$360 million spent on the sporting jewel of Western Sydney.

However, fans who love to enjoy the game with a beverage will notice one key difference: At Allianz Stadium you can buy a full-strength beer, which is an experience not afforded to those who attend CommBank Stadium. But it is not about the strength of the beer; it is about fairness between the east and the west. This is not the first time we have seen a divide between east and west, with the former Government locking down certain areas and not others during the COVID pandemic. Since Allianz Stadium opened in August 2022, fans have been able to enjoy a full-strength drink. Sydney Cricket Ground too has been providing full-strength service during this time. However, fans and concertgoers attending Government-owned venues in Western Sydney—namely, CommBank and Accor—will be all too familiar with the experience of having to make multiple trips to the bar, missing iconic sporting moments or their favourite song that they paid good money to see.

Tommy would not have it, and neither should we. It is time we revisit this decision. Last year the Government decided not to renew the expiring contract of VenuesLive, who provided hospitality in CommBank and Accor stadia. In the announcement about ending the arrangement with the private provider, Venues NSW stated:

The change in stadium operation will deliver a consistent customer experience across the Venues NSW network and will continue to capitalise on the NSW Government's significant investment in major public entertainment and sporting facilities.

The time to deliver on that promise has come. The liquor licences at Accor Stadium and CommBank Stadium allow for the service of full-strength beer throughout the venues. Given that it has now been nearly a year since the Western Sydney stadia have changed back to public management, perhaps there is an opportunity to reintroduce full-strength beer to the general public. Punters and fans in the west should not have to tolerate a lower service than those in the east, but the changes must be done in a way that does not cause an increase in antisocial behaviour. The safety of fans and families must always remain the priority. The Government and Venues NSW will need to work with Liquor and Gaming NSW and New South Wales police to monitor the policy change.

This year more than 800,000 fans attended NRL and State of Origin games across Accor Stadium and CommBank Stadium. Adding to those the massive attendances at Taylor Swift and Coldplay in Homebush shows how integral the venues are to the social fabric of the State. Combined with the Wanderers, Parramatta Eels and now four-time NRL champions Penrith Panthers making CommBank their temporary home next year, the Parramatta stadium may yet reach record attendance heights. The points I raise today are not about the big-picture items that are so often debated in this place, but the principle remains the same. Western Sydney deserves parity in decision-making. It is time we stopped treating Western Sydney patrons differently.

THE HILLS TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROJECT

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (17:05): Homelessness is rising in New South Wales and Australia. Across the country over 122,000 people are without stable housing, including more than 35,000 people in New South Wales alone. Those figures have risen alarmingly in recent years. The 2024 Statewide Street Count recorded 2,037 people sleeping rough in New South Wales. This is a staggering 26 per cent rise from the previous year and is a crisis that reaches all electorates, including my own electorate of Castle Hill. Many local and national organisations work tirelessly to remedy this situation. One project is The Hills Transitional Housing Project, which focuses on transitional housing for vulnerable women and was started by locals from my electorate seven years ago. Dennis van Someren and his team were appalled at the rising numbers of women and children experiencing homelessness. They began the project to provide temporary housing to give these women a chance to get back on their feet.

One of the rising demographics of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness is women, and older women in particular. The Standing Committee on Social Issues report No. 61 on homelessness amongst older people aged over 55 in New South Wales says:

According to evidence before this committee, older women are the fastest growing group to experience homelessness in Australia. Nationally, the number of older women experiencing homelessness increased by 31 per cent between 2011 and 2016.

There are many reasons an older woman may become homeless. With rising cost-of-living pressures, many women facing homelessness spent long periods without regular employment while raising their children. As a result, they have much less superannuation to draw on. They are also usually in lower paid jobs. Now, as they face failing health, redundancy or retirement, they find they can no longer afford to pay escalating rents in the private rental market. The majority of older women experiencing homelessness do so following separation, widowhood or domestic violence. Each night more than 56,000 women across our country are homeless, and more than 75 per cent of their homelessness is attributed to domestic violence.

The Hills Transitional Housing project, in partnership with Wesley Community Housing, has four transitional housing options in the Hills. But, with the growing crisis of homelessness, this is simply not enough. According to the Department of Communities and Justice, one in two women who applies to crisis shelters is turned away due to limited capacity. The project is seeking at least 12 houses by the end of 2025. Those involved know how important these transitional houses have been to women in the Hills. One of the tenants of the houses said, "The program literally saved my life and has given us an opportunity to get back on our feet." Currently, there are four women and 10 children in the transitional housing provided by the program.

Dennis van Someren and his team would like to continue the work and provide more temporary and transitional accommodation for women experiencing homelessness. The project has been offered four more houses to be used as transitional housing. However, this cannot be accomplished without the necessary funding to support the use of these houses for the project. I know that the Minister for Housing has written to the Federal member for Berowra and the member for Kellyville stating that Homes NSW does not have any social housing options available in the Hills district and surrounding areas.

It is simply not good enough that the people of the Hills are without social housing options. The Government and the Minister for Housing need to address the concerning lack of housing for our most vulnerable people. The need to fund this worthy and vital cause is apparent. Several local community groups in my electorate have pledged their support and financial commitment. However, the level of support is simply not enough to achieve the ambitious goals of The Hills Transitional Housing Project. To meet the growing demand for safe and stable housing and provide the comprehensive services needed to help vulnerable women rebuild their lives, the project requires substantial backing from government.

This support is essential to ensure not only the necessary accommodation but also the ongoing sustainability of the program. With government involvement, the project can expand its capacity, enhance its resources and provide the critical services these women need to regain independence and stability. Without this partnership, the project risks being unable to meet its objectives or make a lasting difference to the lives of those it aims to serve. I call on the Government to fund additional housing for vulnerable women in the Hills.

MONARO ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education) (17:10): I report to the House on the progress of some of the commitments I made at the last election. Most of them are capital commitments, but my most important commitment to the people of Monaro was that we would not do what The Nationals did when they represented the electorate, which was to run around with big cheques and open buildings with nobody to work in them. I am really pleased with the progress we have made over the past 18 months. We have reduced the number of classes that do not have teachers by increasing teachers' pay. I am really pleased that, unlike 18 months ago, parents are not coming to me all the time to tell me that their children have been left in playgrounds for hours on end because there are no teachers in their classrooms. Putting people into buildings to actually staff them and provide services was a core commitment I made to the people of Monaro.

I also made a number of capital commitments that are important for me to report on. Recently I was very pleased to join the Hon. Tara Moriarty to confirm \$1.9 million for new Queanbeyan City Football Club facilities on the High Street football grounds. That was a well-deserved commitment for the oldest football club in Queanbeyan. It has been an integral part of the Macedonian community in Queanbeyan during that time. There is also funding for changing rooms at two other facilities in Queanbeyan: the Roos Club and Seiffert Oval. It is great to have the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads in the Chamber because several of Labor's roads funding commitments have also been delivered. Funding for upgrades to Smiths Road and Nerriga Road and noise monitoring on Ellerton Drive has been passed on to the councils, which are ready to deliver. The planning for the intersection that locals call the Spotlight roundabout is also underway with Transport for NSW. One project that was not an election commitment but that I have been working on with the Minister's department and would love to see some progress on is providing safer crossing points in Bungendore on Kings Highway.

We have also made really good progress on our commitment to fund an expansion to the Queanbeyan Basketball Centre. That is a complicated project because it is an oldish stadium and a staged approach is required for its development. It has been great to work with the basketball community in Queanbeyan, who have engaged

in an incredibly constructive way. I am pleased that construction is underway on Yvonne Cuschieri House, which will provide a wonderful respite facility. I have spent quite a bit of the past 18 months fixing problems with projects started by the previous Government, which did not give them appropriate thought or put proper processes in place. A key example of that is Bungendore High School, which I have spoken about previously. The location for Bungendore High School was announced with no community consultation. That location produced a whole range of legal challenges and community problems. We had to solve them by moving the site for the school. I am pleased that within the next few weeks we will publicly release the plans for the new site. That will be a really big step forward for the project.

We had to fix problems with a number of other projects left to us by the previous Government. The Minister for Regional Transport and Roads is well aware of the issues with the Jindabyne school precinct. The previous Government started construction on a fantastic new school but did not fund the road connections, electricity connections or footpaths for the school. It did not foreshadow that more funding was needed. We came to government and had to find additional funding for a project that was supposedly fully funded. Another such project was the Anembo mobile phone tower. The project was announced with great fanfare by one of my predecessors. The former member for Monaro said they funded a phone tower. That was literally what they did—they funded the tower but not the connection to the network. It has taken a long time to resolve that issue and get landowner permissions to put the optic fibre cable through to the phone tower. The delivery of that project is much slower than I would like, but hopefully it will happen in the not-too-distant future.

The Snowy special activation precinct is another big project, with planning for 30 years of growth for Jindabyne. However, the former Government did not think about planning for the delivery of future health services in the area. Again, that would have been the logical thing to do. I am pleased to report the projects that Labor committed to at the last election are well on track. I will continue to update the House and the electorate on those projects as we move forward. Of course, there are a number of other projects that I have not mentioned tonight. I look forward to delivering all those projects over the next couple of years.

KIAMA TAXI SERVICE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (17:15): The Kiama township continues to be recognised with award after award. Kiama was the 2024 Top Tourism Town, but those who call Kiama home do not need awards to know that we have something very special. However, since last year Kiama has been going without a service that is taken for granted by many other communities. Kiama no longer has a taxi service, after the long-serving operators decided to retire from the business. Whilst those in Sydney enjoy metros, ferries, light rail, frequent heavy rail services, expressways and multiple point-to-point services such as Uber, Kiama has no services, and it is having a real impact on liveability for local residents. As the local Independent member, I will not hold back on using the time of this Parliament to raise important issues that my community wants addressed. Armed with hundreds of signatures on a petition, it is clear that people want a taxi service to return.

I recently met with the Illawarra Taxi Network and the NSW Taxi Council to discuss this matter. Previously, the law required taxi plates to operate in their dedicated zone. Those rules have been scrapped, which means that any taxi service can operate in Kiama without restriction. I asked the Illawarra Taxi Network to consider running a trial of two taxis in Kiama. To its great credit, it has agreed to take bookings in Kiama. But it is not the same as having a dedicated service. Other hire car services are available, but they are expensive and beyond the means of many. The NSW Taxi Council agreed to support the request of the New South Wales Government to underwrite a trial of two dedicated taxis in Kiama over a six-month period. I thank Nick Abraham from the NSW Taxi Council for his support in seeking to resolve this matter. Sadly, the Minister's reply was not very helpful. She wrote:

When it comes to plans for the future, the NSW Government is passionate about regional customers getting their fair share of transport projects, and is committed to developing Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plans known as SRITPs. SRITPs will be outcomes-focused, and designed to enable funding decisions based on priorities.

The Minister's reply went on to say that the Illawarra-Shoalhaven Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan is due to begin by mid-2024 and "will be developed with stakeholders including Shoalhaven City Council". That is great, but we are talking about Kiama, not the Shoalhaven. If she cannot get that right, she will forgive me for not having great confidence in her reply. The Minister went on to say that she has passed on my correspondence to the relevant team directly. She assured me that this suggestion will be included as part of the upcoming Illawarra-Shoalhaven SRITP. There is a real human impact of the loss of this service. I read onto the record some comments from the people who are impacted. Margaret wrote:

A taxi would be helpful to get to functions which the train timetable does not coincide with or at night in Kiama, or when no trains go south to Gerringong, requiring waiting an hour at Kiama station, when cold and not safe in the evenings. By supplying a taxi service for Gerringong and Kiama, it would allow me to go to evening events in Kiama and have transport when required for appointments in Shellharbour, as it is impossible to reach PRP radiology and specialists.

Thomas wrote:

We were greatly disappointed when the local taxi service closed down a year ago. We depended on it to go to physios and other appointments and it would help us enormously and I suppose other seniors if we had a taxi service in Kiama. When convenient and it is not urgent could you please look into this matter, we would really appreciate it.

David wrote:

It is vital for the community, but also personally. Not very often, but I occasionally need to travel to Minnamurra Station and/or Shellharbour Airport, with full compliment of luggage.

Having seen the Minister's reply, Margaret wrote:

I Feel the Minster's reply was not helpful. I am not eligible for reduced price taxis, as I'm not in a wheel chair yet, or using Blue Haven services yet!!!

Last week when I arrived at Gerringong late afternoon from a day in SYD, a lady from SOUTH Africa was getting off the train also in Gerringong. She asked me where the taxi rank was and was shocked when I said sadly no taxi service or Uber. I said sorry I am walking and do not drive. She had to get to Gerroa. I said come with me to Cronin's pub to try for a lift. And hopefully ask someone to take you to Gerroa, her destination. She was prepared to pay. Then the only other person at the deserted Gerringong station said she was waiting for a lift and might be able to help this tourist.

The Minister mentioned the service Driving Miss Daisy. Margaret said, "That's too expensive. One-way to Shellharbour is \$40." She felt that the Minister should try to travel from Sydney to Bomaderry and see, as she described it, the havoc on trains—vandals and noise—as well as the bus services that, sadly, do not work out of hours. Indeed, bad lighting at Gerringong station also exacerbates the problems. These are regular regional seniors and other tourists. We need a reasonable solution in response to the situation. A taxi trial underwritten by the Government would be a solution. It is one way that the Government could be innovative and respond to the needs of communities. Cutting the regional seniors travel card has had a real impact. I call on the Government to reconsider the proposal for a taxi trial in Kiama.

NIMBIN NEIGHBOURHOOD AND INFORMATION CENTRE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (17:20): The Minns Government's public inquiry into loneliness starts tomorrow, looking into the extent of loneliness in our community and its causes and impacts. I welcome this initiative by the Minister for Mental Health, Rose Jackson, because loneliness is a growing and often hidden problem in our communities. The inquiry has received 120 written submissions, and I thank the Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre [NNIC] in my electorate for submitting a comprehensive report on loneliness to the inquiry. I will raise some of the points from that submission, because it highlights what loneliness can look like in a regional area.

The NNIC is a hub of community support services in the heart of Nimbin, which welcomes everyone, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, religion, age or social status. It particularly aims to support people who are isolated, vulnerable and disenfranchised. The NNIC conducted its annual community wellbeing survey in May and June this year, which measures belonging, participation, trust and access. The results showed that people living with disability scored the lowest across all measures compared with other groups. Men also scored lower across all those measures. It found that men are less likely to participate in local activities and groups. They are among the least likely to volunteer or take part in neighbourhood centre activities.

The neighbourhood centre followed up with an online survey, the Nimbin Loneliness Survey, to better understand the extent of loneliness in the community. The survey showed that men were more vulnerable to loneliness and indicated a link between loneliness, ageing and disability as isolation becomes an issue. The issue becomes compounded for our elderly people when they have to give up their driver licences. Neighbourhood centres have an enormous role to play to reduce the impacts of loneliness. NNIC runs many social activities including the weekly food pantry and soup kitchens, weekly workshops, monthly food swap, the annual women's dinner, the big free community Christmas lunch, Nimbin NAIDOC Day and regular weaving circles and singing circles. The following are some of the comments that people have shared:

I really love the Food Pantry days and Soup Kitchen too. The service is great and it has become an important part of my life, giving me a sense of social connection and emotional wellbeing.

Some of the best conversations I get all week are at the food pantry and soup kitchen days.

How thankful I am and how blessed our little village is to have the neighbourhood centre and all the amazing workers and volunteers, you guys really are the backbone of our community.

Volunteering plays a major role in reducing social isolation in Nimbin, and NNIC's activities involve more than 50 volunteers per year. Clinical workers at NNIC regularly refer clients to volunteering programs to build confidence and connections. One volunteer said:

I've found that feelings of loneliness stem from feeling disconnected from the community and world around us. Helping others through volunteering helps you feel less lonely and allows you to have a sense of mission and purpose in life.

In regional areas, neighbourhood centres play a critical role in helping people stay connected to their communities. NNIC has many program proposals to further address the issue, such as ongoing welfare checks on isolated neighbours, not just during times of disaster. Ongoing funding is always key. Currently, there is no core funding for neighbourhood centres. There has not been for a long time—only program or project funding. The Queensland Government delivered core funding to neighbourhood centres following its 2021 inquiry into social isolation and loneliness. It will be interesting to see what comes out of the inquiry that New South Wales is conducting and the recommendations that are made. The Nimbin Neighbourhood and Information Centre is clearly making the case for similar funding to happen in New South Wales as one of its recommendations.

NIELSEN PARK SEAWALL

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (17:25): I speak about an issue that has constituents in my community and beyond shaking their heads in disbelief and frustration: the saga of the ongoing reconstruction of the Nielsen Park seawall at Shark Beach. We have been without this beach for two summers, and now a third summer is under threat. Residents are understandably frustrated with the continual delays and are seeking answers. The delays to the seawall reconstruction have eroded the trust and patience of our community. It is important to put this on public record: We must ensure that, one, the project is adequately resourced and has sufficient oversight to ensure completion before Christmas and, two, that a review is conducted and made public by National Parks and Wildlife Service so that we can learn from mistakes and ensure that future construction of public projects will not face similar delays and cost blowouts.

How did we get here? Nielsen Park was incorporated into the Sydney Harbour National Park in 1975 and was listed on the New South Wales State Heritage Register in 2018 in recognition of its outstanding natural and cultural landscape. It has demonstrated a rich and diverse range of uses, spanning from an important historical and spiritual place for Indigenous Australians to a tourism hotspot for avid swimmers and families to picnic. The seawall at Nielsen Park has served visitors well for nearly 100 years. A 160-metre barrier, the seawall has been standing since the 1930s. In July 2016 the seawall was badly damaged by waves during a large storm. Some sections along the western part of the beach were repaired, but the seawall had reached the end of its serviceable life. As a result, a decision was made by the State Government that the seawall would need to be reconstructed in its entirety.

The development application for the replacement of the seawall was submitted on 30 June 2020. The project was approved by the Sydney East Regional Planning Panel on 18 February 2021. Heritage approval followed a couple of months later. In late 2021 a construction contractor was procured, and in March 2022 the demolition of the concrete seawall began. In addition to reconstructions of the seawall, works also include a wheelchair-accessible ramp, resurfaced promenade and a slight extension of the lawn and beach surface areas. The Sydney Restaurant Group also took the opportunity to carry out renovations to the historic Nielsen Park kiosk, the pavilion, and the swimming and lifesaving club.

The plans and promises were able to buy a lot of goodwill in the community. Residents and visitors were invested in a successful outcome. However, the beach has now been closed for more than 2½ years. I recognise that the outdoor nature of the construction works makes them highly weather dependant to achieve a quality finish, and there were unique challenges working within a narrow area between the sea and the land to prevent damage to areas that have cultural sensitivity. But it is unacceptable that a project can blow out from nine months to 2½ years and counting, from an estimated \$6.8 million to about \$21 million at last count. It undermines the trust that we ask of our communities when governments take responsibility for projects.

There are remarkable similarities with the North Sydney Olympic Pool redevelopment. That pool closed in February 2021. However, almost four years later, there is still no forecast completion date. In fact, recent reports state that North Sydney Council will consider hiking its rates to help fund the ballooning cost to rebuild the pool. Since being elected, I have received regular briefings from the National Parks and Wildlife Service and communicated them back to constituents. Like residents, I have been frustrated with the continual delays. I have written to the Minister for the Environment. I appreciate the help and support of her office. I am sure she is also frustrated. She forecast last that the project would be completed by April 2024. It has been seven months since that communication.

On 1 November I wrote again, urging intervention from the Minister to ensure that the beach will open before Christmas this year. I asked a number of questions, including what actions she was taking to ensure that there are no more delays, what options were being considered to expedite public access and if there has been any additional cost to taxpayers. I appreciate again the support of her office in answering some of those questions. We know that National Parks and Wildlife is working hard to finish the project, but we need regular oversight. We need assurances that everything is being done to ensure the speedy completion of the project and that we do not have delays to other public projects as we have with this one.

WINSTON HILLS ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills) (17:30): A matter of great importance to the electorate of Winston Hills is the current state of road infrastructure and the impact of recent upgrades, and the ongoing challenges and future opportunities to improve our community's daily commute and safety. As a suburban electorate located in Western Sydney, Winston Hills relies heavily on its arterial roads for the day-to-day movement of residents, the flow of goods and access to employment hubs in Parramatta and the city. Winston Hills is fortunate to be intersected by several major roads that connect our community to the wider Sydney area. The M7-M2 motorway to the north and the Great Western Highway and M4 Motorway to the south are essential arteries that carry tens of thousands of commuters each day. Those major roads also service much of the Western Sydney community in travelling to and from work, school and essential services.

In recent times, my community has benefited from infrastructure investment, notably under the former Coalition Government. The former Coalition Government's focus on road infrastructure delivered significant upgrades that have enhanced the quality of life for the people of Winston Hills. The Prospect Highway upgrade, which was co-funded by the Federal Government, includes the widening of lanes, new intersections and safety improvements which will transform the once notorious bottleneck into a smooth and reliable route. The road is a main thoroughfare for residents accessing the Great Western Highway and M4 Motorway.

Likewise, the Memorial Avenue upgrade has proven instrumental in facilitating faster travel times from the Hills district into Blacktown council by creating an efficient connection between Windsor Road and Old Windsor Road. The Memorial Avenue upgrade opened in its entirety earlier this week. Projects like that have made, and will continue to make, a lasting impact for road commuters around the electorate of Winston Hills and Western Sydney more broadly. The Coalition's legacy from those upgrades is eased congestion and saved time, which has given commuters hours back that can be spent with family and friends rather than in traffic.

Moreover, the upgrades have had a ripple effect across our community by decreasing the need for residents to use local streets as bypass routes, thereby reducing local congestion and enhancing safety in our neighbourhoods. The smoother flow on the Prospect Highway, for example, will alleviate pressure on surrounding suburban streets, which have previously been overburdened by cut-through traffic. Similarly, improvements on Memorial Avenue have significantly enhanced access to key employment areas and educational institutions. However, while the upgrades have had an undeniable impact, we cannot ignore the growing pressures on other major thoroughfares within the electorate, especially as our population continues to grow and new planning laws are introduced.

The community has increasingly voiced concerns over Old Windsor Road as a major congestion point in our local road network. As the population increases in areas such as Box Hill, Tallawong, Schofields and Gables, the strain on roads like Old Windsor is becoming particularly pronounced. Earlier this year, during the consultation process on the transport oriented development proposal for Kellyville and Bella Vista, that was one of the key concerns raised by residents in Glenwood. Residents have also seen an uptick in the usage of Old Windsor Road and fear that having more commuters will outweigh the road's capacity.

Similarly, Windsor Road serves as a vital link between the north-west suburbs and major employment hubs in Parramatta's CBD, but during peak hours it transforms into almost a standstill. The congestion impacts the residents of not only Winston Hills but also surrounding areas as drivers seek alternative routes, which leads to more local traffic spilling into local roads. The challenges on Windsor Road and Old Windsor Road underscore the need for ongoing investment and strategic planning to keep our infrastructure resilient and adaptive to the demands of a growing population.

At a more local level, residents of Toongabbie have been raising concerns over traffic congestion along Fitzwilliam Road and several key areas. It has been promising that Parramatta council is currently in the process of proposing to install a roundabout at the intersection of Fitzwilliam Road and Tucks Road. The project includes the installation of a pedestrian refuge on Ballandella Road, as well as a median island that prevents turning out of Willmot Avenue. The project is currently under consideration, and the community looks forward to it.

Nearby, the Toongabbie Bridge remains an issue that residents continue to raise with my office. I welcome the announcement made by the Minister for Roads when he visited Toongabbie Bridge with local councillors and the member for Prospect. I look forward to working with the community and the Government to achieve outcomes in this area. The people of Winston Hills deserve roads that meet the demands of today and tomorrow. I will continue to be active in Parliament to advocate for their needs to support the delivery of road networks that keep our community connected, productive and thriving.

SURF LIFE SAVING AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:35): It was a pleasure to recently attend the 2024 Surf Life Saving Awards of Excellence, an inspiring event that each year celebrates the incredible contributions and achievements of surf lifesavers. The annual gathering is an opportunity to honour the dedication, skill and resilience of individuals and clubs who have made a lasting impact on beach safety and community wellbeing across the nation. The most memorable moment of the evening was seeing our very own Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club receive the prestigious Club of the Year award, surpassing 314 clubs from across Australia. That is a monumental achievement for Terrigal, marking it as the first Central Coast club to win the award. I also believe it could be the first time a regional New South Wales surf lifesaving club has ever won the award as well, and it is a testament to their hard work, dedication and vision.

Over the past year, Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club has embraced transformational changes in governance and expanded its range of programs while undertaking a major clubhouse renovation that has been in the works for nearly two decades. The club's 274 trained patrolling members have demonstrated their exceptional commitment to beach safety, not only performing 22 rescues this season but also preventing over 2,000 potential incidents through their vigilance. Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club has successfully cultivated a "something for everyone" philosophy, engaging members from ages five to 98, all while keeping a core focus on public safety.

Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club has extended its impact beyond lifesaving, becoming a vibrant part of the local community. Through events like the Ocean Swim and the Cancer Council Daffodil Day Dip—which I took part in this year—which collectively raised \$34,000 for the club and \$40,000 for NSW Cancer Council on the Central Coast, they have demonstrated the power of community engagement and leadership. The club's approach to inclusion, governance and community partnerships embodies the highest ideals of surf lifesaving.

Equally impressive is the recognition of Mollie Murphy from Umina Surf Life Saving Club, who was awarded Surf Lifesaver of the Year. From a pool of nearly 200,000 volunteer lifesavers, Mollie's selection is a testament to her unwavering dedication and exceptional leadership. Since her early days as a nipper, she has amassed 781 patrol hours, including 147.5 this past season. As the director of lifesaving and a lead patrol captain, she has led her teams in over 68,000 preventative actions and more than 300 rescues. Mollie's commitment to youth development is a cornerstone of her work, inspiring younger members through programs like the Under-15 Leadership Development Program and the Women's Patrol. Her resilience was especially evident in her response to a challenging incident on Christmas Day where her steady leadership supported her team. Through initiatives like the pink and rainbow patrols, Mollie has created an inclusive and supportive culture at Umina Surf Life Saving Club, enhancing community engagement and team unity.

The achievements of both Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club and Mollie Murphy are wonderful reminders of the strength and spirit within our Central Coast surf lifesaving community. The Surf Life Saving Central Coast branch plays a vital role and continues to be a model of excellence, managing and growing the region's surf lifesaving efforts. With 15 clubs—seven within my electorate—and over 8,000 members, Surf Life Saving Central Coast's recognition as Surf Life Saving NSW Branch of the Year six times in the past decade underscores its impact and leadership. Saturday evening was truly a celebration of the outstanding work done by our local surf lifesaving clubs, volunteers, directors and staff. The annual awards are essential in recognising the countless hours dedicated to keeping our beaches safe and enhancing community wellbeing. The individuals and clubs honoured at this event have made profound contributions, both in their local communities and within the broader surf lifesaving movement.

I again congratulate Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club on being named Club of the Year and Mollie Murphy on her well-deserved recognition as Surf Lifesaver of the Year. Her dedication and achievements exemplify the values and spirit of surf lifesaving, setting an inspirational example for others. I thank everyone involved with Surf Life Saving Central Coast for their commitment and tireless work to protect our beaches and foster a thriving, inclusive community. Each of them plays an essential role in ensuring that our beaches remain safe for the millions who visit them each year. Their efforts and passion are invaluable, and we are truly grateful for the difference they make in our community to keep our beaches safe. Central Coast beaches are among the most beautiful in New South Wales, but they are also some of the most dangerous. It is a privilege and an honour to support the incredible surf lifesaving volunteers on the Central Coast, who put in almost 100,000 hours each year to keep people safe between the red-and-yellow flags.

RURAL FIRE SERVICE AWARDS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (17:40): I was delighted to attend the Rural Fire Service Illawarra Sutherland Team district awards presentation. I take this opportunity to acknowledge some of the extraordinary recipients. Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Kevin Blissett's 60 years of service with the Calderwood RFS. Since joining in 1964, Kevin has been a steadfast presence, protecting his community and

exemplifying the RFS spirit. From the days of filling knapsacks with water from milk cans to driving large RFS vehicles across the Illawarra, Kevin's skill and dedication have supported the Calderwood brigade through countless challenges. His knowledge, steady leadership and kindness have made him both a respected driver and a mentor to many. For Kevin, firefighting is a family affair, with his sons and daughters-in-law now part of the Calderwood and Illawarra support brigades and family. He rarely misses a week of training and his commitment to service is a true inspiration. I thank Kevin for his unwavering dedication and humility, and for the legacy he has built over 60 years. Congratulations, Kevin, on this extraordinary achievement.

Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Karyn Lenard, whose 21 years of service to the Albion Park RFS fire control command and Illawarra support have been marked by dedication and excellence. Karyn's contribution has earned her the Long Service Medal with the first clasp, reflecting her commitment to the safety and wellbeing of her community. Karyn's service has been instrumental across multiple brigades, where she has supported both local and regional incident responses with steadfast dedication. Her involvement extends beyond the immediate needs of the community, providing critical support across the Illawarra region. For her years of outstanding service, I express my sincere gratitude to Karyn and congratulate her on this well-deserved honour. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to the RFS family in the Illawarra.

Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises John North of the Calderwood RFS, whose 14 years of dedicated service to the community are honoured with the Long Service Medal. John's commitment to the RFS and his fellow volunteers have made him a highly valued member of the Calderwood team. Throughout his service, John has been a reliable and steady presence, responding to countless call-outs and ensuring the safety of those around him. His dedication to the Calderwood community is evident in every response and in the many comrades he fosters within the brigade. For all that he has contributed to the RFS, I extend my deepest gratitude. Congratulations, John, on this significant milestone, and thank you for your service to Calderwood and beyond.

Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Hans Hornig of the Albion Park RFS, whose 34 years of dedication are testament to his exceptional service. Awarded the National Medal with the first clasp alongside a Long Service Medal with the first clasp, Hans' commitment has had a lasting impact on his brigade and his community. Since joining in 2003, Hans has been a key figure within the Albion Park RFS, not only attending call-outs and training sessions but also serving as the brigade's representative in community initiatives across the region. His work in the Albion Park brigade welfare group has been invaluable, providing vital support to the Illawarra and Sutherland brigades in training and operations. His service has also extended across State lines, where he has represented the RFS in critical deployments. I acknowledge Hans for his decades of service, his contribution to community safety and his enduring dedication to Albion Park. Congratulations, Hans. Your service is inspiring.

Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Christopher Bourke, whose 43 years with the RFS have set a high standard for dedication and leadership. Chris, a recipient of the Long Service Medal with the third clasp, has served across multiple brigades, including Calderwood, where he currently leads as captain. From Mount Kembla to Barham to Berry, Chris has held numerous roles, earning respect and admiration from all who know him. As captain he stresses the importance of teamwork and mateship, values that have strengthened his brigade and inspired his entire team. Chris's commitment has extended to deployments across the State and his leadership continues to set a benchmark in volunteer service. Congratulations, Chris. Your service is truly inspiring.

Those men and women do incredible work. I acknowledge that the Calderwood brigade is in desperate need of a major upgrade. They have only one toilet facility and no changing rooms for women. That RFS needs a major upgrade. I thank the Minister for the engagement I have received on the topic. I want to continue to progress this issue, along with the Dunmore RFS upgrade, which is also absolutely necessary. I look forward to seeing those upgrades delivered so that those men and women can continue their extraordinary volunteer service. Thank you, one and all.

SHOALHAVEN CITY COUNCIL

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (17:45): It saddens me to say that this week the Shoalhaven has been in the news for all the wrong reasons. I love the Shoalhaven, I love my community and I love the people of the South Coast. However, I am concerned about the level of government that is always touted as being "closest to the people": local government. It is no secret that Shoalhaven City Council has been under financial pressure for some time now. In fact, the member for Kiama and I were so concerned about the future of the council and its financial viability that on 15 May we attended a joint meeting with the Minister for Local Government to raise these concerns, a good four months before the local council elections.

Since the meeting, the Office of Local Government has been working closely with Shoalhaven City Council to ensure that it can meet its challenges. The Office of Local Government understands that the council's

performance has been deteriorating since 2018 and has stated that the causes of the council's poor financial performance included the deletion of reserves during COVID and numerous natural disasters. I was further advised that the council waived rates, fees and charges during COVID, and that it had spent considerable money on loss-making ventures like the aquatic centre and the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre, which at last count runs at a loss of \$37,000 per week.

At the beginning of 2024 the council consulted the community about a special rate variation, which it subsequently voted against. Instead, the council voted to make internal financial savings before going back to the community to ask for a rate rise. The council has now proposed another special rate variation, with increases of 8 per cent to 12 per cent in the next financial year. But what has happened since then? In February this year the council welcomed a new CEO, Ms Robyn Stevens. Ms Stevens was handed a big task: undertake a restructure and find cost savings for the council. She was advised to reduce staff numbers via natural attrition. There were to be no staff redundancy payments and the positions were not to be frontline or service delivery staff. Ms Stevens found significant cost-saving measures in her first few months in the job and proposed a restructure of the council. Staff and unions were supportive of the restructure proposal put forward by Ms Stevens, which cut at the managerial level and reduced impact on operational staff.

So how many staff does Shoalhaven City Council have? The Office of Local Government's last report showed that it had 1,096 full-time equivalent positions. The United Services Union has advised that since then, due to the failure of a private company operating the council's waste facilities, an additional 100 employees have been employed, as this was deemed more viable than using a private company. A number of additional employees were also on contracts to assist with the high number of natural disasters, but those employee costs were paid by the New South Wales and Federal governments via emergency funding arrangements.

In early August council voted to put all restructure proposals on hold until after the local government elections. This is where I start to ask questions that I want answered on behalf of the residents of the Shoalhaven. In the lead-up to the local government elections there was a smear campaign about the number of staff at the council and the poor performance of the CEO. It is clear that this campaign was the work of one political party. On the evening of Thursday 10 October, before the mayor and councillors were sworn in, I received a call from the mayor-elect that lasted 23 minutes. She advised me that she and two councillors-to-be had had a meeting with the CEO that afternoon and that she wanted me to hear about the discussion before I heard it on the grapevine.

Over the past week the mayor and the two councillors have admitted to this meeting but have all denied discussing the CEO's future employment. I want them to tell the community exactly what happened in the meeting. I know what happened, as does the staff member from the council's human resources department who witnessed the meeting. When I discussed the meeting with the Office of Local Government, it advised me that the council had the right to terminate the CEO if it so desired, but it also made clear that it would be a without-grounds termination, meaning that the minimum payout would be 32 weeks as well as any entitlements owed.

This week, under mounting pressure, the CEO resigned and the public has no idea of what has taken place and why. The next day the director of people and culture also resigned. Who will be next and at what cost? It is now up to the new council, specifically the mayor, to explain to the community why it is necessary to increase charges, especially during a cost-of-living crisis, when it wasted money on a witch-hunt that has cost Shoalhaven ratepayers at least \$307,000. I want the mayor and the councillors to be open and transparent. I want them to tell the community what has occurred, how much these actions have cost ratepayers and what it has planned for the future of the Shoalhaven.

Bills

PORTABLE LONG SERVICE LEAVE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

Returned

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill without amendment.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 17:50 until
Friday 15 November 2024 at 10:00.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

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

IN MEMORY OF RAY JONES

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—On the 7th November, Thirlmere local legend Ray Jones was remembered with the unveiling of a memorial seat outside the Thirlmere Pharmacy. Ray was instrumental in starting the Thirlmere Festival of Steam, as former President of the Thirlmere Chamber of Commerce. This event has grown to be a yearly highlight, enjoyed by many residents and visitors. He was loved as a local at the Welcome Inn Hotel and was instrumental in saving the pedestrian crossing outside the school. His friendship with both former Councillor Michael Banasik and Councillor Suzy Brandstater, was warmly remembered today at the plaque unveiling. His wife Penny spoke of his love for the town, and it was a pleasure and honour to share this moment with their family. His legacy will be remembered for the impact that he made on those who knew him, and those who will benefit from his contributions to Wollondilly. Stop by and have a rest on the bench when you are in Thirlmere, and reflect on the contributions of people like Ray, who give so much for the betterment of their community.

WOMBATISED INC.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Wombatised Inc. have been awarded a \$5,500 grant from the Southern Highlands Community Foundation to continue to do their valuable work for wombats. Wombatised Inc. is a volunteer-run wildlife rehabilitation, education and rescue group whose members care for native animals that have been injured or orphaned. Wombats and other native animals face ever increasing threats from traffic, disease like the devastating mange as well as being buried alive in their burrows when land is bulldozed for housing developments. Wombatised endeavours to enhance veterinary care, improve wildlife hospital facilities, and integrate wildlife education into schools across the Southern Highlands. They support veterinarians in wombat health, provide field treatment for diseases such as mange, and promote careers in native animal care, ensuring sustainable support for local native wildlife. The Southern Highlands Community Foundation grant will be used in their Soft Release Project, which will allow for rehabilitating and rehoming wombats on private rural land, through the use of portable metal pens, encouraging engagement and a sense of responsibility in locals to advocate for our wildlife.

ALISON RASHEED

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Congratulations to Mrs. Alison Rasheed, Oxley College's Director of Curriculum (P-6), for receiving the Teachers' Guild of NSW World Teachers' Day Recognition Award. This well-deserved award highlights Alison's dedication to teaching excellence and her impactful leadership within the Oxley school community. With over 28 years of experience across Independent, International, and Public Schools, Alison has continuously demonstrated her passion for fostering a love of learning among students. She holds a Bachelor of Education (Hons I) and a Master of Educational Leadership and Management, both from the University of Newcastle, underpinning her strong commitment to professional excellence. Alison's focus on building positive, enduring relationships with students exemplifies her aim to be a "teacher with impact." As a leader, she inspires her colleagues to reach their full potential, modelling humility and dedication in every aspect of her work. Alison is an active member of the Australian College of Educators and the Teachers' Guild of NSW, further reflecting her engagement with the broader educational community. We are proud to see Alison's commitment, service, and expertise celebrated through this award, recognizing her invaluable contributions to education.

AUSTRALIAN ASIAN BUSINESS LEADERS' AWARDS, 2024

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—On 2 November 2024 I attended the Australian Asian Business Leaders Awards [AABL Awards] at the Hilton Hotel, Sydney. By presenting awards we celebrate and recognise the achievements of young business leaders and we inspire future leaders. The Awards also raised a total of \$8,000.00 to support Cancer Council NSW. Awards were presented in ten categories. I recognise the winners for each category. Annual Business Leader Award: Sandra Li. Young Entrepreneur Award: Guanqi Jiang. Annual High-Growth Company Leader Award: Kelvin Wang. Industry Pioneer Award: David Pan. Community Builder Leader Award: Alice Gu. Innovation and Technology Award: Jing Wang (Gerinna). Women Leadership Award: Li Zhuang. Entrepreneurial Spirit Award: Tiger Chen. Industry Leadership Award: Sandy Gan. Outstanding Industry Contribution Award: Hong Huang. A huge congratulations and well done to each of the winners and nominees. I commend the vision, commitment, and contribution of the organizers of the AABL Awards. I specifically recognise the contribution of the following persons: Unico Lam who is the President of the Australian Elite Club, Tarsi Luo who is one of the Co-Founders of Seed Planet, and Lynn Yeh who is the Founder of Homart Group.

HILLS BASKETBALL 40 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—The Hills Basketball Association, home of the Hills Hornets will celebrate 40 years on 30 November 2024. The Association, established in 1984, is a not-for-profit organisation and is now one of the largest and most successful associations in NSW. In 1995 a stadium was built and in 2017 additional courts and upgrades were added. The Association now manages courts located at the Dural Recreation Centre and Bernie Mullane Sports Complex. The Association has expanded to include programs for wheelchair basketball, home school students, people with a disability and walking basketball. Hill Hornets provide a pathway for representative players, coaches, referees, score table statisticians and wheelchair athletes. The Association runs the largest domestic competition in NSW, catering for 850 teams, officiated by 300 plus referees, running 7 days per week and over 1,500 children attend Hornets Academy each week. These numbers equate to more than 10,000 registered participants and over 20,000 individuals visiting HBA venues weekly. The greatest challenge moving forward will be to secure more facilities to cater for the increasing waitlist for players, which currently is over 1,000 players. Congratulations to all who have contributed to the Associations success over the last 40 years.

BOOROWA COURT HOUSE ARTS AND CRAFTS SHOP

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to recognise a huge milestone for The Boorowa Courthouse Arts and Crafts Shop who this November will celebrate 30 years of operation in the community of Boorowa. Initially touted as the "Shop that won't last a year," this icon of Boorowa continues to thrive, proving the old adage, "you can't keep a good thing down." Housed in a charming former courthouse, the shop showcases the talents of local artisans and craftspeople, offering a diverse range of handmade products. The shop not only supports local artists but also fosters a sense of community by providing a space for workshops, exhibitions, and events. These activities encourage creativity and collaboration, making it a focal point for art lovers and locals alike. As a destination, the Boorowa Court House Arts and Crafts Shop highlights the rich cultural heritage of the region, celebrating both traditional and contemporary crafts. Its welcoming atmosphere invites visitors to explore the unique offerings while learning more about the artistic process. I'm sorry to miss the celebrations and the Devonshire Tea! I hope the event is a huge success. Congratulations to the volunteers.

BULLET STATION

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—Congratulations to West Wyalong Maintenance Superintendent David Sealy, fondly known as Bullet, who recently celebrated his long-serving commitment to the Country Regional Network. Bullet's story on the rail began in 1974, when he started as a track maintainer in West Wyalong. This was a time when work was hard manual labour, using picks and shovels. With 50 years of continuous service, Bullet undoubtedly has a few stories to tell about how things in the rail industry have changed over the years. His innovative approach to track maintenance and his leadership in implementing safety measures have significantly improved the efficiency and safety of operations. Bullet's passion and pride for the rail network shines through all the members with his West Wyalong tight knit team, this shown in their work ethic and production. Recently, Bullet was pleasantly surprised and deeply touched when his family and old colleagues came together to unveil 'Bullet Station' at Weethalle. This heartwarming gesture truly reflects the enduring commitment he has made to the rail industry. Thank you, Bullet, we are deeply grateful for your service and the invaluable contributions you have made over the past 50 years.

THE ALBION HOTEL - COOTAMUNDRA RODEO

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—It was noted by many that the Cootamundra Rodeo Parade was back and it certainly was a great evening. The amazing horses and their riders, the young cowgirls and cowboys, the trucks and sponsors vehicles, the rodeo clowns, and the amazing team of four Clydesdales that were hitched to RB Carriages' amazing wagon. The next day saw over 500 entries for the Rodeo. The Australian flag bearer for The Albion Hotel Cootamundra Rodeo 2024 was local cowgirl Macey Bryant. Macey represented Australia in Barrel Hotel Australian High School Rodeo Association Team, and Macey rode tall as she led the grand entry in her hometown and starred alongside legendary cowboy Bob Holder. Six Bob Berg buckles were up for grabs. The "Tom Mitchell Memorial Open Bull Ride Champion" was Dylan Weir, the "Open Barrel Race Champion" was Shawn Chape, The "Novice Barrel Race Champion" was Jodi Kilmartin, the "All Round Junior Cowboy" was Dustyn Swadling and the "All Round Junior Cowgirl" was Stevee Besant and the 8 – 11 "Junior Steer Ride Champion" was Lachlan Lindley.

CRESCENT HEAD HOLIDAY PARK WINS PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Nestled between a pristine beach and a magnificent river, Crescent Head Holiday Park offers sweeping views that captivate visitors and showcase the natural beauty of the Mid North Coast. Recently honoured with the People's Choice Award in Jayco's 2024 'Greatest Escapes' competition, this

stunning park is a true reflection of the region's charm. Renowned for its iconic right-hand surf break, Crescent Head has become a surfer's paradise, drawing visitors from all over to experience world-class waves. The tranquil surroundings, laid-back atmosphere, and breathtaking vistas make it an ideal destination for nature lovers and those seeking a relaxing outdoor escape. This well-deserved recognition highlights Crescent Head Holiday Park as one of Australia's top caravan parks. Whether you're chasing waves or simply soaking in the beauty of the area, the award celebrates the Parks ability to offer both adventure and serenity. Congratulations to Crescent Head Holiday Park on this incredible achievement. This award not only celebrates the park but also shines a spotlight on the stunning Crescent Head region.

COMMUNITY STEPS UP FOR FUNDRAISER

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—The Macksville Ex-Services Club was buzzing with energy, as Zumba Gold instructors held a lively charity event that got hearts racing and feet moving—all for a fantastic cause! Raising over \$1,100 for the Melanoma Institute, the fundraiser brought together about 50 enthusiastic dancers decked out in their most creative "P"-themed costumes, showing just how much fun fitness can be when community spirit takes centre stage. Participants came from every corner of the Mid North Coast, and inside, the scene was a colourful explosion of creativity. Dancers of all ages, including some well into their 80s, dressed to impress as everything from pixies to princesses, Peter Pans to P-platers. This event, the sixth of its kind, highlights a growing trend in the Mid North Coast—a community focused on health, wellness, and supporting one another. The Macksville Ex-Services Club generously provided the hall free of charge, showing the powerful support of local venues in uplifting community-driven initiatives. For everyone involved, the night was a reminder of how community and charity can come together for fitness, fun, and a shared purpose. Well done and congratulations to Zumba Gold!

SGT MATTHEW LOCKE MG MEMORIAL GOLF DAY 2024

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—More than just a tournament, the Sgt. Matthew Locke MG Memorial Golf Day at C.ex Urunga celebrated the memory of Sgt. Locke, an Australian hero, and raised essential funds for The Grub Club—a not-for-profit dedicated to providing educational resources to children in Timor Leste. The Grub Club originally began by supporting Afghani children in Uruzgan Province, where Sgt. Locke served with the Australian Special Air Service Regiment. Since his passing in 2007, the organisation has expanded its mission, now focusing on educational aid in Timor Leste, a cause close to Sgt. Locke's heart. With each swing, participants helped supply books, paper, and school supplies to kindergartens and schools in need, embodying Sgt. Locke's legacy of service and dedication to uplifting communities. The day was a beautiful blend of camaraderie and generosity, and the community's turnout underscored their shared commitment to education. Heartfelt thanks go out to the volunteers, organisers, and everyone who made the event possible. Together, they have created a legacy that not only honours Sgt. Locke but makes a lasting impact on children's lives abroad.

NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE – KURNELL BRIGADE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I joined the NSW Rural Fire Service last weekend as the Illawarra Sutherland Team recognised long service in the Sutherland District, including 10 members of the Kurnell Brigade. Headlining the awards was Michael Cooper who received the 40 years active service Long Service Medal 3rd Clasp, with 46 years of continuous service. Rebecca Hinshelwood received both 20 years active service Long Service Medal 1st Clasp & 30 years active service Long Service Medal 2nd Clasp, with a 31-year career starting when aged 17. The Kurnell brigade is fortunate to have dedicated volunteers like Michael and Rebecca who've been active firefighters as well as leaders, with Rebecca currently serving as president and deputy captain. Other members receiving long service medals/clasps were Judith Krautz (29 years' service), David Hinshelwood (28 years), Colin Moore (26 years), Danielle Edwards (22 years), Scott Goodhew (20 years), Jeff Potauaine (15 years), Shahriar Moudud (10 years), Ciana Fitzgerald (10 years). The tight knit Kurnell community highly values its local brigade for both its emergency response and role in making the village what it is today. I thank these Kurnell brigade members for their service in protecting our community.

MICHAEL COOPER

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Kurnell's Michael Cooper on being awarded the 40-year long service medal by the NSW Rural Fire Service [RFS]. In a 46-year career with the RFS, Michael has been involved in many major emergencies including the 1994 fires in the Shire and the 'black summer' fire season of 2019-20. As well as working on the front line as a firefighter, Michael has made a significant contribution to the running of the brigade and its strong connection with the local community. His dedicated service has included a 13-year run as treasurer, eight years as community engagement officer, and seven years as the brigade's Rural Fire Service Association representative. In 2018, Michael was awarded life membership of the brigade and he's also received the National Medal, and the Premier's Bushfire Emergency Citation for his dedication throughout the black summer fires. Michael has found time on top of his RFS commitments to serve through the Kurnell

Anglican Church, the Kurnell Men's Shed, the local clean-up campaign and at Kurnell Public School. The RFS says Michael is very well respected amongst his fellow fire fighters and the general Kurnell community. I acknowledge Michael's tireless contribution to life in Kurnell.

SOUTHSIDE MALIBU CLUB 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Cronulla institution Southside Malibu Club on celebrating its 40th anniversary. The club was formed in 1984 after founder Dave Ryan competed in Australia's largest longboard competition at the time in Byron Bay and announced at the presentation that he would set up a similar club at Cronulla. After Dave advertised in the letters column of Tracks Magazine and handed out forms at the beach, membership took off and by 1985 the club had big name sponsors in Malibu Rum and Okanui. The club has produced NSW and Australian champions while maintaining its friendly, family-oriented atmosphere and strong membership numbers. It is a credit to the club that there are still several of its foundation members still active in the club competing and helping in its running. The club has regular competition rounds three divisions; Open, Southside Lady Longboarders and Southside Loggers for traditional malibu surfing. I congratulate all current and past members of Southside Malibu Club and acknowledge the efforts of its committee led by president Joe Glendinning, with Jackson Detmold, Jared Eason, Rebecca Neill, Wayne McAree, Ross Ozolins, Roger Roy, Rod Harty, Tim Vanderlaan, Peter Toby and Graham 'Zorro' Sorenson.

GUNNING EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise to recognise Gunning Early Learning Centre. The Gunning Early Learning Centre has been providing essential education and core support and care to the children within the local community for the past forty-two years, celebrating their "Retro Ruby Jubilee" in October. The celebrations encompassed the holistic nature of the centre which has built an incredible level of support and trust from the many families whose children attend the centre. The centre has become renowned for their ability to deliver quality, play-based education. The children from the Gunning Early Learning Centre and Paradise 4 Kids created an array of outstanding artwork which was auctioned on the day, with proceeds raised going to the playground development project. Recognition was provided to the many individuals who volunteer on the Management Committee and the Fundraising Committee for their steadfast and dedicated work. Past and present staff of the centre were praised for their dedication in providing a quality education program alongside their care and nurturing of children's growth and development. I congratulate the whole team at the Centre, wishing them continued success.

CHILDREN'S MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE - GOULBURN AND SURROUNDS COMMITTEE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise to recognise the ongoing effort to raise funds for the Children's Medical Research Institute [CMRI], led by the Goulburn and Surrounds Committee in supporting medical research focused on childhood diseases. The Goulburn and Surrounds Committee, which serves the South Tablelands region from Sutton to Windellama, has successfully raised over \$45,000 since its establishment in 2018. Key fundraising events include the annual Jeans for Genes Day, engaging 25 schools and childcare centres. And more recently, the Taralga Fun Ferret Races at the Taralga Church Hall – which, by all accounts, was well-received and will return in 2025. I thank the Committee including President, Judy Skelton, Secretary, Caroline Greig and Treasurer, Simon Greig for their dedication to the cause. I also thank sponsors Taralga Rural, Ken Croker Constructions, First Choice Earthworks, Jigsaw Tax and Advisory, Nutrien Ag Solutions and Aaron Grant Electrical and Airconditioning. These initiatives highlight the community's commitment to supporting the CMRI's vital research and a strong spirit of community and philanthropy, ensuring that crucial funding continues to flow towards childhood health research.

GOULBURN ROTARY BOOK FAIR

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise to recognise the annual Goulburn Rotary Book Fair. The event offers a treasure trove of pre-loved books for every reading taste, from fiction and biographies to sports, romance, children's literature, gardening, and cooking. The fair features an extensive range of titles at bargain prices, with all proceeds benefiting Rotary charities and community projects. On Saturday, October 11, avid readers across the region flocked to the Peden Pavilion at Goulburn Recreation Area as the Goulburn Rotary Club. The pavilion was filled with thousands of second-hand books, carefully organised into categories for easy browsing. The event is no small feat, with Rotary stockpiling, organising and transporting donations all year in the lead up to the event. As I understand, community contributions continued even after the fair opened, showcasing the generous spirit of local residents. As one of Rotary's major fundraisers, the Book Fair plays a crucial role in supporting community initiatives and I thank Rotary for their monumental effort in arranging the event.

JAMBEROO PUBLIC SCHOOL HONORS REMEMBRANCE DAY THROUGH ART

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today, the Parliament of New South Wales recognises the student leaders and teachers at Jamberoo Public School for their participation in a remarkable project called Draw to Remember, organised by the Wollongong RSL Club. This initiative was designed to help students deepen their understanding of Remembrance Day and honour those who served. Each class received a chalk pack and a Remembrance Day pamphlet to inspire their artistic expressions. After discussing the significance of Remembrance Day, students created designs on their pamphlets, each reflecting their personal interpretations of remembrance. Classmates then voted on a favourite design to recreate as a larger artwork, blending their creativity in a collaborative tribute. On November 7, Mr. Terry Stamp from the Jamberoo RSL Club visited to view the students' work and share insights about Remembrance Day. His presence added personal meaning to the students' artistic expressions. A student named Beau from Kookaaraa concluded the day by reading In Flanders Fields, capturing the reflective spirit of remembrance. We commend the Jamberoo Public School community for its heartfelt observance of this special day.

KIAMA ARTIST, CHARLIE OWENS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today, the Parliament of New South Wales recognises the achievements of 19-year-old artist Charlie Owens from Kiama, whose journey from homeschooling to TAFE NSW has launched her successful career in the arts. Starting with a Diploma of Visual Arts at TAFE NSW Wollongong West, Charlie discovered her passion and adapted to a new learning environment, thanks to the mentorship of Entertainment Head Teacher Mary-Jane Griggs and the support of her all-female class. Charlie's story highlights the critical role that TAFE plays in our education system, offering personalized pathways and hands-on learning that empower students to pursue careers tailored to their skills and passions. Since graduating, Charlie has exhibited her work in local galleries, taken on commissions, and begun selling her art online, reflecting the life-changing potential of TAFE programs. We extend our gratitude to Mary-Jane Griggs and all TAFE educators who foster creativity and skill in students like Charlie, preparing them for meaningful contributions to our arts community and beyond. Congratulations Charlie on the beginning of your next journey and we wish you every success for your future endeavours!

LES MILLER – DUNMORE RFS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today, the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Les Miller, an outstanding volunteer with Dunmore RFS whose 28 years of service reflect unwavering dedication to his community. Les's recent recognition with the National Medal for 15 years of diligent service, and the 1st Clasp for 25 years, honours his commitment to protecting our region from fires, floods, and other emergencies. Les is a Senior Field Officer with the rank of Deputy Captain, a role he has embraced with determination and care. His experience extends well beyond local callouts—Les has tirelessly contributed to critical out-of-area deployments, including leading efforts during the 2013 Blue Mountains fires, the Black Summer Bushfires of 2019–20, and flood relief in the Hawkesbury and Illawarra. Les has shown time and again his readiness to serve and to support his team through the most challenging of conditions. He embodies the best of the RFS spirit—committed, respectful, and always ready to lend a hand. Congratulations, Les, on this well-deserved honour, and thank you for your service!

GRADUATION - MICHAEL CORLETT

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

GRADUATION - MARY COSTAN

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Mary Costan on their recent graduation from Ryde Secondary College. Having attended the ceremony in person, I witnessed the culmination of Mary's years of dedication and hard work. Completing Year 12 is an impressive achievement, and Mary should be incredibly proud of this significant milestone. I am hopeful that they are pleased with their Higher School Certificate results, and wish them every success as they move into the next phase of life's journey. The HSC is a demanding time for all students, and I commend Mary on their continued determination to succeed. Undoubtedly,

their perseverance and commitment will serve them well in all of their future endeavours. On behalf of the Ryde community and this House, I extend my best wishes to Mary and congratulate them on this exceptional achievement. May the future be bright and prosperous for Mary and their family.

GRADUATION - BROOKE HARRIS

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

MARSHALL MUNN

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr Speaker, the future of the Rural Fire Service in Parkes looks healthy if young brigade member Marshall Munn is an example of the calibre of their recruiting. Marshall has been recognised as a NSW RFS Young Volunteer of the Year at its 2024 awards, held at RFS Headquarters at Sydney's Olympic Park. The award, delivered in the 12-15 age division, recognises Marshall's outstanding dedication to his brigade and his community. This recognition bodes well for the brigade's future – despite his youth, Marshall has committed to the RFS cadet training and consistently puts his hand up for RFS community events. This was evident during the floods of November 2022 when Marshall joined brigade members, and members of the SES, to help flood-affected people in Parkes and nearby Forbes with their recovery. During this time he served as a communications operator, an SES beacon operator and was hands-on with sandbagging, ferrying essential staff across flood waters and helping with cleanup. He spent a remarkable 40 days helping with the recovery effort. His willingness to serve during this time was vital to his community's recovery and gives me faith the Parkes RFS brigade is in good hands.

EMMA GREY

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to congratulate Canowindra's Emma Grey on being selected as a member of the Australian team to compete at the International Association of Ultra Runners 100km World Championships. As part of the nine-member Australian outfit, Emma heads to Bengaluru in southern inland India where she will run against athletes from 34 other countries over the gruelling 100km distance. Emma took up running during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is fantastic to see how she has turned something that started as a hobby and an emotional outlet into Australian representation, aligning her with the world's best endurance athletes. Physical activity is an important aspect of everyone's health and Emma is setting a great example to others in her community. Running 100km is obviously no easy task and her commitment to training and diet and the lifestyle sacrifices she has made to be in peak condition for this world event must be commended. I wish Emma the best of luck during competition. The Central West is proud of your amazing achievement.

ADRIAN CISCO

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr Speaker, volunteers are the unrecognised life-blood of any community and today I wish to recognise Orange's Adrian Cisco for his under-the-radar efforts to keep his community safe. Mr Cisco is one of Orange City Council's parking officers but is looking beyond this roll when it comes to the safety of the city's school zones. He has a strong focus on promoting and improving driver safety in these zones, especially during the busy morning and afternoon drop-off and pick-up. Adrian is also the deputy captain for two of the Orange district's Rural Fire Service brigades, Lucknow and North West Orange, where he is heavily involved in delivering training to volunteers, old and new. He has dedicated 100s of hours to guiding crews on first aid, truck driving, including emergency response, as well as the obvious firefighting and safety skills. He is also a member of Orange's Community Safety and Crime Prevention committees. Volunteers seem to be a dwindling asset yet they are incredibly important to the community. As Adrian demonstrates, they fulfil vital roles where their expertise is critical to the functioning of important organisations like the RFS. I thank Adrian for his dedication to his community.

MRS KHAMKHOUNE PHIMSIPRASOM, LCAC

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—I would like to recognise Mrs Khamkhoun Phimsiprasom for her exceptional leadership and contributions to the Lao community in my electorate and beyond. Mrs Phimsiprasom arrived in Australia with her family in 1978. She has since become a pillar of the Lao community through her various leadership roles with the Lao Community Advancement Co-op (LCAC). She is one of the founding

members of LCAC, serving as a member of the Board of Directors, and as Director for Lao Culture. Throughout her 12 years of service, Mrs Phimsiprasom has made a remarkable and lasting impact, particularly through her selfless efforts to advance the Lao community and promote Lao culture and heritage. On behalf of our Local community, I extend my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Mrs Phimsiprasom for her outstanding service.

MR BOUNMA SAYSANAVONGPHET, LCAC

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—I would like to recognise Mr Bounma Saysanavongphet a respected elder within the Lao community. Arriving in Australia with his family in the late 1970s, Mr Saysanavongphet has since become a pillar of the community. As a lifelong member of the Lao Community Advancement Co-op [LCAC], Mr Saysanavongphet has worked tirelessly to support LCAC in delivering its service to both new and established Lao refugees. Moreover, Mr Saysanavongphet embodies the values of compassion, harmony, and unity, which are deeply cherished and upheld within the Lao culture. His unwavering dedication to fostering a united, cohesive, and harmonious community serves as an admirable example for younger generations of Lao Australians. Mr Saysanavongphet's hard work and lifelong dedication to uplifting the Lao community in Australia deserve our heartfelt recognition and gratitude. His impact is profound, and we are fortunate to have him as a guiding role model within the community.

MRS VATSANA SOUVANNAVONG, LCAC

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—Mrs Vatsana Souvannavong is an exceptional community leader, whose dedication has made a lasting impact on the Lao community in my electorate and across Australia. Arriving in Australia with her family in 1975, Ms Souvannavong became a pivotal figure in supporting newly arrived Lao refugees. As the first President of the Lao Refugee Association, which is the Lao Community Advancement Co-op [LCAC] today, Mrs Souvannavong worked tirelessly to assist families in their settlement. From her very first days in Australia to the present, Mrs Souvannavong has remained actively involved in religious, cultural, and social events within the Lao community. Her lifelong dedication and service to LCAC and the broader Lao community are exceptional and deserves our heartfelt recognition. On behalf of our local community, I extend my gratitude to Mrs Souvannavong for her outstanding contributions and the lasting impact she has made on our multicultural society today.

SHELLHARBOUR JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB – WOMEN COMMUNITY LEAGUE TEAM

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of the Shellharbour Junior Football Club - Women Community League Team for their successful 2024 season. The Women Community League Team played in their grand final, at Ian McLennan Park in late September, defeating Fern Hill to claim a wonderful victory. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate the Women Community League Team on this this wonderful achievement.

JAYLA COMMINS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Jayla Commins, from the Shellharbour Sharks Rugby League Football Club, for her successful 2024 season. Jayla was awarded Open Women's Tackle Player of the Year at the Group Seven's Michael Cronin Medal Awards Night in September 2024. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Jayla on this this wonderful achievement and wish her all the best in her future sporting endeavours.

ISAAC MORRIS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Isaac Morris, from the Shellharbour Sharks RLFC, for his successful 2024 season. Isaac was awarded 1st Grade Top Point Scorer at the Group Seven's Michael Cronin Medal Awards Night in September 2024, with 122 pts. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Isaac on this this wonderful achievement and wish him all the best in his future sporting endeavours.

PAT CROWE ESM MARKS 60 YEARS AS SES VOLUNTEER

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I wish to warmly congratulate Inspector Patricia Kathleen Crowe ESM, affectionately known as Pat, on an incredible 60 years as Volunteer No. 40002460 with the NSW State Emergency Service [NSW SES]. Born on September 23, 1937, Pat began her journey originally with the Civil Defence before joining the NSW SES's Clarence Nambucca Unit on October 1, 1964, soon rising to the position of Unit Commander. Her unwavering dedication and tireless efforts have been instrumental in shaping the unit and ensuring its success over the decades, according to NSW SES Deputy Commander North Eastern Zone, Superintendent Scott McLennan. Throughout her illustrious career, Pat has been actively involved in numerous flood rescue operations across the Clarence Valley, showcasing her bravery and resilience in the face of adversity. Her extensive experience and profound knowledge have made her an invaluable asset to the NSW SES and the

Northern Rivers region. Pat has been awarded the Emergency Services Medal [ESM] and the National Emergency Medal [NEM] for multiple events, including the 2019-2020 'Black Summer' bushfires, Hunter storms, and Clarence Valley flooding events of 1974, 1989 and 2012. These honours reflect her outstanding commitment to public safety.

SYDNEY SUCCESS FOR NIMBIN'S MOUNTAIN TOP COFFEE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—Congratulations to Nimbin's Mountain Top Coffee on recently receiving a champion trophy for its Nimbin Blend line of roasted coffee at the Sydney Royal Fine Foods Festival. I've visited Denise and Owen Whitney's farm and coffee plantation so I was thrilled to read in The Nimbin Good Times of their latest success. They travelled to Sydney with plantation manager Bernard Rooney, who is a highly skilled roaster. It was the second champion trophy for the Whitneys, having won for Microlot in 2021. Denise told The Nimbin Good Times that Mountain Top Coffee was especially pleased that Nimbin Blend got up, as it's not only their newest lot, but also a growing favourite among locals and fans further afield. It gained 91.3 points in the plunger category, a result which Denise described as a validation of the consistently good quality of their product. The farm was first established in 1998 and the Whitneys purchased it in 2020. The land neighbours their own family farm and belonged originally to Owen's great uncle. Currently, Owen, Aaron Gilmour and farm manager Peter Webb are preparing to plant 2,500 trees of new semi dwarf varieties as a trial.

TENTERFIELD VOLUNTEER SUPPORT GROUP

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I am in awe of the Tenterfield Volunteer Support Group's exceptional fundraising efforts which reflect its members' wealth of community spirit and generosity. The group recently made a significant \$150,000 donation to the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service. This latest donation brings the group's total contributions since 2015 to almost \$700,000, a remarkable achievement for a town of over 6,500 residents. The \$150,000 was raised through an annual gala dinner, a golf day, various other events and raffles throughout the year. Tenterfield Volunteer Support Group outgoing President John 'Dodge' Landers has given heartfelt thanks to individuals and organisations in the community for their tremendous support. He made special mention of Michael Townes at Tenterfield Golf Club and the Tenterfield Bowling Club. It's good to know that John will remain active as a volunteer with the group. The Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service, in partnership with NSW Ambulance and NSW Health, provides life-saving aeromedical and rescue services in the New England region and beyond. I can report that the Lismore-based Service this year secured a \$18,970 NSW Government grant to purchase a pair of night vision goggles for one of its AW139 helicopters under the Community Building Partnership program.

CENTRAL COAST NSW YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)—Today, it is my great pleasure to congratulate two fantastic young Central Coast leaders on their appointment to the 2025 NSW Youth Advisory Council, Maddi Elwine-Wilson and Jai McEwen. Maddi and Jai are two outstanding members of our community and I have had the privilege of meeting them in their roles as young local leaders. For the past year Maddi has been a part of Central Coast Council's Youth 4 Youth Action Team, working with other young Coasties to organise local youth-focused programs and advise Council by advocating for young people on youth-related issues and initiatives. Meanwhile, Jai is currently working with the Barang Regional Alliance, an Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation committed to empowering local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and businesses on the Central Coast. I had the privilege of meeting these amazing young people at the Central Coast Youth roundtable earlier this year with Minister Jackson, where they spoke with passion about the issues facing young people on the Central Coast. I was impressed by them then and I am sure that I will continue to be impressed by their hard work on the 2025 NSW Youth Advisory Council.

DEIRDRE CLARKE

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)—It is my privilege to acknowledge Deirdre Clarke of Ettalong Beach for her passion for gardening and for sharing love, kindness, and joy across the community. Deirdre's Garden is a kaleidoscope of colour and happiness. Her garden is home to over 50 roses and a field of lavender that is complimented with all sorts of lovely colourful plants that I am sure is a collection and a harvest of a lifetime of love. She is passionate about her garden and generously gives her flowers to people across our community. Deirdre is so well known for her flower gifting that people bring her jars and wrapping paper so she can continue to share her joy of gardening and brighten up people's lives. Thank you so much to Deirdre and all the wonderful gardeners in our community for making the Central Coast a more joyous place to live for all of us.

PETER MOTE

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)—In the NSW Parliament tonight, I would like to offer my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Peter Mote, the former Founder and Co-President of Rotary Brisbane

Water. Peter was an outstanding individual. His personality always lit up the room, and he was well known for his gentle English humour. As he was a progressive businessman and a Rotary devotee, Peter was frequently the foreman of all projects, yet nothing was too big or too small for him. In 2019, Peter and his wonderful wife, Jayne formed Rotary Brisbane Water after realising there was a need for another club on the Peninsula. Peter had been President of Woy Woy Rotary four times, Assistant Governor of the Sydney Rotary District three times and had two Paul Harris Fellow awards from Rotary International. What an incredible man he was! As the founders of Rotary Brisbane Water, Peter and Jayne wanted a more casual and practical approach 'come when you can, do what you can'. That's the reason the club quickly took off and continue to be very successful. Peter's life was rich and blessed with meaningful purpose. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

MOSMAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I want to congratulate the Mosman Chamber of Commerce for hosting a successful October Business After Hours networking event at the newly launched WOTSO coworking space in Cremorne. Mosman Chamber of Commerce does so much for our community and our small businesses, and always facilitates such engaging events that allow business leaders from the North Shore to connect and build relationships. I want to thank Mosman Chamber of Commerce President Tamara Keniry for championing the event and leading the Chamber with exceptional leadership and vision. Tamara's commitment to supporting local businesses is truly commendable. I want to acknowledge Georgia Gebrael, the WOTSO Regional Manager. WOTSO launched a dynamic coworking space in Cremorne just a few months ago, and it has been such a welcome addition to the business community. WOTSO allows businesses and professionals to have access to office spaces or permanent desks at a professional address. I want to recognise Emma Spencer, CEO of Spencer Health, who provided valuable insights about workplace mental health. I acknowledge all members of the Mosman Chamber of Commerce for all the work they do in our community.

MARY'S HOUSE WALK

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker I want to congratulate Mary's House Services on their recent Mary's House Walk fundraiser. Established in 2015, their mission is to save lives by providing support for women and children impacted by domestic and family violence. Since its inception, Mary's House Refuge has provided more than 14,000 nights of accommodation to those in need. I acknowledge the spirit and generosity of the North Shore community. In particular, I want to commend the efforts of the North Sydney Sunrise Rotary Club. The Club was well represented and joined over 700 walkers to raise money for the cause. The Rotary Club raised an amazing \$4,000 for Mary's House and its vital work. I also want to congratulate the St Aloysius and Loreto Kirribilli Companions Team, which raised an incredible \$1,000 for the organisation. I acknowledge the team members, Adam, Nick, Charlie, Joe, Connor, Cameron and Lachlan from St Aloysius for walking the 10km as companions. Finally, I want to thank the Mary's House Services team, particularly CEO Yvette Vignando and the Board members for all the time and effort they put into bettering our community.

MONTE GIRLS WIN GOLD AT MQ INCUBATOR EVENT

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker I want to congratulate two Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College students on their outstanding recent achievement in winning the MQ Incubator Student Pitch Event. The event was held at Macquarie University last month and was a celebration of young entrepreneurs across Sydney. I saw numerous student-led startups pitch their project and business ideas in front of a live audience. Monte students Carina and Alissia are the founders of the app 'Pup' and pitched the app and its purpose on the night. The app is designed to help individuals take care of, manage and train their dogs to service dog quality. Their pitch was clearly well-received, earning them the coveted first prize and \$500 prize money. It is evident that hours of hard work went into designing the app and preparing the pitch. I congratulate both Carina and Alissia on their well-deserved win and wish them every success for the future.

ST PAUL'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE, MANLY 95TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, I wish to acknowledge St Paul's Catholic College in Manly who are celebrating their 95th anniversary this month. Since 1929, St Paul's has provided an outstanding education to families in Manly and on the Northern Beaches. Over the years, St Paul's has consistently delivered an inclusive learning environment that has proven to be effective in meeting the diverse needs of its students and fostering a strong sense of community. Dedicated and experienced staff, impressive facilities and a shared mission to provide a quality Catholic education has helped ensure that St Paul's continues to produce future leaders in their chosen fields. From 2025, St Paul's will begin enrolling young women, demonstrating St Paul's commitment to prioritising the emerging needs of the local Manly community, epitomizing their motto *Prima Primum*, meaning 'first things first'. I congratulate St Paul's on this historic milestone, and I thank them for the invaluable service in education they provide to the Manly community.

ROYAL FAR WEST CENTENARY

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, I wish to acknowledge the centenary of the Far West Children's Health Scheme – now known as Royal Far West – based in my electorate of Manly. It is Australia's only national charity dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the nation's rural and remote children. On 6 December 1924, while sitting on Manly beach, Methodist Minister, Stanley Drummond conceived the idea of bringing country children to the beach for respite. Two years later, local Northern Beaches Doctor, George Moncrieff Barron offered his medical services free of charge, after noticing the outback children's health needs and recognising their limited access to health services. One hundred years on, the Royal Far West continues its extraordinary service in supporting the developmental, behavioural and mental health care of country children. It is without doubt one of Australia's most respected and enduring charities. I recognise Jacqui Emery and her leadership team, the dedicated staff and volunteers, and all those who have been involved with the outstanding work of Royal Far West over the years. I wish the organisation well as it embraces its next 100 years of service to the children of rural and remote Australia.

VALE THOMAS EDWARD CAIN

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the many achievements of the late Thomas Edward Cain better known as Tommy or 'Killer' Cain, who passed away recently at age 82. He was a tough football player, a talented cyclist and a hardworking, family devoted man. Killer had a tremendous influence on the rugby league community in Moree, in particular the Moree Boars team over many years. Killer took to refereeing in 1980 because league was struggling to sign referees up. He ran up and down rugby league fields each weekend for the next 35 seasons, hanging up the ref's badge in 2014 at age 71 - only due to illness! I commend the late Killer Cain on his significant enduring career as a Rugby League Referee and for his massive contribution to Rugby League in Moree. As the words of the Moree Boars Captain, Todd Mitchell – 'Killer was a real character, who loved life and treated everyone equal. He had a huge influence on Rugby League in Moree, as a player and as a referee. He was a great man'. Through loss, there is a wonderful legacy left by Killer to the township of Moree.

WALCHA MOTORCYCLE RALLY

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the achievements of the Walcha Motorcycle Rally for being selected as a finalist for the New South Wales Tourism Awards in the Festival and Events category, with this year's awards celebrating exceptional visitor experiences across NSW. I congratulate all involved in being selected for this impressive accolade. The rally is a major event on Walcha's calendar and includes a Motorcycle Street Parade, Show and Shine contest, Barrell Racing, Demotion Derby, Enduro-X along with a Posties Grass Track Derby and Soccer competitions. Special thanks to those contributing to the success of the rally, including the Walcha Council and Tourism staff - Lisa Kirton, Patrick Dogan, Susie Crawford; Advisory committee members - Andy Burwell, Kim Barnett, Jason Cox, Shane Carey, Tracey Hoy, Fiona Barden and Glen O'Brien; as well as support from Sally Munday, Dave Ledingham, James Tickle, Alan Holmes and Pat Stace. I commend event organisers and the Walcha community in being recognised and selected as a finalist in the NSW Tourism Awards. The Northern Tablelands Electorate wishes you every success at the upcoming announcement and the continued longevity of the rally.

THUNDERBOLTS FESTIVAL

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the the Rotary Club of Uralla on a successful 2024 Thunderbolts Festival and on celebrating its 25th anniversary. This annual event aims to unite the local community, whilst honouring the legacy of the legendary bushranger Captain Thunderbolt. Celebrations included a Bush Poets breakfast, street parade, market stalls, live music, street performers, art, antique machinery displays and many children's activities, with the theme being loud shirts and hula skirts, adding to the spirit of occasion. I congratulate the Rotary Club for hosting and staging this event. Special thanks to the organisers including: Bev and Bruce Stubberfield, Leanne Doran, Michael Batt, Clare Mailler and Tom O'Connor, for their tireless work in bringing the festival together. Thank you to sponsors, Uralla Shire Council, ACEN Australia, Phoenix Foundry, Uralla Bowling Club and Fleet Helicopters for their generous financial support. Thanks also to the many volunteers, as events such as this in regional towns, cannot function without the wonderful support these volunteers give. I commend all involved in the success and longevity of the festival, who have given their time and effort to ensure the significance of their history remains for future generations.

CELEBRATION OF AFRICAN AUSTRALIANS

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown Electorate, I want to recognise the work of Celebration of African Australians in supporting and celebrating the contributions of African Australians across various disciplines including performing arts and community engagement. Since their inception in 2012,

Celebration of African Australians have provided a platform to recognise vast contributions of African Australians to our community and share African culture through performing arts. Through their work in engaging with communities and promoting African performing arts, Celebration of African Australians creates a sense of belonging among multicultural communities and fosters intergenerational learning and civic participation. I commend Celebration of African Australians on their ongoing commitment to supporting African Australian communities, sharing African culture, and celebrating the contributions of African Australians.

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown Electorate, I want to share my warmest congratulations with the Marrickville Heritage Society on their 40th anniversary. For forty years the Marrickville Heritage Society has been committed to the study, research and documentation of the Inner West's heritage. Their newsletters and journals, which have been published regularly since 1984, document in detail the history of the Inner West, its people, culture and environment. In particular, I want to recognise President Scott MacArthur and Life Members Richard Blair and the late Chrys Meader who have given so much to the Society over decades. The Marrickville Heritage Society have made a remarkable contribution to the local history in the Inner-West. I congratulate them on 40 years!

MODEL GLOBAL PARLIAMENT 2024

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Monday 11 November 2024, I officially opened the Model Global Parliament in the Legislative Assembly at the Parliament of NSW. The Model Global Parliament is a democratically constituted forum, where students representing geopolitical regions and non-government networks work together to identify global problems and seek practical and attainable solutions. Since its founding in 2012, it has met each year outside of the COVID-19 pandemic, to provide an educational program for students to learn to think and talk about global issues, using parliamentary procedures to consider solutions. Its primary purpose is to enable students to explore new ways to address gaps in global governance and to present and debate ideas about creating a better world for life on our planet. I recognise the Model Global Parliament 2024 Management Committee Dr Zeny Edwards, Associate Professor Chris Hamer, David Delos Reyes, Maini Pham, Charlene Cai, Maria Adriano, Jason Lijwardi, Jeff Wong and Alex Zhuang. I recognise and thank all of the students who participated and helped gain valuable experience that will assist them in their future endeavours.

NSW ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH SERVICE & EX-SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN: REMEMBRANCE DAY 2024

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Sunday 10 November 2024 I attended the NSW Association of Jewish Service & Ex-Service Men and Women [NAJEX] Communal Wreath Laying and Remembrance Day Service at the Sydney Jewish Museum in Darlinghurst. Since 1920 NAJEX has honoured and commemorated members of the Jewish faith who have served in Australia's armed forces. In the words of Sir John Monash as he opened the NSW Jewish War Memorial on 11 November 1923 "Nowhere in the world do we have so free and unfettered a life. Let us do loyal service to the country". I recognise Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of NSW; President Roger Selby and board members Monica Kleinman, Harvey Baden RFD, Charles Aronson OAM, Jon Green and CMDR Paul Koerber RAN for all the work they do for Jewish service and ex-service men and women. In our Davidson electorate, we have a vibrant Australian Jewish community who I am proud to represent in the Parliament of NSW.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2024 IN FORESTVILLE & ROSEVILLE

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Monday 11 November 2024, Remembrance Day events were held locally in the Davidson Electorate. Remembrance Day is in honour of those who died or suffered serving in wars, conflicts or peace operations. I recognise that at Roseville Memorial Park, the Returned Servicemen's Memorial Club held a service led by President John Whitworth. I recognise that at Forestville RSL, the Sub Branch held a service led by President Bob Lunnon. We were so blessed to have in our presence World War II veteran Don Kennedy OAM, who laid a wreath. I also recognise local veteran Roy Taylor. At Forestville, I was honoured to give an address where I spoke about the importance of memories and remembrance. Although they can fade with the passage of time – and even worse – be lost to history – we must as a community in 2024 know the importance of remembering. We owe it to past and future generations. I spoke of my late grandfather, Athol, who was a Frenchs Forest local who wrote in his diary about war, "Memories alone I can share". We Will Remember Them. Lest We Forget.

BONDI LEGENDS LUNCH

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse)—Speaker, I would like to recognise the organisers of the annual Legends Lunch at Bondi Surf Bathers Life Saving Club. Volunteering is at the heart of the BSBLSC, and members give their time and energy to save the lives of people in our community. In addition to this contribution, five Club

members, Grant Baldock, Andrew Hoggett, Kieran Varcoe, Adam Nezval and Kieran Milne organise the Bondi Surf Bathers' Lifesaving Club annual 'Legends Lunch' annually. Two weeks ago they hosted the 11th annual event, raising over \$35,000 to put towards the renovation of the heritage listed, oldest surf club in the world. The fundraising from this year adds to the \$300,000 in total raised over 11 Legends Lunch events. Grant, Andrew, Kieran Adam and Kieran are long term members having contributed significantly and I recognised many of them hold life member status. Thank you for your service.

MAURICE NEIL RFD KC

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vacluse)—Speaker, I would like to recognise Maurice Neil RFD KC on the occasion of his 80th birthday. As a soldier, lawyer and member of Parliament, Maurice has served both our community and country. Born in Manchester in 1944, Maurice migrated to Australia at the age of 5. After attending Sydney University, he served in the Royal Australian Infantry as a platoon commander in Vietnam. Mr Neil was elected to the Australian Parliament as the Member for St George in 1975, representing Sydney's southern suburbs. After the 1980 election, Neil returned to a career in law and was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1985 and has served at 11 Garfield Barwick Chambers. Thank you for your contributions, and congratulations on this momentous occasion, Neil.

JUDEAN SCOUTS

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vacluse)—Speaker, I would like to recognise the 3rd Rose Bay (Judean) Scout Group on their 60th anniversary. Under the Leadership of Leon Waxman, they are a force for good in our community by educating young people in achieving their full potential as responsible citizens. Jewish scouting in Sydney began with the formation of the first Jewish patrol of boys scouts on Sunday 25th October 1908 at the rear of the Great Synagogue in Sydney. The 3rd Rose Bay Scout Group were formally established in 1964, meeting at the Rose Bay Scout Hall on Vickery Avenue. Their merger with 2nd North Bondi Cubs and Scouts in 1989, solidified the 3rd Rose Bay Scout Group as the sole remaining Judean Scout Group in Sydney. Judean Scouts seek to complement the scouting experience with Jewish values, traditions, and observance of Jewish festivals. Congratulations Leon and the 3rd Rose Bay (Judean) Scout Group.

TERRYWHITE CHEMMART

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I take this opportunity to recognise the team at TerryWhite Chemmart, Kogarah, for reaching a significant milestone, having recently celebrated their 50 year anniversary. The pharmacy offers an impressive amount of services, treatments and vaccinations in an effort to best assist the people of our community and actively support their health. TerryWhite's business manager, Chrysoula Tirekidis, has had the opportunity to speak to the students of a number of local schools about what it's like to work within the community, without a doubt inspiring them to find ways to also make a difference. TerryWhite Chemmart would not be able to operate without the hard work and dedication of their exemplary team of pharmacists who use their expertise to offer stand out services. I would like to offer my most heartfelt thanks to the team at TerryWhite Chemmart for their unwavering commitment to supporting the health of our community.

GRAFTON NETBALL ASSOCIATION - BROOKE BURTON

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—Congratulations to Brooke Burton of Grafton Netball Association for the wonderful achievement of receiving the Netball NSW Anne Clark BEM Service Award at the 2024 Netball NSW awards night. Netball is the biggest team sport in Australia, and Netball NSW is one of the largest independent sports organisations in the state. The Anne Clark Service Award is awarded to an individual in recognition of their significant contribution to the development of netball at an Association level and has given at least ten years of outstanding service to netball. Brooke has filled various roles during her involvement with local netball, from Vice President to President and even Canteen Manager. Brooke has coached at a club level and a representative level. Well done, Brooke, for your hard work, and dedication to Grafton Netball Association. I am sure that the rest of the team and the players are so very grateful for your tireless efforts and commitment. Congratulations again on such a great achievement.

NITA CHILD – CLARENCE RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to extend my congratulations to Nita Child, who was presented with Life Membership of the Clarence River Historical Society on October 29. When they arrive at Schaeffer House Museum in Grafton, many visitors are welcomed through the doors by Mrs Child. For the past thirty years, Mrs Child has been extremely dedicated to her role and duties within the heritage listed property. Her immense knowledge of the museum and diligence in executing her tasks over the last three decades has shaped her into an integral part of the building's character. From cataloguing historical information right through to setting up new exhibitions, Mrs Child has done it all. Mrs Child volunteers at Schaeffer House Museum four to five days every week and very much enjoys keeping herself busy while she's there. Well done Nita on such a milestone

achievement, your dedication to Shaeffer House Museum and the Clarence River Historical Society is very admirable.

JACARANDA 2024

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—2024 marked the 90th anniversary of Grafton's Jacaranda Festival, which is the oldest floral festival in Australia. Congratulations goes to the 2024 Westlawn Jacaranda Royal Party, who were crowned with their titles on Saturday October 26 at Market Square in Grafton. 2024 Jacaranda Queen, Alice Jabour, was born and raised in Grafton and grew up admiring the Jacaranda Festival and the proud traditions it holds within the local community. Alongside Alice, the Jacaranda Princess title went to Imogen Jablonski, while Amelia McLachlan was announced as the 2024 Royal Party Member. Isabella Roughley was crowned the Junior Jacaranda Queen and Caleb Foster was announced as the first ever Junior Jacaranda Prince. Caleb was the first boy to nominate as a Junior Jacaranda candidate in the 90-year history of the event. A special shoutout to the Mini Royal Party, Flower Girl - Lilly McKenzie, Page Boy - Tae Woods, Party Princess - Lilly Worthy and Party Prince - Tennyson Yager. Danielle Bower also formally received her title of 2024 Matron of Honour. Congratulations to the Grafton Jacaranda Festival Committee and the volunteers for their amazing dedication and efforts in ensuring another great festival took place this year. Well done everyone.

KINGSGROVE COMMUNITY AID CENTRE

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and congratulate the team at Kingsgrove Community Aid Centre for their campaign to educate senior residents about online safety and scams. Kingsgrove Community Aid Centre invited officers from St George Police Area Command to address residents about how to remain safe online. The presentation taught seniors how to avoid fraud, protect parcel deliveries, and safeguard their personal data while shopping online. Senior citizens across NSW are increasingly using the internet for banking, socialising, and shopping, which has had the unfortunate side effect of opening the door for nebulous characters who use techniques such as fake emails and websites to exploit and scam elderly residents. The presentation recommended ways senior citizens can protect themselves online, including strong passwords, two-factor authentication, verifying emails and messages before responding, as well as refraining from sending sensitive data across untrusted networks. The internet has provided opportunities for our senior citizens to remain connected and independent longer than previous generations, but this has also created new challenges. I congratulate and thank Kingsgrove Community Aid Centre and St George Police Local Area Command on this campaign to help seniors stay safe online.

CORRIMAL ROTARY COMMUNITY BBQ

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)—This past week, I had the pleasure of popping in to see the team from the Corrimal Rotary Club, who were running a free community BBQ event to thank the community for their continued support over the years. The Corrimal Rotary Club have worked tirelessly to help make a difference in the local community and also internationally, whether this be through community fundraisers or advocating for community members. The Rotarians come from all walks of life and share the same passion for community service and friendship. On the second Monday of each month the Rotary Club will be trialling a free community BBQ outside of the Service NSW centre in Corrimal. The Rotary Club is looking to give back to the community and to thank them for their generous donations towards disaster relief and donations of goods and services that have been used as raffle prizes at various major events such as their annual trivia night. On behalf of myself, my office and the Keira Electorate, I would like to thank the Corrimal Rotary Club and their members for all of their hard work and dedication over the years to helping the community.

ABBIE GOLLAN

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker..... I would like to congratulate Abbie Gollan of Wellington who was recently awarded the Early Career Award at the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives [CATSINaM]. Held in Fremantle, Western Australia, the CATSINaM conference is a bi-annual event dedicated to advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and well-being. The event champions initiatives and discussions that create positive change and brings together leaders and healthcare professionals. Abbie was nominated for this prestigious award by CATSINaM, recognising her as an outstanding early career Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander nurse or midwife. The honour celebrates her achievements and dedication during the initial years of her career. Born in Wellington, Abbie completed her primary school schooling there before competing her senior studies in Dubbo. She went onto pursue nursing at Charles Sturt University, graduating as a registered Nurse in 2021. Abbie's commitment to her career and ongoing education is inspiring. Balancing her role in the Dubbo Hospital Emergency Department with further studies at Charles Sturt University highlights her dedication to advancing her skills and knowledge in healthcare. Your journey so far is marking the beginning of a promising career in healthcare. Congratulations!

ROBERT HANDSAKER FORD

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker..... I would like to acknowledge Robert Handsaker Ford on fifty years in business. On 4 November 1974 eighteen-year-old Robert opened the doors to his Ford dealership for the first time, marking the beginning of a remarkable journey in the automotive industry. Over the last fifty years, Robert has built a strong reputation for his dealership as a reliable, family owned and operated business. The growth and success is exemplified by the addition of the Narromine RV Centre to their portfolio, broadening their impact in the community. In any business, honest and trustworthy staff are essential to success. Ten years after the dealership's opening on 4 November 1984, Greg Walsh joined the team, contributing to the dealership's reputation and stability. As the dealership marks fifty years in business, they also proudly celebrate Greg's incredible forty years as an employee, where he is the dealership's Spare Parts Manager. A significant milestone! Reaching fifty years in business is a remarkable achievement! Congratulations Robert, on all you have achieved and your contributions to the Narromine community. This anniversary stands as a testament to your hard work, commitment and vision.

CENTRAL WEST RIDERS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker..... Central West Riders SMC 2018 are not only a social motorcycle club, but passionate advocates for local charities and causes. I would like to acknowledge their dedication to creating awareness and fundraising for a variety of different causes. Their dedication to their rides knows no bounds. For them, each ride is more than just a day on the bike; it is an opportunity to bring people together to create awareness of the cause whilst making it a memorable experience. They go above and beyond, organising raffles, auctions, bike shows, event merchandise, live music, and children's activities to conclude the ride, making the events inclusive and family friendly. The Riders have done rides for a variety of causes including families in need, homelessness and most recently fundraising for a second skin check truck. They also do annual Christmas toy rides for disadvantaged children, across the region. Never ones to rest on their laurels, the committee is often planning the next charity ride before the current one is complete. This dedication allows them to support as many causes close to their heart as possible while of course, spending time on their bikes enjoying the open roads!

AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S MUSIC FOUNDATION

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Around 75% of Australian primary schools lack access to music education. On 22 October, the NSW Parliament was informed and entertained by talented youngsters and luminaries of the Australian music scene, promoting the essential work of the Australian Children's Music Foundation [ACMF], founded by Don Spencer OAM in 2002. The aim was to change and improve young lives through music. ACMF nurtures the next generation of Australian songwriters and musicians, providing music programs and free instruments to disadvantaged schools, youth justice centres, and hospitals, unlocking hidden potential, changing life trajectories and improving young lives through music. We were made aware of how music enriches young lives and how important it is that music lessons are provided on a regular basis to all school students. Guests on the night included host and ACMF Ambassador Rob Mills, Rachel Scott, the Year 5 and 6 Lalor Park Public School STA Band, TikTok sensation Bailey Pickles, Emily Albert and, of course, Australian music and Play School icon Don Spencer - the founder himself. Thankyou to ACMF for all that you do for young people and music.

BILL TURNER CUP AND TROPHY 2024

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Prestigious school football competitions, the Bill Turner Cup (boys) and Bill Turner Trophy (girls) are celebrating 45 and 33 years respectively in 2024. Over the years, these competitions have grown to around 850 teams from NSW, Qld, ACT and Victoria. In 1979, a committee of teachers involved in school football decided to introduce a 15-years and under knock-out competition, chaired by Bill Turner from Booragul High School. Bill had worked tirelessly in school and youth football for many years, valuing fitness, fun and fair play. The competition, paying tribute to these values, commenced with 34 entries Newcastle and Lake Macquarie schools. Belmont and Whitebridge met in the final at the Crystal Palace Ground, Wallsend. Local schools have had some success: Wallsend 3rd (1979) and Champions (1984), Lambton 3rd (1995) and 2nd (2002), Waratah 2nd (1990), Glendale Champions (1981) and 2nd (1985), and Newcastle High 3rd (2024) with Levi Segal awarded the Bill Turner Spirit of Football prize. In 2024, the finals were held at Speers Point, Tuesday 3 and Wednesday 4 September. Bill passed away in 2013, aged 83. His legacy lives on.

PROFESSOR MATT DUN

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—On 22 October, at the National Press Club, Professor Matt Dun of the University of Newcastle and Hunter Medical Research Institute, was presented with the Australian Society for Medical Research medal for his work to improve the survival rate of children diagnosed with DIPG, an aggressive

form of brain cancer. Dedicated to advocating for health and medical research and families facing this "terrible monster" – diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma [DIPG] - Professor Dun leads a team of over twenty researchers analysing these tumours to pinpoint disease sub-types which might further refine treatments. After reaching out to the world's leading DIPG researchers, he and his team developed new life-extending treatments. Through the Zero Childhood Cancer program, the team set out to pinpoint specific mutations in the tumour to identify potential drug targets. Professor Dun continues to study the efficacy of drugs which can help treatments and says that collaboration and generosity can triumph over isolation and adversity, allowing progress to be made when communities work together. Congratulations, Professor Dun, on your award - for extending lives and offering hope.

RAMSGATE BEACH GARAGE SALE TRAIL

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport)—I would like to congratulate the residents of Ramsgate Beach who on Saturday the 9th of November successfully held their annual Garage Sale Trail. Garage Sale Trail is part of a nationwide project in which communities organise garage sales outside of their houses and units to encourage recycling, reusing, and environmental sustainability. The Ramsgate Beach garage sale has become an annual event in the community, where customers from all over the St George and Bayside areas can come and find furniture, clothing, retro crockery, books, plants as well as a lucky dip for children. More than just providing a fun day out for families and thrifty customers, the Garage Sale Trail provides an opportunity to resell pre-loved goods that otherwise might have just been thrown out, promoting a culture of sustainable use and environmental responsibility. In 2023 the Garage Sale Trail saw 4.8 million kilograms of items resold or recycled. I commend and congratulate the community of Ramsgate beach for successfully organising event and thank them for the positive impact it has had on the wider Rockdale community.

BAYSIDE GARDEN CENTRE

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport)—I would like to acknowledge Bayside Garden Centre for the valuable service they provide to the Rockdale community. Bayside Garden Centre started as a joint venture between Bayside Council and the Intellectual Disability Foundation of St George. The Garden Centre is an inclusive workplace that offers meaningful employment opportunities for people with disabilities. More than that, the Bayside Garden Centre offers a wide range of potted plants for as low as \$1 each, helping locals decorate their homes at affordable prices. There are approximately 80,000 plants available at Bayside Garden Centre, ranging from roses to small trees. Bayside Garden's Centre's staff are well trained with an abundance of horticultural knowledge and are happy to provide gardening advice. Bayside Garden Centre offers other services including contract growing, seed propagation, and delivery. The Bayside Garden Centre is one example of how cooperation between government and charity organisations allows for the development of community-based programs that create positive outcomes for our local communities. On behalf of the Rockdale community, I thank the Bayside Garden Centre team for their work and wish them continued success going forward.

FATIMA WINS THE CBC CHILDREN'S AWARD IN LEADERSHIP

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I am delighted to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Fatima in Year 4 at Punchbowl Public School for her outstanding achievement in receiving the prestigious Children's Award in the Leadership category at the City of Canterbury Bankstown award evening. As a valued member of the Green Team and an active participant in the SRC, Fatima has shown exceptional leadership and initiative. Her involvement goes beyond academics, with active participation in extracurricular activities such as chess, choir, and representative sports, where she continues to set a positive example for her peers. This award is a testament to her hard work and positive influence within her school. It is wonderful to see Fatima's leadership qualities acknowledged in the presence of her proud family, alongside her supportive teacher, Mrs. Vohland, and Assistant Principal, Mrs. Iriate. Fatima's success is not only a personal achievement but also a source of pride for Punchbowl Public School and the wider community. Congratulations once again, Fatima! Your leadership and positive spirit shine brightly, and I look forward to seeing all that you will continue to accomplish as a leader within your school and beyond.

SALAAM LIVING LAUNCH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TLC DISABILITY SERVICES

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—The Salaam Group recently launched Salaam Living, a new initiative in partnership with TLC Disability Services, aimed at supporting Australian Muslims in accessing and navigating government provided aged care and the NDIS. Salaam Group is a dedicated organisation focused

on supporting the Australian Muslim community through culturally sensitive services and initiatives. The launch event was a great success, bringing together business leaders, community members, and service providers in support of this remarkable initiative. Salaam Living will serve as a vital first point of contact for Muslim individuals and families, providing appropriate guidance to simplify access to these essential services. Salaam Group's Managing Director, Professor Talal Yassine AM, and TLC CEO Yasser Zaki highlighted the partnership's commitment to compassionate, culturally sensitive support and its mission to enrich lives in our diverse community. This combined approach addresses a growing need within the Muslim community for tailored, accessible aged care and disability services. I extend my congratulations to Salaam Group and TLC for their commitment to the well-being of the Muslim community through Salaam Living. This partnership marks a significant step towards inclusive and accessible aged care and disability services.

ANATE CORPORATE GROUP TRADES DISCOVERY WORKSHOP

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I recently had the pleasure of joining students from Punchbowl Boys' High School at ANATE Corporate Group in Bankstown for their Trades Discovery Workshop—a fantastic initiative aimed at empowering youth through hands-on training and career exploration. ANATE is committed to supporting individuals by providing specialised training in fields such as business, healthcare, construction, and trades, helping young people recognise their potential and explore career pathways. During the workshop, students had the opportunity to engage directly with trade professionals and gain valuable insights into career options within the trades industry. It was wonderful to witness their enthusiasm, and I couldn't resist joining in to show the boys a few hands-on skills myself. Thank you to the dedicated team at ANATE for their commitment to improving community services and encouraging youth employment. Another special thanks to industry partners, FormX Constructions and Oracle Building Services, for generously offering their time and mentorship. This workshop exemplifies ANATE's mission to Educate, Empower, and Employ, instilling confidence in our local youth and creating pathways for positive outcomes. I look forward to seeing more initiatives like this that engage and support our young people's growth and success.

ST GERARD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms MONICA TUDEHOPE (Epping)—In 1964, the Parramatta Sisters of Mercy, upon the invitation of Parish Priest Fr Nolan established in Carlingford what would become St Gerard's Catholic Primary School. Like most fledgling schools, they started small with one building with three classrooms, built by local volunteers. The Sisters oversaw the developments of the school over the subsequent decades displaying great care and love for their work in bringing an excellent standard of Catholic education to Carlingford. Sixty years later, St Gerard's, under the strong leadership of many good principals including current Principal Barbara Yee continue the sisters' mission. I want to pay tribute to Barbara and the school staff for their dedication and passion in their roles. Last week, I was fortunate to sit alongside parents to enjoy a performance from the students to celebrate the school's anniversary. Congratulations again to St Gerard's and I look forward to visiting again soon.

PENRITH BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION – REFEREE AWARDS

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith)—I wanted to take this opportunity to congratulate the Penrith Basketball Association for being honoured with the prestigious "Referee Program of the Year" award at the 2024 Basketball NSW Annual Awards! Our referees and officials are rarely acknowledged. This achievement is a testament to the exceptional commitment and hard work put into training and developing a strong community of officials. With an impressive roster of 150-200 officials, some as young as 13, Penrith Basketball has established itself as a prime example for nurturing young talent and building a pathway for future referees. Your efforts in running basketball games nearly every night at your Cambridge Park facility demonstrate the dedication and consistency required to create an environment where new officials can grow, learn, and gain hands-on experience. The award reflects not only the honour of being recognized at a state level but also highlights the importance of building skills and confidence in people and new referees, giving them a foundation that will benefit them for years to come. Congratulations again on this well-deserved recognition—Penrith Basketball Association is setting a high standard in NSW, and your commitment to training the next generation is truly inspiring!

BE FIRE SAFE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—As we approach the summer season, I echo the calls of Fire and Rescue NSW [FRNSW] for people to be fire safe this summer and to not become complacent about home fire dangers. A fire can spread rapidly and be devastating. In under three minutes, toxic smoke and flames can spread through a home, putting people at serious risk. Some key tips from FRNSW for people to be fire safe are for people to ensure their smoke alarm is in good working order and to test it regularly; for people to make sure they stay in the kitchen while cooking and turn off the stove before they leave; for people to keep barbecues clean and ensure all gas hoses and connections are tight with no leakage; for people to never use or charge a damaged

battery; for people to use only one item per power socket and not to overload power boards or piggyback double adapters when setting up Christmas lights or decorative electric displays. I urge everyone to stay safe, especially throughout the festive, summer season.

M & D LUDDENHAM BIKE AND CAR SHOW

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I rise to thank and commend M & D Luddenham Bike and Car Show organiser Dianne Hand, and all involved, for raising funds for the not-for-profit 'Heartbeat of Football'. I also thank and commend 'Heartbeat of Football' for their important and lifesaving work in raising awareness of cardiac health and how to limit the chances of suffering a sudden unpredicted cardiac event. The show, held on the 5th of October 2024 at the Luddenham Showground, had 900-1000 attendees, with a burnout competition held that included 14 categories for bikes and 14 categories for cars. Entertainment also involved a reptile display and show, a sword fight display and a kid's corner. I'm pleased that the community had so much fun, all for a good cause and am delighted to learn that organisers are planning to run the event annually. On behalf of my electorate of Badgerys Creek, I thank all involved in the event and the not-for-profit organisation.

ORAN PARK PODIUM

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I congratulate and commend Greenfields Development Company and everyone at Oran Park Podium shopping centre and community precinct on Oran Park Podium's recent 10th anniversary. The Podium has over 60 stores across a wide variety of categories and is a vital part of the growing and thriving Oran Park community. It was fitting that the celebrations were marked by activities and festivities for all to enjoy, including the exciting claw machine and the kids craft zone. I was delighted to hear that the winner of the Clinton's Toyota RAV4 was a lady who was celebrating her 10-year wedding anniversary. I wish all local businesses at The Podium the very best as they serve the local community and visitors alike and look forward to many more milestones ahead.

JUNE HEAD

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden)—June Head has dedicated her entire life to selflessly serving our Camden Community. June was born in 1930 and moved to Cobbitty in 1968, where she joined the Camden Red Cross Auxiliary Group – and has been a member ever since. I had the pleasure of meeting June this year and awarding her with her 56 years of service medallion. During her time, June has served as club President and as a co-ordinator for the Trauma Teddy Program, working to create teddies to make hospital stays easier. Now, June works alongside the Red Cross fundraising to support our community and for our beloved events like the Camden Show. At 94 years of age, June continues to exemplify the best parts of our Camden area. Thank you to June for her constant active involvement.

ANTHONY LYNCH

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Ensuring the values of honesty, trust, support, friendship and camaraderie are always maintained have been a feature of Anthony Lynch's unwavering service to the NSW Rural Fire Service. Anthony Lynch's service was acknowledged by receiving the Long Service Medal for 43 years of service as a member of the Arkell Brigade. Anthony joined the Brigade in 1981 and was the Brigades first aid officer for multiple years. He has attended local incidents over the years and is a valuable member of the Brigade. Throughout changes over the decades towards fire response, equipment and firefighting strategies, Anthony has embraced his role as a loyal Brigade member. Today, he continues to reflect these positive values through his manner, good humour and integrity which all place Anthony as a highly respected member, not only of the Arkell RFS Brigade, but also the wider RFS community. Congratulations Anthony on a job well done. Your community owes you a vote of thanks.

RAY FITZPATRICK

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Ensuring the values of honesty, trust, support, friendship and camaraderie are always maintained have been a feature of Ray Fitzpatrick's unwavering service to the NSW Rural Fire Service. Ray Fitzpatrick's service was acknowledged by receiving the Long Service Medal for 44 years of service as a member of the Edith Brigade. Since joining the Brigade in 1980 Ray has been a driving force on training and encourages his Brigade members to attend any training they can. Ray has been the Captain of the Edith Brigade since 1996 and continues to be share his local knowledge with new members and the community. Throughout changes over the decades towards fire response, equipment and firefighting strategies, Ray has embraced his role as a loyal Brigade member. Today, he continues to reflect these positive values through his manner, good humour and integrity which all place Ray as a highly respected member, not only of the Edith RFS Brigade, but also the wider RFS community. Congratulations Ray on a job well done. Your community owes you a vote of thanks.

LESTER LUTHER

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Ensuring the values of honesty, trust, support, friendship and camaraderie are always maintained have been a feature of Lester Luther's unwavering service to the NSW Rural Fire Service. Lester Luther's service was acknowledged by receiving the Long Service Medal for 44 years of service as a member of the Edith Brigade. Lester joined the Edith Brigade in 1980 and has served as the Deputy Captain from 1990 to 2013 before stepping into the Senior Deputy Captain role in 2013. Throughout changes over the decades towards fire response, equipment and firefighting strategies, Lester has embraced his role as a loyal Brigade member. Today, he continues to reflect these positive values through his manner, good humour and integrity which all place Lester as a highly respected member, not only of the Edith RFS Brigade, but also the wider RFS community. Congratulations Lester on a job well done. Your community owes you a vote of thanks.

TAMIL KALAI VIZHA 2024

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—Tamil culture contributes to the rich tapestry of multicultural Parramatta fostered by institutions like the Wentworthville Tamil Study Centre [WTSC]. The centre has been in operation since 1988 teaching the Tamil language every Saturday to children from preschool to HSC. Over 700 students from Western Sydney attend the school. I was honoured to be invited to the annual Kalai Vizha concert, which showcases the rich cultural heritage of the Tamil community, demonstrating the artistic talent of local students. The event is a platform for unity, diversity, and inclusivity. It was a pleasure to experience such a colourful and thoughtful cultural celebration. Whether it's Bharatanatyam dance, Canatic music or Tamil literary recitations, the creativity, knowledge, and talent of these students belie their ages. In total, NSW has 14 Tamil community language schools with thousands of pupils. The Tamil community has seen significant growth in the past decade and I am proud that many call Parramatta, Western Sydney and Australia home. Thank you to Yaso Murugaiah, Secretary of WTSC and Kumaran Jeyapalan, event coordinator for your dedication, enthusiasm and encouragement to the younger generation as they engage with and carry on with the traditions of their cultural heritage.

CAOIMHE BRAY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—Today, I'd like to recognise the extraordinary achievements of Caoimhe Bray, a young sports sensation from Adamstown. At only 15 years old and a Year Nine student at St Pius Xavier High School, Caoimhe has made an impressive debut in the Women's Big Bash League for the Sydney Sixers. As the youngest player in Women's Big Bash League history, she made an immediate impact by delivering a victory over the Melbourne Renegades at Adelaide Oval, hitting the winning runs and showing remarkable poise under pressure. Her talent and potential have already earned her a well-deserved three-year contract with the Sixers. Caoimhe's sporting accomplishments don't stop at cricket. She's also a talented goalkeeper with the Newcastle Jets and has proudly represented Australia with the Junior Matildas at the AFC Under-17 Asian Women's Cup in Bali. I'm incredibly proud to have such a dedicated and gifted young athlete from my area, and I look forward to cheering on Caoimhe as she continues what promises to be an outstanding sporting career.

GRANDPARENT'S DAY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—NSW Grandparents Day is all about celebrating the special role grandparents and grand-friends play in our lives. It's a time to share special moments, laughter, and fun with the people who bring so much warmth and wisdom to our families. I had the pleasure of attending a wonderful event at the Windale Library Hub, where local grandparents and their grandchildren gathered for a musical performance and afternoon tea. Together, we sang songs, enjoyed a story time reading *Where is the Green Sheep?*, and were treated to a beautiful performance by a cellist and flutist. This event was made possible by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice and Lake Macquarie Libraries, and I want to extend my thanks to everyone who helped bring this day to life. And of course, thank you to all the grandparents who came along. Your smiles, stories, and laughter made the day truly unforgettable!

LAUREN BURROWS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—Today, I'd like to recognise Lauren Burrows, who truly kicks goals for the Dudley Redhead Junior Rugby League Club. Lauren wears many hats—canteen coordinator, fundraiser, First Aid Officer, League Safe Officer, and even coach. As a busy mum of four boys and a Learning Support Officer at a local primary school, Lauren somehow finds the time and passion to be the heartbeat of the Mighty Magpie Juniors. Lauren's commitment shines brightest on Amber Day, a special annual

event in memory of Amber Hughes, a former Magpie who lost her battle with DIPG. Thanks to Lauren's tireless efforts, the club has raised nearly \$50,000 over the past two years for RUN DIPG, Amber's chosen charity. For a small community club, that's no small feat and Lauren's drive makes all the difference. Her unwavering dedication to the kids and our community inspires us all. We're incredibly lucky to have someone as committed and spirited as Lauren leading our youth forward.

FINGAL HEAD COASTCARE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—Fingal Head Coastcare Inc in the Tweed Electorate has been restoring flora and fauna habitats since 1986, helping to protect and nurture the amazingly scenic and culturally significant Fingal Head area. This volunteer group cares for the littoral rainforest, coastal woodlands, wetlands and dunal vegetation by propagating native species in a community nursery, controlling weeds, planting local species, restoring flora and fauna habitat, installing nesting boxes and fauna watering plants, providing community environmental education, organising community environmental events and advocating and campaigning for environmental protection. The Tweed has a rich array of flora and fauna with more species of fish, birds, amphibians and mammals than Kakadu. The region has many threatened fauna species and Australia's highest concentration of threatened plants. I commend Fingal Head Coastcare volunteers for your wonderful efforts and thank you on behalf of the Tweed community for restoring and safeguarding the Fingal Head coastal environment.

NORTH COAST REGIONAL NATIVE SEED BANK

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—Tweed Landcare Inc is one of five partners working together to develop the North Coast Regional Native Seed Bank. This project will see seeds collected from across the North Coast and stored at a refurbished facility at the North Coast Regional Botanic Garden in Coffs Harbour. The seeds are tested and kept at this new state-of-the-art facility to ensure they remain viable for use by seed bank members into the future. The project is supported by North Coast Local Land Services and Tweed Landcare Inc is helping to develop the seed bank hub through best practice standards. The seed bank will importantly provide a strategic reserve of seed for use following natural disasters. Tweed Landcare Inc has received an ITV Studios Tweed Community Initiative Fund grant towards undertaking a seed collection bus trip. I commend Tweed Landcare Inc for the important contribution volunteers are making to the North Coast Regional Native Seed Bank and for helping to build the resilience of our native environment in the Tweed.

INTEGRATED CANCER CARE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—Cancer care in the Northern NSW Local Health District [NNSWLHD] has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from patients in the latest Bureau of Health Information's [BHI] Outpatient Cancer Clinics Survey. Local cancer treatment now incorporates the new Integrated Cancer Care Service at the brand new \$723.3 million Tweed Valley Hospital. Survey results showed: 99 per cent of patients rated their overall care as 'very good' or 'good'; 99 per cent of patients rated the health professionals who treated them as 'very good' or 'good'; 95 per cent said they 'definitely' received safe, high quality care from the clinic, 97 per cent agreed that the health professionals were kind and caring; and 95 per cent agreed that reception staff were polite and welcoming. Well done to the NNSWLHD cancer care teams for this positive patient feedback and thank you for the kind, caring and high quality care you are providing to cancer patients and their loved ones.

JACK TAZAWA

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)—Jack Tazawa from Wyong Creek Public School is one of the brightest young minds across the Central Coast being recognised in the 2024 Newcastle Permanent Primary School Mathematics Competition. Jack was presented third place in the Year 6 Division for his outstanding mathematical results. The competition involves more than 300 schools across NSW with challenging Year 5 and Year 6 students to solve 35 questions without the use of calculators or rulers, demonstrating their mathematical abilities and problem-solving skills. The Newcastle Permanent Primary School Mathematics Competition began in 1981, remains one of Australia's largest and longest-running maths competition of its kind. The 2024 competition saw more top performers this year than ever. Congratulations to Jack Tazawa on your great achievement.

KAEDE O'CONNELL

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)—Kaede O'Connell from Wyong Public School is one of the brightest young minds across the Central Coast being recognised in the 2024 Newcastle Permanent Primary School Mathematics Competition. Kaede was presented the Year 5 District Award for his outstanding mathematical results. The competition involves more than 300 schools across NSW with challenging Year 5 and Year 6 students to solve 35 questions without the use of calculators or

rulers, demonstrating their mathematical abilities and problem-solving skills. The Newcastle Permanent Primary School Mathematics Competition began in 1981, remains one of Australia's largest and longest-running maths competition of its kind. The 2024 competition saw more top performers this year than ever. Congratulations to Kaede O'Connell on your great achievement.

YIAN HE

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)—Yian He from Wyong Public School is one of the brightest young minds across the Central Coast being recognised in the 2024 Newcastle Permanent Primary School Mathematics Competition. Yian was presented second place in the Year 6 Division for his outstanding mathematical results. The competition involves more than 300 schools across NSW with challenging Year 5 and Year 6 students to solve 35 questions without the use of calculators or rulers, demonstrating their mathematical abilities and problem-solving skills. The Newcastle Permanent Primary School Mathematics Competition began in 1981, remains one of Australia's largest and longest-running maths competition of its kind. The 2024 competition saw more top performers this year than ever. Congratulations to Yian He on your great achievement.

SAE INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I recognise the talent and creativity of the three Byron Shire winners across several categories at the 19th annual SAE International Awards. The SAE Awards recognise the best alumni and student work from SAE's 48 campuses around the world. Noah Malin's, "Chasing the Breeze" a short documentary about two Ballina kitesurfing enthusiasts, won student Best Film or TV Project. It also screened at the Sony Catchlight Film Festival in Sydney and at the Byron Bay International Film Festival. Byron students Jarmila Sustrova, Crystal Wilkes and Alisha Doherty-Hough were successful across three categories with their conceptual game trailer, Trinket. Jarmila and Crystal won the Best Audio Project (Non-Music) category for students and Alisha won the Best VFX or 3D Production category for alumni. Trinket also won the Best Animation Award at the Byron Bay International Film Festival, whose judges described it as 'unique, witty, and wildly imaginative'. I am proud to represent a region in which the imagination, talent and technical skills of young people in a highly competitive field are encouraged to shine and be celebrated. I also congratulate the Byron Bay SAE University College on the quality of its teaching.

BANGALOW MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH EVENT

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I recognise the joint efforts of several Bangalow community groups aimed at supporting the excellent work done by The Black Dog Institute in the field of men's mental health. A fundraising event, "Lunch with Your Mates", held in early November, was organised by the Bangalow Men's Shed, Bangalow Lions Club and NSW Police with support from The Bangalow Bowlo. Attendees heard about the life experiences of rugby league legends Bill Harrigan, Paul Sironen, and Don McKinnon at the lunch, which was held at The Bowlo. The issue of poor mental health in men is one of the utmost gravity in the region, with Byron and Lismore shires having the highest suicide rate per head of population in NSW, and I am incredibly pleased with the commitment shown by local organisations to attempt to address the problem. The Bangalow Men's Shed has shown itself to be a leader in this field, with its president David Noakes, being a tireless advocate on behalf of residents of all genders in the area.

RUTHERFORD AMBULANCE RESCUE SERVICES

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Thank you to our first responders. On the morning of October 12, Matilda Campbell went for a bushwalk with a friend. When she dropped a mobile phone and tried to retrieve it, Matilda slipped and ended up wedged between two boulders. The image of Matilda's feet protruding from between the rocks went viral after the event. A rescue team was quickly formed, comprising of the Volunteer Rescue Association, the Rural Fire Service, NSW Police Rescue and specialist rescue paramedics from the Rutherford Ambulance Station, including Peter Watts and Nicole Priest. It was a seven-hour rescue effort unlike any Peter and Nicole had confronted in their careers. After several hours, Peter was able to squeeze through a gap 'no wider than his chest' in order to reach Matilda. Matilda was able to be freed with only minor scratching and bruises and this is testament to the professionalism and care shown by the entire rescue team. Thank you to all our first responders, our Maitland community appreciates your tireless dedication and professionalism.

GLADYS MITCHELL 30 YEARS OF DARRELL LEA

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Gladys Mitchell has been affectionately known within the Maitland community as the 'Darrell Lea Lady' for over thirty years. Gladys purchased the original Darrell Lea shop in High St, Maitland in October 1994, after looking for a

business of her own to run for some time. The shop quickly evolved from a nuts and ice-cream store to the chocolate, card and gift store that the community got to know and love until its closure in 2015. In 2005 Gladys was approached by Darrell Lea to start a distribution business, running both that business and the Maitland store for almost 10 years before focusing on her distribution business, known as Glader Confectionary in Rutherford. Darrell Lea going into administration in 2012 changed Gladys' business overnight as the new owners deleted gift box and carton lines that had made up a large part of her sales. Gladys pivoted and brought in other brands such as Chocolatier and Davies to make up the losses, and Glader Confectionary now distributes approximately 15 brands, also sold via their Shipley Drive shopfront. I congratulate Gladys on over thirty years of success with Darrell Lea.

DR. JACOB ALEXANDER

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Congratulations to Rutherford GP and Vamp Cosmetic Clinic owner Dr Jacob Alexander who has won a prestigious award for his cosmetic physician work. Dr. Alexander won in the category of Best Non-Surgical Facial Rejuvenation/Beautification at the Aesthetics Australia conference held earlier this year. The award was judged by a panel of non-surgical cosmetic experts from across the world and represents a terrific honour for a regional clinic. The award was in recognition of Dr. Alexander's CO2 laser skin resurfacing treatment which is an intense process which treats deep wrinkles, skin laxity, extensive pigmentation and eye rejuvenation, and can only be performed by a doctor. This type of laser treatment can remove skin cancers, address cosmetic skin issues, such as fine or deep lines, wrinkles and acne scars and treat areas of skin discoloration, like sunspots and age spots. Congratulations to Dr. Alexander on this industry recognition.

BOUDDI FOUNDATION

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to take this opportunity to commend John Bell, the founder of the Bouddi Foundation for the Arts and congratulate the highly talented young artists who have recently been recognised at the annual Bouddi Foundation for the Arts Awards Presentation. The Foundation has shown unwavering support and dedication to fostering young talent and championing the arts here on the Central Coast since 2011. Through his vision and leadership, John has created an invaluable platform that gives emerging artists essential funding to pursue their dreams. The recent presentation exemplifies this commitment, with nearly \$80,000 in grants and scholarships awarded to 42 talented young artists. This is an incredible achievement and a testament to the Foundation's dedication to the arts. Despite these financially challenging times, the Bouddi Foundation relies entirely on the generosity of private donors—a heartening reminder of how a community can come together to uplift its young creatives. Congratulations to each young artist who received a grant or scholarship. These awards, ranging from \$500 to \$5000, offer essential resources to help launch the careers of the next generation of artists across all forms of artistic expression, from painting and music to theatre and writing.

MICHELLE MITCHELL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—Today, I want to acknowledge constituent Michelle Mitchell who has taken a proactive approach to the cost-of-living crisis by running a Box Divvy Food Hub right from her own garage. Through this modern food co-op, she's supporting 55 local families each week, helping them access fresh, affordable groceries straight from our local farmers and suppliers. Originally a member herself, Michelle stepped up to lead a local Hub when the neighbourhood's fruit and veggie service closed, as a way to ensure access to fresh, local food. Her efforts through Box Divvy not only help families save up to 30% on groceries, but also allow 60 cents of every dollar to go directly to farmers—far more than what big supermarkets pay. Beyond groceries, the Hub has become a real gathering place, connecting people of all ages and backgrounds. Michelle's work isn't just about food; it's about community. From organising kindness boxes to sharing recipes and new ideas, she's built a welcoming family hub that emphasizes sustainability, mindful eating, and meaningful support for farmers. Congratulations Michelle on your involvement in this fantastic endeavour to help ensure people within your community have access to local fresh food and for fostering connection.

POOTY AWARDS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—Today, I am honoured to acknowledge the remarkable commitment of our police force. I recently had the privilege of attending the NSW Police Officer of the Year Awards in Sydney, an inspiring event jointly organized by the Rotary Clubs of NSW and the NSW Police Force. This prestigious evening celebrates the incredible professionalism and dedication of our police officers and civilian staff across New South Wales. I want to extend my warmest congratulations to Senior Constable Alison Stewart from Port Stephens, who was awarded the title of Rotary NSW Police Officer of the Year. Senior Constable Stewart's extensive charity work with Backpack Venture, her 36-year career as a regional officer, and her dedication to youth in her community are a true testament to her character and commitment. We are also grateful to all nominees, who represent excellence in service and courage. I was once again joined by my friend Irene Jurgens

APM, a veteran policewoman who's extraordinary 44-year career inspired the IJ Fellowship Award in 2014, honouring outstanding community-based policing contributions. To all the dedicated officers recognized at this year's awards, thank you for your unwavering service in keeping our community safe.

ARMENIAN COMMUNITY WELFARE CENTRE

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—The Armenian Community Welfare Centre is a prime example of the wonderful charity organisations that abound in Willoughby. As a ministry of the Armenian Apostolic Church of the Holy Resurrection, the Centre seeks to demonstrate the love of God in practical ways to people in need. Established in 1982 under the auspices of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Australia and New Zealand, the Centre was originally founded to assist newly arrived Armenian migrants in their settlement. Today the Centre provides a range of social services that cater for various demographic groups in the community. These include domestic assistance, respite services, meals, transport, and social support for groups and individuals. I commend the President of the Armenian Community Centre, Archbishop Haigazoun Najarian, and its manager, Zepur Mouradian, for their dedicated and compassionate leadership. As a registered charity, the Centre receives some government funding for its services, but welcomes donations from its generous supporters in the community. I appreciate immensely the work that the Armenian Community Welfare Centre does to help people and community.

CROWS NEST CENTRE

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I would like to commend the Crows Nest Centre for the immense social capital it contributes to my community of Willoughby. The Centre exists to provide and facilitate quality community programs and services to enhance the quality of life of individuals, reduce social isolation and sustain community wellbeing. The Centre caters to vulnerable groups in our community including seniors, migrants, people living with a disability, and those at risk of homelessness. It provides myriad services including assisted shopping, assisted transport, a social group for seniors of Chinese background, a community restaurant, a community shower, a computer lab, employability skills for migrants, English conversation classes, home visits, assistance with homework, a linen service, meals on wheels, aged care services, parenting seminars and mothers groups for Spanish and Japanese speakers. The Centre is above all vested in fostering social connections and belonging. Whether it is a home visit by a caring volunteer, a meal in the company of others, or a trivia night, the Centre regularly provides its clients with something to look forward to. The Crows Nest Centre is truly something for which my community of Willoughby is all the richer.

MERCY CATHOLIC COLLEGE ART SHOWCASE

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I would like to recognise the recent Creative Arts Showcase by Mercy Catholic College held at The Concourse. This incredible event highlighted the immense talent and creativity of the students showcasing a diverse range of artistic works and performances. The dedication and hard work of the students and staff were evident in every piece displayed from visual art to music and drama. It was a wonderful celebration of creativity, innovation and expression bringing our community together to support and applaud the achievements of these young artists. Congratulations to Mercy Catholic College for an outstanding showcase and thank you to everyone who contributed to making this event such a memorable success. Our community is fortunate to have such vibrant and inspiring young talent. I was proud to be with the school community and I thank Principal Brenda Timp and everyone present for making me welcome.

CHOCOL'ART EXHIBITION AT THE CREATIVE INCUBATOR

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—It is not every day that you see interactive art made entirely of chocolate, but the Skills for Trade Chocol'art Exhibition held at The Creator Incubator last month achieved this outstanding feat. This groundbreaking showcase featured interactive art installations that pushed the boundaries of culinary artistry. Made from repurposed chocolate supplied by sponsor Fmayer/Callebaut Australia, the sculptures encapsulate hundreds of hours of painstaking skilled labour under the vision of Dean Gibson, Jon Pryer and Shane Williams. The unique fusion of artistic vision and chocolate mastery featured a large chocolate eagle with a two-metre wingspan suspended by the ceiling. Seven chocolate seagulls were also mounted to fly over a projected background of Newcastle beaches. I would like to thank The Creator Incubator for bring this exhibition to Newcastle, and hope we continue to see more revolutionary (and delicious!) art.

THE BEACH HOTEL

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Merewether pub The Beach Hotel for taking out the top award at the Australian Hotel Association's NSW Awards last month. The hotel was named NSW's best regional pub out of a pool of 950 nominations representing the best and brightest in the NSW hotel industry. Bought by Glenn Piper in 2022, the hotel has become a local hotspot after their extensive renovations. Under the new management, the Hotel pays homage to the melody of local cultures, encapsulating the surf and

the city with their Art Deco architecture, iconic views, and delicious food. This is an amazing achievement, and I thank the hotel for their ongoing celebration of our wonderful city.

NINA'S IGA

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—I'd like to pay tribute to Hamilton's beloved grocer, Nina's IGA, which has been sold after nearly four decades of business. Affectionately known as 'Nina's', the grocer opened in 1989 under the management of Nina and George Kiriakidis, and quickly became embedded into the cultural fabric of Hamilton. In addition to selling life-changing lotto tickets over the years, the Beaumont Street grocer has worked hard to cater to the needs of Newcastle's growing migrant community by stocking unique items from across the world. Recognised as Newcastle's longest-running international grocer, I'd like to thank Nina and George for their wonderful contribution to our community and wish them both a happy retirement!

ETHICAL CLOTHING AUSTRALIA NETWORKING EVENT

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I draw to the attention of the House the recent Ethical Clothing Australia Networking Event. Ethical Clothing Australia works collaboratively with local textile, clothing and footwear businesses to audit their business practices and ensure workers are being paid appropriately and their rights upheld. This accreditation, in turn, empowers consumers to support businesses that value workers' rights and environmentally friendly practices. This event was an important opportunity to meet with Ethical Clothing Australia and accredited business owners and workers. They all deserve thanks for their work towards a more transparent manufacturing industry where the rights of workers are prioritised and protected. I am particularly grateful to the outworkers that came to the event and shared their experiences with us so willingly. Congratulations to the workers and representatives from the accredited businesses, to Rachel Reilly, Ethical Clothing Australia National Manager, to the compliance team from the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia, to my parliamentary colleague Sarah Kaine MLC and her staff member Katie Johns who co-hosted this event with me, and to everyone that attended this event.

NORTON STREET ITALIAN FESTA

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the house the dedicated work of the Leichhardt Collective and Co.As.It on the incredible street festival – the Norton Street Italian Festa. This iconic local event started in 1986 and is now one of the largest street festivals in Australia. Norton Street in Leichhardt, or 'Little Italy', has long been known as the centre of the Italian community here in Sydney. Many local businesses, and thousands of people took part in the event and enjoyed perfect Sydney weather, delicious food and drinks, music, rides, art and culture. Norton Street Italian Festa continues to people together, to support local artists, businesses, and traditions. The Festa helps preserve cultural heritage while creating spaces for shared experiences, strengthening belonging, pride, and unity within our community. Congratulations to everyone who helped put this event together from the Leichhardt Collective, including their President Nigel Ng, Vice President Joshua Gibbs, Secretary Eliza Bullivant and Ilario Ventolini; and Co. As. It, including General Manager Thomas Camporeale. I look forward to continuing to support this longstanding and important event.

SAINT RAFQA FUNDRAISER 2024

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—On 8 November, I had the privilege of joining the Maronite community at the St Rafqa parish gala fundraiser, a yearly event that brings parishioners together in celebration and support of their church. His Excellency Bishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay graced the occasion, adding to the event's significance as we gathered to champion the parish's valuable work. The enthusiasm and generosity displayed by everyone in attendance spoke volumes about their commitment to supporting St Rafqa's mission and initiatives. It was inspiring to engage in conversations about the parish's plans for growth and its ongoing work to uplift those in need. The evening offered a warm and welcoming atmosphere. I would like to extend a special thank you to Father Sarkis, Father Joe, and Father Boutros for their dedicated service to the community and their role in leading the St Rafqa project. Their vision for a new St Rafqa will undoubtedly benefit parishioners and future generations. This event reaffirmed the vital role that St Rafqa plays in fostering faith, community, and charitable service.

ALDARDELGER DAGIIRANZ

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government)—Today, I recognise the hard work and remarkable achievements of Aldardelger Dagairanz, a proud Year 9 student at my own alma mater, JJ Cahill Memorial High School. Aldardelger is a talented young scholar and leader who has recently represented Australia at prestigious international competitions, including the fifth Copernicus Natural Science and Physics Astronomy competition and the International Mathematics Olympiad in New York, where he earned a bronze medal and helped supervise over 200 students from around the world. Born in South Korea, raised in Mongolia, and now an inspiring member of our local Mascot community, Aldardelger has also founded a non-government organisation

to inspire Mongolian youths to pursue global educational opportunities, be it through international Olympiads or studying abroad. Aldardelger's dedication to his studies, active leadership, and enthusiasm for the NSW public education system exemplifies the values of JJ Cahill Memorial High School. Congratulations, Aldardelger—you make our community incredibly proud!

PARRAMATTA AND DISTRICT SYNAGOGUE – 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Sunday 3rd November, I was pleased to attend the 75th Anniversary event for the Parramatta and District Synagogue, which included a commemoration of the October 7th 2023 attacks and the launch of the Daat Library and Learning Centre, Parramatta. Parramatta and District Synagogue traces its history to 1949, when Jewish families first met for the purpose of establishing a synagogue and commencing formal Jewish education in the local area for their children. The current site of the Synagogue was purchased in 1952 and the Synagogue was built and occupied in 1955. The 75th Anniversary event included a commemoration of the October 7th 2023 attacks in Israel, with prayers for the safe return of all hostages and a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The Daat Library and Learning Centre, based in the Parramatta Synagogue grounds, was also launched with key texts and digital materials to help preserve Jewish culture in Western Sydney. My thanks go out to Michael Morris OAM, President, Parramatta and District Synagogue, David Ossip, President, NSW Jewish Board of Deputies and all dedicated Synagogue volunteers and supporters, with best wishes for the next 75 years in our vibrant Western Sydney community.

NSW FEDERATION OF TAMIL SCHOOLS – INIYA TAMIL MAALAI

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Sunday 10th November, I was pleased to address teachers, students and parents from our local Tamil-Australian community at the annual Iniya Tamil Maalai event at Girraween High School. Tamil Australians are a dynamic part of our Prospect Electorate and Western Sydney community. With an estimated 150,000 Tamil speakers across Australia, our local Prospect Electorate is the beating heart of Tamil community life. Formed in 1991, the NSW Federation of Tamil Schools has committed to promoting the Tamil language and culture among children across NSW and beyond for more than three decades. Today, NSWFTS represents more than 3,000 students and 250 teachers from 6 affiliated Tamil community language schools, fostering cultural values and heritage within our local Tamil community. This year, NSWFTS celebrated student achievements in the Dr Venthanar Ilango Tamil Proficiency Examination with Distinction and High-Distinction, as well as dedicated Tamil teachers who reached service milestones of 5 years through to an extraordinary 35 years of service. My heartfelt congratulations go out to Ilango Surendran, President 2024-2025, and all organisers, teachers, students, parents and volunteers at the NSW Federation of Tamil Schools on another year full of accomplishment and success.

THE PARKS COMMUNITY NETWORK INC.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to The Parks Community Network Inc. [PARKS] on 30 years of outstanding service to our community. It was great to join their AGM and celebrate this fantastic milestone with our Prospect Electorate community, on Friday 25th October 2024. For 30 years, PARKS has been a pillar of our community, providing meaningful support, when our community needed most. PARKS was established with the vision to alleviate hardship and need through benevolent programs, across South Western Sydney. Working directly with local stakeholders, they provide services to assist and relieve the impacts of financial hardship, distress, loneliness and personal need. Offering practical and considered support, PARKS offers a plethora of focused programs. From Carer Support for multicultural communities, a Seniors Wellness Centre to connect, educate and promote independence for our seniors, parenting programs, a youth enrichment program to promote leadership and emotional-resilience and a No Interest Loan Scheme, PARKS are supporting all ages and abilities. My heartfelt thanks and congratulations go out to Jacqueline Harborne, President, Tairyn Vergara, CEO, Natalie Jacobi, Family Support Service Coordinator and the whole PARKS team for providing vital support and creative solutions to our community for 30 years.

JENNIFER SMITH

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge Concord local Jennifer Smith for her contributions as a volunteer across many community organisations. Jenny has committed over 10 years in various volunteer roles, primarily supporting young individuals and mental health organisations. Her work includes volunteering with Beyond Blue, the Diversity and Disability Alliance and the Smith Family. Recently, she has engaged with the Girls Brigade and the Warrior Women Foundation. Beyond her charitable work, Jenny has used her experience to support the Sydney and South Eastern Sydney Local Health Districts through the Lived Experience Advisory Panel and Peer Facilitator Understanding Mental Distress workshops. Jenny's recognition as the Westfield Local Hero 2020 is a testament to her dedication. On behalf of our community, I acknowledge Jenny and wish her all the best.

GLADYS REAVELL

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to congratulate Abbotsford local Gladys Reavell who recently celebrated her 101st birthday on 29 October 2024. Reaching 101 years is a truly remarkable milestone. In marking this extraordinarily special occasion, we acknowledge a century plus one of loving memories and reflect fondly on a lifetime of cherished and sentimental moments. I visited Gladys on her birthday with my colleague, City of Canada Bay Council Mayor Michael Megna and met her son Norm and daughter-in-law Judy. That night Gladys was heading off to Sydney Rowing Club to enjoy a celebration with her family. It is clear that Gladys is so loved and that she is living a tremendously fulfilling life. Together with her beloved husband Norman, she raised a beautiful family that has flourished welcoming grandchildren and great-grandchildren. On behalf of our local community, I sincerely wish Gladys all the very best on the occasion of her 101st birthday. Wishing you all the very best always.

A BLOODY GREAT NIGHT OUT

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge the Foundation for a Bloody Great Cause who recently hosted 'A Bloody Great Night Out' on 18 October 2024. This year, a Bloody Great Night Out raised over \$250,000, bringing the total funds raised for Concord Hospital to over \$1.5 million. The Foundation for a Bloody Great Cause was established to support the Concord Hospital Haematology Research Unit. The Foundation provides funding for specialist nurses to support patients, and to fund clinical trials, patient support and preventative research. I acknowledge the efforts of the Bloody Great Committee Chair Susan MacGregor as well as committee members Rosanna Campisi and Marie Piccin as well as Christian Bracci, Steven Nassibian, Natalino Bongiorno, Lara Meli and Professor Judith Trotman. A Bloody Great Night Out would not be possible without the tireless efforts of the committee, former patients and volunteers. I extend my sincerest gratitude to the staff of the Concord Hospital Haematology Research Unit including the doctors, nurses and allied health staff who have committed countless hours to blood cancer research and save lives every day. I congratulate the Foundation for a Bloody Great Cause & thank everyone who supported this wonderful cause.

PETS DAY OUT

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills)—I'm disappointed to have missed the annual Pets Day Out at Vale of Ah in Milperra earlier this month. As many of you know, this event has become a cherished part of our community calendar here in Canterbury Bankstown. Each year, the very much-loved dog park in Milperra brings together hundreds of residents and their furry friends to celebrate our shared love for animals and all things fabulous and furry. The East Hills electorate is home to many devoted pet owners, and it's heartwarming to see how pets bring us together as neighbors and friends. Whether it's at the park, along our walking paths, or in our own backyards, our pets make our community a happier and more connected place. This isn't just a regular day out—it's a whole festival dedicated to the pets we love. From entertaining pet parades to activities and family-friendly fun, there's something for everyone to enjoy. Thank you, East Hills, for being such a caring, pet-loving community. Let's keep celebrating what makes us such a special place to call home.

BLACK HEAD SURF CLUB

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise the achievements of Black Head Surf Club's team at the Newcastle Permanent Series held at Caves Beach, Newcastle. With challenging weather conditions, including heavy rain, strong winds, and rough surf, the small team of eight competitors secured fourth place overall, finishing just behind some of Newcastle's strongest clubs. Every team member achieved at least one top 10 result, with tough competition from the Hunter Branch. Special mention goes to Ella McDonald, who won in three individual events in the under-13s, and her brother Jayden, who came second place for the round with a win in the surf race and podium finishes in the board and iron. I congratulate Black Head Surf Club on their outstanding performance. I look forward to seeing their continued success in future competitions.

DR. ARRON VELTRE

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to acknowledge Dr. Arron Veltre, Senior Staff Specialist in palliative care at Manning Base Hospital, who was recently awarded the Rural Doctors Association of Australia's 2024 Rural Doctor of the Year. Dr. Veltre began his work at Manning Base in 2020 as our region's first and only palliative care specialist. Since then, he has helped shape the local palliative care service, which now serves over 600 patients annually. Dr. Veltre has mentored countless students and young doctors, inspiring many to pursue careers in rural healthcare. As a former Clinical Dean at the University of Newcastle's Manning Campus, Dr. Veltre has encouraged a strong culture of learning, particularly focused on the unique needs of rural medicine. I thank Dr. Veltre for his work, he has strengthened palliative care and advanced rural health outcomes in our region. I congratulate him on this well-deserved recognition.

WINGHAM MUSIC FESTIVAL

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to acknowledge the Wingham Music Festival, which celebrated another successful year. Founded and organised by Donna Ballard, Wingham Music Festival has managed to keep going post-COVID by staying connected to the community. Unlike major festivals, the Wingham Music Festival runs entirely on volunteer effort, with help from state and federal grants. This year's festival brought in large crowds, with headline acts like GANgajang, the Baby Animals, and the Wolfe Brothers, as well as local artists, including 14-year-old guitarist Archie Geronimi of Autumn Blue. Thanks to Donna and her wonderful team of volunteers, the Wingham Music Festival remains a valued celebration of music and community for our region.

NEWCASTLE PERMANENT SCHOOL MATHEMATICS COMPETITION 2024

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today, I commend the 2024 Newcastle Permanent Primary School Mathematics Competition winners who excelled amongst over 300 entries in mathematical talent, dedication and perseverance. The brightest minds in regional NSW recently competed in Australia's longest running, annual mathematics competition in a showcase that tested students numeracy and problem-solving skills from Years 5 to 6. Among them, four students from the Port Macquarie Electorate received awards in their age division. I congratulate the following students who achieved success. Emilia Perri from Tacking Point Public School claimed joint first place honours in the Year 6 division. Oliver Acland from St Columba Anglican School Port Macquarie won joint third place in the Year 5 division. In the Year 5 District Awards Dexter Van Mill from Port Macquarie Public School took out third place. The Year 6 District Award was presented to Finn Brunsdon of St Columba Anglican School Port Macquarie. All of our gifted students performed exceptionally well under pressure, problem-solving 35 questions without the use of a calculator or ruler. A wonderful achievement from our talented, young, critical thinkers. Congratulations again on this wonderful result.

LOLA STYLES GAINS POSITION IN NSW PHOENIX U15 SQUAD.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise volleyball powerhouse Lola Styles from Hastings Secondary College, Port Macquarie Campus. Following her impressive performance at the NSW All Schools National Titles held in June, Lola trialled for a position on the NSW Phoenix U15 squad. This program represents the highest tier of the Volleyball NSW pathway, offering athletes the opportunity to compete at both national and international levels. Lola's performance must have been impressive, as she was selected as the team's Libero (defensive specialist) and also appointed co-captain for the squad. In September, Lola participated in the Australian Youth Volleyball Championships in Bendigo, Victoria. Over 1,500 athletes competed fiercely for the national title. Despite Lola's team finishing 6th overall out of 9, many of these matches went into nail biting overtime sets, demonstrating the team's high level of skill and competition. Lola represented Port Macquarie proudly and is the only regional athlete selected for the squad. Lola, your dedication and skill as a young athlete is exceptional and the commitment and support of your parents and coach is a testimony to their vision for your future as a sportswoman. Congratulations to you all!

WAYNE GLEESON – NSW TOUCH FOOTBALL AWARDS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise the praiseworthy achievements of Mr Wayne Gleeson, President of Port Macquarie's MAKOS Touch Football Club. Wayne was named Senior Player of the Year at the recent NSW Touch Football Awards. This is a magnificent achievement at any age, but as Wayne approaches 50, it is an even more impressive feat! Although a minimal contact sport, touch football is physically demanding, it's fast-paced, requires speed, evasive tactics and great skill in passing and catching. In addition to holding the position of Club President, this year Wayne led his team, the Northern Eagles Masters Mixed side to a decisive 7-2 victory over the South Queensland Sharks in the Grand Final. This win resulted in Wayne receiving both the Eagles Player's Player award, and the Player of the Finals award, topping off the excitement of winning the premiership. A memorable presentation event was held at the Sydney Cricket Ground to honour the achievements of touch football across the State of NSW, and I believe that Wayne was a very deserving recipient. Congratulations Wayne on a year of sporting success and I hope there will be many more games to be played.

NORTH RYDE RSL - REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—Mr Speaker – I would like to thank North Ryde RSL for organising a well-attended Remembrance Day ceremony at Macquarie Park Cemetery last week. This event was an important opportunity for our community to pay tribute to our fallen who have sacrificed so much for our Nation.

BALU MOOTHEDATH - DIWALI CELEBRATION

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—Mr Speaker – I would like to thank Balu Moothedath for organising a fantastic Diwali celebration last weekend. The celebrations were a great opportunity for our local Indian community to come together and celebrate the most important holiday in their calendar.

PROFESSOR FRANK TALBOT AM

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—Mr Speaker – I would like to pay tribute to Riverview Resident, Professor Frank Talbot AM. Professor Talbot, who passed away on the 15th of October, was a groundbreaking researcher who left an indelible mark on the field of marine science. I offer my sincere condolences to his family. Vale Frank Talbot.

SILVER SURFERS

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater)—I want to congratulate and celebrate the amazing new Silver Surfers initiative run by Surfers for Climate together with MWP Care, Manly Surf School and body boarding champion Ben Player and owner of the Manly and Palm Beach Surf School, Matt Grainger. Over 60's 'gromparents' meet at beaches, including Kiddy's Corner at Palm Beach, to catch a wave together. MWP Care is a well-established part of the Northern Beaches community with the aim of providing support to our elderly and those living with a disability to be independent for as long as possible. Surfers for Climate know that people want to protect the things they love and getting into the ocean is a way to appreciate and promote environmental protection. Silver Surfers fosters a sense of community and promotes wellbeing amongst our elderly who can often experience loneliness at far higher rates than other age groups. This group collaboration is an epic one and I can't wait to join the next group of over 60s as they get out of their comfort zone and embrace body boarding as a terrific way to keep healthy, connect with the ocean and have fun.

AMY KENNY

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater)—A huge thank you to Amy Kenny, the outgoing president of the Avalon Public School P&C Association. A teacher herself at Bilgola Public School, Amy's leadership as the Avalon Public School P&C Association President has brought about significant transformation within Avalon Public School of 750 students, 50 staff members and a school community of more than 600 families. Amy quickly established herself as a dynamic, consultative leader with equal parts passion, diplomatic skill, determination and humour. She formed a strong leadership team that successfully organised events like a record breaking fund-raising Colour Run, parent socials and fundraising auctions, and well-attended Father's and Mother's Day breakfasts. These initiatives not only foster a deeper sense of community but also helped raise substantial funds for essential projects, including a significant nature playground refurbishment, the construction of a new OOSH building and the launch of the Lego Hub. Amy's dedication has been evident in her consistent presence on campus and her dynamic, hands-on approach to leadership, ensuring the smooth operation of all P&C activities. Her efforts have revitalised P&C meetings, leading to increased participation and engagement, galvanising and strengthening the school community.

SHARNI WILLIAMS

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater)—I want to acknowledge a local legend and fold medal Olympian of the Pittwater community, Sharni Williams. She has been a true trailer blazer in Australian sport as the longest-serving female Rugby Sevens player, competing in three Olympic Games in 2016, 2020 and 2024. She was part of the team that achieved Australia's inaugural rugby sevens gold medal at the 2016 games in Rio De Janeiro. Sharni was widely regarded as an integral part of the team and has shown durability and tenacity on the field like few others in the game. Her decorated career has seen a rise in public interest not only in Women's Rugby Sevens, but women's sport more widely. Sharni showed off her pride at the Tokyo games after being granted permission to by the International Olympic Committee to wear rainbow headgear on the field. Along with her wife Mel, she has now settled into post-Sevens life buying an F45 gym in Avalon, helping encourage local residents to stay active and healthy. The community are so proud of Sharni and grateful for what a great role model she has been for aspiring young girls in sport and the wider LGBTQI+ community.

LEJLA SINANOVIC – PARLIFLIX FINALIST

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—Yesterday I had the pleasure of meeting students from across NSW who entered into the 2024 ParliFlix competition Congratulations Lejla Sinanovic of Newington Public School who was chosen as a Finalist in the short entry film category for the Parli Flicks Short Film Award in the Best Metropolitan category. Lejla and her parents were invited to the NSW Parliament to attend the Parli-Flicks Awards Night where I had the pleasure of presenting Lejla with a medal and a certificate. Entries were made to the following categories – BEST PRIMARY, BEST JUNIOR SECONDARY, BEST SENIOR SECONDARY AND

BEST REGIONAL. This year's Parli-Flicks competition inspired students from Year 5 to 12 across metro and regional NSW to enter the Parli-Flicks short film award to create a one-minute film answering the theme question - if you were a Member of Parliament, what is the one law that you would want to pass? The standard and creativity of the entries were of a high calibre with a strong understanding of democracy. Lejla's short film focussed on the one law she would pass – creating a Public Holiday to celebrate Ramadan. Congratulations Lejla and all those who took up this challenge.

NATHANIEL ILOSKI

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge the incredible fundraising efforts of Nathaniel Iloski of Sylvania who participated in Aspect's Run for Autism in October. The Run for Autism raises funds to support Aspect in their efforts to support the interests and aspirations of people on the autism spectrum by asking participants register to run up to 120km over October. Impressively, 6,028 registered participants ran 128,004km and raised over \$684,871 for autistic Australians. Amongst them was superstar Nathaniel, who was diagnosed with autism at age 7 and participated to ensure that funding was available to support more children and adults with autism assessments, special education, therapies and services. With the encouragement of his mum Ivana, Nathaniel ran 127km to smash his initial fundraising goal of \$350 and raise \$4,118. There is no better demonstration of Nathaniel's generosity than his request to his friends and family that they donate to his fundraising efforts for Aspect in lieu of giving him birthday presents. I commend Nathaniel on his incredible fundraising to support those with autism in our community.

PUTT PLANET

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I recognise dynamic husband and wife duo, Wayne and Genelle Griffin of Putt Planet, a much-loved small business that recently closed its doors after 14 years. Founded in 2011, Putt Planet was born in response to what the couple saw as a lack of variety in all age recreational entertainment in the Sutherland Shire. The African themed mini-golf course in Miranda allowed players to putt through bustling market places, homes and even sewers while exploring the ancient doorway to Eastern Africa - Mombasa. From the beginning, Putt Planet catered for players of all ages and abilities. Wayne and Genelle should be proud that it was the only fully wheelchair accessible mini-golf course in Australia, and as such the go to destination for families and disability groups. To mark the closure Wayne and Genelle hosted a farewell party for former staff and volunteers, providing them all with the opportunity to reflect and reminisce on their time at Putt Planet. I thank Wayne and Genelle for providing 14 years of fun and entertainment in our community and wish them well for the future as they spend more time with family and take on new projects.

JOJO BURANA

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge the incredible efforts of JoJo Burana of GyMEA in raising funds for the Kids with Cancer Foundation. JoJo is a familiar face to many in our community and was moved to act upon hearing of the heart-breaking stories of a number of local children who had been diagnosed with cancer. In April, JoJo set the ambitious goal of raising \$5,000 this year by making and selling bracelets which she fashioned into NRL team colours with the support of her employer Fruiticious GyMEA. The bracelets soon became a hit, with many in our community offering much more than the \$5 they were retailing for to purchase one of JoJo's "circles of love". It is no surprise that through the incredible generosity of our local community, JoJo exceed her goal of \$5,000. In September, JoJo visited the Sydney Children's Hospital Randwick to deliver the \$6,200 she raised to the Kids with Cancer Foundation and tour the children's cancer ward. I commend JoJo on her charitable efforts and thank her for bringing her "circles of love" to our community for such an important cause.

75 YEARS OF SNOWY MOUNTAIN SCHEME

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education)—This year marks 75 years since Ben Chifley and William McKell detonated the first blast to get the mighty Snowy Scheme underway. I had the privilege of joining more than 370 former workers in Cooma recently to celebrate the anniversary. The Snowy Scheme is the first thing most Australian's think of when they hear 'nation building project' – and rightly so. This was an engineering marvel and a vision we will rarely see repeated anywhere in the world. Construction was dangerous and tough, but the comradeship and bonds formed have lasted life times. The Snowy Scheme created Australia's first multicultural regional community as people from around the world, particularly post war Europe came to the Cooma Region to build the scheme and then build families. Being at this celebration was moving and exciting. Justifiable pride on the faces on the workers, joy at seeing old friends and excitement about the work now being done on Snowy 2.0. Congratulations to those workers, thanks to Snowy Hydro and all involved in organising the celebration.

QUEANBEYAN SES UNIT 60 YEARS

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education)—I was pleased to join Monaro SES volunteers on Saturday night, to honour volunteer service and 60 years of the Queanbeyan SES. Queanbeyan's unit was formed in 1963 when Robin Grame and Jannette Yann drowned in the Queanbeyan River. At its first meeting of 1964 the then Queanbeyan Municipal Council resolved to acquire rescue equipment and two locals, Alderman Jack McNamara and firefighter Ray Morton, drove the establishment of Queanbeyan Civil Defence. In the 60 years since then the Queanbeyan Civil Defence has transformed into Queanbeyan SES and has tirelessly helped our community – and many others – respond to natural disasters and other needs. On Saturday night, we heard from Zakia an incredible list of events attended. That list went back to a flood I remember in the 1970s when my father was local member. In the time I have represented the Queanbeyan community I have seen numerous occasions where the volunteers of Queanbeyan SES have kept the community safe. From Queanbeyan floods in 2010-11 to weeks of deployment on the 2019-20 bushfires. Huge congratulations and thank you to volunteers who make up the Queanbeyan SES now and over the last 60 years.
