

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday 21 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.]

Visitors

VISITORS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I welcome to the public gallery Sue and Phillip Frost, who are guests of the member for Oxley.

Bills

AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS (PUBLIC ACCESS) BILL 2024 (NO 3)

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Gareth Ward, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (10:18): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024 (No 3) mandates the installation, registration and maintenance of automated external defibrillators [AEDs] in certain buildings and vehicles. As I foreshadowed on 6 June 2024 when I introduced the Automated External Defibrillators (Public Access) Bill 2024 (No 2), I will not need to speak for long.

However, I refer members to the second reading speech I gave in this place on 21 March 2024 for the bill's first iteration and ask them to again reflect on that speech.

I ask members to consider the objects of the bill in their entirety. I will read them onto the record because the Government's earlier opposition to the bill was highly political and took an inaccurate and misleading approach to its calculation and its introduction. The objects of the bill are as followings:

- (a) require the installation of automated external defibrillators (*defibrillators*) in certain buildings and vehicles, and
- (b) require the registration and maintenance of the defibrillators, and
- (c) require the Minister to—
 - (i) keep a publicly accessible register of the defibrillators, including the location of the defibrillators, and
 - (ii) develop a strategy to inform the public about defibrillators

I refer members to the official report of parliamentary debates on 24 October 2024. I thank and acknowledge members representing the electorates of Bega, Vaucluse, Heathcote, Shellharbour, Gosford, Blacktown, Leppington, Willoughby and Balmain for their contributions to that debate. The member for Bega led for the Government, and he speaks with the responsibility of Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Health and with experience as a former specialist obstetrician in a rural area.

Whilst it was put that the New South Wales Government already supports initiatives to increase access to life-saving emergency care to members of the community, we have seen cuts by this Government to programs that put those life-saving devices in the community. Worse, those cuts have been based on postcodes—proof positive of the Labor Party's obsession with class warfare, which puts life at risk. The bill ensures that AEDs are seen as an asset and rolled out in a logical and practical manner, and that they are registered, protected and maintained. That is what the bill seeks to do. If it is easier, members can consider those devices like a fire hydrant. You would not arbitrarily install fire hydrants throughout a city, town or street or based on a postcode. You would

not have less in a community because it was wealthier or poorer, based on postcodes. They go beyond health services. They are about occupational health and safety everywhere.

The mandatory installation of AEDs in certain buildings and vehicles and their maintenance, a register and continued education strategy should not be seen as a burden by this State. It should be seen as an opportunity, as other States have realised. Indeed, there was no argument about costs raised in this place in earlier debates. The onus of ensuring that AEDs are in all our communities should not be on community groups, a local MP, councils or sporting clubs. I acknowledge the reference by the member for Bega to the Australian College of Emergency Medicine and the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation guidelines and the importance of matching any AED replacements with an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest event rate.

On replacements, I have sought expert advice but I am not aware of a single instance of having to replace a faulty AED. That has not been the experience of the sector. Sure, from time to time a battery or pad needs replacing, but that is planned, and these devices are robust. I thank Integrity Health, which provided that advice, debunking the Labor myth from a member of Parliament who should know better than to engage in scaremongering when it comes to life-saving devices. The chief executive of NSW Ambulance, Adjunct Associate Professor Dominic Morgan, said:

Early recognition, early CPR and defibrillation and early advanced care are the key out-of-hospital links in the "Chain of Survival", and highlight the importance of mobilising bystanders and other resources in the response to cardiac arrest.

The *Cardiac Arrest Registry 2019 Report* also referenced the Global Resuscitation Alliance's 10 programs to increase cardiac arrest survival in our communities. Those programs were extensive and incorporated the ideas of the very bill that I present. The recommendations included working towards a culture of excellence, making AED training mandatory in schools and the community, and establishing a registry. But something South Australia Labor has successfully embraced, for some reason, is something that this New South Wales Labor Government does not support or will not do. The *Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest Registry 2020 Report* by NSW Ambulance observed that 127 patients were defibrillated by a bystander using an AED. Survival was significantly higher when shocked first with a public AED prior to paramedic arrival, at a rate of 30 per cent versus 9 per cent. The report went on to say:

Across all witnessed statuses, the survival rate was highest for patients on whom an AED was used (45% survived event; 30% survived 30 days), compared to patients who did not have an AED used (22% survived event; 9% survived 30 days). The event survival rate and 30 day survival rate was highest for patients who had a bystander witnessed OHCA and had an AED used (54% and 37% respectively).

I acknowledge and thank the member for Vacluse—and the Opposition—for supporting this very sensible bill. I agree that the Government should stand up and contribute, as Liberal Premier Nick Greiner did in the 1990s, in ensuring that every ambulance had what was known as a packer whacker. The member for Vacluse also reminded the House that the Heart Foundation is ready to assist the Government in the rollout of this initiative. The pathway forward for the objectives of the bill have been primed by the work of the former Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Victor Dominello, and the work done under the Local Sport Defibrillator Grant Program, which needs to be continued and expanded.

I have consulted with AED providers. I thank Pentalym, Integrity Health and Safety—which, I might add, has been appointed by the South Australian Government to deliver defibrillators to the whole of government, as mandated in that State, from 1 January 2025—as well as groups such as Staying Alive Health, Heartbeat of Football, Rapid Response Revival Research Ltd and the Shoalhaven Superheroes. I have offered to meet with the Minister for Health in December to discuss what I have learned in preparing this bill, what I have learned from the South Australian experience and what I have learned from experts in the sector. I look forward to that opportunity when the Minister is not busy flogging off hospitals in my electorate.

Strathfield Council—not in my electorate—resolved on 13 August 2024 to write to all New South Wales State members requesting they consider the introduction of legislation to mandate the installation of defibrillators in new businesses and high-rise developments. I would be keen to hear from the member for Strathfield on his position in response to the request from his own council. I acknowledge the contribution from the member for Heathcote and that advances and novel treatments are also available in treating cardiac arrests. Technology and medicine will always advance, but so too will AEDs, their price and efficiency, and AEDs remain the primary and prevalent device in significantly reducing deaths and dealing with out-of-hospital cardiac arrests.

I acknowledge the work of the GoodSAM app and join this House, NSW Ambulance and others in calling for its promotion and an increase in membership. I wholeheartedly endorse the call by Minister for Health on 16 October for more people to sign up as a NSW Ambulance GoodSAM volunteer. That is incredibly important in ensuring that people are where they need to be when an AED is needed and available. I understand that New South Wales wants to increase users of the app from 8,000 to 100,000. That is only more reason to support this bill and its objectives, which would see defibrillators rolled out across the State.

Noting the GoodSAM app is not a valid argument nor convincing rebuttal as to why this bill should not progress. The GoodSAM app and its integration forms part of a matrix of responses required and a tapestry of life-saving measures that need to be in place. There is no silver bullet but a lot of strategies that should be engaged. If there are some 4,300 AEDs registered on the app and we want more users—and we have more and more requests for funding and support for more and more AEDs—we should have more AEDs when they are needed. I note that the member for Heathcote encouraged the Opposition and the crossbench to reach out to stakeholders, including NSW Health, the unions and specialist paramedics. So do I, and we have. In my previous second reading speech in this place I outlined stakeholders who had been consulted and approached.

I note the contribution from the member for Shellharbour. When my neighbour was not commenting on a helipad or Shellharbour Hospital, again, the progress of the GoodSAM app was used as an argument for not supporting the bill. I emphasise again that the GoodSAM app and the objects of the bill are complementary, not mutually exclusive. I thank the member for Leppington for his contribution and consideration of the objects of the bill. Honestly, parts of that contribution made some of the best cases in support of the bill. Moving cases were made for the importance of mandating these devices in sporting fields and public spaces—and I thank the member for Leppington for his advocacy. Saving young people's lives, in conjunction with the GoodSAM app and a well-placed AED, is critical.

I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Gosford and thank her for her support for the bill. I acknowledge the member for Lismore, who opposed the bill and, again, made the team line argument that AEDs are great but we also have to make sure that people know how to use them. I refer to object (c) (ii) and the development—partly done, I might add—of a strategy to inform the public about defibrillators and how to use them. That is a key aspect; education is part of this. The main thrust of the Government's opposition to the bill is, as the member for Lismore reiterated:

The Government, in opposing the bill, has said there is a lack of evidence supporting the wider dissemination of AEDs outside key public areas. Studies and data have not demonstrated that placing AEDs in all public buildings would significantly improve outcomes in cases of cardiac arrest, especially if community members are unable to use them. Instead, there is good evidence that community education to improve the use of AEDs, which is already in place, and increasing bystander willingness to perform CPR are more effective.

I call on the Government to provide those studies and data. Clearly, the South Australian Government was not consumed by this particular argument, nor should it be, when we consider that 70 per cent of people who experienced out-of-hospital cardiac arrest and passed away could have been saved if they had access to an AED. I know that the Premier is a fan of Peter Malinauskas, so I encourage him to consider this initiative.

The Government should reconsider its preposterous proposition that the bill will lead to significant duplication or even worse outcomes. That is clearly not the case. Let us show some faith in our departments implementing this work with experts in the field who have demonstrated that AEDs work. I want to see this introduced into our State to ensure that there are options there when people need them. As I said when I introduced the bill, it came about because of someone who came to my electorate office to tell me that a grant I had secured for a defibrillator saved their life. It does not matter whether it is David from Jamberoo or Greg Page, a number of people have had their lives saved because of these life-saving devices. I thank members for their contributions to the debate. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

SUMMARY OFFENCES AMENDMENT (WAR MEMORIALS AND OTHER PROTECTED PLACES) BILL 2024

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 15 August 2024.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Before I call the Attorney General, I welcome to the public gallery guests of the member for Hawkesbury: David Hadfield and Brian Rieusset from the Windsor and District RSL Sub-Branch, Graham Hehir from the Newtown RSL Sub-Branch, Vin and Nancy Cosgrove from the Vietnam Veterans Association St Marys, Alwyn Morgan from the Kurrajong District War Memorial Club, David Ingram from the Far Western Metropolitan District Council of RSL NSW, and Jack Gray and Josh Farquhar from the North Bondi RSL Sub-Branch.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (10:31): I contribute to debate on the Summary Offences Amendment (War Memorials and Other Protected Places) Bill 2024. I too acknowledge the guests in the public gallery. I thank them for the work that they do and the service they have given our country over many years. All members of Parliament have RSL sub-branches, Vietnam veterans groups and the like in our electorates, and there are no more important or valued community groups. As much as the member for

Hawkesbury has brought the bill to the House in good faith, members can only deal with legislation as it is drafted and with rationales given in second reading speeches made in the House. On the basis of those two aspects, the Government does not support the bill.

Mr Alister Henskens: Shame!

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: No, it is not a shame. The member for Wahroonga should listen to what I have to say before he starts being aggressive in the Chamber on this important issue. Our Government supports veterans, and we will do all that we can to ensure that they are honoured with dignity and respect. Our Government also recognises the important role that war memorials play in acknowledging and commemorating the sacrifice of our veterans. That is reflected in the New South Wales Government announcement just this month of funding for war memorials that will support their appropriate conservation and upkeep.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order! The Attorney General will be heard in silence.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Our Government does not support the bill because it proposes amendments that are unnecessary and that, on the drafting of the bill, could cause confusion and seem to be based on a misunderstanding of the application of current offences. The bill proposes to, one, amend the definition of "war memorial" to include the Pool of Reflection in front of the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park, along with war shrines, monuments, statues or other similar structures or places, and things or areas within the vicinity of such places; two, increase the penalty for the offence under section 8 (2) of the Summary Offences Act 1988 from 40 penalty units to 50 penalty units, imprisonment for two years, or both; and, three, replace the regulation-making power contained in section 8 (4) of the Act from one that allows the status of a place as a war memorial to be confirmed by the regulations to one which allows sites to be excluded by the regulations.

In her second reading speech, the member for Hawkesbury seemed to suggest that a war memorial must be prescribed by the regulations before it is protected under section 8. That is incorrect. The intended effect of the proposed amendment in the bill to the definition of "war memorial" would be to allow section 8 to be applied to all war memorials by default, but that is already how the provision operates, and I made that clear to the member for Hawkesbury when I met with her this week to discuss the bill. The current definition of "war memorial" in section 8 means a war memorial located in a public place, and without limitation includes the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park and any other place prescribed by the regulations. That definition leaves "war memorial" largely undefined to allow a broad interpretation and also allows specific sites to be prescribed by regulation if needed.

The member for Hawkesbury said the change relating to the Pool of Reflection in front of the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park was being made following an act of vandalism committed during a protest rally and went on to say that when the Act was originally assented to, it did not specify the Pool of Reflection. In the current provisions of the Act, the Pool of Reflection is already included in the definition of "war memorial" because it is a structure upon the land of the Hyde Park memorial as described in the schedule to the Anzac Memorial (Building) Act 1923. That seems to have been ignored. Police have previously charged people under section 8 (3) for incidents relating to the Pool of Reflection, including one in 2018 involving a person riding a bicycle through the pool and another in 2019 relating to an individual who sat in the pool. Charges have also been laid under section 8 (2) in relation to similar incidents, including in relation to an individual swimming in the El Alamein Fountain in Potts Point and an individual pouring red food dye into the same fountain.

As the Pool of Reflection and all war memorials located in a public place are already within the ambit of the offences at sections 8 (2) and (3) of the Act, the relevant amendments in the private member's bill are unnecessary. By expanding the definition of "war memorial" to include any thing or area within the vicinity of a shrine, monument, statue or place, the private member's bill also generates uncertainty. "Vicinity" is not a term that has a clear legal meaning, and its proposed use in an offence provision could result in uncertainty in relation to what the Act applies to. It is also not necessary. The broad application of the definition and the offences already in the Act are made clear by examples of the types of conduct that have already been charged, including defacing a war memorial at a railway station, damaging or defacing the war memorial in the Fitzroy Gardens and desecrating a memorial pillar.

In her second reading speech, the member for Hawkesbury detailed incidents where people had attempted to tamper with or deface various monuments. Those alleged acts would all be covered by the existing legislation, and appropriate penalties are already available. For example, in relation to the example given of a statue commemorating Governor Lachlan Macquarie within the vicinity of the Windsor War Memorial being doused in red, covered in red handprints and sprayed with illegible writing, the statue is already included in the current offence which applies to protected places. "Protected place" is defined as a shrine, monument or statue located in a public place, and without limitation includes a war memorial or an internment site.

Of course, in some situations, it is not possible for police to identify individuals who deface or damage statues or monuments, particularly if the incident occurs late at night and with no witnesses, but that does not mean there is a problem with the offence provision. If an alleged offender cannot be identified, it does not matter what the offence provision says. The proposal in the bill to reverse the regulation-making power—that is, to remove the ability to prescribe places as war memorials and instead create an ability to prescribe places that are not war memorials—also appears to be connected to a misplaced belief that the term "war memorial" has a narrow meaning. That amendment is not necessary and will not improve the operation of the provision.

Finally, in relation to the proposed amendments to the penalty available for the offence under section 8 (2) of the Act, data from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research shows that there are, on average, two charges a year for offences under that section, and when fines are given, they average at fines of over \$1,200 dollars. Courts clearly regard the conduct as serious. For section 8 offences, instead of imposing a fine, a court can order a person to perform up to 100 hours of community service.

When a person is convicted of one of these offences, a court can also order the person to pay an additional amount of up to \$2,200 for the cost of any repairs to the war memorial or, as an alternative, order them to personally repair, or assist in repairing, the war memorial. Section 8 is the only offence under the Act for which a court can order a person to make such an additional payment.

In addition to the offences provided for in the Summary Offences Act 1988, it is also important to note that more serious examples of offending conduct are captured in part 4AD of the Crimes Act 1900, which relates to criminal destruction and damage, and houses offences that carry maximum penalties of between five and 25 years imprisonment. I will say that again: For contravening the provisions in part 4AD of the Crimes Act in relation to the destruction of property on public land, maximum penalties of between five and 25 years imprisonment are already on the statute books. Consultation conducted by the Office of Veterans Affairs with ex-service organisations has indicated that they feel that the current level of protections of memorials is adequate. That is not to say—

Mr Michael Kemp: Bollocks!

Ms Robyn Preston: Well, they don't. That's not what I'm hearing. Who are you talking to?

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Well, the Minister is here.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order! The Government's speech in response to a private member's bill is not an opportunity for ongoing dialogue across the Chamber. I will call members to order if there are further interjections. I note that question time is in 20 minutes. The Attorney General will resume his speech and be heard in silence.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: That is not to say that there is universal acceptance of any provisions on the statute book. It might well be that there are citizens across New South Wales and RSL sub-branches that have varying opinions on those provisions. But I will say again that my advice is that the consultation conducted by the Office of Veterans Affairs with ex-service organisations has indicated that they feel that the current level of protections of memorials is adequate. The Minister for Veterans is in the Chamber. I have spoken to him about this and his door is always open. The Government is not closing the book on provisions like this. I said at the outset of my tenure as Attorney General that every one of the considerable number of acts that I am responsible for under the allocation of the administration of Acts can be under constant review if needs be. That is my public position. The door is not closed on this and the Minister's door is well and truly open. For the reasons that I have set out, the Government will not support the bill.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (10:42): I will make a very brief contribution to debate on the Summary Offences Amendment (War Memorials and Other Protected Places) Bill 2024. At the outset, I acknowledge the veterans who are in the gallery. My father served in the Allied forces in the Second World War after he was in the Dutch resistance. We appreciate the way they have put their lives on the line for the freedoms that many people in our community take for granted. We very much appreciate their service to our nation. One of the reasons we have war memorials is that people die away from our shores in the service of our country, so their families do not always have a gravesite where they can remember their loved ones. War memorials and rolls of honour are incredibly important as an acknowledgement of, and a public place where we can remember, those in our community who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our country. The speech from the Attorney General was incredibly disappointing. He did not give one coherent reason for opposing the bill.

I will run through the important contributions to the law that the bill will provide. First, section 8 of the Summary Offences Act is the only piece of legislation on the statute books of our State that is dedicated to offences for damaging or desecrating war memorials. At the moment the Act provides for a paltry maximum penalty of \$4,400 for someone who damages a desecrates our memorials. Through the bill, the member for Hawkesbury is

proposing to increase those penalties to a maximum of two years imprisonment or a \$5,500 fine, or both. So the bill is an important deterrent to people desecrating our sacred war memorials throughout the State.

Secondly, the bill expands the definition of "war memorial" under the provisions in the Summary Offences Act. At the moment, the only specified war memorial under the legislation is the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park or any other war memorials designated by regulation, but there are no other war memorials designated by regulation. Whether it be the Cenotaph in Martin Place, the Turramurra war memorial in my electorate, the Wahroonga war memorial or the roll of honour at Gordon railway station, the bill will automatically identify all war memorials throughout the State as a war memorial, unless the regulation states they are not. The bill will provide protection to all war memorials. At the moment there is an opt-in approach, where they have to be identified as a war memorial in the regulation to be protected. The bill will automatically protect every war memorial in the State unless they are opted out, which is an important new provision.

This legislation will protect not just war memorials but also monuments, statues or other similar structures or places, and include a thing or area within the vicinity of the shrine. The word "vicinity" is used in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, as well as in a lot of other pieces of legislation, but the Attorney General has said that the word is too imprecise to be in this legislation. Well, that is nonsense. A garden, a flagpole or other things that are part of a war memorial should all be protected. Perpetrators should not be able to escape punishment by saying, "That is not the memorial itself," or, "That is not the structure."

The bill is an important piece of legislation. I encourage the Government to have a second think and see that the bill expands the only dedicated piece of legislation for war memorials in our State. It is not good enough for Labor MPs to turn up to Anzac Day or to Remembrance Day services when they are not willing to support the protection of war memorials that remember the people who have served our country. I thank the veterans in the gallery for everything they do. My father was a proud member of the RSL. I also thank the member for Hawkesbury for introducing this important legislation.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast) (10:47): I make a contribution to debate on the Summary Offences Amendment (War Memorials and Other Protected Places) Bill 2024. I recognise all the veterans who are in the gallery today and thank them for their service and dedication to our nation. I also recognise all of their family members who also made that sacrifice. The Government is currently developing its next four-year Veterans Strategy, which will be launched next year. It will be squarely focused on meeting the recommendations of the recent Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. I recognise everybody who took part in that royal commission and told their harrowing stories. I have great respect for them for playing their part in that royal commission.

The Government is committed to honouring our veterans and protecting our memorials. There are 3,700 memorials in local towns and suburbs spread right across New South Wales. They stand to honour the memory of all of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. It is pleasing that the number of Anzac Day and Remembrance Day commemorations is growing and the amount of people attending is increasing. It is also pleasing that the number of young people involved in those services is growing as well. It shows that, as a State and as a nation, our community rightly respects the sacrifice that our service men and women have made not only in the past but also continue to make, not just in service in our country but also around the world.

As the Attorney General mentioned, the Community War Memorials Fund provides grant funding to local organisations to preserve their local memorials. For example, Broken Hill has a prominent memorial called The Bomber that received funding. We went through how they are going to be able to restore that very important memorial for that community. We understand that these memorials do not just honour those who fought for our country. They continually, 365 days a year, provide a place to grieve and reflect the loss of those who were left behind. It also gives communities a constant reminder of the sacrifices of those men and women. I also acknowledge the commitment of the member for Hawkesbury and pay tribute to her strong advocacy on behalf of veterans. We both serve on the Board of Trustees of the Anzac Memorial. We know the importance of that place, as well as of all the other places across New South Wales. This month the memorial celebrates 90 years. There will be a great day of commemoration on Sunday. We invite everyone to attend the memorial service at 5.30 p.m. In terms of the bill that the member for Hawkesbury and shadow Minister has brought forward, I absolutely understand the sentiment behind the bill.

When there are acts of vandalism against memorials, particularly the one that occurred earlier this year in which red dye was put into the Pool of Reflection, it generates community anger, as it goes against our national ethos of respecting our veterans. That gets people emotional and they want to make sure that those particular sites are protected. But when we do that, we have to do it in the right way. The Government has been advised by the department that section 8 of the Summary Offences Act currently has protections, but, as the Attorney General said, it is not ruling out further protections in the future. I point out, as the member for Hawkesbury knows, the

Anzac Memorial (Building) Act and by-laws have recently undergone extensive review with the City of Sydney on Crown lands, supported by Parliamentary Counsel. The revised bill will be put through the Parliament as a process in 2025 next year, which is also the 110th anniversary of Gallipoli.

As to this private member's bill, in September the department undertook consultation with a number of groups, including the RSL, Legacy and the Families of Veterans Guild. The feedback was that amending the current definition of "memorial" is not necessary and may create uncertainty and unintended consequences. That does not mean that there is a variance of opinion in terms of that but, legally, at the moment, the definition is seen as adequate. Also, the Pool of Reflection is captured by the current definition as a structure on relevant land, and the revision to the Anzac Memorial Act, which I just mentioned, will strengthen its protection as part of the memorial precinct.

Proposed penalties need further consideration. We have to make sure they are consistent with existing penalties. As the Attorney General said, the Government cannot support the bill as it is at the moment, given there will be revision to the Anzac Memorial Act in 2025, in which some of these issues can be prosecuted. The bill is a bit early. The Government has already been going through a process over a number of years, which started under the previous Government. It has continued that process of review, which it will bring to the Parliament in 2025. The Government acknowledges that the member for Hawkesbury wants to bring those penalties forward now. The legal advice the Government has received is that it is better to do it as part of the package, because definitions are really important. It might not be what it includes that matters; it might be what it leaves out.

When particular things are specified, there is a risk of leaving out other things that may then not be protected. So we have to be really careful with this. If we want to protect all memorials across New South Wales—which is the intention of the shadow Minister—we have to make sure the wording is exactly right, otherwise we could create inconsistencies that leave some memorials vulnerable. As Ministers, we get letters in which people raise these issues. After we explain it to people, they understand the importance of definitions as to what is in and what is out, and they then understand that we have to do these things carefully. I am really disappointed that the member for Wairoa would seek to politicise this issue and say that Labor members of Parliament do not care about memorials. Shame on him.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order! The Minister will be heard in silence.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: The member for Hawkesbury knows this. At every event I go to, I say that the welfare of veterans and those who have served our nation is a bipartisan issue. We do not make it political. To say that the bill is inadequate at this moment—and the Anzac Memorial Act is already under review anyway—and to insinuate that we do not care is just plain not right. It is incorrect.

Ms ROBYN PRESTON: I move:

That the question be now put.

The House divided.

Ayes39
Noes48
Majority.....9

AYES

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

Henskens, A
Hodges, M
James, T
Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D
Moylan, B
Petinos, E
Preston, R
Provest, G
Saunders, D
Scrubby, J
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

NOES

Aitchison, J

Harris, D

Park, R

NOES

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

PAIRS

Roberts, A

Watson, A

Motion negatived.

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

Members

MEMBER FOR PORT STEPHENS

MEMBER FOR MURRAY

MEMBER FOR SYDNEY

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. I know everybody is excited. It is the last question time for the year. I acknowledge the member for Port Stephens, the member for Murray and the member for Sydney, who are going to have birthdays soon. I hope they have wonderful celebrations outside the parliamentary sitting period.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome guests in the gallery. Everybody is very happy. I apologise. I now see the members of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association, who are not all happy, but generally sort of. I extend a warm welcome to guests of the member for Kogarah, Dennis Cheng and Josephine Cheng, who are celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary this year. They are at the front of the gallery, the place of honour. I welcome to the gallery guests of the member for Upper Hunter, students from Dungog High School and their teacher. I welcome a guest of the member for East Hills, Oliver Moreton, a work experience student with the member. I also acknowledge and welcome David Hadfield and Brian Rieusset from Windsor and District RSL Sub-Branch; Graham Hehir from the Newtown RSL Sub-Branch; Vin Cosgrove and Nancy Cosgrove from the Vietnam Veterans Association St Marys; Alwyn Morgan from Kurrajong District War Memorial Club; David Ingram from Far Western Metropolitan District Council of RSL NSW; and Jack Gray from North Bondi RSL Sub-Branch. I know they have been acknowledged previously but it is appropriate for them to be acknowledged again at the beginning of question time.

Announcements

ANGLICARE DISPLAY

The SPEAKER: I remind members that there is an amazing Anglicare display in the Macquarie Room today. The staff of Anglicare do fantastic work supporting people in need during these times of particular financial stress. They would love members to visit and see what they are doing and maybe help promote Anglicare. If members could do that, that would be wonderful.

*Members***MEMBER FOR GOSFORD**

The SPEAKER: I have a very special acknowledgement, which has been sent to me just now, regarding the member for Gosford. We are all very proud of her. The member for Gosford was this week formally inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame. Congratulations.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

The SPEAKER: Members normally only get applause when they are departing this place. I thank all members. We are very proud of the member for Gosford.

[Interruption]

Members will come to order. Government members will stop encouraging Opposition members.

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

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (11:11): My question is directed to the Premier. In less than 24 hours trains will grind to a halt because of the Premier's failure to rein in the Rail, Tram and Bus Union. Why will the Premier not take the rail union to the Fair Work Commission to stop its industrial blackmail?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:11): The Government was obviously in negotiations with the union this morning, last night and all throughout yesterday. I hope to get back to it as soon as possible. Mr Speaker, maybe if you could cut back question time a little bit I could get back to the negotiating table.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Our hope is that we can get back to the negotiating table as soon as possible.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Maybe I can save everyone some time. The Opposition is pretty predictable on these matters. We can probably guess its questions: Will you sack yourself? Will you sack the Minister? Will you condemn the workers? Do you support changes to the industrial relations system? Will you guarantee services? The answers are: no, no, no, yes and I hope to.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Dubbo to order for the first time. I remind the member for Dubbo what happened yesterday; I do not want to remove him from the Chamber again. Members will come to order and listen to the question from the member for Leppington.

STATE BUDGET

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (11:13): My question is addressed to the Premier. Can the Premier update the House on the state of the New South Wales budget?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:13): I can. I am happy to report to the House that, rather than the previous Government's pre-election forecast of debt being 14 per cent of gross State product, the Government has been able to lower that number to 13.5 per cent as per the last budget. That is a significant decline as a result of the difficult decisions that the Government has made in relation to spending and revenue measures in New South Wales. All of that has been opposed by the previous Government. Members will remember that just prior to the election the previous Treasurer of New South Wales racked up \$27 billion worth of spending in nine months. That was not during the COVID period, that was in the election period—\$27 billion in nine months, the largest amount of money ever spent by a Treasurer in the shortest period of time in the history of New South Wales.

The Government made difficult decisions—but we regard them as appropriate decisions—in relation to the National Guarantee Fund, the Transport Asset Holding Entity, politician and senior executive pay and superannuation, and saved \$745 million over four years. On consultants and labour hire, we saved \$530 million. We made difficult decisions around cutting waste, saving \$400 million. Electrical vehicle rebates inside the New South Wales budget—opposed by those opposite and instituted by the former Treasurer, Matt Kean—saved \$527 million. We made difficult decisions in relation to Active Kids, which were opposed by the Opposition but which we regarded as appropriate to try to rein in spending. As a result of those measures, collectively we have a \$13 billion improvement in the budget bottom line.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I make the point—

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: —that prior to the election many members opposite said that the Government would lose its triple-A credit rating from the ratings agencies. But both those firms have reaffirmed the triple-A credit rating. I do not remember Opposition members coming to the dispatch box saying, "Good news, Premier and Treasurer, we seem to have kept the triple-A rating despite our doomsday scenario." This speaks to a couple of things. It is worth noting what the Opposition has promised from opposition. Presumably this would become government policy if it were to win the next election. It is an interesting list of spending. The Leader of the Opposition has promised to keep both the land tax changes promised by the Perrottet Government as well as Labor's first home buyer concessions. That is \$660 million. The National Party has promised Dungowan Dam and Wyangala Dam. That is respectively \$1.3 billion and \$4.6 billion.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: There is the Great Western Highway tunnel, \$11 billion; Northern Beaches Tunnel, \$10 billion; Active and Creative Kids, \$640—

Mr Nathan Hagarty: I seek further information.

The SPEAKER: The member for Leppington jumped before the Premier's time had expired. An additional two minutes is granted.

[Opposition members interjected.]

I will have members removed from the Chamber if they continue to interject. It is the last day and members can go home early if they wish. But I know they will want to say nice things later during seasonal felicitations.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: If we look at the Opposition's spending since the election in March of 2023, we see billions of dollars have gone out the door, including New South Wales bidding on the Commonwealth Games that ultimately would come out of the budget coffers. Who would have to pay as a result of that? What is the ultimate gain here for all of this spending, all of this opposition to the Government's difficult decisions? The answer is the only way to make the books work is to reintroduce a wages cap in New South Wales.

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Point of order: The Premier is indulging in hypotheticals.

The SPEAKER: It is all right.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: There you go, hypotheticals he says. It is purely a hypothetical. Why will those opposite not just come out and rule it out? They will never rule it out because that is the policy of the previous Government and that would be the policy of a hypothetical Coalition government in New South Wales—reintroduce the wages cap. Workers in this State will never forget that, despite the fact that 2.5 per cent was the wages cap, during the COVID epidemic—months before spiralling inflation—it was wound all the way back to zero per cent. We listened to the Leader of the Opposition's questions yesterday and they were an amalgam of this: Will you condemn the union? Will you reintroduce a wages cap? Will you have a long meeting to sort all this out? What a fantastic strategy: Get everyone in a room, condemn them first up and then say, "Good news everyone, we are going to reintroduce a 2.5 per cent wages cap." How will that solve any of these industrial disputes?

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I make this point. Obviously we do not want industrial disputes in New South Wales. We do not want people going out on strike. Of course not. But under the Coalition they were leaving the profession.

RAIL, TRAM AND BUS UNION INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (11:18): My question is directed to the Premier. The Premier forced nurses to the industrial tribunal and now they face fines for striking, but he will not do the same for the rail union. Why the double standard?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:19): That is absolutely ridiculous. We did not impose that condition on the Nurses and Midwives' Association; the NSW Industrial Relations Commission did.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: While we are talking about massive hypocrites in this place, the member for Goulburn was out marching with nurses two weeks ago.

Mrs Wendy Tuckerman: Absolutely. I'm happy to support my community nurses.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: There we go. She said she is happy to support nurses.

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

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Leader of the House rises on a point of order.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Members are far too disorderly. It is one thing for members to interject in the bearpit, but it is another thing for them to shout and drown out the proceedings.

Ms Kellie Sloane: Tell your Premier not to use the word "hypocrite".

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Vacluse to remove herself from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A until the Premier has concluded his answer.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Vacluse left the Chamber at 11:20.]

Mr Ron Hoenig: That demonstrates the very defiance of the standing orders that is occurring. I ask that members on both sides come to order and cease shouting and interrupting.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. It is early in question time. I will have members removed from the Chamber if they continue to interject. That includes Government members. I cannot apply one standard to the Opposition and another to the Government.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Members would have heard the member for Goulburn a moment ago when she said that she is happy to stand with nurses. That was the public pronouncement from the member for Goulburn. She might be interested to hear that Natalie Ward from the other place was on ABC radio earlier today. Sarah Macdonald asked Natalie Ward, "What would you give the train drivers and the cleaners and those who are part of this industrial action? Where would your limit be?"

Ms Robyn Preston: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Premier will resume his seat.

Ms Robyn Preston: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 75. No member is to be referred to by name. The Premier has referred to Natalie Ward.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Have members opposite actually read that book? Members of the upper House do not have electorates; they have names.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Alister Henskens: If it is good enough for the Leader of the House to raise, then it is good enough for the Opposition to raise. Government members are calling out across the Chamber and shouting over the Premier. They should be called to order. They are causing quarrels within the Chamber.

The SPEAKER: They are. There are a few quarrelsome members in the Chamber. There is no point of order. I will have members removed if they continue to interject.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The member for Goulburn would be interested to hear about her colleague Natalie Ward in the other place. On ABC radio this morning Sarah Macdonald asked, "What would you give the train drivers and the cleaners and those who are part of this industrial action? Where would your limit be?"

Mrs Wendy Tuckerman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I will hear the point of order.

Mrs Wendy Tuckerman: The question was reflecting on the Premier's double standard. Can he please be more directly relevant to the question?

The SPEAKER: The member for Goulburn will resume her seat. The Premier has broad latitude in answering the question.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I will start again. Sarah Macdonald asked Natalie Ward, "We have a cost-of-living crisis. What would you give the train drivers and the cleaners and those who are part of this industrial action?"

Where would your limit be?" That is, what would the Opposition's limit be. Natalie Ward said, "It won't surprise you to hear from me that, under the previous Government, we had certainty with a wages cap." She said that one hour ago.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The member was in the street marching with nurses while her colleagues are saying, "We want to bring back the wages cap." This was not said in the distant past. This was not said two or three years ago. This was said 50 minutes ago. The wages cap will be reintroduced in New South Wales if the Coalition is ever elected to government. Other than that, members opposite stand condemned for being hypocrites. That is the truth. They may not like that designation, but there is no other explanation.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (11:24): 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 commitment to rebuild public education in New South Wales?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:24): I thank the member for Bega for that important question, which goes to the heart of what we are doing as a government. He is a hardworking, legendary regional MP who is working so hard with his local schools and teachers to rebuild public education in his part of New South Wales. When it comes to regional areas, I begin by answering the question of the member on a real positive, which is a novel idea in this House. This morning we awoke to a positive front page on major regional newspaper *The Northern Daily Leader*. Every member of this place—maybe save the former Minister because I think this is her local newspaper—would be quite happy to see this front-page article showing local principals and teachers under the headline "Good signs on horizon". The article reads:

The teacher shortage crisis is officially over.

Or at least the worst of it is, according to public school principals in the New England and North West.

That would be quite confusing for the former Minister, who spent her tenure avoiding the fact that the teacher shortage even existed. I want those hardworking principals and teachers in this extremely positive article to hear that, while this Government is not doing a victory lap, it shows that there are green shoots. We are proud to be delivering those green shoots for teachers and principals on the ground.

Natalie Hill, the brilliant principal of Oxley High School, said that having teachers in front of children in classrooms is the most important thing. This brilliant principal said that she did not feel like she could say that the worst of it was over out loud because she thought that maybe she would jinx herself. Her school is only down one position. This time last year, it was down more than eight. The data does not lie. The principal at Oxley and principals and teachers across regional New South Wales and the State have a government that finally values them and the work they do in schools. The result is a reduction in vacancies and a massive reduction in merged, cancelled and collapsed classes.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: Members opposite find this very hard to deal with because it is the truth. We have driven down teacher vacancies by 24 per cent and up, and we have halved the number of merged and cancelled classes. We have done that by respecting and validating the teaching profession and ensuring that we focus on teachers in the classroom. [*Extension of time*]

In the electorate of the member for Bega, merged and cancelled classes are down 22 per cent. That makes a difference in regional communities. The Liberals and The Nationals continue to attack our approach to valuing teachers and ensuring that there are teachers in front of classes. This week the member for Myall Lakes said in this place that teachers deserve more, but at what cost? I will tell her what cost. It is the cost of ensuring that the number of merged and cancelled classes decrease. It is making sure that we get teachers in front of our kids to teach them the lessons that prepare them for life. That is the priority of our Government.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: In addition to increasing the number of teachers, we are also building schools where they are needed. I have spoken many times in this place about the work that we have been doing over the past 20 months and will continue to do until 2027 in south-west and north-west Sydney, even in Wes Fang's electorate at Concord High School near Drummoyne! We are making sure that the schools that are required to be built—

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, direct relevance. We are now four minutes into the answer and the Minister still has not explained why she has cut 200 permanent and temporary teachers.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time. The Minister has the call.

Ms PRUE CAR: That is completely fake news. Vacancies are going down and teacher numbers are going up. We are also empowering teachers to clamp down on persistent misbehaviour by strengthening behaviour policies—and the Speaker is also leaning into a stronger sense of discipline in this place. We should be able to have settled classrooms so our kids can learn from quality teachers in the best facilities, and that is what we are doing for our kids.

PFAS AND MICROPLASTICS

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (11:29): My question is directed to the Premier. In light of a lack of waste facilities in Sydney and the risk to the environment from microplastic releases, what is the Government's view on the rising concerns around PFAS and microplastic processing near Sydney drinking water catchment areas?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:30): I thank the member for Wollondilly for her question. She is right—this is an emerging problem for the New South Wales Government and across the country. PFAS, or forever chemicals, have become particularly acute in the electorate of the member for Port Stephens, with the air force base up there, and also in the Blue Mountains. Historical firefighting retardant used in those parts of New South Wales has, unfortunately, risked the water supply in those communities. We have minimum standards, and those minimum standards have been applied. The vast majority of drinking water in New South Wales meets those standards.

The Commonwealth Government has indicated that soon it will change the requirements for PFAS minimum designations in the years ahead. That means we have to make changes to meet the new standard. We are confident we can do that in the vast majority of our tertiary treated water facilities in New South Wales, but there are certainly actions that we need to take, particularly when we consider that New South Wales produces one-third of Australia's waste every year, we will run out of landfill space by 2030 and recycling rates in the State have, unfortunately, remained stagnant since 2016. There is a big hill to climb to get recycling back on track, ensure that we can protect our drinking water supply right across the State and ensure that we are compliant with changing standards, which are largely driven by the United States. But, as I have said, in recent months the Commonwealth has indicated that it will apply those standards to New South Wales too.

I can inform the House that while the Federal Government is looking at banning and phasing out all forms of PFAS through its Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management Standard—and we want to support it in that work—the Minister for the Environment is also looking at a waste infrastructure plan for the State. That is complex work because it involves land use management. We must make sure that they are well located in communities that can take them and that we do not use viable land for housing, but we must start considering where those forever chemicals storage facilities are going to go and whether we are growing enough space for waste in New South Wales in the years ahead. It is firmly on our radar. We must make sure that those decisions are timely, but all the evidence is available to us. I assure the House that the Environment Protection Authority is working with the Minister for the Environment to develop that plan and roll it out in the months ahead.

GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (11:32): My question is addressed to the Minister for Local Government, and Leader of the House. Will the Minister please update the House on how the Minns Labor Government's legislative agenda is helping to build a better New South Wales?

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (11:33): I thank the member for South Coast for her question. I am so impressed. The people of the South Coast have such enhanced representation from that fabulous member. I thought the best way to measure the performance of the Government objectively was to look at statistics. We in this business all know that numbers tell the story. That is why the member for Wahroonga will never get there, despite the fact that he tries.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr RON HOENIG: It is probably why the member for Lane Cove is not here today. He is always one out and one back from the pack. He knows how to pace himself. The statistics are objective and they tell the story. In the first year of the Minns Labor Government, it introduced 67 bills into this Parliament at an average of

5.2 Government bills a week for 13 sitting weeks. I have compared that with 2019, which was also an election year. The Berejiklian Government introduced a miserly 30 Government bills over the identical 13-week period.

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

Mr RON HOENIG: On top of that, the Liberal Berejiklian Government—which had a majority, mind you—managed to pass only 24 Government bills at a rate of 1.8 Government bills for every sitting week. When I first came into this House, before every question time I would hear the member for Wollongong shout out to the Liberal Government, "Lazy, lazy, lazy." When I look at those statistics, I understand what Noreen Hay was talking about. The Minns Labor Government has introduced 90 bills at a rate of 6.2 bills for every sitting week, and we have passed 82 bills at an average of 5.7 bills for every sitting week.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr RON HOENIG: This minority Government has not lost a division. It has passed every significant piece of legislation it has brought to this House. Those opposite have the hide to complain about the number of sitting days next year and that they must work on Fridays. Well, get used to it. The average workers in New South Wales have to work more than three days a week, and they do not earn more than \$300,000 a year.

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

Ms Liza Butler: I seek further information.

The SPEAKER: I grant an additional two minutes. The Minister will be heard in silence.

Mr RON HOENIG: It will be difficult to fit it into two minutes, so I will do it quickly. On top of the mountain of policy work and other reforms, we have legislated against no-grounds evictions to provide greater housing security for more than 2.2 million renters in New South Wales. We have limited rental increases to one per year and made it easier to keep pets in rentals. We have introduced a ban on paying for background checks when applying for property.

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

Mr RON HOENIG: In the justice and prevention of family and domestic violence portfolios, we have taken further steps to create a safer New South Wales by legislating the toughest domestic violence laws in the country. We have passed stronger bail laws, making it harder for alleged domestic violence offenders to get bail, and we have put an end to registrars making bail decisions, ensuring they are handled by magistrates.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr RON HOENIG: We have passed laws that will get more knives off our streets, and increased the penalties for selling knives to children. In Health, we have cracked down on illegal tobacco and introduced harsher penalties for illegal vape supply. We have also introduced tough new penalties for people who assault our hardworking GPs and their staff.

Mrs Wendy Tuckerman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. Someone get the member for Heffron a drink of water while I hear the point of order from the member for Goulburn.

Mrs Wendy Tuckerman: I am finding it hard to understand what the Minister is saying.

The SPEAKER: The member for Goulburn might be able to understand if she stopped talking to the member for Port Macquarie. The Minister has the call.

Mr RON HOENIG: We have also passed legislation to make sure private health insurers pay their bills to public hospitals. After more than a decade of the former Government decimating Sydney's night-life, we have passed a wave of legislation through this place to reboot Sydney's night-life and make Sydney the world-class city it deserves to be. I could go on for another five minutes to indicate the success of this Government. We have also worked across the Parliament to pass five crossbench bills, which is a record. We respect crossbenchers for their hard work and advocacy and for advancing the importance of social and community reforms. We have put our foot to the floor in this Parliament to clean up the mess left to us by those opposite. We will continue to proceed with our agenda to help people and ensure they live in a better New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: That was one of the more interesting contributions. I thank the Leader of the House.

RAIL, TRAM AND BUS UNION INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (11:39): My question is directed to the Premier. The transport Minister said that train services cannot be operated 24/7 because "we cannot jeopardise the maintenance of the

rail system". Will the Premier rule out running trains 24/7 this weekend or at any time to postpone the industrial chaos?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:39): Is the story from the member for Dubbo that he is hoping we do not get a deal? Does he hope there is not an agreement and there is more chaos?

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. The Opposition has asked the question. The Premier will be heard in silence.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: As has been made perfectly clear by the Minister for Transport, the basic point is that in order to get maintenance done—and the maintenance backlog was massive under the previous Government. Opposition members may scoff, but it is true. It has come down. In order to get maintenance done, people work in the middle of the night while the trains do not operate. We made a good faith effort last weekend to run 24-hour trains. To do that continually, which is consistent with the union bans, is not possible, but of course we will try to get an outcome. All arrangements are on the table because we want to get to a point where we minimise disruption for the people of New South Wales.

The basic point remains that if we run 24-hour services consistent with the union bans, which are presumably to run all the way to the end of protected bargaining in February of next year, we cannot run maintenance on the network. We cannot do it. But if there is something we can do this weekend to get an agreement, of course we will do that. We do not want to disrupt millions of people across New South Wales. If some kind of agreement can be reached with the rail union, of course we will do that. But I go back to the idea that the way to solve this is to reintroduce a wages cap in New South Wales. Members would have heard that member in the upper House—

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: My point of order is about relevance. The question is about whether the Premier will rule out doing it for the short term, or for a longer term.

The SPEAKER: I will cut the member for Dubbo a break and not throw him out. There is no point of order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The idea was that this would be solved with a wages cap. Members opposite should not forget that during the previous term in office, the former Government had a wages cap of 2.5 per cent in New South Wales. Workers were not going on strike; they were leaving the public service in New South Wales. In a radio interview in Dubbo, the member for Dubbo was directly asked about teachers leaving the profession and about the teacher crisis. He replied, "I'm focused on other things right now, to be perfectly honest."

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

Mr CHRIS MINNS: "No, I don't think that should be a focus for me."

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

Mr Mark Speakman: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, direct relevance. The Premier will not condemn the union, he will not take it to the commission and he will not answer the question.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. There is no point of order. I have already ruled on that point.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: This is leadership from the Leader of the Opposition: "The way to solve this is to condemn the union and reintroduce a 2.5 per cent wages cap."

The SPEAKER: I place the member for Coffs Harbour on three calls to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: "But, by the way, have a long meeting as well. Make sure you have a long meeting. Firstly condemn them and then say, 'Good news: I'm going to give you 2.5 per cent.'" Anyway, getting back to that hypocrite in chief, the member for Goulburn, members will not believe what she had put on social media last week.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Premier will resume his seat. The Clerk will stop the clock. I think there were five seconds to go.

Mr Alister Henskens: My point of order is taken under both Standing Order 72 and Standing Order 73. The Premier is using offensive words towards the member for Goulburn. If he wants to reflect on the member, he should do so by way of substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. The Premier has concluded his answer.

HEALTH SYSTEM

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (11:43): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Regional Health. Will the Minister update the House on the Minns Labor Government's work to rebuild the healthcare system in New South Wales?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (11:43): I thank the hardworking member for Riverstone. We are putting a record investment into a brand-new health facility out at Rouse Hill.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr RYAN PARK: Unusually, the hospital will be coming with an emergency department. One of the most hilarious things I heard in my first week as Minister was that this hospital was committed without an emergency department. We will not be doing that.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Coffs Harbour to remove himself from the Chamber under Standing Order 294A until the end of question time.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Coffs Harbour left the Chamber at 11:44.]

Mr RYAN PARK: This has been a very big first 20 months for the Government. I start by acknowledging the enormous amount of work that all our healthcare workers do across New South Wales, including our nurses and midwives who are in the gallery today.

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

Mr RYAN PARK: I see Bianca from the Illawarra is in the gallery, whom I have met with frequently as part of our discussions. I acknowledge the healthcare workers today. It is a good opportunity to list some of the challenges we face and how we are going about resolving those. When we came into office, we had a record number of people waiting for surgery—beyond 17,000. Over the course of the last 20 months we have been able to reduce that by 85 per cent.

In addition to that, we had a number of key issues out in regional and rural areas, particularly around paramedics. In the first 20 months we have rolled out 125 brand-new paramedics for regional and rural New South Wales. We have also recruited 7,000 additional nurses. That is about 1,500 more than the previous financial year, when the Opposition was in government. On top of that, we have invested a record half a billion dollars in our emergency departments, all designed to reduce pressure and to provide alternative pathways to care. We estimate that those measures will see 290,000 people avoid having to go to an emergency department each and every year. We are investing \$1 billion into hospitals in Western Sydney, which in many cases have not seen upgrades for well over 30 years. *[Extension of time]*

We are seeing big improvements in ramping. In Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District, which my colleagues and I share and advocate for, the number of people who are seen within 30 minutes has improved.

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

Mr RYAN PARK: That number has ranged from about 55 per cent, when we first came in, up to around about 75 per cent now. That means those people are getting off the ambulance and into care sooner and faster, which is good for them and good for the system too. We have doubled the incentive, up to \$20,000, for those healthcare workers who are willing to go to regional and rural areas where we are having trouble getting healthcare staff. We have also recently gone up to \$20,000 for midwives in some of these regional and rural locations. The member for Tamworth will understand some of the challenges we are having with midwifery out in that community.

Pleasingly, we have had a heavy focus on women. What have we done? We have not only removed the wages cap but we have, for the first time, provided women's healthcare centres with nearly double the funding. We have rolled out the trials for urinary tract infection treatments and the contraceptive pill in our pharmacies to make it easier for women to access health care. When I came into office, around 18 per cent of the chairpersons on my health boards were women. That is now 45 per cent. We are rolling out menopause hubs. We are rolling out McGrath Foundation breast care nurses. We are doing an amazing amount of work off the back of a great level of commitment from our healthcare staff. Today all members should acknowledge the tremendous work of our healthcare staff members as they continue to deliver healthcare services across New South Wales.

RAIL, TRAM AND BUS UNION INDUSTRIAL ACTION

Ms Eleni Petinos (Miranda) (11:49): My question is directed to the Premier. Train drivers are already on a \$121,000 salary. What does giving rail unionists a large pay rise say to private sector workers on average incomes?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:49): I will bypass the irony that that salary is half what the member for Miranda earns. I do not know whether that is relevant. The member for Miranda earns twice as much as a train driver.

Mrs Leslie Williams: What's that got to do with it?

Mr CHRIS MINNS: She said that they earn too much. Is that the story?

Ms Eleni Petinos: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Does the member wish to clarify the question?

Ms Eleni Petinos: No, I wish to take a point of order. The Premier cannot verbal me on the question. If he wants to make a personal reflection on me, he can do so by way of a substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. That is not what happened.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: If we are going to start evaluating in a subjective way the value of contributions to taxpayers, train drivers earn half what the member for Miranda and all her colleagues earn.

Mr Mark Speakman: What are you saying to average workers, Chris?

Mr CHRIS MINNS: No, I am just wondering. Is the solution to this to go to the negotiating table and say, "Look, the member for Miranda, who earns twice what you earn, reckons you earn too much, so the way we're going to solve this industrial dispute is to cut your pay"? Is that the strategy?

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Ms Eleni Petinos: Point of order—

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I welcome the point of order. I would love to hear it. I think a lot of rail workers would like the member for Miranda to justify her question.

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

Ms Eleni Petinos: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129 and goes to direct relevance. The Premier was asked to reflect on what he says to private sector workers on average incomes about giving rail unionists a large pay rise? He was not asked to speak to me, but to the workers in this State.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I have the question in front of me. The Premier has been directly relevant. He will be heard in silence.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I make the point that I am not making a judgement about rail workers in New South Wales. But is it the Opposition's strategy to go in there and say, "We think you should take a pay cut, and we should put 2.5 per cent on that pay cut. By the way, we want to have a really long meeting because Mark Speakman reckons that's the way we'll sort this"? If we are going to start making judgements about what people earn and whether it is value for money, it is a bit rich for the member for Miranda to say to someone who is on half her salary that they are getting paid too much money. I make the point to the nurses and midwives in the public gallery today that in September last year the shadow Minister for Health said the budget was about, "choices that were made and the choice they made to get rid of the public sector wages cap?"

Ms Eleni Petinos: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I remind members that there is a standing order about taking vexatious points of order. I have made it very clear that the Premier has been relevant.

Ms Eleni Petinos: The Premier's answer is now deviating into health workers, which is nowhere near the scope of the question.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Premier has been directly relevant. He now has some leeway in the way he concludes his answer.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I make the point that private sector wages are growing too. That is the truth. The cap on public sector wages was a cap on private sector wages. In any event, the member for Goulburn was at the rally saying, "I am woman, hear me roar in numbers too big to ignore", with a sign that said "2.5 per cent".

HOUSING SUPPLY

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (11:53): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Will the Minister please update the House on the Minns Labor Government's plan to build better communities with more well-located homes?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (11:53): I thank the member for Liverpool for her second question on housing this week. She is a young member who wants to give young people in New South Wales a real opportunity to get a home, whether it is to buy or rent. That is exactly what we are trying to do. In the 20 months of this Government's term, we have introduced more reforms to the planning system than the previous Government managed in 12 years. It is the end of the parliamentary year and the last question time, and a good opportunity to recap some of those reforms—just in case Opposition members have forgotten. We reformed infrastructure contributions. We helped rebuild the planning workforce with funding to support cadetships for new planners, as well as a new TAFE course for paraplanners. We invested \$815 million to get Landcom back into the housing delivery business, where it belongs. We are bringing planning into the twenty-first century by introducing artificial intelligence.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: We introduced nation-leading environmental and sustainability standards for new homes.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Goulburn to remove herself from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A until the conclusion of question time.

[Pursuant to standing order the member for Goulburn left the Chamber at 11:54.]

Mr PAUL SCULLY: We gave self-assessment powers to Landcom, Homes NSW and the Aboriginal Housing Office so homes can get off the ground faster. We created a new State significant development pathway for affordable housing projects from government agencies for faster rezonings of social and affordable homes. We delivered the master plan for Sydney's brand-new city at Bradfield. We struck agreements with 12 of the 13 councils that are hosting the transport-oriented developments to bring that State environmental planning policy into effect. Those changes are already in effect in 24 of the 37 locations and development applications are being submitted right now. We reintroduced dual occupancies and semi-detached dwellings as permissible housing types in R2 zones across the State. Taken together, these changes alone are the biggest rezoning in the State's history. They are all aimed at delivering more housing. But we have done more than just that.

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

Mr PAUL SCULLY: We introduced league tables to monitor councils' performance and make sure they are delivering housing in a timely manner. We provided new housing targets to local government areas for the first time in regional New South Wales to reshape housing growth around transport connections. We conducted an audit to identify surplus government lands for housing, led by the Minister for Lands and Property. We invested to create more than 8,000 new social homes. We passed the largest rental reforms of the past decade. Importantly, we made it easier to make simple changes to cemeteries and crematoriums without needing development applications. We are even providing end-of-life housing. Our pathway to provide a height bonus for projects with 10 per cent to 15 per cent affordable housing has been hugely popular. *[Extension of time]*

In less than a year, applications for nearly 3,400 homes were submitted, with more than 1,100 of them being affordable. Importantly, 42 proposals are in the wings that are expected to deliver nearly 15,000 homes. Last week we announced what commentators are saying are some of the largest changes to the planning system in New South Wales history. Our housing taskforce has been unblocking projects stuck in bureaucratic limbo to get them underway sooner. Our Housing Pattern Book was launched to reshape the future face of housing in New South Wales. The Housing Delivering Authority will streamline the assessment of large-scale housing proposals, reduce assessment times and get projects moving. That has been praised and recognised by people such as Urban Design Institute of Australia CEO Stuart Ayres and Business Council of Australia CEO Bran Black. Opposition members will remember them. They are backing our changes. Importantly, we changed the culture of the department to deliver quicker responses, ending the culture of indecision and delay that the former Government created. But we are not done. We are making it easier for residential buildings to be used as temporary housing.

The SPEAKER: There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. I am struggling to hear the Minister.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Importantly, we need to look at what the Opposition has done this year. It tried to pass legislation that would have outlawed medium-density housing near train stations. In less than 24 hours it backflipped on its commitment for bipartisanship on planning reforms. It made opposition to housing the centre

of its Pittwater by-election campaign. Never before has there been a group of people gathered together who are so opposed to getting people into housing in New South Wales than Opposition members. They stand for fewer houses. They stand for higher rents. They stand for lower living standards. That is the modern Liberal Party and the modern National Party. Let us hope a Christmas miracle happens and Opposition members come back in 2025 willing to get behind more housing. You never know—a Christmas miracle may just happen.

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (11:58): My question is directed to the Premier. After 20 months of delays, cuts, strikes, drivers on driverless trains and jobs for the boys, what will it take for the Premier to sack the Minister for Transport?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:58): She is awake, and that is a step up from her predecessor. She answers her phone.

Seriously, the New South Wales Government is embarking on the largest public transport investment in the history of New South Wales.

Mr Mark Speakman: Our project!

Mr CHRIS MINNS: "Our project," the Leader of the Opposition says. What did he have to do with it? I am serious. I am all ears.

The SPEAKER: The Premier will be heard in silence.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I give full credit to Gladys Berejiklian. Under the previous Government, 10 stations were opened on the north-west metro. Our Government opened eight stations through the city, but we give credit to Gladys Berejiklian. Throughout metropolitan Sydney, the Government is now building an additional 25 metro stations.

Mr Alister Henskens: You opposed it.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: We are opposed to it, but we are doing it—is that the story? Apparently we are investing \$24 billion in a project we do not support. The Minister for Transport's predecessor, in remarkable candour, revealed to the House and to the taxpayers of New South Wales that he considered abandoning the south metro project, which we resuscitated and began again. Is that not true? I am all ears about the genius ideas of members opposite.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: In the 18 months leading up to the March 2023 election, the previous Government lost 907,000 hours of public sector work because of industrial action. Since we came to government, in the same period of 18 months we have lost 19,000 hours—907,000 hours versus 19,000 hours. Under the previous Government, the number of hours lost to industrial action was 47 times higher.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Premier will resume his seat. The Leader of the Opposition rises on a point of order.

Mr Mark Speakman: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Premier is not being relevant. The question is not a free-for-all on industrial action. It is about the transport Minister and her incompetence.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. I direct the Premier to be more directly relevant.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: It was a specific question about lost industrial hours. I am happy to produce the record for the House.

Mr Mark Speakman: It wasn't. The Speaker upheld my point of order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The question included industrial hours. You said "strikes".

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: In any event, 907,000 hours of lost industrial time versus 19,000 hours of industrial time—that is 47 times higher.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Premier will resume his seat. The Leader of the Opposition rises on a point of order.

Mr Mark Speakman: Mr Speaker, you upheld my point of order. What the Premier is doing is an affront to you. He is flouting your ruling.

The SPEAKER: I upheld the point of order. The Premier heard me.

Mrs Leslie Williams: And he is ignoring you.

The SPEAKER: I agree. The Premier has completed his answer. I remind members that the standing orders provide some leeway in how questions are answered. Ministers are given some latitude, depending on the nature of the question.

SUMMER SAFETY

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (12:02): My question is addressed to the Minister for Emergency Services. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales Government is preparing to keep the State safe over summer?

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (12:02): I thank the member for Blue Mountains, who represents the most bushfire-prone place across Australia. I thank her for her work. I also thank and acknowledge the work of the RFS, volunteers who get involved in the area and all the emergency services. Summer is an exciting time for all of us. Who doesn't love to spend time with family and friends in the waterways? Many of us will be at the beach. That includes the Leader of the Opposition, who will visit Cronulla Beach. To avoid any traffic congestion, he will take his last remaining supporters and squeeze them into his Honda Jazz. They will be no problem.

I also expect the member for Manly to be at the beach. He should be careful and watch out for those big Teal waves. I have heard there has been a bit of a problem with that. Let us not forget the member for Rockdale, who will be doing his bit at Brighton-Le-Sands. In an effort to keep crowds down, he will be patrolling in his budgie smugglers. That is a step up—he was going to wear a mankini before that. I will stop talking about water, otherwise my friend the member for Murray might accuse me of stealing her thunder.

Getting back to the point, summer is also the peak time for our emergency services. As a government, we are taking some steps to keep the community safe over summer and all year round. Yesterday I joined the member for East Hills at Revesby Beach to announce the deployment of 19 new Fire and Rescue vessels. The new boats are equipped with enhanced capabilities to quickly respond to hazmat incidents across the State's waterways. The Fire and Rescue motto is "We're prepared for anything". That means any type of toxic situation, which is good news for the member for Port Macquarie, who has abandoned one toxic ship. When she is ready to flee the "HMAS *Liberal Party*", rest assured, our hazmat team will be there to help her out. The New South Wales Government is also supporting a new national beach safety campaign, "Stop. Look. Stay Alive".

[Interruption]

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

Mr JIHAD DIB: Everyone can download an app called Beach Passport. Importantly, it informs people about not only basic safety but also beach conditions. That will come in handy if anyone goes to Wagga Beach because they would need not only a passport but also a visa approved by Wes Fang.

Mrs Leslie Williams: These jokes are going down so well.

Ms Trish Doyle: I seek further information.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. Be fair to the Minister, because he would not get away with this at home. I grant him an additional two minutes.

Mr JIHAD DIB: The dad jokes do not work at home, but they work here. It is all in good jest. The "Stop. Look. Stay Alive" campaign is about more than just water safety. It is also the motto that the Leader of the Opposition uses every morning on his way to work—geez, that went down well! Across the State we continue to see wet weather and storm conditions, and the SES has been dealing with over the past week. We have also seen fires burn over 1,000 hectares, and the RFS has looked after those.

As a government, we committed \$116 million to the SES, because the previous Government had left it at a fiscal cliff. The current season sees the RFS preparing and organising its aerial fleet services in 19 locations across the State. We continue to develop our firefighting capability with ongoing trials for night-time water bombing and winching, which is incredibly important during bushfires. For the first time, our chinook will have 24-hour capability to contain fires throughout the night. If members get the chance, they should join our surf lifesavers to say thank you. I thank the member for Cooee and the member for Terrigal for organising the surf lifesaver volunteers who will be on Level 9 at 1.00 p.m.

Finally, on behalf of the Government and the Parliament, I thank our frontline responders, our emergency services and our volunteers—some of whom are in the gallery—who always give up their time. Some of that time will be on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. They will be available every single day to put out fires, conduct rescues, patrol our waterways and clean up after storms. Their selflessness says a lot about who they are and their civic-minded duty is a credit to them. I wish them all the very best. I thank them for their service on behalf of the New South Wales Parliament.

KINSHIP FOSTER CARE

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (12:08): My question is directed to the Minister for Families and Communities. Will support for grandparent carers be part of the reforms coming out of the Minister's current review into the out-of-home care system to assist grandparents who become primary carers and to maintain kinship groups?

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion) (12:08): I thank the member for Ballina for her important question about grandparent carers and the out-of-home care system review. I acknowledge that child protection is an issue that the member cares deeply about, and I also appreciate how she looks after caseworkers in her electorate. I am pleased to inform the House that I recently received the final report of the out of-home care system review, and I intend on publishing that report this month.

The report confirms that the foster care system that we inherited is not fit for purpose, that it fails to meet the needs of children and young people, and that it is ineffective and inefficient. It also finds that too many families and carers are not receiving the supports they deserve. That includes thousands of grandparent carers across the State, and I acknowledge that grandparents face particular challenges when caring for vulnerable children.

For the benefit of members, under the current system there are essentially two types of arrangements where family members, including grandparents, care for children. The first type is the formal out-of-home care system that most members would be aware of. This is where family members care for a child on behalf of the Government following child protection proceedings and a removal decision endorsed by the Children's Court. In those cases, the relative and kinship carers are formal, authorised carers who receive the foster care allowance and other government-funded supports. Approximately one-quarter of all authorised foster carers in New South Wales are, in fact, grandparent carers. Those carers receive the foster care allowance and are required to meet all the formal obligations of authorised carers, such as regular home visits, care planning and other case management activities.

The second type of arrangements are informal arrangements, where family or friends step up and step forward to care for a child, often because they, quite admirably, not only want to keep the child safe but also out of the child protection system. That has happened for time immemorial, where family and friends offer informal safe and loving homes instead of necessitating formal government intervention. As Minister, I acknowledge that many of those informal arrangements effectively mean the New South Wales Government provides no direct financial supports and, as a result, some grandparent carers have long advocated for the equivalent of the foster care allowance. I assure the member for Ballina and the House that our out-of-home care reforms will definitively deliver more supports to carers and more community supports for families, including grandparents. As part of our reforms, I want to ensure that all families have access to the supports they need to provide— [*Extension of time*]

We want to ensure that all families have access to the supports they need to provide safe, stable and loving homes. But I have to be frank and honest that we are unlikely to be in a position to pay foster care allowances to carers who are not authorised carers and where parental responsibility has not been allocated to me as Minister. Given the current circumstances, it is not sustainable or appropriate for the State child protection system to fund placements where we have no visibility of the quality of care being provided or the safety of the child. As Minister, I have legal parental responsibility for more than 13,000 children who have been removed from their parents, with court proceedings allocating parental responsibility to me as Minister.

New South Wales already runs the largest child protection system in the Southern Hemisphere, so I am being open and honest about the fact that, currently, we are not in a position to expand that system to include potentially tens of thousands of additional children who have not been removed by the New South Wales Government or where a court has not allocated parental responsibility to the Minister. I acknowledge there are significant complexities in every single case, and sometimes family members do not understand the consequences of the legal decisions they make in these really challenging circumstances.

That is why our Government has recently rolled out the Legal Assistance for Families: Partnership Agreement program across the State to ensure families have access to important free legal advice at the very point when the difficult decisions are being made. But, as Minister, the most important task in front of me is to ensure that everyone has access to supports that help families stay safely together. It is also why this Government is so

laser-focused on rebuilding essential services that change the life trajectories of vulnerable families, like public health care, public education, public housing and other services that we need for stronger, safer communities.

ROAD SAFETY

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (12:13): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Ahead of the holiday season, will the Minister please update the House on the importance of road safety?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:13): I thank the member for Gosford and congratulate her on her amazing achievement of being inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame. This is probably a different last question time answer for the year than we normally have, because I am very serious about this issue, and I want to update the House. Every death on our roads is one too many. As at today, 306 people have died on the roads in New South Wales this year, including 207 on regional roads. Last year we lost 351 people on our roads. To put that in perspective, already this year we have lost more than three times the number of members in this Chamber, and before the end of the year we are probably likely to lose about half that again. On regional roads—and only one-third of our population lives in the regions—two-thirds of all road deaths occurred. Additionally, last year 1,869 people in New South Wales were hospitalised, traumatised and left with injuries that changed their lives for weeks, months or, in many cases, permanently.

Every death on our roads is terrible. For the survivors and loved ones left behind, the trauma continues. As I have said before, the day of the crash is not the end of the process. Once the media interest wanes and the papers and TV cameras go away, that is the start of the weeks, months, years and decades of trauma, grief and loss; and for survivors, the healing, both physical and mental, the surgeries, learning to live with a disability and hopefully regaining function. It is awful. To address that, the Government has done a number of things, with the support of the Opposition on most of them. We hosted the State's first international road safety forum to hear from experts who have successfully reduced road tolls to zero in some cases, which is our goal.

I attended the first Level Crossing Safety Forum, hosted by the Federal Minister, and we hosted a wildlife strike symposium for the safety of animals and humans on our roads. We announced record Towards Zero Safer Roads funding, with nearly a quarter of a billion dollars rolling out across our road network. We legislated for mobile phone detection cameras to autonomously enforce seatbelt use. That went from 10,500 people being caught by police in a year to 11,000 people in three weeks. We legislated for trials of average speed cameras for light vehicles, which has been rolled out in every other jurisdiction. We introduced a demerit point return scheme to encourage positive driving behaviours. We have implemented trials of technology to improve safety at level crossings. *[Extension of time]*

We have invested \$30 million in the expansion of the Future Mobility Testing and Research Centre in Cudal to expand its capability for testing safety telematics and autonomous heavy vehicle safety technologies. We are doubling the number of mobile speed camera sites. We have closed loopholes for international drivers who rack up fines and put people's lives in danger. We have increased the number of safer road speed zone reviews, which some members have campaigned against but which is really important. We have retrofitted seatbelts in another 92 school buses in regional communities based on risk assessments. We have completed the bus taskforce safety review. We have launched a report into road worker safety to protect those who work on our roads and try to make them safer, and tomorrow we are hosting the road safety council of Ministers meeting in New South Wales.

There is a bit of a tradition of being a bit funny during the last question time answer of the year. I could gift an average speed camera to the member for Dubbo for him to have a safer trip to Parliament or an odometer to Wes Fang that tells him he is always doing 130 kilometres per hour but actually stops his car from going over the speed limit. But what I want for Christmas is five things, and I want every member to share these with the community: Do not speed, do not drive under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, do not let your mobile phone or other things distract you while driving, do not drive when you are fatigued, and always—always—wear a seatbelt. On behalf of those who have lost a loved one or who have suffered a terrible trauma or permanent injury, I ask members to share that message with their communities. As much as we have had fun this year and as much as I have given a lot of members a very hard time—and there is one person who is not coming back to the Legislative Council who I will not miss—I would like to see all members again next year. Please drive safely over the break.

Documents

Tabling

Mr RON HOENIG: I announce the electronic tabling of the following reports of various government agencies and departments for the year ended 30 June 2024:

NSW Education Standards Authority; New South Wales Crimes Commission; NSW Police Force; NSW Architects Registration Board; Rental Bond Board; State Insurance Regulatory Authority; Board of Surveying and Spatial Information; New South Wales Telecommunications (Telco) Authority; Fire and Rescue NSW; New South Wales Rural Fire Service; New South Wales State Emergency Service; Destination NSW; Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority; NSW Independent Casino Commission; Greyhound welfare and Integrity Commission; Office of Transport Safety Investigations; NSW TrainLink (Volumes One and Two); Sydney Metro; Sydney Trains (Volumes One and Two); Department of Transport for NSW (Volumes One and Two); Department of Communities and Justice (Volumes One and Two); Forestry Corporation of New South Wales; Local Land Services; NSW Food Authority; Veterinary Practitioners Board of New South Wales; Department of Regional NSW; Rice Marketing Board for the State of New South Wales; Natural Resources Commission; Parliamentary Counsel's Office; Cabinet Office; Public Service Commission; Parramatta Park Trust; Western Sydney Parklands Trust; Place Management NSW (including the report for Luna Park Reserve Trust); Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust; Sydney Olympic Park Authority; Western Parkland City Authority; Independent Planning Commission; NSW Reconstruction Authority; Biodiversity Conservation Trust; NSW Energy Corporation (EnergyCo); NSW Environment Protection Authority; Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust; Lord Howe Island Board; Zoological Parks Board of New South Wales (trading as Taronga Conservation Society Australia); Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (Volumes One and Two); NSW Skills Board; TAFE NSW; Art Gallery of New South Wales Trust; Australian Museum trust; Centennial Park and Moore Park trust; New South Wales Environmental Trust; Heritage Council of New South Wales; Office of the Independent Review Officer; Legal Aid New South Wales; Legal Professional Admission Board; Library Council of New South Wales; Museums of History NSW; New South Wales Electoral Commission; New South Wales Rural Assistance Authority; NSW Trustee and Guardian; State Records Authority NSW; Sydney Opera House Trust; Trustees of the Anzac Memorial Building; Trustees of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences; NSW Crown Solicitor's Office; Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions; Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade; Judicial Commission of New South Wales; Personal Injury Commission; New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council; Harness Racing New South Wales; Greyhound Racing New South Wales; Racing NSW; NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts; Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation; Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal; Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation; Office of the Legal Services Commissioner; New South Wales Returned and Services League; Dams Safety NSW; Mental Health Commission of New South Wales; Multicultural NSW; Venue NSW; NSW Institute of Sport; Combat Sports Authority, State Sporting Venues Authority; Office of Sport; Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW; Waste Assets Management Corporation; Property and Development NSW; Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission; New South Wales Aboriginal housing Office; Premier's Department; Cobar Water Board; Aboriginal Languages Trust; Valuer-General NSW; Teacher Housing Authority; NSW Health (Volumes One to Three); Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency; Cancer Institute New South Wales; Health Care Complaints Commission; Combined Health Professional Councils of NSW; National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner; NSW Health Foundation; Administrator of the National Health Funding Pool; National Health Funding Body; Commissioner of the NSW Crime Commission; NSW Police (2023); NSW Police (2024); Legal Services Council; Public Defenders; New South Wales Bar Association; New South Wales Law Reform Commission; Anti-Discrimination Board; Attorney-General; Wentworth Park Sporting Complex Land Manager; Department of Customer Service; Service NSW; and Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Volumes One and Two).

I move:

That the reports be printed:

Motion agreed to.

PRINTING OF PAPERS

Mr RON HOENIG: I move:

That the following papers be printed:

- (1) Reports for the year ended 30 June 2023—Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and the National Boards; Health Care Complaints Ombudsman; Cancer Institute New South Wales; and NSW Health, tabled by Mr Ryan Park (30 November 2023).
- (2) Report of the Valuer General NSW entitled *Annual Report 2022-23*, dated 31 October 2023, tabled by Mr Stephen Kamper (30 November 2023).
- (3) A written response from the Premier to a question asked of him by the member for Kiama during question time on 6 February 2024, tabled by Mr Ron Hoenig (8 February 2024).
- (4) The Draft Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Amendment Regulation 2024, tabled by Mr Ron Hoenig (8 February 2024).
- (5) Report of the Office of Transport Safety Investigations entitled *Bus Safety Investigation Report: Bus Fire MO9994 – Green Valley, 8 August 2022*, dated March 2024, tabled by Jo Haylen (13 March 2024).
- (6) Report of the Aboriginal Languages Trust entitled *Aboriginal Languages Trust Annual Report and Annual Review of the Strategic Plan Implementation* for the year ended 30 June 2023, tabled by Mr David Harris (21 March 2024).
- (7) A written response from the Premier to a question asked of him by the member for Kiama during question time on 21 March 2024, tabled by Mr Ron Hoenig (8 May 2024).
- (8) A written response from the Premier to a question asked of him by the member for Kiama during question time on 9 May 2024, tabled by Mr Ron Hoenig (15 May 2024).
- (9) Report on the 2024 Review of the Exemption for Private Gaming Rooms under the Smoke-free Environment Act 2000, tabled by Mr Ryan Park (15 May 2024).
- (10) Half-yearly report of Sydney Water Corporation for six months ended 31 December 2023; half-yearly report of Hunter Water Corporation for the period ended December 2023; half-yearly report of WaterNSW for the period ended 31 December 2023; half-yearly report of Essential Energy for the period ended 31 December 2023; half-yearly report of Forestry Corporation of NSW for the period ended 31 December 2023; half-yearly report of Landcom for the period ended December 2023; half-yearly

report of Port Authority of New South Wales for the period ended 31 December 2023; and half-yearly report of the Transport Asset Holding Entity of NSW for the period ended December 2023, tabled by Mr Ron Hoenig (15 May 2024).

- (11) Report of the Office of Transport Safety Investigations entitled *Bus Safety Investigation Report: Collision of Buses in Campsie on 20 March 2024*, dated June 2024, tabled by Ms Jo Haylen (6 June 2024).
- (12) A written response from the Premier to a question asked of him by the member for Kiama during question time on 6 June 2024, tabled by Mr Ron Hoenig (19 June 2024).
- (13) Report of the Office of Transport Safety Investigations entitled *Rail Safety Investigation Report – Rail Worksite Protection in NSW - Report 2 Cowan, 11 January 2023*, dated June 2024, tabled by Ms Jo Haylen (20 June 2024).
- (14) Government response to the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Transport and Infrastructure Report on the Sydney Metro West project, tabled by Ms Jo Haylen (6 August 2024).
- (15) Second Deed of Amendment and Restatement in respect of the Duty and Responsible Gaming Levy Agreement, dated 22 April 2024, tabled by Mr Ron Hoenig (6 August 2024).
- (16) Report of Transport for NSW entitled *NSW Road Safety Progress Report 2023: Centre for Road Safety*, dated August 2024, tabled by Ms Jenny Aitchison (8 August 2024).
- (17) A written response from the Premier to a question asked of him by the member for Kiama during question time on 7 August 2024, tabled by Mr Ron Hoenig (13 August 2024).
- (18) New South Wales Government response to the final report of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, tabled by Ms Kate Washington (15 August 2024).
- (19) NSW Public Authorities Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2023 – Progress Report Card, tabled by Ms Kate Washington (15 August 2024).
- (20) A written response from himself to a question asked of him by the member for Northern Tablelands during question time on 15 August 2024, tabled by Mr Ryan Park (17 September 2024).
- (21) Chair's report of the Board of the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission for the year ended 30 June 2023, tabled by Ms Yasmin Catley (17 September 2024).
- (22) Government Response to the Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTQ Hate Crimes, tabled by Ms Yasmin Catley (19 September 2024).
- (23) A written response from the Premier to a question asked by the member for Dubbo during question time on 19 September 2024 and a written response from the Premier to a question asked by the member for Kiama during question time on 19 September 2024, tabled by Mr Steve Whan (24 September 2024).
- (24) Proposed part revocation of the dedication of Bago State Forest, tabled by Mr Steve Whan (24 September 2024).
- (25) Report of the NSW Rural Fire Service entitled *NSW Bush Fire Season Outlook 2024-25*, tabled by Mr Jihad Dib (25 September 2024).
- (26) Report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled *Energy Sustainability Schemes - 2022–23 Energy Security Safeguard, Report to the Minister*, dated July 2024, tabled by Mr Jihad Dib (26 September 2024).
- (27) Report of Liquor and Gaming NSW entitled *Review of the Music Festivals Act 2019: Final report*, dated April 2024, tabled by Ms Jo Haylen (10 October 2024).
- (28) Intergovernmental Agreement entitled *Management, Operation, Maintenance and Repair of the Tweed Sand Bypassing System* between the State of New South Wales and the State of Queensland, tabled by Ms Jo Haylen (23 October 2024).
- (29) Report of Music Festival Roundtable for year ended 30 June 2024, tabled by Ms Jo Haylen (23 October 2024).
- (30) A written response from the Premier to a question asked by the member for Kiama during question time on 12 November 2024, tabled by Mr Ron Hoenig (14 November 2024).

Motion agreed to.

OFFICE OF TRANSPORT SAFETY INVESTIGATIONS

Reports

Mr RON HOENIG: In accordance with section 46D of the Passenger Transport Act 1990, I announce the electronic tabling of the Office of Transport Safety Investigations report entitled *Bus Safety Investigation Report: Coach fire, Revesby, 10 February 2023*, dated November 2024.

DEPARTMENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Reports

Mr RON HOENIG: By leave: I move:

That if the House is not sitting, the report of the Department of the Legislative Assembly for the year ended 30 June 2024 be received by the Speaker and printed with the authority of the House.

Motion agreed to.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION**Reports**

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I announce the electronic tabling of the following reports:

- (1) Report of the Office of the Inspector of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled *Report under section 242(3) of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 (LEPRA) for the period ending 28 May 2023: Covert Search Warrants*, dated June 202.
- (2) Report of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission entitled *Covert Search Warrants & Preventative Detention Orders – Review under the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 (NSW) July 202 – June 2023*, dated September 2024.

NSW LAW REFORM COMMISSION**Reports**

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I announce the electronic tabling of report No. 151 of the NSW Law Reform Commission entitled *Serious racial and religious vilification*, dated September 2024.

DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES**Reports**

The SPEAKER: I table the report of the Department of Parliamentary Services for the year ended 30 June 2024. I order that the report be printed.

AUDITOR-GENERAL**Reports**

The CLERK: In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, I announce receipt of the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Road Asset Management in Local Government*, dated 21 November 2024.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

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

Bathurst Health Service Parking

Petition requesting that the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to make provision for increased car parking in the final design of the Bathurst Health Service redevelopment project, received from **Mr Paul Toole**.

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

Plastic Waste

ePetition calling upon the Legislative Assembly to implement a ban on certain plastic products, received from **Dr Joe McGirr**.

*Motions***CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS**

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (12:23): On behalf of Mr Chris Minns: I move:

That this House take note of Christmas felicitations.

It is a great privilege to be here on behalf of the Premier to offer Christmas felicitations, as is the tradition of the House. When members of both Houses are in this building, they might be tempted to think that they are the stars of the show. But to do this job is to be constantly reminded that we are only here to support the real stars. If we can do that then we will have done our job as members of Parliament. With that in mind, on behalf of the Premier, I start by acknowledging the State's emergency workers, who will not get a chance to stop this summer, even while the rest of us are winding down for the year. I say to all the police officers, firefighters, paramedics, doctors, nurses, SES workers and everyone who will be on call over the break preparing for the worst, we can only hope that call does not come.

In terms of my parliamentary colleagues, I begin at the top and pay tribute to you, Mr Speaker. Not many people can say they enjoy universal respect, but in this Parliament you are universally respected. Every sitting day you show the wisdom of Solomon, the dignity of Queen Elizabeth and the weary patience of a childcare worker.

The SPEAKER: I don't know what to say.

Ms PRUE CAR: Someone in the Premier's office has done a beautiful, prosaic job with this. I am sure everyone joins me in wishing you a very quiet and peaceful summer break in your beautiful electorate, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you.

Ms PRUE CAR: In the same spirit I also acknowledge Ben Franklin in the other place. To Mark Speakman on the Opposition front bench, on behalf of the Labor Government I wish you and your family a very merry Christmas in beautiful Cronulla. Labor has been there; being in opposition is not easy. It is a lonely gig, but it is an important one, and our system relies on it. Enjoy the time off. I acknowledge the Leader of the House, the one and only Ron Hoenig. There is no-one quite like him. His staff, starting with Omar Rodriguez, do incredible work in a very stressful and fast-moving environment. I thank the Labor Whips in the Legislative Assembly, Nathan Hagarty and Janelle Saffin, as well as Colleen Symington in the Whip's office, for literally keeping the show together.

On the other side of the House I acknowledge Alister Henskens, the Manager of Opposition Business; and Adam Crouch, the Liberal Party Whip. I also acknowledge Dugald Saunders, the Leader of The Nationals. Dugald, in the spirit of Christmas, the Premier has told me to say that he is sorry for saying you had fleas. That was unparliamentary of him. To Dugald and all the Liberal and Nationals MPs and staff, I hope you enjoy a well-earned break with family and loved ones.

One group I want to mention is the crossbench. There has been a real attempt during this term of Parliament to work across traditional lines through some pretty unlikely friendships, and I think our politics is undeniably better for it. Crossbench members have brought new ideas, raised new perspectives and welcomed us into their very diverse communities, including Roy Butler, who welcomed us all to beautiful and historic Broken Hill. Helen Dalton has taken many of us to the Deni Ute Muster through the years; Phil Donato continues to hunt us down; and Jeremy Buckingham keeps trying to get the Premier to Nimbin for some reason. Maybe next year, Jeremy.

In many ways, 2024 has seen a changing of the guard in this Parliament. We have said goodbye to a number of colleagues who are moving on from parliamentary life. Dom Perrottet has moved on to bigger and better things in America, Bronnie Taylor has gone home and Matt Kean has finally joined the Federal Labor Party. It is the end of an era and our Parliament will not be the same without them. I wish them all well. From one House to the other, I thank the Legislative Council and its leaders, Penny Sharpe and John Graham, and the Labor Whip Bob Nanva. I acknowledge the parliamentary staff supporting that team: Peta Waller-Bryant, Harry Gregg and Max Kennedy.

We all know that Parliament is a very large production. Like any serious show, the annoying divas are up on stage while the real professionals are behind the curtain making sure the whole thing does not fall apart. They include the Clerks of the Legislative Assembly—Clerk Helen Minnican and Deputy Clerk Carly Maxwell—the Sergeant-at-Arms, Simon Johnston; and the Chamber support staff and attendants, led by Ian Delahunty. I give a special mention to Danny Heldal and April Lowndes, who both retired this year. Members all rely on staff at the Parliamentary Counsel's Office, led by the amazing Annette O'Callaghan, who write the bills and translate the amendments, all in real time, just like we depend on the brilliant Table Office and committee staff, who keep the wheels of policy moving in this State.

We thank all the hardworking people from the Department of Parliamentary Services, who care about this building and support the work we do in it. That includes the long-suffering Hansard staff who, for better or worse, turn our daily words into permanent history. I honestly do not know how they do it most of the time—or even hear what we are saying. I thank everyone at the Parliamentary Library, who are custodians of 180 years of service to our democracy; IT support, who answer all our questions with the patience of Greg Piper; security and the special constables, who look after us and act with great professionalism at all times; and to the cleaners, who do a very hard day's work in the Parliament building as well as in the ministerial building and in our electorate offices too—we do notice and we do appreciate it for we could not do any of this without them. I also thank the catering staff and the restaurant and cafe staff, with special mention to Gary Chan, who is a legend of the public cafe and bar.

I thank all the staff in the Premier's office and the ministerial officers—they have really hard gigs and give of themselves each and every day—led by the Premier's chief of staff, James Cullen, all our chiefs of staff and all of our ministerial advisers and everyone working in the offices who keep government going. I also thank all our

electorate officers. I ask for the indulgence of the House to give a big thank you to my Londonderry electorate office in St Marys. My senior electorate officer, Lois Fisher, was recently given an award for almost two decades of service. Lois has worked for both former member for Penrith Faye Lo Po' and I. Without Lois, I definitely would not have been re-elected twice. Particularly since the election of a new government and with my ministerial roles, she has literally kept the electorate going. I thank the team for that.

I give thanks to our drivers. I did not know it would happen but now I understand, and most Ministers would say the same thing: My drivers are basically my family at this point, and I trust them with my children. To the Government departments and a frank and fearless public service, led by Simon Draper and Kate Boyd, I give thanks. I also give thanks to my own department, the Department of Education, led by the indefatigable Murat Dizdar, who has the biggest heart for what he does of anyone I have ever met. I thank him for everything he is doing. I thank all the teachers of New South Wales. It is a pretty special privilege to be your Minister. I am never not blown away by everything they do for our kids. I look forward to doing it all again with them next year. To my electorate, I love my community so much. Every year it gets better. We are doing some great things together. It is the honour of my professional life to represent my electorate in this place as we change and grow and the challenges that we confront change and grow.

Without being too personal, I think on this day we should also acknowledge all of our families. Being in the family of a member of Parliament is an all-consuming exercise. That is particularly so for members who, like me, have young children who are growing up as we are in Parliament. So to our husbands and our wives, our nans and our pops, and everyone who helps with our kids so that we can represent our communities, I take this opportunity to say thank you. I particularly thank my husband, who is no stranger to service. He served the nation in Iraq, so his service, especially to the country, is more than I will ever do in my lifetime. At the moment, he is the only thing keeping my family together, and I am really grateful to him and his ability to help me do this job. The only political thing I will say in this contribution is about what happened prior to question time today. Using the memorial bill in a political way was particularly hurtful in that context, and particularly hurtful to the families of veterans.

Christmas is a happy time, though for many people it is a difficult time. If money is tight, Christmas can be stressful as there are lot of extra costs and pressures, and high expectations to meet. As politicians, we have to acknowledge that we are lucky because we are elected to represent our communities in this place. It is up to us to use the good fortune that we have, and the privilege given to us by the community, to help the people we represent. Families in our State have been through a hard couple of years; it is a slog. I hear that from my own community every day. It is our responsibility to do what we can with the resources we have to continue to lighten that load in 2025. So today, as we break for Christmas—we really break to go to school presentations—we recommit ourselves to that task, as we look forward to a new year and hopefully better times ahead.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (12:35): Having the opportunity, with my fellow members of Parliament, to offer my Christmas wishes is one of the fine traditions that has developed in the New South Wales Parliament, Australia's oldest Parliament and the heart of democracy in our State. Christmas is a time of reflection, a time—hopefully—of rest, a time of joy and a time to give thanks. First and foremost, I extend my greetings of the Christmas season to the people of Cronulla. I am the luckiest person in this Parliament to represent such a wonderful community in such a wonderful part of New South Wales. I have been privileged to do so now for over 13 years. The community has entrusted me to be in this place to undertake my role as an MP and as the Leader of the Opposition.

My service to my community is enabled by my dedicated and empathetic electorate staff team. My long-serving—and some would say long-suffering—senior electorate officer, Michelle Lawson, has been with me now for over 10 years, supported by the dedicated Pete Leate, Cecilia Falson and Hendrix Cunnea, and watched over most days by my extraordinarily social and loveable golden retriever, Lucy. The indefatigable Cheryl Gwilliam, my chief of staff as Leader of the Opposition and formerly as a Minister, has been my trusted and loyal adviser for 5½ years. She is a calm voice of reason, whose advice and wisdom are always succinctly delivered and gratefully received. I thank my loyal, energetic Parliament House office team. Clem Hall, who operates on minimum sleep and maximum Coke Zero, is the first to text me before dawn and the last at night. In recent welcome developments, Sue Finn has returned to the fold. Sue brings extensive media and communications expertise from the public and private sectors.

Nicolle Nasr is our policy and social media expert extraordinaire; Nick Johnston simultaneously impresses with his policy work and joie de vivre; and my office manager and executive assistant, Kit Hale, keeps me and the entire office super organised. Yianni runs Economou Economics, for anything that involves a dollar, a percentage sign or legal analysis. Liam Kiss burns the candle at both ends during sitting days, as the business program is updated and shifts from time to time. Andrew Humpherson expertly supports the Manager of Opposition Business in the lower House when the Parliament is sitting to ensure the efficient running of the

Legislative Assembly. I thank drivers Steve O'Keefe, Dean Simpson and Tim Dwyer for their continued professional and diligent service during the past year. They get me across the length and breadth of Sydney and into the regions—down tight, urban, one-way streets and along dirt roads—when I am not zooming around the electorate in my ever-reliable 2013 Honda Jazz.

I extend my thanks and appreciation to all the parliamentary staff, including the Clerk, for their patience and goodwill. The stalwarts of our nation's oldest Parliament, they are simultaneously attuned to and good natured about the boisterous nature of this Chamber. While members of Parliament may be the public face of democracy in our State, we are all aware of and grateful for the work of the behind-the-scenes team in Parliament House who work to provide professional services and support through the various units, including Hansard, Library and Research; Catering; IT Services; Communications, Engagement and Education; Financial Services and Governance; People, Property and Security; Capital Works, Strategy and Delivery; and Digital Transformation.

They have had a busy year with all the additional work associated with the celebrations and events marking the bicentenary of the Legislative Council, including a visit by His Majesty Charles III and Queen Camilla as part of their official visit to Australia. The Parliament House staff are exemplar public servants and critical to the success of this place.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for your refereeing and for your hospitality towards all the guests we have had through the year. I recognise and thank the Coalition leadership group: Liberal colleagues Natalie Ward, Damien Tudehope, Robyn Preston and Alister Henskens; plus Nationals colleagues Dugald Saunders, Gurmesh Singh and Sarah Mitchell; as well as my entire shadow ministry team. I thank the Opposition Whips, Adam Crouch and Chris Rath, for their continued astute attention and diligence in keeping us on track and fed during the legislative program over the past year. Corraling us all to be where we need to be when we need to be is crucial to the smooth and proper functioning of this place, and the thoroughness of the Whips is testament to the respect that we should all have for this Chamber. I thank all my parliamentary colleagues in the Chamber from the Premier and his Government to the Opposition and the crossbench for their contributions this year, whether that be speaking on legislation, bringing the perspectives of their electorates to this House or speaking more generally on motions or speeches.

The scourge of domestic and family violence has sadly shadowed much of this year. I acknowledge all the families and communities for whom this will be the first Christmas without a loved one, and the separated and splintered families across the State. Peace and goodwill to all is a central tenet of Christmas, a poignant message in times of conflict and tension in communities in New South Wales. As we celebrate Christmas with family and friends, we have to be conscious of those near and far facing hardship or adversity. It is a time to celebrate the blessings we share, to extend a hand to those in need and to strengthen the bonds that hold us together.

I am always heartened by the acts of service I see every day in electorates across New South Wales and I am grateful for the countless community members who give selflessly to help others. Whether through organising food drives, reaching out to isolated neighbours or simply bringing some holiday cheer to those who need it most, those actions reflect the true spirit of Christmas. Christmas brings us the gift of reflection, allowing us to look back on the year that was—its challenges and its triumphs—and to look forward to the year ahead with renewed hope and purpose. This time of year calls us to appreciate simple but profound gifts in life: family, friendship and the communities we call home. St Luke's Gospel speaks of shepherds living out in the fields near Bethlehem keeping watch over their flocks at night, and records:

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

I wish everyone in this place and across New South Wales a safe and merry Christmas.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (12:43): I echo some of the comments that have already been made and add my thanks to those who keep this Parliament, the oldest in Australia, functioning effectively. I will not re-mention every single one. But, given you are about to leave the chair, Mr Speaker, I will skip to the thanks that I had for you. Even though you have put me on far too many calls and removed me from the Chamber on too many occasions, I thank you for your judgements this year. I wish you and your family all the very best for Christmas and the new year. I reflect on the many people in this place who help us each day. Literally from the time we walk in, which is sometimes very early, to the time we walk out, which is sometimes very late, we are well looked after by the staff, who make this place work as smoothly as it does.

They include the guards manning security when we walk in the front or the back door to the Clerks, who are with us in the Chamber every time and who do an amazing job and sometimes explain what we regard—or certainly I regard—as fairly complicated bits and pieces in the simplest of ways. We thank them for what they do. I give a massive thanks to all of the attendants, who do an amazing job—we have some new faces in the Chamber now replacing some amazing former attendants—all of the parliamentary staff; the reception staff; the cafe and

restaurant workers, who feed us at all sorts of weird hours; the cleaners, who we mostly see every morning; the library staff; the special constables; Hansard, who, as mentioned, do an amazing job; and the countless others who work in this place for all that they do. We can only do what we do because of their work behind the scenes. Trust me, it does not go unnoticed. It is worth us all reflecting on that today.

I reflect proudly on the work that we have done as a Coalition over the year. Part of that is focusing on keeping the Labor Government accountable. I recognise every one of my NSW Nationals colleagues in this place. Each one of them works particularly hard for their electorates and regional New South Wales. I thank my deputy leader, Gurmeh Singh, the member for Coffs Harbour; Kevin Anderson, the member for Tamworth; Steph Cooke, the member for Cootamundra; Dave Layzell, the member for Upper Hunter; Geoff Provest, who is 100 per cent for the Tweed; "Tooley", Paul Toole, the member for Bathurst; Michael Kemp, the member for Oxley; Tanya Thompson, the member for Myall Lakes; our Whip, Richie Williamson, the member for Clarence; and, of course, our newest member, Brendan Moylan, who won a by-election in the Northern Tablelands earlier this year and is fitting right in as part of the team.

What we do in this Chamber is backed by our colleagues in the other place. We have a small but formidable crew in that Chamber that has, again, been amazing in 2024. There has been a bit of change in our upper House team this year. The irrepressible Bronnie Taylor—"the Bombshell"—has called it a day and has been replaced by the returning Scott Barrett. I welcome him back. We are also about to farewell Sam Farraway, who delivered his valedictory yesterday. We wish him all the very best at the Federal level. In the next couple of weeks his replacement will be elected. Leading the charge for the Nats in the upper House has been Sarah Mitchell, who is a great friend and has done yet again an amazing job—well done, Smitch—along with Fes Wang. I mean, Mr Wang. I mean Wes Fang, who has once again fought tirelessly for the people of regional New South Wales. Well done to him.

Each of our MPs has been fantastic in their own way but all work to represent the regions and ensure the best outcomes for the bush. I say a big thank you to the staff in the offices of all of those Nationals MPs for what they do. Their work is invaluable to ensuring a strong party and a strong opposition. I also take the chance to thank our Liberal colleagues, led in this House by Mark Speakman. It is great to work with him. There is also Robyn Preston in this place and Damien Tudehope and Natalie Ward in the other place. It has been almost two years since the last election. While I admit that opposition is not quite as nice as government, we are working together as a unit to keep the Labor Government accountable on behalf of the communities that each one of us represents.

Let us be honest. MPs, party leaders and even Ministers are only as good as their staff. I thank all of the staff that I have worked with over the past 12 months across our team. It is a small but pretty amazing team that punches above its weight. That has included Emmy G, who has now sadly left us; Jaydos; Becko; Mills; Kate and Sal; Barnsley; G; Bridgey; Firmy; the big man, Johnnie Walks; Candy; Corey; and Rory. I particularly thank Candy and Cory for all of those incredible late-night discussions where we have solved so many world problems. Then there were those early morning calls, most of which I left unanswered. Sorry, not sorry. There has been caramel slice, to be fair, but not nearly enough. There have been too many ponytails to think about and a very memorable kilted occasion that the King decided to base his entire Australian visit around. One golden memory that I will mention is "pelicans".

I also hugely thank my "electorate office angels", as I call them. They are literally the team at the electorate office that helps keep the show on the road. That is the saying but it is literally what they do: allow me to be on the road when it is needed. I thank my lead angel, Jane Diffy—otherwise known as Biffo or just the Biff—for what she does. Jane brings everything together and helps hold the fort with the other amazing angels, Laura Dunkley, who is the socials genius; and Sally Everett, who has added a whole new dimension this year. I thank them for what they do for me.

There is also the straight-shooting Susie Rowley and Emily O'Dea, who do a great job. Very simply, as Jeff Fenech would say, "I love youse all". One of my highlights of the year involves Dubbo and the King. During his visit to regional Parramatta I was able to present him with a king-sized and a queen-sized "I LOVE DUBBO" T-shirt, which he loved, honestly. I have had reports, in fact this very morning, that he has been spotted in his "I LOVE DUBBO" T-shirt doing a bit of gardening—long live the King!

As I mentioned, I thank the Speaker for all his help this year, even though he removed me too many times. We need to recognise and acknowledge all of the staff in the Speaker's office who help do all of the things that need to get done and the staff in the offices of the Whips, of all political persuasions, who also make sure that this place keeps work tirelessly to keep running smoothly. I acknowledge Premier Chris Minns, Deputy Premier Prue Car and their teams, who we know go above and beyond to make sure that they can function as they need to. I also give a shout-out to all of the crossbenchers in both Houses. Being in government is all consuming at times, but to all members and their families I wish you all a happy and safe holiday period.

Lastly, and importantly for me, I thank my family. I said it last year, but with another full year under my belt as leader I am much more aware that along with the honour of a role like this comes quite a bit of sacrifice from others. I know that is something that everyone in this place would recognise. To my wonderful wife, Karen—who works full time herself—thank you for everything you do to make it possible for me to do this role and for the way you support me in this role. A lot goes on in our lives, in my life, that most people do not ever know about. Thank you for your understanding and support. I am so proud of our daughters, Georgie and Charlie. They are growing into amazing young adults. I hope that what we are doing now will help contribute to regional New South Wales being a better place to live. I finish by wishing everyone in this place and across New South Wales a restful, peaceful and happy Christmas period, no matter what they are doing, hopefully spent with family and friends. Drive safely if you are travelling. I look forward to seeing you in 2025.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:51): It is a privilege to close out another year in this place and the second year of the Minns Labor Government. First and foremost, I thank the people of Heffron for entrusting me to be your local member for the past 12 years. As long as I am in this place, I will continue to do all I can to improve your lives and ensure that Heffron remains a wonderful and enriching place to live. As we come to the end of the year, it is a pertinent time to reflect on the wins we have shared in our time in government thus far, as we continue to inspire and move towards creating a better New South Wales for the people of this great State. I thank the Premier, my friend Chris Minns, for his steadfast, compassionate, thoughtful and strategic leadership as leader of the Government. Since Labor was returned to office, the Premier has demonstrated time and time again this Labor Government's commitment to build a better future for the people of New South Wales. Despite facing his own personal challenges this year, he has always put the people of New South Wales first. I thank him for his friendship and the confidence he has instilled in me as a member of his government, and as Leader of the House.

I acknowledge the Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning and Minister for Western Sydney, Prue Car. Her deep commitment to the Labor cause, to her community and to the children and students of New South Wales is all encompassing. She is an amazing education Minister. To my ministerial colleagues, by now we have come to learn that being a Minister is undoubtedly a challenge, and a job that comes with enormous responsibilities. I have a great appreciation for the tenacity of my Cabinet colleagues, and I am proud of the work we have done as a collective. Every day we have the immense privilege of being a government that is delivering a fresh start for the people of New South Wales. I also acknowledge my counterparts in the other place, the Hon. Penny Sharpe, the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council, and the Hon. John Graham, Deputy Leader of the Government. To my fellow parliamentary colleagues, each of you is instrumental to the Labor cause. Thank you for your support and generosity as we continue to journey together as a united team.

I acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition and member for Cronulla, Mark Speakman, who read with me when he first came to the bar when I was a public defender, a man whom I know is a deep thinking and honourable man, engaged in the most difficult job in politics in this State. I also acknowledge the shadow ministry and all those opposite. Having had the experience of being in opposition for 12 years, I know it is not an easy job. I think it is fair to say that this year has been a particularly difficult one for the Opposition, losing some formidable members of the Liberal Party. As long as you are in opposition—which I hope will be a very long time—I ask that you continue to challenge the Government and keep us accountable. Robust democratic debate in this place is a cornerstone of democracy and as an effective Opposition it is fundamental to honest, good government. At the end of the day, I have confidence that irrespective of our political affiliations we are all in this place because we want what is best for our communities and for New South Wales. Let us never let name-calling and finger-pointing get in the way of this.

I acknowledge the member for Wahroonga and Manager of Opposition Business, a highly regarded silk who succeeded in his profession before coming into politics. The parliamentary process is much the better for his addition to it. I also acknowledge the Opposition Whip, the member for Terrigal, whose cooperation this year in my capacity as Leader of the House and previously when I was Manager of Opposition Business is appreciated. I greatly appreciate the cooperation and support that you have always provided me as we have worked across the aisle. I acknowledge the member for Goulburn and shadow Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Wendy Tuckerman—as she still has that honourable title—for her collaboration on a number of pieces of work this year. I thank her for approaching local government reform in a bipartisan way. I know she has a deep-seated experience and shares with me a commitment to improve local government, its functioning and its reputation. I believe her approach has to this point and will continue to have stronger outcomes and our communities will be better for it.

Speaking of collaboration, I sincerely thank the members of the crossbench for working so openly with me, the Premier and the Government this past year. When Labor was elected, we came to this place as a minority government. We knew we would have to work with the crossbench if we were to have any hope of pushing legislation through this House. I say to all the crossbenchers, you are tenacious advocates for your communities, you force us to become a better, more considered government. I thank you for your genuine engagement, for

bringing informed policy positions to us that strengthen the legislation that moves through this House. You challenge us and, while we do not always agree, without your perspectives and lived experience, the Government would not have passed some of the most important and impactful legislation this year. Thank you, and I hope we can continue this respectful working relationship.

Being Leader of the House means I get to see the inner workings of the parliamentary process that the rest of elected members are not always privy too. For that, I extend my deepest thanks to the people who work incredibly hard behind the scenes not just on long sitting days well into the night, but often seven days a week. The work you do ensures that the Government and the House can continue to deliver for the people of New South Wales, as we were elected to do. From my office, I particularly thank Omar. How Omar has put up with me all these years, he probably needs more than just a medal. I sincerely thank him for his loyalty, his dedication and assistance. I simply would not have been able to function over the years without it. I thank Sachin and Cara from the Premier's Office for their support and assistance. Without their dedication and support I simply would not have been able to get the bills through the House.

You are instrumental to ensuring that things run smoothly and navigating the complexities of the parliamentary process, which is a supremely difficult challenge in itself.

This also would not be possible without the many people who do the work that often is not acknowledged but enables the rest of us to look good. I thank and express my appreciation to the Clerk, Helen Minnican, our constitutional officer, the Deputy Clerk, Carly Maxwell, and all the team in the office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. You provide advice and counsel independently, and we could not operate without your professional input. The Clerk has provided advice to me on so many occasions, and I am grateful for her patience, professionalism and knowledge. Many of us would be lost without Helen's guidance and the guidance of her staff. I also acknowledge the Government Whip, the member for Leppington, Nathan Haggarty, and the Deputy Whip, the member for Lismore, Janelle Saffin. She knows more about what it takes to be an effective local member than anyone else in this place. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge Colleen in the Whip's office. Colleen worked with me initially. You are one of the most dependable and hardworking people I know, and you are invaluable to maintaining the stability of the Government.

To the Speaker, the member for Lake Macquarie, Greg Piper, thank you for upholding the dignity of this Chamber. I appreciate the professionalism and gravitas with which you approach the chair every day. It was important to the Minns Government, not just because you are an Independent, that you were selected for the role. The Premier genuinely believes in the independence of the office of Speaker. We are delighted that you accepted the role. I know that from time to time both sides of the House get a bit overzealous, and you have the unenviable job of keeping the House in order. Thank you for adjudicating with fairness and for the cordiality you have afforded me, the Government and the Opposition. I thank you, Deputy Speaker, the member for Wallsend, and the Assistant Speaker, the member for Strathfield, for your contributions when taking the chair. I also thank the Temporary Speakers, the member for Sydney, the member for Cessnock, the member for Parramatta, the member for Drummoyne and the member for Oxley.

To all the other staff at Parliament, cleaners, caterers, cafe staff, special constables, IT and facilities management, you quietly and diligently keep this place running for us. You make sure we are safe and well fed. We probably do not say it often enough, but thank you for the respective jobs you do. To the staff at the Legislative Assembly Table Office, Hansard, the Serjeant-at-Arms and the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms, thank you for the roles you carry out to maintain the great legacy of this Chamber. I also acknowledge the work done by the Parliamentary Counsel's Office, led by Annette O'Callaghan. Drafting legislation is an immensely difficult challenge. That comes from someone who was at the bar and my opposite number, who was a senior member of the bar. We know how difficult it is. The talented and professional people in the Parliamentary Counsel's Office do a remarkable job turning the Government's intentions into legislation that can pass through the Parliament. To the press gallery, you keep all of us accountable and honest. You do an incredibly important job and it is vital that freedom of the press is never stifled or diminished. We may not always like it, but you play a central role in the democratic process, and it is a role that deserves respect.

To my ministerial staff, you continue to navigate the treacherous waters of local government as we work through the immense challenges in the sector. I thank my very capable and level-headed chief of staff, Peter McCabe, for leading my team, who I know work tirelessly to fulfil my wishes. I assure the House that if any member needs a level-headed chief of staff, it is me. To the whole team—Brendan, Clare, Brianna, Phil, Jennifer and Omar—and the department liaison officers, thank you for your commitment to me and the Government. I also thank my electorate office staff, Dorothy, Aidan and Tracy. While my ministerial duties keep me busy elsewhere, my staff do a tremendous job having to carry me and ensuring that the issues that are brought to our attention are resolved promptly, efficiently, professionally and expeditiously. Thank you for going above and beyond when

dealing with my constituents and ensuring that every resident who raises a concern is treated with dignity, respect and compassion, as they deserve to be.

As the face of my electorate continues to change, encompassing one of the most densely populated areas in Sydney, I will continue to fight for my constituents to ensure that they have the best quality of life. Last but not least, I thank my wife, Christine, and my two sons, Ben and Matt. They have had to endure many sacrifices and by now are well accustomed to the demands of my work life. I make the observation that my children have never known me out of public office. As they grow up in an area where I represent the local community, they themselves can never be out of the public eye because of their surname. I know that, at times, that has been a burden, and I thank them for their sacrifice. This year Christine and I celebrated our thirty-ninth wedding anniversary, and I am eternally grateful to have her by my side. I will never take her unwavering support, love or affection for granted.

To those who celebrate, I wish you a very merry Christmas. To those who do not, I hope you use this opportunity to reflect on the past 12 months and spend some quality time with your family, friends and loved ones. I wish everybody a safe, happy and prosperous 2025.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (13:06): I must say that I greatly enjoyed the Christmas felicitations speech made by the Leader of the House. It reminded me of what people often say to us in this place, "How do you actually get on with the other people in the Chamber?" All they see is the argy-bargy of question time and sometimes members getting a little hot in debates. I often say to my friends who live very close to where you live, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the member for Wallsend is a great person and always seems to have her heart in the right place. It is sometimes forgotten that we are all human beings. We are all working in this place, as the Leader of the House said, with the best interests of the community in mind, notwithstanding the fact that from time to time we may have different views on how that can be achieved. I thank the Leader of the House for his kind words.

As the Manager of Opposition Business, it is a great privilege to be given the opportunity to deliver a Christmas message to the people in this building, our staff members, the people of New South Wales and the people of my fantastic electorate of Wahroonga. The Leader of the House ended his contribution by acknowledging his family. My family is in a slightly different position because my children did know my life before I entered this place. When I was preselected, my 16-year-old daughter said, "This is the most embarrassing thing that has ever happened to me, Dad." My 14-year-old son showed the great loyalty that he has always shown me and said, "You'll be great, Dad. Good on you. You're really stepping up your community engagement by becoming a member of Parliament." I have been very fortunate, as has the Leader of the House, to have the support of those close to me, as well as my brothers, sisters, mother and now departed father, who was still alive when I was elected to this place. They pay a big penalty in the time they get to spend with us so that we can be in public life. It is important to acknowledge them.

This is a hard time for many people at the moment. The economy ebbs and flows, and times are not easy for a lot of people. The cost of living is a massive issue in the community. We must acknowledge that Christmas will not be an easy period for many people. Many people will not be able to enjoy Christmas in the way that they have in the past. We are thinking of them and we acknowledge their hardships and struggles. People think my electorate is universally full of people who are very well-off, but there are many struggling seniors on fixed incomes who are asset rich but income poor, as they say. Many people are struggling not just in my electorate but all over the State. We must acknowledge that.

I note the Speaker has entered the Chamber. I thank him and know that his is not an easy job. We all know the Speaker always does his absolute best in that job. He does his best to be fair to everyone, and we all respect that. We thank the Speaker for doing that and for taking on the burden of that very important job within Parliament. I thank also the Clerk, Helen Minnican, Deputy Clerk Carly Maxwell, Jonathan Elliott, Simon Johnston and all of the Legislative Assembly team for their diligent advice. We do not have many staff in Opposition, so their assistance is particularly important. I thank the staff from Hansard, the Table Office and Parliamentary Counsel.

I thank the security officers, cleaners and hospitality staff. I thank our IT staff, whom I bug a lot because, despite the fact that I was the former technology Minister, I always seem to have technology issues to trouble them with. I have a brother who is a retired professor of computer science. I love technology; it is very logical. We just have to work out how to use it. We need help from people from time to time. To all the staff who keep this Parliament going, I thank them very much for their work and acknowledge what they do and how important that is to our role as MPs.

I thank the Leader of the House, Ron Hoenig, for working with me this year. We have had the opportunity to work in each other's former positions. I am glad that we are able to work cordially and cooperatively together. I acknowledge all the MPs in this Chamber. I acknowledge my other opposite number, the Attorney General. The

Attorney General has an incredibly important role in the Government of this State and to protect the rule of law. I thank him for the way in which he is discharging that important position. As another year in Opposition passes, and as the Leader of the House correctly identified, it is important to good government that we have good oppositions. I thank the Opposition leadership team, which meets early every morning on parliamentary sitting days and at other times from time to time.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Cronulla. I thank the member for Hawkesbury, our Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this House. I thank the member for Terrigal, our Opposition Whip, and all our parliamentary colleagues. I thank Andrew Humpherson, a former member of this place, who assists me in my role as Manager of Opposition Business. Of course, I acknowledge my great electorate office staff. Deanna Turner has been with me every day that I have been an MP. She is my most senior electorate officer. She is not only a highly intelligent and experienced person but also one of the most compassionate people I have ever had the pleasure of working with. She is great with people, which is so important in a people-related occupation like working for a member of Parliament.

I thank Fleur Findlay. She is an exceptional lawyer who has come into my office and is doing great work. I thank Steph Le Bas, who is in the Speaker's gallery. She is my communications employee and does a great job in so many different ways, including with the much talked about *Macquarie Street Matters* podcast. I thank Mitch Karadinovski, who is also helping us with social media and other digital content. I thank also Emily Kerris. She formerly worked for me full time but now fills in from time to time. I acknowledge the counsel that my former ministerial staff give me from time to time when I get myself into trouble and need advice. I thank them very much for their assistance during the year. It is great to catch up and keep in contact with them. I assure all members that we will continue to keep working hard in Parliament to keep the Government accountable. Oppositions are incredibly important to good government, democracy and the freedoms we enjoy.

Every year that we get to serve in this Parliament, in whatever capacity, is a great honour and privilege. I am so glad that the people of Wahroonga have put their faith in me to represent them in this place. I thank all of them. I thank the schools, sporting clubs and volunteers. My electorate has some of the highest levels of volunteerism in the entire State. That includes many of my constituents who volunteer in the Lifeline centre at Gordon. That 24/7 centre looks after people in need. There are many other organisations that look after and take care of people, whether they be the SES, the RFS or Easy Care Gardening—it does not matter. I have a fantastic electorate. I thank all of them for being the people they are. I conclude by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas, happy Hanukkah and happy new year. I look forward to seeing everyone again next year to resume our important work.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (13:16): It has been a very interesting first full year of the Fifty-Eighth Parliament. From a political point of view, a lot of business has been transacted in this House, albeit in only 15 full weeks of parliamentary sittings. But as the Leader of the House referenced earlier, a lot has certainly been achieved. The Parliament itself has seen a lot of activity. It is 200 years since the embryonic parliamentary system was established here, not just in New South Wales but in Australia, with the Legislative Council sitting in the Wentworth Room just behind this Chamber.

It is an honour for us all to be elected to this place at any time in its history, but especially to be here at a time when we celebrate 200 years since the establishment of parliamentary democracy. It is a great privilege for each and every one of us. I am very proud of how the Parliament has responded to the pressures upon it through that period. The Legislative Council's bicentenary celebrations required an awful lot of resources and incredible expertise and commitment from our staff and members right across the Parliament. In the lead-up to the celebrations, we also had the first visit by a male monarch, King Charles III, which went off without a hitch. That was only delivered because of the extraordinary work that went on behind the scenes.

Many people make significant contributions to ensuring the Parliament runs on a daily basis so that we can open, operate throughout the day, close and then start again the following day. Our staff, in particular, do that with exceptional professionalism. I believe our members assist and guide this place to be a professional, diverse and generally happy workplace.

I thank the members of the crossbench. I spend a lot of time with them, even though I have mostly separated myself in my role as the Speaker. But I thank all of those crossbench members for their collegiality. I call out the new member for Pittwater. Having just come into this Parliament, I imagine she was wondering just what she had got herself into as the parliamentary year came to a bit of a climax. I know she has hit the road running and got lots of good advice and certainly lots of energy. I am sure she will do well.

I acknowledge the Speaker's panel. Madam Deputy Speaker, thank you for everything you do to make sure that this place can run. The Speaker's team is really important to running this place, particularly when we have some of those extraordinary long days, which happens from time to time. So I thank you and the member for

Strathfield, the Assistant Speaker. We have a number of Temporary Speakers, being the member for Sydney, the inimitable member for Cessnock, the member for Drummoyne, the member for Parramatta and the member for Oxley. The latter four members are relatively new into this place and took up those roles. Unless you have been here for some time, it is hard to understand how the Parliament works. Most members who sit on the backbench, and even perhaps some members who have been Parliamentary Secretaries or Ministers, might not understand the details of how Parliament works as much as the Leader of the House and the Manager of the Opposition Business and those on the Speaker's team do. But a lot of work goes on, and I thank them for that.

I thank the leaders of the Government and of the Opposition. The Premier and I sometimes have differences of opinion in the Chamber during question time, but I really appreciate the way in which he has been so considerate of me in my role as Speaker. He has always listened to me—though not so much in question time—and we have had really productive and collegial discussions on a regular basis. I thank the Premier and wish him and his family, particularly Anna, a wonderful Christmas break. It was lovely to hear the Deputy Premier's words earlier. I thank her.

The Leader of the House had some eloquent words for how he feels about the Leader of the Opposition. Nobody would ever meet the Leader of the Opposition and not immediately realise that he is an honourable person. It is a tough gig. I have never been in opposition, but I do get to see it and I appreciate how hard it is. I was disappointed to have to send the Deputy Leader of the Opposition out of the Chamber yesterday and he missed out on the Parliamentary Friends of Seafood event. It is noteworthy that we all have a good working relationship. I acknowledge all the Ministers, who work so well to try to help everybody, even members of the Opposition. My observation is that where there is an important, legitimate issue, the Ministers are always there. They take it objectively. The Ministers are not there to serve their side of the House. They are there to serve the needs of the community.

The Leader of the House and I spend a lot of time together. How we have resolved many of the issues in this House has been quite extraordinary. It is not the first time. In the previous Parliament, the Fifty-Seventh Parliament, the roles were reversed. The member for Heffron and the member for Wahroonga, as Manager of Opposition Business, and I have dealt with each other for some time. I thank them for the collegial way in which we do it. I thank the Whips. It is wonderful to work with the member for Leppington and the inimitable member for Lismore. I thank the member for Terrigal, the Opposition Whip, and the new revelation, the Nationals Whip. What a decent person the member for Clarence is.

I thank the people of Lake Macquarie. Of course, I would not be here making this contribution if it were not for them re-electing me. I really do appreciate that. I do not understand why I maintain such support, but it is very much appreciated. One of the reasons I know I maintain such support is my staff. I acknowledge and thank my senior electorate officer, Belinda Pevy, as well as Kim Williamson, Alex Freeland, Debra Dennis and Francesca Arciuli-Matar, who I poached from the Legislative Assembly committees team. She is fantastic. I send my sympathies to the Legislative Assembly staff and Clerks, but she is a fantastic addition to Lake Macquarie. I have also picked up Jake Foster, who is working as a temp in my office. I do a lot of community engagement. I thank Madeleine McKell and Trudy Craig, who are responsible for all the visitors I get. Every now and then I have visitors in the public gallery.

I acknowledge the staff of the Legislative Assembly. I thank Clerk Helen Minnican for everything she does. The sage advice she provides is greatly received. I thank Deputy Clerk Carly Maxwell, Simon Johnston and Todd Buttsworth—or "Mace Man", as I call him. I thank also Jonathan Elliott, John Young and all their staff. I thank Rohan Tyler, whom no-one has mentioned today. He has been backing us up here for a long time. I thank the attendants, including, of course, Ian Delahunty, who is a legend around this place. I really do appreciate Ian, Monica, Matt, Chris, Blake, Eve and Nathan, and it was wonderful to farewell Danny Heldal just recently.

We have a lot to do with the Legislative Council, although there is sometimes some contest between the Houses. The team of the Speaker and the President has been very collegial and beneficial to the Parliament. I acknowledge President Ben Franklin and his chief of staff, Will Coates. I thank Rebel Neary, Dave Smith and Damian Spinks. I thank Legislative Council Clerk David Blunt. I thank the staff of the Department of Parliamentary Services. I acknowledge CEO Mark Webb, Melinda McIntyre and the leadership team for the parliamentary division: Julie Langsworth, Matthew Dobson and Janson Hews. I thank Will de Vos, Toby Loo, Helen Gors and Margaret Palmer, who run the corporate services division. I thank Rob Nielsen and Danielle Schefer, who lead the branches making our capital works and technology projects come together. I recognise Rob Nielsen and his team for the amazing work they have done to restore this building and bring it up to a standard that can hopefully survive another 200 years.

There are so many people to mention. I thank the IT and digital transformation crews. I give a big shout out to Helen Johnston and her husband. The reason her husband will remain nameless is thanks to Stephen Smith. If Helen is listening, she can blame Stephen for that. I thank building services and the capital works team. I thank

catering, including Lee Kwiez, Carlos Andrade, Vanessa Harcourt and the rest of the team, especially Kim, Anong and Mai. I thank the cleaning team, particularly Carmen, who looks after this Chamber—she is amazing—Gusti and Jon Vega.

I acknowledge the finance and governance team, and members entitlements and Tass. I acknowledge human services and Michelle Bartolo. I thank our security team. Security was a big issue for us this year. We have been talking about it a lot. I want members to know that it is taken very seriously, particularly by our security team. I thank Anthony Macvean and Ralph Ewen. I thank the library and research crews, including Deb Bennett and Nicola Dunbar. I thank the media team, including Ingrid Lane and Taylah Ribarovski, and the education and engagement team, including Jeannie Douglass. I thank the Hansard team—I will not be able to name them all—led by Vanessa Schlenert. I also thank Lisa. I acknowledge the audiovisual team, led by Mick Kennedy. I thank our Aboriginal engagement team, including Joe Stewart and Damon Goolagong.

I thank "Team Speaker". The person who keeps the place going and deals with all the difficult, complex issues is Jason Gordon. Jason is a legend with a huge capacity for work and can get his head around complicated matters. I thank Shu-Fang Wei, Jodi Rahme and Ally Hawes. I thank my drivers, Gerry and Floyd, for everything they do, as all drivers do for all members.

I thank all members in the Chamber. The members treat me very well, even if I do not always treat them very well. I do try. Most people are very surprised at how well we all get along when we come into this Chamber to say nice things about each other at Christmas. But it is the reality, and we do treat each other well most of the time. It is generally the exception when we do not. I thank all members for their collegiality, their friendship and what they do for their electorates and democracy in New South Wales.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): It being 1.30 p.m., in accordance with the resolution of 13 November 2024, business before the House is interrupted. I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.30 p.m.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (14:30): As I give my felicitations, I note for those in the packed gallery and those watching at home that, thankfully for them, we have gone from a 10-minute limit to a five-minute limit on speaking time. We have had our share of spirited debates in this Chamber this year; I have probably been over-represented in some of the more controversial incidents in this Chamber. I extend my best wishes to all of my colleagues in this House and in the other place as we wind down for another well-earned break with family and friends.

First of all, a big thank you to the Speaker and the Speaker's panel for all their hard work and dedication. It is a difficult job at the best of times, and I genuinely appreciate the tone and the culture that you bring to this place, as do the other Speakers on the Speaker's panel. I acknowledge the Government leadership team: the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the entire front bench. I have had the immense privilege of being promoted to Whip relatively quickly in my career. One of the great privileges of being the Whip is being in the tactics meeting every morning and seeing the brains trust of the Government at work. I get to see the intellect, hard work, compassion and dedication of the team to serve our great State.

After nearly two years—20 months—in this place, the effect still has not worn off that each and every day we vote or speak on an issue that a friend, family member or colleague has raised with me in one of my previous careers. They said, "This is a problem that we should fix," and now I work each and every day to make this a better State and to make Leppington a better electorate. It is an immense privilege, and I am pretty sure that that special feeling never wears off as long as we are in this place.

Where would we be without the backbone of this place? I send my best regards to the parliamentary staff. They ensure that this place runs smoothly, day in and day out, despite the attempts by mainly members opposite—occasionally this side too—to cause havoc and chaos. I thank the Clerks, the Legislative Assembly team, Hansard, committee services, the library, IT, corporate services, building and facilities, security, food and catering and, of course, our wonderful cleaners. I give a special thanks to Gusti, who is the cleaner that comes in every morning and makes the Whip's office look prim and proper. An extra special thank you to her for bringing in a big container of homemade rendang during Ramadan this year. It is one of my favourite dishes, and it was delicious. It was very special.

As we talk about things running smoothly, I extend my deepest thank you to Colleen Symington in the Whip's office. She is exceptional in everything she does, from guidance to her dedication, expertise and support, both in a professional and a personal capacity. I cannot thank her enough, but I will try. Thank you, thank you, thank you. She does an amazing job, and I think we all recognise that in this place. To the Deputy Whip, the member for Lismore, thank you for your advice and wisdom. As a newbie to this place and to the Whip's role, I could not ask for a better partner in crime.

Speaking of partnerships, a big thanks to the Leader of the House, and Omar in his office. They are two of the people that I work most closely with. I am pretty lucky as someone who has not been here a very long time to have people who have the experience that they do. I also extend a thanks to the Opposition Whip and the Deputy Opposition Whip and to Bo in the Opposition Whip's office. I do not know how she does it, but she is chirpy and happy and jolly every day of the week. It is a talent; it is a skill. Thank you for your collaboration and efforts throughout the year.

Closer to home, I thank my staff: my senior electorate officer, Sharon; and Nick, Zeli and Shannen. Every minute and every hour I spend doing this job, Leppington is still out there, and they do a fantastic job in that regard. We know our families make immense sacrifices for us in this job. I thank my family: my wife, Christy, and my two amazing children, Evan and Nia. Nia graduated from school this year and already has a job. I came home last night, after we finished here a bit early, and she was on the couch talking to my wife, her mum, about the day at work. You do miss your family, and things go in a snap, especially when we are in this place. We have reached a very big milestone in the Hagarty household.

I did my first Leppington Christmas card competition this year. I thank Alicia Li from Leppington Primary School, who was the winner. There were some fantastic entries from Sarrinah, Petar, Sai, Advik, Erin, Zaafrah, Inessa and Irene from a whole bunch of schools across the electorate. Mason and Serah also put in some highly commended efforts. The people of Leppington are part of a growing community. It is an immense privilege to be your member and to be your member at a time when it is growing. I have such an important role in shaping and building that community with you. As I said, it is an immense privilege, and it has been fantastic to represent you for one more year. Now, it is a well-known fact that I am a fan of hip-hop, so I would like to end on this note. In the immortal words of Run-D.M.C. from their yuletide classic *Christmas in Hollis*:

The time is now, the place is here
And the whole wide world is filled with cheer
My name's D.M.C. with the mic in my hand
And I'm chilling and coolin' just like a snowman
So open your eyes, lend us an ear
We wanna say, Merry Christmas and happy New Year

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): I thank the member for Leppington. That is why we allowed him to speak for more than five minutes.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (14:37): It was worth the wait. I am filled with immense gratitude and warm wishes for all who contribute to the life and work here in this Chamber. To every member on both sides of the House—and to the dedicated staff and families who support you—I wish you all a safe, joyful and peaceful Christmas. May this season bring you rest, laughter and cherished time with loved ones. To the many people who ensure the smooth running of this place, their dedication behind the scenes allows the important work of the House to continue uninterrupted.

To the Speaker, I thank him for his leadership in the Chamber and for the good humour it takes to keep a rein on the bear pit. I acknowledge that it was he who threw me out for the first time in almost eight years—for a minute and 34 seconds. If you blinked, you missed it; it should not have been longer. I also thank Jason, Jodi, Shu-Fang and Ally in the Speaker's office for keeping the camaraderie in the Executive corridor going. Many thanks to the Deputy Speaker, the Assistant Speaker and the entire Speaker's panel—in particular, the member for Drummoyne and the member for Oxley. In the words of Temporary Speaker Barr, we will keep it "less words, more brief" in 2025.

Thank you to the Leader of the House for his "Rontent"; obviously we enjoy watching all of it. A special thank you to Omar, who really does keep the place running. Omar, anytime you want a job, you are more than welcome to pop up to Terrigal, mate. You would look great in a blue T-shirt. To the Manager of Opposition Business, keep your content coming as well. Thank you for your advice. I also thank Stephanie and Andrew for the great work they do with you. To the Government Whip, thanks for voting with us this year. We really appreciate that. I also thank the Deputy Government Whip and the Opposition Whip in the other place, the Hon. Chris Rath, and my Nationals Whip, the incredible member for Clarence. Being Whips could descend into madness, but your collegiate approach to this blood sport keeps each sitting day—even Fridays—an experience. Colleen, I absolutely agree with the Government Whip: You are a total rockstar. Keep looking after the Whip; he needs all the help you can give him.

I take this moment to also acknowledge my incredible leader, Mark Speakman—Senior Counsel, Opposition leader and Leader of the Liberals—and his incredible staff. You could not meet a better, more honest or more hardworking man.

To his incredible chief of staff, Cheryl Gwilliam, thanks, Cheryl; you know exactly why. Kit Hale, Clem Hall, who never sleeps, Liam Kiss, Nick Johnston, Nicolle Nasr, Yianni Economou and Sinclair Hall, who is the

Hon. Natalie Ward's right-hand man, thank you. Mark, your care, compassion and tireless commitment to the people of New South Wales, and your silver Honda Jazz, are truly inspiring. It is an honour and a privilege to be your whip and part of your shadow Cabinet.

To our leadership team, Natalie Ward and Damien Tudehope in the other place, and our Nationals partners Dugald Saunders, Gurmeh Singh and Sarah Mitchell, all I say is two more years. I acknowledge the shadow Cabinet members and their staff, who do an amazing job. Almost two years in opposition has given you the grit, hunger and determination to work for the great people of New South Wales. That could not be done without our staff. They have a tough job in balancing the many and varying demands on their time, especially as shadow Ministers. While it is not possible to name all staff, I particularly mention the following people for their incredible work this year: Rory Cunningham, Emma Toole, Georgia Saeck, Cooper Gannon and Deyi Wu. Thanks for keeping everything ticking along.

I would be remiss if I did not highlight the incredible work of the Clerks, whose procedural expertise is indispensable. The amazing and wonderful Helen Minnican, Carly Maxwell, Simon Johnston, Jonathan Elliott, Amanda Alam, Emma Wood and Todd Buttsworth, thank you for all of the support you give us. I also extend my gratitude to the Hansard team who have the unenviable task of transforming every weird utterance in this Chamber into polished lines. The Chamber attendants, who I will never challenge to a game of poker, Blake, Chris, Eve, Ian, Janish, Monica and Nathan—but I will challenge Matt because that guy has not got Clerk face happening yet—thank you for looking after us. To Danny, mate, cheers, you will be missed.

To facilities, cleaning and maintenance, members entitlements, IT services, HR, security, property, and the incredible research, library, and education teams, the great teams you have here are absolutely outstanding. Our award-winning chefs and catering staff, and the wonderful Kylie down in Cafe Quorum, who keeps me caffeinated and fed—your smile, Kylie, is endearing—thank you. To the special constables who work tirelessly to keep us safe every day, I say thank you. Your dedication allows us to carry out our duties with confidence. My whip's adviser, Bo Ok, oh my God, she is an incredible woman who is full of energy and happiness. There is never a day where she does not uplift everyone who meets her. I wish her a merry Christmas and I hope she gets to enjoy a well-earned break.

Terrigal is the greatest electorate in New South Wales, and I have the greatest community in New South Wales. Your never-ending support and love, especially this year, reminds me of why we do what we do every day. Jack, my senior electorate officer and captain of Team Terrigal, you have stepped into the role without hesitation and have created a wonderful team, both inside the office and in our electorate. I could not do this without you. Thank you to the superb Donna, who looks after every single one of our constituents and always keeps me level-headed and up to date with all my Christmas cards and new constituent letters. Julie, who always makes sure my diary is filled to the brim with appointments and events and makes sure I am where I need to be, you are truly marvellous. Debra is a master of efficiency in the office and is always prepared to step up to the plate and lend a helping hand when needed no matter the job. The work you all do daily for our community does not go unnoticed. You make a real difference, and I am endlessly grateful and so proud of the work you do and the support you give me.

I also express my deepest gratitude to our local Liberal branch executives and members. Your unwavering support and care have meant so much to me, especially this year. To everyone in this Chamber and beyond, I wish you a very merry Christmas, a safe and happy new year and a refreshing break with loved ones. Let us look forward to 2025 with renewed energy and embrace the opportunities and challenges ahead. Enjoy your time with every one of your loved ones this year. Every moment matters.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (14:43): To the Opposition Whip, or Crouchy as we affectionately call him, thank you for everything that you said, but also our thoughts are with him, particularly at Christmas time. I love Christmas because it is a season of joy. It is when we can let go, or we should, of some worries and past grievances to embrace each other as all part of what I call the wonderful human family. Also, we can continue to hold out a hand and our hearts to those who find Christmas challenging and confronting, let them know that we are with them at this time of year and do what we can to make it just that little bit better. Yesterday I was with the member for Clarence and some other members and he said that we develop unique friendships in Parliament. We certainly do, and we are like one big family—sometimes quite dysfunctional. We cannot help but develop relationships, affections and all sorts of things for each other because we spend a lot of time with each other. As some people say, we probably spend more time with each other than with our partners.

Mr Paul Scully: And they are grateful.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN: No comment to Minister Scully. I thank the team around me, particularly as the Deputy Government Whip. Working with the member for Leppington, the Government Whip, has been terrific. It is the first time we have worked together. We have developed a very close working relationship. He is wonderful

to work with, along with his team. They are great to work with. I have got to know his wife, Christy, really well—she is a great cook. I also thank Colleen Symington, who is just brilliant. Nothing works without her. The wheels stay on because of what she does. She can focus with everybody in the room talking all at once, being loud and eating lollies and chocolates. They go in and out of the room and she stays completely focused and on track and makes sure that everybody does what they should do. There are a few recalcitrants, but I will not name them.

I thank the Opposition Whip, Crouchy, and his deputy, Richie, the member for Clarence. Richie and I were already friends before we came to Parliament; that friendship prevails. It is really nice that we get to work with each other in Parliament. We worked together when he was a mayor and I was a Federal member. We did a lot together, and we are still doing a lot together and that will continue. The Leader of the House, Ron Hoenig, is wonderful, considerate and kind. He and Omar do a great job in this House. I thank the Manager of Opposition Business in the House, Alister Henskens. It is important that we have a strong government and an equally strong opposition.

I thank the main Clerks at the table, Helen, Carly, Simon, Jonathan, Sam, John, Amanda and Todd. I thank other staff of the Legislative Assembly, including Leon, Stephanie, Rohan, Kieran, Emma, Jenny, Eline, Manuela, Isabella, Hayley, Chris, Alex and Joan. I thank other people in the team who support everyone in the Chamber, including Ian, Chris, Danny, who is retired—we love Danny and will miss his presence—Blake, Eve, Monica, Matt, Nathan, Dave and Janish. I thank Ashlee Dunn from the Table Office—Colleen appreciates her work. To Hansard, thank you for the wonderful work you do. I do not know how you do it. Thank you for correcting our grammar, mispronunciations and all sorts of things. I hope everyone has a lovely Christmas. Merry Christmas.

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence) (14:48): The year is coming to a close and it is time to reflect on the past 12 months and look forward to both the challenges and the rewards of the 2025 parliamentary year.

What that may hold, heaven knows, but I can genuinely say that the members of this House are all on team New South Wales. Both inside and outside of the Chamber, as the member for Lismore said, unique friendships are formed. Those who watch question time probably get the wrong impression of the parliamentarians who work in this place. I wish the Premier, his Ministers and all members of his Government the very best for Christmas. I hope that you all genuinely get time to put your feet up, relax with your family and friends and come back refreshed for 2025. I hope you get the chance to love your loved ones. We should be kind every day, but that should be highlighted at Christmas.

To my fellow Nationals colleagues in this place, led by Dugald Saunders, I wish you all a very merry Christmas. As the only party totally focused on regional and rural New South Wales, it is a tough gig to bring the bush to Macquarie Street. We spend a lot of time away from our families and friends, but together I believe we are making a difference in the cog that is Parliament through the decisions that are made in this place. To my colleagues, I thank you for your support and I genuinely wish you all a very merry Christmas. To the Leader of the Opposition, Mark Speakman, and the other members of the Opposition, I too wish you all the very best for Christmas and look forward to holding the Government to account next year.

I acknowledge that while Christmas is a joyous time for most of us in this place, that is not always the case for everybody in New South Wales. I acknowledge the people and families who are faced with challenges at this time, not only in my electorate of Clarence but all over New South Wales. To the next-door neighbours who offer a cuppa or a chat at Christmas, invite someone who is alone for the first time at Christmas into their home, or donate food or a toy for a child, you know who you are. Collectively, we say thank you. To the police, the doctors, the nurses, the ambulance crews, the Rural Fire Service, the voluntary rescue squads, Fire and Rescue NSW, the coastguards, the surf lifesavers, the SES volunteers, and everyone else involved in the emergency services, thank you. I hope you have a quiet Christmas and you are not run off your feet. All of us in this place sleep easier at night knowing that, when the phone rings or the text message arrives, you are there to support our community.

I thank my fellow Whips. To the member for Leppington, Nath, it has been wonderful to get to know you in my short time in the role; to the member for Terrigal, Adam, thank you for your guidance; and to my friend and next-door neighbour electorally, Janelle, I wish you a very merry Christmas. To the Whips' staff, Bo and Georgia, you make this side of the House tick. Thank you for your ongoing guidance and your support. You make our job so much easier. I particularly put on the record my thanks to the Speaker's panel, the Clerks and Hansard. There are a lot of moving parts in this place, and you all play a very important role in democracy in New South Wales.

To all of my constituents at home, I wish you all a very merry Christmas. A lot of us will be heading to the beach this summer. If you do go to the beach, please stay safe. We want you back next year. I thank my electorate office staff, Debbie, Christine, Melissa, Jodi and Sarah, for their work keeping the wheels turning at home whilst I am here in Parliament. I conclude by genuinely wishing all members in this place, no matter what side of the House you are on, a very happy, safe and holy Christmas. I look forward to seeing you all again in 2025.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (14:54): At the outset I thank the people of The Entrance electorate. It is an absolute honour to be their representative in the oldest Parliament in the country. I follow that by particularly thanking the working people of the Central Coast and across New South Wales for keeping the State moving. I express my hope that I can be part of a group of people who will continue Labor's historic purpose of building a better world and improving the conditions of the working class more generally. Speaking of the working class, I thank the public servants throughout New South Wales. They are crucial to Labor's aim of making this State better for all its citizens by providing the services they voted for and that they said they need and deserve.

Speaking of servants of the State, I particularly thank the Clerks, who keep this House running; Hansard, who turn my mumbles into fine prose; and all the other staff—I will not name them all—who keep Parliament House running. They are a wonder to behold. It gives me great pleasure to come here and see the place move so smoothly because of their work. I thank my colleagues, who I continue to enjoy working with, as I have since I was elected in 2015. It is an honour to be part of this Labor Government. In particular in that regard I acknowledge the leadership of the Premier, Chris Minns. This is a Labor government to be proud of, and I am super honoured to have been given a small role in the Government as Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer. I thank the Treasurer and all the staff in his office for the support they have shown me in the short time we have been in government.

My staff are absolutely essential to the role I perform in the House and in the community. I am well served by Catherine Wall, Alfat Karnib, Dani Atherden and Bridget Wall, who collectively work out issues to do the best they can for my community. I thank them from the bottom of my heart. In terms of the staff who support us in Parliament, I cannot not mention Colleen Symington. When the history of this Labor Government is written, Colleen's role in opposition and in government supporting the business of the House and making sure we do what we need to do from day to day will be part of that history. I also acknowledge the leader's office, Omar and the Whips for the work they do.

I give a special shout-out to some of my constituents for the work they have done in my community, including Josephine Johnston, who has been a tremendous help with the campaign to get lifts at Tuggerah station; Judy Townsend, who has been a really important part of building the Bateau Bay community and making sure it gets what it needs; and Di Willard and the Ourimbah Region Residents Association for the work they have done to make their community an important part of my electorate. I also acknowledge Sidonie Shaw for her work with the Central Coast Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service; Jade Brown, who is the leader of the homelessness network on the Central Coast; and Scott Goold, who is a really important, dynamic and refreshing leader of the local business community at Business NSW (Central Coast). I thank you for your work. I also give a shout-out to the new Central Coast Council councillors. I wish you all the very best. I acknowledge the role that Anne Sullivan played in the Australian Labor Party on the coast in getting them to work together during the campaign, and the role she still plays now that they have taken their seats on the council.

I want to thank my family: Deanne, for her love and forbearance, and my children for understanding the obligations I have as a representative and my ambition to represent the people of the Central Coast and what that has meant for our lives. I want to acknowledge Melissa Norris, the mother of my children. I would not have been able to get here without the sacrifices she made over many, many years. Finally, I wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (14:59): I send my best wishes to the people of my local community this coming festive season. Merry Christmas and also happy Hanukkah, because it overflows this year. May it be filled with love, family, relaxation and joy for all. As we come to the end of the year, it is natural that we all reflect on the year that was. In truth, 2024 has been a year filled with a lot of heartache for my electorate. In April our State and my community was left in a state of shock by the Bondi Junction attack. That senseless attack claimed six lives and left many more injured. It was an attack on a place central to our community, a place where so many of us meet friends, shop and where our kids hang out during the school holidays. Many families, first responders and retail staff still live with the memories of what happened on that day. Many are still processing the trauma of those events. Some will never be the same. For those who lost loved ones on that day, this holiday season will be especially painful. For any family mourning a lost loved one, the empty seat at the Christmas table is a cruel reminder of that missing part of their hearts and of the person who cannot be replaced but will always be remembered and always be loved.

With the largest Jewish population of any electorate, my community has also continued to deal with the fallout of the 7 October attacks. Overnight we saw that clearly in our community, with anti-Israel vandalism on cars, restaurants and homes, and a car set on fire. They were deliberate acts, designed to intimidate, harass and silence the Jewish community. I have witnessed what 7 October has done to our local Jewish community. It has brought to the fore deep wounds that people did not remember or know they had. Generational anguish is coming back to the surface. That is because of not just what happened on 7 October but also what followed the attack—

the rise in antisemitism and the fear for the safety of loved ones and children. I have spoken with so many Jewish constituents who never thought they would see or experience what they have in this past year.

Though my local community has experienced heartache, there has also been hope. At this time of year it is important for us to reflect on the messages of hope and peace that are central to the Christmas and Hanukkah stories, and to remember the goodness in our world. This year we have been reminded that where there is evil and hatred, there is also bravery and good. We saw bravery in the actions of inspector Amy Scott and in ordinary people in our community who raced to help others. We saw it in the police and paramedics who put their lives on the line every day. They rush to danger when others are running away. We have seen it in the countless Australians who have called out hatred and disrespect not just towards the Jewish community but towards any community. They are the people who push for social cohesion and harmony that we cherish and which we hope will come forth in the new year.

People have reminded us that there is more that unites us as in Australia than divides us. In my electorate we are lucky to have so many organisations and individuals who embody the best of our State. I recognise them—from the lifesavers at Bondi and North Bondi who will keep our beaches safe this summer, to the volunteers who help the most vulnerable, like those at Lifeline Bondi, Jewish House, Bondi Beach Cottage and Lokahi. For the work of our incredible churches and shuls, and our principals and teachers—who no doubt will be looking forward to a nice summer break—I thank them. I thank the eastern suburbs local police, led by Detective Superintendent Jodi Radmore: Every year the work she does is incredible, but this year many people of the eastern suburbs would especially want me to acknowledge her for what she has done for our community. To our paramedics and the furies, I thank you. I note that the Minister for Emergency Services is in the Chamber, and I thank him for his work.

To our nurses, doctors and healthcare staff—many of whom will also be working hard this Christmas period—and to the retail staff, I say thank you. I especially acknowledge my electorate staff who do incredible work helping the people of Vacluse: Dylan Gojak, Nick McNamara, Carol Freeman, Olivia Di Pasqua and also Nan. I thank the parliamentary staff who keep this place running efficiently and deliver for the people of New South Wales, especially those in Cafe Quorum who keep us caffeinated and fed, which is very important—Kylie and the team. I thank our leader, Mark Speakman, for his extraordinary commitment to this State and to our party. I thank my parliamentary colleagues. I thank the Speaker and his team. To everyone in Parliament, from across the aisle, I say Merry Christmas, and have a safe and happy new year.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (15:04): It is lovely to continue the Christmas felicitations. This is our time to say thank you for everything that has happened and reflect on the year. I begin by thanking the Premier and the Deputy Premier for their leadership. It is a great honour to be a Minister. I am joined by my ministerial colleague and friend Minister Scully. We spend a lot of time together doing things with the Reconstruction Authority. I have many stories to tell, but I only have five minutes so I will save that for another time. I also acknowledge the leadership of the Opposition. We have been in opposition; it is a tough gig. Leadership in opposition is a really tough job—every day we had to get up, dust ourselves off and give it our best crack. I genuinely say that the Leader of the Opposition is a good and decent man. I wish him and the Leader of The Nationals, the member for Dubbo, all the best.

I also acknowledge the shadow Ministers, including the member for Manly and member for Coffs Harbour. It is important to acknowledge that while Government and Opposition members might sit on different sides of the Chamber and have different reasons for coming to Parliament, we are here for the same purpose. I acknowledge Judy Hannan, an Independent, who is in the Chamber. It is an interesting Parliament. It is the first one with such a large crossbench, and that makes it better. It means we have more diverse voices in the Parliament. I acknowledge the work that the Independents and crossbenchers do, particularly the relationship that we have developed with them. Again, it does not matter what colour members come in as. When they come to this place, they come in with the same purpose, which is to be the best they can be for their local community and, ultimately, for the State. That does not change, no matter where we sit in this Chamber. It is an important point to make.

I acknowledge the Speaker and his team. As an Independent Speaker, he is genuinely independent. He is a good man. Sometimes we give him a hard time—well, the Opposition does; we on this side do not. We are always perfectly behaved. He has good grace and incredible humility. The team that he leads—including Madam Temporary Speaker, the member for Drummoyne—is really wonderful. We try our best as Ministers with our extra responsibilities and we have an exceptional, united and close team that supports one another. I have talked about my relationship with the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces through our work with the Reconstruction Authority, but we all work together, which is clear to the Parliament. That could not happen if we did not have an incredible support network and a cheer squad around us in our ministerial offices. I cannot list all the people in the ministerial office because I am short on time. I do thank Zoë and James for leading the team for

me, as well as all the team. I thank Kim, and Belinda before her, for making sure that I get to everywhere I need to be, Mark, Emily, Rabia and Curt—I said I was not going to name them but there are a few more. I also thank all the department liaison officers who have played an incredible part.

I thank a special team that I have had on and off since I began my time in this place, and that is my electorate office. We come here because of our local community. Some of us get to become Ministers, which is an enormous privilege, but our first title is still the member for our electorate. I am the proud member for Bankstown. So to Beryl, Dylan, Alah, Leila and Carissa, g'day, I hope that you're watching! I thank them for everything they do and for always ensuring that I spread the voices of our community. I could not do it without them. I also thank them for making sure I never lose sight of what is important for our community, which has experienced a very difficult year. We will continue to do all we can for our community.

I cannot forget to thank Helen Minnican and the team, who are incredible and exceptional. They give beautiful advice and are always kind—they laugh at my jokes when no-one else does, so I really appreciate them. To that point, Hansard somehow makes me sound more intelligent than I am. I thank them. I thank the table attendants for always helping me when I forget my phone and tags, and also for their politeness and kindness. The team is also made up of the cleaners, the caterers, the special constables and the media.

Everyone is part of the ecosystem that makes the New South Wales Parliament, whether they work in an electorate office in Punchbowl or in this building making someone a cup of coffee or cleaning. We are all part of the system. If one part of it breaks down, it does not work.

I thank Colleen Symington. Colleen is the unsung hero for us, and for me especially over the past 10 years. She is an amazing human being who makes sure that she finds time for every person. People in the Whip's office—and it would be the same for the Opposition—do incredible work. They probably do not get enough thanks. I thank Colleen for all that she does. We are here for others. We are all part of the parliamentary ecosystem, as I said, and we all do our bit because we all believe in making New South Wales a better place. While sometimes it looks a little unsettled, we are all focused on making sure that we deliver the best outcomes. I wish everybody—whether they celebrate Christmas or not—a merry Christmas and all the best. I hope they stay safe. I hope my emergency services staff stay safe and I hope the people of New South Wales stay safe. I encourage people to look after themselves. I will see them again next year.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (15:10): I am so lucky to live in and represent the people of Wollondilly electorate, from Warragamba to Burradoo. I appreciate all the things that we have been given and have received, and look forward to future opportunities to fight for. For me, Christmas is a time of reflection and thankfulness. Like previous members who have spoken today, I thank the Clerks, all members, our staff, the people who look after us on committees, the cleaners and the restaurant people. The cleaners helped me during the year by telling me that I had my skirt on backwards. The restaurant staff make sure that my guests get the right kind of food. It has been amazing. I very much thank everyone who makes this crazy place work.

Christmas is different for many people. Obviously, it is one of the major Christian celebrations of the birth anniversary of Jesus Christ and is a celebration of love, joy and kindness. Christians often attend church and follow beautiful traditions. It is also celebrated by people of non-Christian religions and countries—such as India, China, Japan and Korea—as a celebration of love. In the Northern Hemisphere, where some of my friends live, there are log fires, eggnog and cuddly jumpers, and the Family Circle biscuit selection. There are flourishes of holly or perhaps even a traditional tree.

In Australia we are amazing. We decorate our pine trees, we have pretend snow and we try to follow old traditions with roast dinners and puddings, sweating as the temperatures rise on the thermometer. I am not sure why we do that. Hopefully, barbeques and prawns will be on the agenda. Then comes the part that I am really looking forward to: the Santa Claus part. I have two beautiful grandsons and a little granddaughter. Excitedly and eagerly, we wait for Santa Claus to give us gifts—magically, while we are all asleep. For some, it might simply be a day off work and a time to relax.

I acknowledge three groups of people this Christmas. First, we need to remember that on this day, while each of us stop, celebrate and enjoy our brunches, lunches and dinners, there are others who are lonely, homeless and really doing it tough. To them, I say we care. The second group are the people who provide essential services, such as our police, paramedics, nurses, midwives and doctors, who continue to look after us and work all Christmas Day, missing out on celebrations with their families. I encourage people to look after themselves and be kind on Christmas Day because the need for emergency services increases into Christmas night and things can get quite ugly. I thank those people who work so hard for us.

The third group I acknowledge are my amazing staff and the volunteers who work in my office. That includes Louise, Ben, Sandra, Noel, Rose, Erin, Jeremy and Sue, and a couple of other volunteers who pop in and

out. I thank them for all their support during the year and the crazy movies that we have just made—making a point about the 30-minute cities that do not actually work. I also thank my husband, Neil. The office is an amazing place to be. People would be amazed to know we have an incubator, with ducklings coming in the next couple of weeks. Not only do we help each other and everyone in our area but also we say "family first", and that includes every person in Wollondilly, who is very welcome to pop into our office. This Christmas I hope people find love, hope and joy. I wish them all a very merry Christmas. May the warmth of the season stay with us all throughout the coming year.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (15:14): I thank my amazing staff and wish them a very merry Christmas. If it were not for my staff, goodness gracious, it would be chaos. They do a fantastic job looking after our community. Realistically, people come to the office of a local member of Parliament when every other system has let them down, so often people are incredibly distraught and upset. But my amazing office team have the patience of saints, an incredible wealth of knowledge and fantastic research skills. They do a fantastic job supporting people in our community and caring for each other. Not wanting to single anybody out, I am going to mention everybody. We are really going to miss beautiful Emily and the incredible work she has done in our team. I congratulate her on becoming a lawyer and wish her all the best in the Federal Attorney-General's office. I very much thank Ella. We will miss her beautiful writing skills and wish her all the best on her next journey. We have also said goodbye to Nat, who is having a lovely time in Nepal.

We are welcoming some new people in our office next summer. One of the people who has been filling in on behalf of the others is Connor, who is a young person who is keen and diligent and such a great fit for our team. He is wonderful. Han has joined our team. She is so passionate about the community. She has a finger in so many different pies and is great to have around. Jayden is a young man who joined our team before he had even finished the HSC. He is a competent community leader, who is doing great work with his own not-for-profit organisation. We love him. Joely, my office manager, is an absolute saint. She knows what I need before I even begin to need it. She has done a million things. She is a great thinker and a great person to bounce ideas off. I thank her ever so much. I very much thank the office team. I very much thank the people of Gosford. Every day it is an honour to be in this job and to work in the best electorate in New South Wales. I see the member for Wollongong nodding his head.

Mr Paul Scully: It is the second best.

Ms LIESL TESCH: But we have also had an exciting year. We have seen Gosford change. We have the Gosford Twin Towers, which now has its own identity on the internet and a bit of a cult following. The Premier was there during the topping out ceremony of that Aland development. Having a five-star hotel and posh apartments in Gosford, with a rooftop bar and a pool as well, is a real game changer for our community. I thank everybody involved in the construction and delivery. There has also been the return of democracy to our council. That is so important. I welcome our new councillors, especially those in Gosford West Ward, whom I will be working closely with. I acknowledge all our councillors. I look forward to continuing to work with our mayor, Lawrie McKinna, in leading our community to a better space.

I thank our teachers. We have seen an increasing coverage of classes and a pay rise for teachers. Hopefully, we will see the pressure come off some of the teachers who are delivering important education in schools across the Central Coast. I thank the nurses, doctors, allied health staff and administration staff in the hospitals and private practices across the coast. Health is the biggest employer on the coast. I thank everybody who works in that sector. As a former teacher, I used to think the job of the police was like playground duty for the whole of society. I really respect and appreciate the work that our police do. I have a good relationship with our local superintendent. I thank Darryl Jobson for the work he does and the leadership he provides. I also thank our fireies for the work they do protecting our community.

I thank my NSW Labor parliamentary colleagues for the support they provide and for our great teamwork in the workplace. I also thank the staff of the Labor branches in my community, who are great and have their fingers on the pulse across the community. I thank our surf lifesaving clubs, the RFS, our Lions clubs, our Rotary clubs, our service clubs, our men's sheds, our Country Women's Association branches, our older women's networks, our sporting groups and the people who work with the vulnerable across our community—including the people who work in the domestic violence sector; the people who work at Mary Mac's shelter, the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Hope Church in my electorate; and the people who supply food to vulnerable people who need it. At Christmas time lots of people work and volunteer at Care4Coast putting hampers together to look after vulnerable people. It is important and appreciated. I wish them, as well as our fantastic parliamentary staff, all a very merry Christmas.

It was a real privilege to be part of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference this year and see the incredible work of our parliamentary staff. I know it goes on quietly behind the scenes in the Parliament, but the work the staff were able to do outside their normal parliamentary roles, picking up the pieces for

750 delegates from across the Commonwealth with joy, dignity, politeness and good management. I know we are fantastically looked after here. In closing, to the women of the New South Wales Parliament, I know our connections and abilities are growing. Bring it on. Merry Christmas to all.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (15:19): As the year draws to a close and the festive season begins, I extend my heartfelt Christmas greetings to all my parliamentary colleagues across both Houses and Chambers. Christmas is a time of joy, togetherness and reflection when communities across our great State come together to celebrate the season's spirit of love, hope, and generosity. While Christmas is a season of joy for many families, it can also be a challenging time for others. We must not forget those who face hardship, isolation or loss. For some, the festive season can highlight financial struggles, fractured relationships or the absence of loved ones. As leaders, it is our responsibility to ensure that no-one in our communities is left behind. I recognise the dedication of those who serve our communities year round, particularly during the holiday season. This includes our police, emergency services personnel, healthcare workers and volunteers, many of whom sacrifice their own celebrations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our community. Your commitment is a testament to the values that make our State strong.

I express my heartfelt thanks to our Premier, Deputy Premier and the Premier's office for their guidance and vision, which continue to shape and strengthen our work in service to the people of New South Wales. My appreciation also extends to the Speaker, the Speaker's panel, the Leader of the House and his office—particularly Omar—Ministers and fellow parliamentarians, with whom it is both an honour and privilege to work. A special mention goes to the Whip's office, and in particular to Colleen Symington. Thank you for your invaluable support. I also acknowledge the work of our indispensable parliamentary teams: the Legislative Assembly Clerk's office, table staff, the Hansard team as well as the parliamentary committees. A special mention to my Law and Safety Committee—thank you for all your support and guidance.

I acknowledge and thank the many parliamentary services, including our security personnel, library staff, facilities team, catering staff, cleaners and IT department, whose behind-the-scenes efforts allow Parliament to run smoothly. I am grateful for each of you and for the essential role you play in ensuring that we can serve effectively. I also recognise the parliamentary press gallery. Your commitment to keeping the public informed is invaluable to the democratic process. I express my sincere appreciation to my Labor branch members, whose commitment and support within the community inspire me every day. I am also grateful to the leadership and staff of the New South Wales Labor Party for their unwavering support and shared vision for our community and our State.

To the countless local community groups servicing the community of Mount Druitt, I extend a heartfelt thank you. I also acknowledge the invaluable support of my office team, who work diligently to serve the Mount Druitt community with professionalism and integrity. To my office manager, Sarah Hatch, and my electorate staff—Phil, Yvonne, and Maddie—your dedication, resourcefulness and hard work make an enormous difference. You all bring both professionalism and compassion to your work, and I am truly grateful for your commitment to our community.

Lastly, I extend my love and heartfelt thanks to my family. None of us could do our job as parliamentarians without the support of our families. To my wonderful wife, Dimyana, and daughters, Natalie and Eustina, my son-in-law, John, and my beloved grandchildren, Elise and Nicholas, thank you for your unyielding support, patience and understanding. You have shown me endless grace in accommodating the demands of my role and your encouragement gives me the strength to continue serving our community. I am truly blessed to have you by my side. May this Christmas bring peace, joy and hope to every home in New South Wales. I wish all our residents a safe and happy festive season and a prosperous and fulfilling New Year.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (15:24): I start by wishing everybody in the parliamentary precinct and the building a merry Christmas. I hope this year has been easier than other years. Certainly we have sat less, but I will not get into that today. I thank the Clerks and everybody on the Speaker's panel, which I know can be a thankless job. I thank the Speaker, and member for Lake Macquarie, who threw me out three times this week for a little bit of talking. But that is okay. It could have been more, but it was not. To all our colleagues across the Parliament, it has obviously been an extraordinary year—as they all are. To our leadership team, Dugald Saunders, it has been great working alongside you. We came into Parliament together 5½ years ago. It is good to be your Deputy Leader.

To the Leader of the Opposition, and member for Cronulla, Mark Speakman, it has been great to get to know you even better as part of the team. I also thank Sarah Mitchell, the leader of The Nationals in the upper House, as well as Damien Tudehope. It is nice to work alongside both of you. I wish you a wonderful Christmas with your families. To the wider National Party team, we have had a little bit of change this year. I take the opportunity to welcome Scott Barrett back into the upper House and Brendan Moylan taking over from Adam Marshall. Three positions were filled following resignations and I pay particular tribute to the former

Deputy Leader of the NSW Nationals, Bronnie Taylor, who not only was a good friend and mentor during her time here, but also looked after us like a big sister and made sure that especially the newer MPs were taken care of.

You make a lot of friends in your life and some of them are work friends, but Sam Faraway is a friend inside and outside this place. We share a love of Indian food and we will miss him in the party room. Often when we talk of retirement it is the oldest person in the party room, but it is rare that it is the youngest person in the party room whose retirement you are toasting. We will definitely miss the members who have left, but we have some great replacements to take their place. To our Liberal Party colleagues, our cousins here in the city, it has been good working alongside all of you. To our colleagues in the Government sitting across from us, I know we give you a bit of grief but we also wish you a merry Christmas as well.

Mr Paul Scully: You are acknowledging that we are an excellent government.

Mr GURMESH SINGH: I would not quite go that far. We might have to get Hansard to fact-check that. Also, our crossbench colleagues, we often disagree on many different policies but we are all in this place for the same reason: to make our communities the best possible place they can be. At the start of this year I was the Deputy Opposition Whip, a position I thoroughly enjoyed for the past couple of years. It was great working alongside my colleague the member for Terrigal, Adam Crouch, as well as with staff across all the Whips' offices, Bo and the Government Whip's assistant, Colleen. In our office we have had Emma Toole and now Georgia Saeck. Emma is off to the Northern Territory working for the Treasurer in Darwin and we wish her all the very best. I give a big shout-out to Bo. Our junk food tastes are exactly in line and it is a wonder I have not put on 20 extra kilograms since working in this place.

To my electorate office staff, Diane, Mel, Craig and Deb, thank you for everything you do to make the office turn around. To Katie and Cherrill, who are longstanding staff members who left earlier this year, thank you for everything you did for the community of Coffs Harbour over your years of service. Lastly, I thank my family. Being a regional member, we are away from home often five days at a time. I could not do it without their support. I am looking forward to being at home every night in summer. On behalf of my team, I wish everyone a very merry Christmas.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (15:30): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to this year's Christmas felicitations and extend my heartfelt wishes for a peaceful and joyous festive season for the members of both Houses and everyone in all the communities across our beautiful State. We know that this Christmas many families and people will be doing it tough on every level. We send our heartfelt wishes for a gentler and better world in 2025. Whilst I will not reiterate every acknowledgment made by my colleagues in their contributions, I join them in recognising and thanking those people in this place and across all departments for their dedication and service to the community.

I thank the hardworking staff from this place, including the crossbench support team—Amanda, Emma, Eline and Ashlee—the Clerks, the Serjeant-at-Arms, Hansard, the library team, the education team, the IT department and catering, which is very important. I remember on my first day I was told that there was a hatted chef in the catering team and I was excited by that. I also thank the maintenance crews and the cleaners, who keep our work spaces in such good shape. I thank the teams in the Department of Parliamentary Services and the teams across all the other departments for their efforts behind the scenes. My colleagues the member for Balmain and the member for Newtown join me in thanking the leader's office for its support. We are in a minority government and we are grateful for the support of the leader's office and the Whip's office. I particularly thank Colleen and Janelle because, quite frankly, it is not their job to support us as much as they do. I am very grateful.

I take the opportunity to recognise the extraordinary work of those who are not taking a break this Christmas, like emergency services workers; healthcare workers, including nurses, midwives and paramedics; and all frontline responders, including police. This is a challenging time of year, and we owe our frontline workers and their families a great debt of gratitude. Retail, tourism and hospitality are hugely important for the three Greens electorates in this place and for our economy. Those workers do not get much respite during the festive period. We wish them a happy and successful summer season.

It is a privilege to work with my Greens colleagues in this place, Jenny Leong and Kobi Shetty, and Abigail Boyd, Amanda Cohn, Cate Faehrmann and Sue Higginson in the other place. We work very hard. Seven of us shadow all the portfolios and we all share a vision of a more sustainable future on our planet and true equality for every person. Our staff are not just hardworking but also quite extraordinary. We thank them for everything they do. I was asked to give a shout-out to the dedicated committee staff over the past 12 months on the Select Committee on the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Prohibiting No Grounds Evictions) Bill 2024. That was a wonderful experience for us and an overdue victory for renters in New South Wales. Shanshan Guo was a particular champion. It was a professional privilege for me to serve as chair of the Joint Standing Committee on

the Office of the Valuer General. I thank my parliamentary colleagues, along with Leon Last, Kate McCorquodale and the whole secretariat for their contributions to that work.

I also acknowledge my fellow Northern Rivers colleagues, Janelle Saffin, Geoff Provost and Richie Williamson. Despite our political differences, we work closely together. That is special, and our communities love it. Our communities have had a difficult few years and our collaboration has been vital to their support and success. I wish everyone in the Ballina electorate a merry Christmas. They are at the heart of everything I do. Whenever I am in this place, at least 80 per cent of me is still in my electorate. Finally, to all members of the House, their staff and their families, please have a safe and happy Christmas. We all look forward to returning refreshed and ready for important work in 2025.

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (15:35): There is no doubt that 2024 has been a challenging year for many in the Riverstone electorate. Still, as we move toward a brighter future, I take a moment to express my gratitude and acknowledge the incredible contributions of so many within our community. First and foremost, I thank my community at large for entrusting me with the honour of being your voice in Parliament. Our region has experienced unprecedented population growth over the past decade, and the lack of investment in public infrastructure has been the cause of great frustration. I thank you for your patience.

That has led to a degradation in liveability for many, and I genuinely appreciate everyone who has worked with me to improve the quality of life for members of our community. By pointing out the lack of parks and play spaces, the need for more schools, and failures with our public transport system, you have helped to advance my advocacy for funding towards solutions. By providing feedback on the proposed Kellyville and Bella Vista transport oriented development rezoning or offering input into the Riverstone Town Centre, Marsden Park North and West Schofields master plans, you have directly contributed to the future of our area.

I sincerely thank the support services, youth workers and councillors who dedicate themselves to providing vital resources and care during difficult times. Your unwavering commitment makes a real difference. To our doctors, nurses, police, ambulance officers, firefighters, RFS and SES volunteers, and all those who put the welfare of others first, I am deeply grateful for your courage, compassion and tireless efforts in supporting people during their most challenging moments of their lives. To our teachers, who lay the foundations for all other professions, thank you for the diligence you demonstrate each and every day as the educators of our most precious resource—Australia's future generation.

To the thousands of parents, coaches and club committees who give up their weekends to volunteer for sporting clubs throughout the electorate, you provide an invaluable service to help young people get fit, healthy and socially connected. Your dedication to the sporting endeavours of our youth is building a more resilient future generation. To our youth, thank you for your energy, determination and partnership in striving to build a brighter future. Together, we are shaping a better Riverstone. To our vibrant multicultural community, thank you for your warm welcome and for sharing the richness of your cultures with us. You enrich our lives, broaden our minds and strengthen the fabric of Riverstone.

I also acknowledge the passion, innovation, and leadership of the Minns Labor Government. I am immeasurably more optimistic about the future of Riverstone thanks to your willingness to recognise the problems my electorate faces and start the process of recovery for my community and, indeed, the State. Taking the reins in these challenging times is no small feat, and your genuine commitment to steering New South Wales toward a better future is commendable. To the Opposition and to the crossbench, I thank you for your dedication to keeping us accountable and pushing the Government to deliver the best outcomes for the people of New South Wales.

To the incredible staff and management of the New South Wales Parliament, I cannot thank you enough for creating such a supportive and inspiring workplace. It has genuinely been the most positive environment I have had the privilege of working in throughout my career. Finally, to my dedicated team at the Riverstone electorate office, your passion and commitment to serving our community every day is nothing short of extraordinary. The work we have done so far and the work that is to come simply would not be possible without your efforts. Thank you for everything you do. As we close out the year, I wish you all a safe and joyous Christmas break. Here is to a positive, productive and promising 2025. Merry Christmas.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (15:39): To mark the end of the 2024 parliamentary year, I would like to reflect, give thanks for the year that has been and convey my Christmas wishes to one and all. Completing my third year as the member for Willoughby, I am so thankful for the privilege of representing this remarkable community in our State's Parliament. The people of Willoughby are defined by their cultural vitality, enterprise, work ethic, neighbourliness and community spirit. Meeting countless locals at street corners, bus stops, school fetes, sporting matches, concerts, street markets, pubs, clubs and small businesses across Willoughby, I am constantly inspired by the spirit and energy of our people. The people of Willoughby know how to work hard, play hard and contribute richly to the community we all love so much.

I thank the people of Willoughby for placing their trust in me this year and I will continue to work hard for them every day. I appreciate that this dedication to serving my community is one shared by all in this House, who strive daily to make a positive difference to their respective communities. I am grateful for the many friendships I enjoy with parliamentary colleagues in this place, and I thank all the MPs with whom I am proud to work. I want to thank my shadow Cabinet, the Speaker, the Speaker's panel, the Whip, the Manager of Opposition Business and our party leader, Mark Speakman, for leading an effective and disciplined Liberal team. Special thanks to Beau in the Whip's office, who does an amazing job keeping us all so organised and on schedule.

I would like to thank the many individuals, businesses, industry bodies and other stakeholders who have engaged with me in my shadow portfolios of Small Business, Fair Trading, Work Health and Safety and Building. Their invaluable input and expertise has helped me in my advocacy for more prosperous, successful, fair, safe and healthy workplaces and sectors for all. I want to thank very much my staff in the Willoughby electorate office, especially my senior electorate officer Sue Clark, together with James Mount, Pierre Okosdinossian, Katharine Zhang, Dominic Jones, Michael Opoyan and David Furse-Roberts, who are the first point of contact and have served the people of Willoughby with such distinction. I would also like to thank Margie Malouf, who finished up this year as my office manager after two terrific years together. Her dedication and professionalism have left a lasting impact on our team.

I am deeply grateful to my mum, who volunteers in my electorate office each Wednesday. Her kindness, wisdom and selfless commitment to serving our community is a true inspiration to me. I extend my thanks to the many incredible interns who have worked in our office this year, including Ben, Rishan, Riddhima, Pia, Colin, Corey, Salman, Alvin and Catherine. Their hard work and enthusiasm has been invaluable to our efforts. Beyond my electorate office, I am grateful for the support of all the parliamentary staff, including the parliamentary Clerks and research officers, the Hansard team, the librarians, as well as the security officers, caterers, cleaners, IT support crew and many more. I would also like to thank my local conference executive and leadership—James, Jeffery, Michelle, Olivia and Angelo—for their great guidance and support throughout this year.

A special mention, I should add, to Graham and his team at Advance Press, who are our local printer, and Mel, our graphic designer, for their exceptional work in ensuring our communications and materials are always of the highest standard. I also want to thank the Northbridge Australia Post office for their dedicated service this year. Above all, I am indebted to my loving and supportive family: my wife, Nikki; daughters, Chloe and Madeleine; and son, Xavier. I know they sacrifice so much to afford me the privilege of serving our community. With the festive season upon us, I wish everyone a happy and safe Christmas. It is a magical time of the year for Christians and one and all to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and his timeless message of peace and hope. For people of all faiths and all walks of life, Christmas is the season to share the spirit of giving with loved ones, neighbours and especially those less fortunate than ourselves.

I pay tribute to the wonderful work our churches, charities and service clubs who do so much, reaching out across our community. Through the selfless generosity of their donors and volunteers, they bring Christmas joy to those in need with hampers, toys and other gifts, as well as hosting Christmas lunches for those who are homeless or alone. As Australia's peak holiday season, the Christmas and new year break gives us the chance to relax, unwind and share time with our families. Many of us take this opportunity to explore the beautiful wonders of our State, including our spectacular beaches and national parks. With all the usual risks and hazards that come with summer holidays, I want to particularly thank our police, fire brigades, paramedics, nurses, doctors and other emergency workers who work so hard and make so many personal sacrifices to help keep us safe, including over the holiday period.

I want to encourage everyone in Willoughby and across New South Wales to take care on the roads this summer and, indeed, to be very careful around our waterways and, indeed, to take care right across the State, wherever you may be enjoying a break with your loved ones. Thank you once again to everyone in this place and beyond for your friendship and support this year. I wish one and all a merry Christmas and all the very best for 2025. May God bless you all this Christmas and always.

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (15:44): At the end of another year, it is timely to reflect on recent events and turn our thoughts to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Globally, 2024 has been a time of unrest, with great events beyond our control sending ripples of influence into quiet corners of our State—quiet corners that are half a world away and yet not immune from the ructions across the world, leaving worry and danger in their wake. Those echoes are made louder with the pressures of cost of living, homelessness, health care access, domestic and family violence and the many other challenges we face. At times of such reflection, I am heartened by the robust nature of our democracy in this Parliament and within my electorate.

As always, I am grateful to represent a work-together, can-do community that never resiles from hope and rises to meet our challenges. I especially call out and thank our frontline services and volunteers. Our many volunteers make such a difference to the fabric of our community life. I thank them all. As members of Parliament,

we are the public faces of our electorates. But behind the scenes, the wheels of democracy turn only because of an army of dedicated staff, community leaders, advocates and commentators who drive the engines of government. I thank the parliamentary staff who turn those wheels—the team that brings us *Hansard*, our excellent library services, those who keep us safe and secure, and those who cater for our events and keep our workplace clean and functioning—as well as the Clerks, administrators and others who ensure that we can do our jobs.

I especially thank my electorate team, including Jennie Burns, Paul Terry, Daniela Gooden, Robyn Rossiter, Jessica Masuda, Marie Adriaenssens, Meg Mundy and Greta Roberts, as well as Rachelle Kell and Mario Olsen for their wonderful work. I also thank the secretariat of the committees I chair, in particular Carty McKenna, Matt Johnson, Lauren Evans, David Rodwell, Rohan Tyler, Patrick Glynn, Shaza Barbar, Holly Rivas and Kieran Lewis. I thank them and the support team. I thank Richard Hurford and his team from the Parliamentary Counsel Office, including Dominic Bowes, who have been professional, timely and supportive in drafting legislation. Once again, I acknowledge my colleagues, in particular the Speaker, the Hon. Greg Piper, who has been simply outstanding this year as Speaker. I also acknowledge his staff, with special appreciation to Jason Gordon.

I thank my fellow crossbenchers for their advice and assistance. Even when we do not agree, we enjoy collegiality and a desire to make life better for our constituents. I also thank the Premier, his Ministers and staff, the Opposition Leader and his team, as well as the Leader of the House, the Manager of Opposition Business and the Whips, Deputy Whips and their staff for their passion and drive. I especially thank Sachin Saxena and Omar Rodriguez for their work with the crossbench in general and myself in particular. They are tireless and their work is invaluable. We are fortunate to be held accountable by a free press. I thank the press gallery for their work. In particular, I thank my local media, who do a difficult job at a time of austerity for the industry but who always strive to accurately report the news that matters.

Politics is a calling that can demand a lot and, as all members know, it comes at a cost to our families—yet it is those closest to us who sustain us. On that note, I express my love and gratitude to my wife, Associate Professor Kerin Fielding, a leading surgeon, tireless advocate for rural and regional health, and President of the Australasian College of Surgeons for the past 18 months. She is a real champion, and I thank her. It has been quite a saga negotiating our work together, but it has been a privilege and she is fantastic. Our children and their partners are a source of love and support, so I thank Lara and Duncan and their daughter Rachel, as well as Natasha, Dylan and Bel, and Anna and Jesse. I could not be prouder of my family.

Finally, I thank the people who sent me here, the people of my electorate, whose passion for their community has made it the best place to call home. Their trust and support are gifts that I work every day to repay, and I feel privileged to represent them. With Christmas and the holiday season upon us, those ructions on the world stage and the ups and downs of life within our own communities will continue to present challenges and opportunities. But at the time of year when we especially hope for goodwill to all men and women, I hope that Christmas is a special time with loved ones for us all and a springboard to a safe, happy and prosperous 2025 for all those we represent. Happy Christmas and God bless.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:48): As we wrap up the parliamentary sitting year and head into my favourite time of year, this is a chance for all members in this place to reflect on the year that has been. We are all extremely privileged to be elected by our communities to represent them in Australia's oldest Parliament. I thank my local community of North Shore for putting their trust in me to be their voice.

As always, it has been a busy year in my community. We have had some major milestones. The upgrades to Mosman High School and North Sydney Demonstration School are fully complete, and all the students are in the facilities and loving them.

Our major upgrade to Neutral Bay Public School is well underway. I look forward to seeing it open next year, not least because my own little kindergartener, once she is in year 1, will be able to experience these facilities as well. Sydney Metro opened two stations, at Crows Nest and Victoria Cross in North Sydney, to serve my community. Importantly, the simple day-to-day interactions with my community, whether it is helping my constituents with a housing issue, assisting a local sporting club to secure a grant or just listening to the needs of people in my local neighbourhoods, have been so rewarding.

As we head into the Christmas season, I thank all our emergency service personnel and first responders who will not be taking a break like the rest of us. I thank our local police from the North Shore Police Area Command. It is always a big time locally given the issues around the harbour on New Year's Eve and the fact that the highway patrol and the counter-terrorism command are based in my community. I thank our local fireies. I have three wonderful stations, in Neutral Bay, Crows Nest and Mosman. I thank our paramedics; our hospital staff members, particularly at Royal North Shore Hospital; our SES volunteers; our Marine Rescue volunteers, who are already out working with the influx of people on the water; and of course volunteers across the State, including

the RFS, for all the incredible work they do in our community and across New South Wales to keep us safe and looked after. We all hope that it is a season with few incidents, few emergencies and few fatalities. Sadly, too often that is not the case.

I thank those in my local community who always provide me with a lot of support. That includes many of my local Liberal Party members, whether helping to organise events or man community stalls at markets and festivals. In particular, I thank my conference executive: my president, Ted Wziontek; the treasurer, Mary Blainey; vice-presidents John Davaine and Jess Keen; and secretary Marilyn Cameron. I thank Efi Carr and Jo Howe. I give a special mention to Clark Cooley, who has stepped in significantly this year to help with things such as running a stall at Crows Nest Fest with military-like precision and arranging a group of energetic volunteers on the day.

I thank the staff of the Parliament, which is instrumental in running this place for the rest of us. In particular, I thank Clerk Helen Minnican and her team, Carly Maxwell and Simon Johnston, and the whole team here for their hard work. I thank the Speaker and his panel and office for all of their assistance, and particularly for his patience and perseverance with the member for North Shore. I thank Bo Ok, who runs a tight ship in the Opposition Whip's office, always with a great deal of kindness and consideration. I thank Hansard, the front desk staff, the security team and all the constables who keep us safe here. I thank the caterers for always giving me my decaf and chocolate, and the cafe staff, who keep me very well fed. I am particularly loving the lamb kofta plate this week. It is delicious; I have had it a couple of times.

I thank the staff in my electorate office. All members know how crucial our offices are to help those who need it the most. Those people do not work behind us but, in fact, at the front line providing those services. I know I speak for many members in this place who recognise that this job would be impossible to do without the compassion, hard work and dedication of those people. I thank them so much. I did not write this part of my speech, but I have been well trained to read what is written here for me to say. I thank in particular my long-serving and long-suffering senior electorate officer, Lisa Forrest, as well as Meg Taylor and Chris McDermott for all their hard work in assisting me and my team.

Chris is actually finishing up with us in the new year, so he will not be back in Parliament. I know he will be sorely missed as he heads off on an overseas adventure in February. Chris is well known his sartorial flare and for cutting a sharp figure in Parliament in his dapper green suit. We thank Chris very much. I know that he would want me to say to the people in the Parliament, "Toodle-oo, and God save the King." I recognise my family members—my sisters, my mum and particularly my two beautiful babies—for their love and support. I wish my community, family and friends a happy new year and a merry Christmas. I am sure it will be full of excitement and new beginnings.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (15:53): I wish all members of the House a very merry Christmas and a safe and successful 2025. For so many of us, Christmas is a happy and joyous time. But, for some across our State, this is a lonely time. My thoughts and prayers are with those going without or missing loved ones who are no longer with us. If you know someone who may be lonely this Christmas, pick up the phone or knock on a door and give the quintessentially Aussie gift of mateship to someone who may need it more than you know. It is also a time to reflect on the 59 state-based conflicts across the world—the highest since 1946—and our wish for peace and kindness to others. Let us hope that 2025 brings healing to old divisions and a greater respect for our common humanity.

I acknowledge the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and the members of the Speaker's panel for their oversight and general fairness. I acknowledge also Jason Gordon, the Speaker's chief of staff, for his hard work and commitment to a very difficult role. I thank the wonderful staff at the Parliamentary Counsel's Office [PCO]. Richard Hurford and his team play a really important role, particularly for the crossbench. I can confidently say on behalf of all crossbench members that we thank the PCO for its help, diligence and assistance. I give my thanks to the Clerks and the Hansard team for their professionalism and unprompted creativity. I thank all the staff of the Parliament, but particularly Mark Webb and the Department of Parliamentary Services, the Legislative Assembly Table Office and the attendants. I give a huge shout-out to Danny as he commences a well-earned retirement. I give a special mention to the crossbench support team—Amanda, Emma, Eline and Ashlee—for accomplishing the difficult task of herding cats.

I acknowledge the leader of our State, with whom I have a close friendship and mutual respect—my friend the member for Sydney—and congratulate him on an outstanding year. As for the person masquerading as Premier, the member for Kogarah, as the Good Book says, no-one is beyond redemption. I acknowledge my colleagues in the Opposition, both Liberals and Nationals, and thank them for holding the Government to account. I pay special tribute to the Manager of Opposition Business, the member for Wahroonga, whom I absolutely despised when in government but have come to admire in opposition. You really do the hard yards and deserve every accolade for what is really a thankless task. I give genuine thanks to the Leader of the Government, the member for Heffron. Whilst you never agree to anything I ask for, I appreciate that you are at least consistent,

which is more than can be said for most of your ministerial colleagues. I thank the Whips for all they do. I give a special thanks to Colleen and Beau. You are both a pleasure to deal with, which is in stark contrast to your employers.

I acknowledge my Independent crossbench colleagues. Whilst we may all have different views and perspectives, I must thank all of you for the camaraderie and friendship we share. I have learned so much from all of you. We can be proud to have influenced the parliamentary agenda this year and achieved real and meaningful outcomes for the people we represent. Our communities do not want political pointscoreing or cheap one-liners; they want intelligent, considered and respectful debate. More than that, our communities expect outcomes. We can be very proud of the countless bills, amendments and inquiries on issues that simply would have never had a fair hearing were it not for the Parliament, which requires the art of the compromise. This has made our polity better and more inclusive. The House may not be aware, but the Independents now meet prior to Parliament commencing on a Tuesday. I am really enjoying the novelty of attending a party room meeting that does not leak!

I pay tribute to the staff of my electorate office. I thank James Vernon, Bec Dimond, Ben Blackburn, Kristy Stubbs, Bryon Fishpool and Toby Gibson for serving our electorate with focus and passion. You deal with people who are often at their lowest ebb, but I remain constantly impressed by how many positive comments and items of feedback I receive about each of you and how loved and appreciated you are for the care and concern you show for every person who reaches out for help. We really do live in the most beautiful part of the State, not just because of its natural beauty. Its people are what make it truly great.

Having grown up in my electorate, my community is my family. My hope is that my service and loyalty to you can be matched by the faith and support you have shown to me. I do not know whether I can ever repay you, but I will be forever grateful to you for giving me a chance and the greatest honour of my life by serving you in the oldest Parliament in the country. I thank my family—my mum, Margaret, and my dad, who has had a challenging year. To my sister, Belinda, my brothers Arthur and Scott, my nieces Emily, Chloe and Azura, and my nephews Ben and Thorin, thank you for always being there and for your care and diligence.

I wish each and every member of the House a safe and merry Christmas. Drive carefully on our roads. I hope that 2025 can be a year of hope and optimism, of reward and opportunity for the people of our State. Having had the opportunity to serve here for some years, I can confidently say that the members who come to this place do so with genuine intent to make our State better. May 2025 be a year that builds on that hope, optimism, creativity and care that so many members demonstrate in this Chamber every single day of the week. Merry Christmas and all the best.

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoynes) (15:58): As we gather in this Chamber to reflect on the past year and to celebrate Christmas, I am filled with immense joy and gratitude. Every day I hold in my heart what an immense privilege it is to represent my community, which I was born and raised in. To the local residents of the Drummoynes electorate, it is an honour to you as your member and to be in this place. I truly appreciate the people, businesses and the incredible community I serve.

Every day I am inspired by my community to strive for a better tomorrow and to work constructively and collaboratively with the Government, and indeed all levels of government, to achieve the best outcomes. I wish the Drummoynes electorate a very merry Christmas.

For many of us, the Christmas and New Year period will be a time to relax, enjoy the company of family and loved ones and celebrate the holidays. I acknowledge the first responders, frontline workers and volunteers who will continue working over Christmas. I thank the doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and healthcare and administrative staff at Concord hospital. I thank our paramedics. I thank the hardworking and incredibly dedicated police officers at Burwood Police Area Command, led by the incredible Superintendent Christine McDonald. I thank our fireies, SES volunteers and all other volunteers who will continue to support our community on the front line over the Christmas period. They are all wonderful. I thank them and wish them a merry Christmas.

I sincerely thank the professional and dedicated staff of the New South Wales Parliament. They work tirelessly to make sure members are well supported in their roles. Their commitment and dedication are the backbone of this institution. The vital role each of them plays keeps our Parliament running smoothly. I thank the Speaker, the Hon. Greg Piper, for his role as Presiding Officer. I know how hard the Speaker works and I thank him for his efforts, guidance and counsel. I acknowledge also the President of the Legislative Council, Ben Franklin. I acknowledge the staff of the Speaker, especially Shu-fang Wei, who is truly a gem.

I thank all the other members of the Speaker's panel. It was a pleasure working with all of them this year. I know how important it is to all of us that every member can come into the Chamber and be treated with dignity and respect. We have some fun along the way too. I thank my colleagues in the Liberal Party and The Nationals. I am honoured to work with such a passionate and visionary group of people. I appreciate their camaraderie,

guidance and encouragement. I thank the boss and Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Mark Speakman, SC, and the entire leadership team. It is an honour to serve with them all. I thank the hardworking staff in our offices, particularly Bo, the Opposition Whip's advisor.

I thank Clerk of the Legislative Assembly Helen Minnican, Deputy Clerk Carly Maxwell, Simon Johnston and all the clerk assistants. I am truly grateful for the support they provide and really appreciate their guidance, especially when I am in the Speaker's chair. I acknowledge all members of Parliament and wish everyone a merry Christmas. Our debates may be robust, but our shared goal is always to build a better State for everyone. I look forward to continuing to work for my community in a bipartisan way with the Government, Premier and Ministers next year.

I am forever grateful for the opportunity to represent the people of Drummoyne. I thank every volunteer and member of a community organisation who is working to support my community. I acknowledge all my local community organisations. There are too many to name, but I will do my best. I thank the Rotary clubs of Five Dock, Concord and Drummoyne. I thank the chambers of commerce of Five Dock, Drummoyne and Majors Bay. I thank all the sporting clubs, local environmental groups, schools, preschools, teachers, principals, P&C committees, church groups, priests, pastors, parishes and small business owners. Together they strive to make the Drummoyne electorate the best place to live, work and raise a family. I hope they all enjoy the Christmas break.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my family. I thank my parents, sisters and fiancé, Andrew, for everything they do. There are no words to express my appreciation for their support and the sacrifices they make. I thank them for always being there for me and encouraging me every day. I thank my electorate office staff: Maria, Jim, Thera and Blake. We have built a small but strong team. I could not do my job without them, and I appreciate their dedication to the community and everything they do for me. They welcome and serve everyone, no matter the issue. That is the way it should be.

As we celebrate Christmas, let us remember those who are less fortunate than us: the individuals and families struggling to make ends meet, communities affected by natural disasters and tragedies, and people who are grieving. I acknowledge the brave service men and women in uniform who are serving abroad and will not be home to spend Christmas with their loved ones. Finally, let us remember the reason for the season: the birth of Jesus Christ. I wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. May this Christmas bring us all hope, joy, love and peace. God bless.

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (16:03): I could not miss this opportunity to spread some Christmas cheer and thanks. As a relatively new member, I am so impressed by the dynamic and professional staff who keep this old institution running like a well-oiled machine, day in and day out. Independent members with no party behind them are very reliant on parliamentary staff. As a newcomer, I am in awe of all of them. As the last speaker, I will not go on, but I do extend a massive, heartfelt thank you to the Legislative Assembly staff, committee staff, Clerk, Deputy Clerk, clerk assistants, Chamber staff and Hansard. They all rock. I thank the Speaker and his staff. What a year it has been. We have also had four by-elections—just for the hell of it. The work that comes with that, on top of the normal workload, is extraordinary.

I thank the member for Lake Macquarie and the member for Sydney for the time they invest in newbie Independents, including me. I thank the cleaners, particularly the fairies who visit our offices every morning and leave them spick-and-span. I thank the cafe and catering staff, who are so helpful and generous and provide great food—that is a bonus. I thank Parliamentary Counsel staff for their exceptional support of the crossbench, bringing our legislative dreams to life. I thank the IT staff. It is the best IT department I have ever encountered. They are actually responsive and proactively come to see me when I have any problems.

Mr Paul Scully: It's just frequent flyers.

Mr MICHAEL REGAN: Yes, just frequent flyers like me. I thank the security staff and police, who greet us with us with a smile every day and keep watch. They are amazing. I thank the Government and Opposition members for indulging me. I thank my Greens crossbench colleagues. I thank my fellow Independent colleagues. They are independent in spirit as well as in politics. They are all courageous individuals who are treading their own paths, bringing extraordinary passion, dedication and depth of personal experience to their work. I thank Helen Dalton, Judy Hannan, Joe McGirr, Greg Piper, Alex Greenwich, Roy Butler, Phil Donato, Gareth Ward and, most recently, Jacqui Scruby.

All the Independent members are supported by research officers who contribute a wealth of wit and wisdom. Not least of them is my very own Ishbel. I am reliably informed that if you take them all to dinner, you will hear stories about growing up in the circus, reporting from war zones and publishing books on notorious Australian bushrangers. Ishbel and Susie from my office are a true dynamic duo. They are a breath of fresh air in this place. I thank them for supporting me in the way they do and what they do for our community. I sincerely

thank my handlers in government, Omar and Sachin, for their responsiveness, patience and, more importantly, humour.

Every member of this place is surrounded by others who support them. I give a shout-out to all the partners of staff and members. The hours spent in the House are long. For those who have to travel from the regions and stay for the week, they are even longer. I can only imagine what it is like for the partners and families. I sincerely thank the partners and families who support our staff. I single out my wife, Bronwen Regan. She is a superstar in her own right. In fact, I am convinced that if she put up her hand to run, she would easily beat me. Bronwen has been my long-suffering partner in crime since I started my journey in public life way back when I ran for mayor in 2008. That election night, my life and the lives of those around me changed forever. Suddenly, I was out every night at events. Every weekend was spent at community events. As often as possible, Bronwen was there. At dinners we would sit side by side or with our backs to each other as we engaged with the community. At some gatherings and community events we would be separated, eventually seeing each other at the end. But Bronwen was there.

I am sure that sounds familiar to many members. When our partners are not by our sides, they are taking care of things at home, raising families and forging their own careers. There are so many examples. I thank them all. I recognise my wonderful electorate office team in Dee Why. They are motivated by a sincere desire to help others, bring the community together and make the world a better place. They are very tolerant of me bounding around with my latest idea, my persistent teasing and me sometimes completely derailing team meetings—what a shock that is! But there is no doubt about how much I love them all and how grateful I am to each of them. I thank Sean Moran, my senior electorate officer, for keeping the fires burning on the home front. He is a natural leader, always looking to bring out the best in everyone around him. He is reliable, proactive and competent. What makes him exceptional is his selfless spirit. He is brimming with generosity, joy and compassion for others. Happy birthday, mate!

I thank Gypsy, who wrestles my calendar. All members will know that is the job that enables everything else. The dedication Gypsy brings to her casework is inspiring. She is Gypsy Bryant, but some day she could be "Gypsy Brockovich". She brings her forensic mind and commitment to social justice to issues big and small. I thank Paul Murphy, the latest member of our team. He is an excellent addition, pursuing cases and working with constituents with such clarity, patience and good cheer. I thank Sally Carmody for the passion she brings to Independent politics on the northern beaches. Her insights and connections to the local area are invaluable to all of our work. I wish the entire parliamentary community an extraordinary, wonderful and refreshing Christmas and summer break. Love your work! Merry Christmas.

Community Recognition Statements

OLIVER MORETON

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (16:09): It has been an absolute pleasure to host Oliver Moreton, a dedicated year 10 student from Georges River Grammar School, who joins us in the Speaker's gallery this afternoon, for his work experience this week. Throughout his time in my office, Oliver has demonstrated a strong work ethic and a positive attitude. He has assisted in writing speeches, begun learning how to advocate for constituents and has gained a deeper understanding of the political system. His willingness to take on new challenges and ask insightful questions speaks volumes. His enthusiasm and an eagerness to learn have made him a valuable addition to our team. Today he is soaking in the vibrant atmosphere of Parliament, gaining firsthand experience of how our democratic process operates. I have no doubt that he has a bright future ahead of him, and I look forward to seeing his future accomplishments. I hope this has been a great learning experience. I thank Oliver. We have enjoyed having him in the office. I hope he has enjoyed himself too.

DRUMMOYNE ELECTORATE YEAR 6 STUDENTS

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (16:10): I sincerely congratulate year 6 students across our community who are graduating at the end of the year. The transition from primary to secondary is a time of significant change as our students prepare to take the next step in their education. This next chapter will be filled with countless opportunities, challenges and growth that will shape who they become. I sincerely thank all who have helped guide our year 6 students throughout their educational journey so far, especially our local parents, principals and teachers, and support staff. I thank them for shaping the leaders of tomorrow. Congratulations and good luck to our graduating year 6 students from Abbotsford Public School, Concord Public School, Concord West Public School, Five Dock Public School, Strathfield North Public School, Russell Lea Public School, Mortlake Public School, Lucas Gardens School, All Hallows Catholic Primary School, St Mark's Primary School, the McDonald College, St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School, St Ambrose Catholic Primary School, St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Victoria Avenue Public School. I wish them all the best.

GOLDEN PALACE SEAFOOD RESTAURANT, CABRAMATTA

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (16:11): On 5 November 2024 I had the pleasure of attending the twelfth anniversary celebration of the Golden Palace Seafood Restaurant in Cabramatta, and it was truly a wonderful experience. This milestone event was a testament to the hard work and dedication of the restaurant's owners and staff. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Benny Wong, David Lu and the entire management team at the Golden Palace Seafood Restaurant on their continued success and commitment to excellence in the food and hospitality industry. The anniversary celebration also provided a fantastic opportunity to reflect on the vibrant, diverse community of Cabramatta and the incredible contributions made by so many local small businesses. It was inspiring to celebrate not only the success of Golden Palace Seafood Restaurant but also the hard work of all the small businesses and community members, who have helped make Cabramatta such a unique and welcoming place. I look forward to seeing the continued growth and prosperity of this amazing local area.

SWIFT STREET ANTENATAL CLINIC

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (16:12): I congratulate the Swift Street Antenatal Clinic at Wellington on receiving a recent Commonwealth Medicare Champion award. The antenatal clinic is a coordinated service run between the Swift Street Medical Centre and the Wellington Aboriginal Corporation Health Service. The awards recognise and honour Medicare champions from around Australia who provide exceptional care, embrace innovation and work together to improve the health of their community. More than 140 nominations were submitted this year from every State and Territory. The Swift Street team was recognised for supporting its regional community through effective multidisciplinary care, including two GPs, a midwife and a nurse. It provides bulk-billed services, including home visits, to support women from the early stages of pregnancy to the post-partum stage and have a focus on the emotional and social wellbeing of patients. This is particularly important for those without family support, single mothers, teen mothers, First Nations women and people experiencing domestic violence and drug addiction. Congratulations to the entire team of dedicated and passionate healthcare workers.

FOOTBALL NSW STATE DINNER AND AWARDS CEREMONY

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (16:13): On 26 October it was an immense pleasure and honour to attend the Football NSW State Dinner and Awards ceremony at the Novotel at Sydney Olympic Park, along with the member for Wakehurst.

Ms Felicity Wilson: And me.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: You were there too; that is right. It was a wonderful event, which celebrated the incredible achievements and dedication within our football community across the State, highlighting the passion for the game at every level. I give a special thanks to a few of the winners on the night, including Darcy Lound from the Macarthur Football Association and Spiros Missiakos from Liverpool Olympic, on behalf of the Southern Districts Soccer Football Association. A special mention goes to Eschol Park's Jared Lazarus, who received a special acknowledgment after demonstrating exceptional courage during a medical emergency earlier this year during a club training session. These well-deserved recognitions reflect their contributions in growing the game across our State. I thank everyone in attendance on what was a wonderful night.

TRIBUTE TO IAN STEPHENSON

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (16:14): I rise today to pay tribute to the enduring legacy of Ian Stephenson. Ian was a dedicated curator and historian, a tireless advocate for the preservation of Australia's cultural heritage, and a warm, funny and much-loved member of our community. He was born in Sydney in 1955, and his career was defined by his dedication to protecting and celebrating Australia's rich cultural heritage. His roles included serving as the Curator of Collections at the University of New England, Senior Curator at the National Trust of Australia, and as President of the Glebe Society from 2021 to 2023. Ian's extensive knowledge was instrumental to the Glebe Society's work preserving the unique character of Glebe and Forest Lodge. He was also a valued member of Hands Off Glebe, advocating for the protection of public housing. In our many discussions, I greatly appreciated Ian's generosity and expertise. Beyond his professional accomplishments, Ian was a cherished friend, known for his good humour, sharp wit and care for others. Ian's sudden and unexpected passing has been felt deeply by all who knew him. We will remember Ian for his profound impact on the world around him and the legacy that he leaves behind.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): Vale, Ian Stephenson. He was a wonderful contributor to the National Trust as well.

DR MEIKE FLORE

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (16:15): I acknowledge and congratulate Dr Meike Fiore on being awarded the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners' prestigious national General Practice Registrar Supervisor of the Year award. Dr Fiore was in line to win this award after she had previously won the New South Wales award. Known for her compassionate cradle-to-the-grave patient care, Meike's dedication, leadership and passion for excellence in general practice have had a profound impact on her colleagues, trainees and the community. Meike's exceptional guidance as a GP supervisor continues to inspire the next generation of doctors, shaping the future of health care with skill and compassion. Meike described receiving the award as "a deeply humbling experience" and stated that she felt incredibly honoured. However, it was a tribute to all GP supervisors, who tirelessly mentor young doctors. Meike said, "The privilege of caring for families in our community drives me to be the best supervisor and GP I can be." I am sure that the entire South Coast joins me in congratulating Dr Meike Fiore on this remarkable achievement.

BALCOMBE HEIGHTS SENSORY GARDEN

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (16:16): On 10 November 2024 I was fortunate to attend the official opening of the Balcombe Heights sensory garden, which has, for many years, been a labour of love for Connie Keith. Connie had the idea to create an inclusive sensory garden within the Balcombe Heights Estate, which is located within Baulkham Hills. The sensory garden became a reality when, through Connie's vision and hard work, Hills Community Aid received a grant worth \$627,464 as part of the Western Sydney Infrastructure Grants Program, formerly known as WestInvest. The sensory garden now has a huge variety of plants, including a mix of native plants, exotic plants and other plants. The garden includes an all-ability walking path, Indigenous symbols and something for all senses: sound, smell, sight and touch. I thank Connie Keith, Mici Beer and the entire Balcombe Heights committee for their tireless work to complete the garden. I am certain that the community will spend many hours enjoying the wonderful sensory garden.

CHARLIZE TRAN

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (16:17): I congratulate Charlize Tran on her successful selection into the ParaMatildas World Cup training camp, where she will train alongside some of Australia's finest athletes as she aspires to secure a place in the ParaMatildas squad for the 2025 World Cup in Spain. This achievement is a testament to her extraordinary talent and her commitment to doing Riverstone proud in sport. Charlize made her debut appearance for the ParaMatildas in 2022 in a match against the Netherlands, and that same year she earned a silver medal at the International Federation of Cerebral Palsy Football Women's World Cup. Charlize serves as an outstanding role model for not only young Australians aspiring to pursue professional sport but also all Australians with disabilities who dream of competing on the world stage. Her journey is a shining example of how hard work, resilience and passion can open doors to incredible opportunities. On behalf of the Riverstone electorate, I wish Charlize the very best as she trains for this exciting step in her career. Whatever the outcome, she has already done us immensely proud, and we will continue to cheer her on every step of the way.

STEPHANIE DUNSTALL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (16:18): Palliative care educator Stephanie Dunstall works across the Murrumbidgee Local Health District [MLHD], raising awareness about end-of-life options and supporting the palliative care team to provide compassionate care for individuals and their families. Stephanie has been nominated and has progressed to being a finalist for the 2024 NSW Premier's Award under the Anthea Kerr Award category. This category is awarded to people who exhibit in their work a deep commitment to public sector values and identified leadership potential. Stephanie is passionate about improving palliative and end-of-life care education, has conducted a needs analysis and has surveyed nurse unit managers and clinical nurse educators across the MLHD to identify knowledge gaps. I congratulate Stephanie on making it this far. It is wonderful to have someone as knowledgeable and dedicated as Stephanie within our electorate.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE STAFF

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (16:19): I acknowledge some of the unsung heroes that we have in Parliament House. While many of us come to the front and are seen frequently on social media, in the media and in our communities, that could not be done without the hardworking staff who work in the Parliament. We have the Clerks who work in the Chamber. We have the people at the table. We have catering. We have all the people who clean the offices. We have those members who work in Hansard. We have the sound and audio team, who are listening to my community recognition statement right now. I acknowledge all of those people, and I hope they realise how much we could not do our job without them. We appreciate everything they do. We wish them a very merry Christmas and recognise that they are doing a service for New South Wales in their service to us as members of Parliament. I thank all the people behind the scenes who do not get seen.

NATIONAL SURVIVORS' DAY

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (16:20): National Survivors' Day was on 12 November. It is a day to honour the courage of survivors of sexual assault and institutional abuse, along with supporters and whistleblowers across Australia. I recently had the privilege of meeting Harrison James, co-founder of the Your Reference Ain't Relevant campaign. Harry is leading an important push for legal reform to ensure child sexual abuse perpetrators can no longer use good character references to reduce their sentencing. I proudly support initiatives which seek to bring meaningful change and improve outcomes for survivors. I thank all Wakehurst residents who work to support victim-survivors of abuse. To all survivors and their supporters: We hear you, we stand with you and we care deeply about your journey to justice and healing. I thank Harry for his tireless advocacy.

SURFING WITH THE MOB

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (16:21): On 1 October, I had the pleasure of representing the Minister for Sport, Steve Kamper, at Pambula Beach for Surfing with the Mob. In a collaborative partnership with the New South Wales Office of Sport and Surfing with the Mob, Surfing NSW delivered training to 10 First Nations surfers, providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills to become accredited surf coaches. As part of the program, all participants had to complete a fitness test comprising a run, swim, run, paddle and run, as well as a 200-metre swim that they were required to finish in less than five minutes. Training participants in first aid and trauma response equips them with the confidence to save lives in emergencies. To support Surfing with the Mob to deliver future programs to First Nations surfers in the region, the Office of Sport supplied a number of new surfboards, wetsuits and a Surfing with the Mob branded trailer. The new equipment and trailer will not only strengthen current efforts but also position the group for future growth. I congratulate all the participants who attended during their school holidays.

MOVEMBER

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (16:22): This month we bring together moustaches, also known as "moes", and November to form Movember. Whether it is horseshoes, handlebars, pencils or walruses, our faces tell a story. I apologise for my own attempt. Importantly, our moes start a conversation around men's physical and mental health, and they are also about raising funds. Movember helps solve a problem. The men in our lives, our fathers, brothers, husbands and friends, are facing a health crisis rarely spoken about. Men are dying too young. Earlier this year, I even thought I only had weeks or months to live after being diagnosed with bowel cancer. I experienced fear, shock and denial, but also hope that I was diagnosed early due to listening to my doctor and having a conversation. In 2024, I am very honoured to take part in Movember with parliamentary colleagues Warren Kirby and Roy Butler. I thank Warren and Roy. So, I have a mo; please support me with your dough to support our bros.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): I acknowledge visitors in the public gallery. I welcome Damien Clegg, Karlie Clegg and the star of the show Johnny Smith from Kempsey. I also welcome a delegation from the Indian State of Tamil Nadu led by the Hon. R. Gandhi, Minister for Handlooms and Textiles, and R. Lalitha, director of textiles, along with their guests. I thank them all for being with us today.

HELENSBURGH POLICE STATION

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (16:24): I acknowledge a significant achievement in the safety of the Helensburgh community. The Minns Labor Government delivered on another election promise. Helensburgh now has a functioning police station once again. The new facility can accommodate up to eight police officers and replaces the demountable that was no longer fit for purpose. A first response car will be attached to the station, providing 24/7 coverage of the area. The building stands as a physical representation of a government that keeps its promises. The community trusted the Government to deliver in a swift and efficient manner, and now New South Wales police are based in northern Illawarra once again. There has been a significant history to policing in Helensburgh, and I am proud to help continue that. I thank the Premier, Minister for Police and the NSW Police Force for assisting in the return of a police presence to the people of Helensburgh and northern Illawarra. The Helensburgh community is grateful that the new station will restore peace of mind in the area to all.

THIRLMERE FESTIVAL OF STEAM

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (16:25): Thirlmere Festival of Steam has won the platinum prize in the category of Best Visitor Economy Event: Day Visitation in the 2024 Western Sydney Tourism Awards. The festival is held at the NSW Rail Museum in Thirlmere, which was the platinum winner for the Best Historical Venue. The double awards recognise the thriving museum and its significant contribution to preserving and celebrating Wollondilly's transport history. The Festival of Steam is held in partnership with Wollondilly Shire

Council and Transport Heritage NSW at the NSW Rail Museum in Thirlmere and celebrates the vibrant transport heritage of Wollondilly. The museum is a popular attraction year-round, and the Festival of Steam broadens its appeal to train lovers everywhere and encourages visitors to Wollondilly. This family-friendly event, held over two days each year, includes heritage steam train rides, exhibits and displays. I congratulate all involved.

SENIORS' STORIES

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (16:26): Four Penrith locals have told extraordinary tales of moments that defined them in the milestone tenth edition of *Seniors' Stories*. I congratulate Mrs Barbara Ryan, Ms Wendy Gordon, Ms Sonia Cantalupo and Mrs Janice Snedden who feature in this year's book, and I congratulate them on their contributions. This year's theme, What Made Me, has produced stories of hardship, resilience, life-changing moments and generational life lessons in the 260-page book. This year's competition attracted a high volume of entries, with 500 short stories shared with our judging panel from across New South Wales. Our talented seniors continue to amaze and move me each year with their wonderful stories of years past; they are inspirational. Our Penrith residents have the most amazing stories to tell. The competition is open to seniors and offers the opportunity to showcase different cultures, backgrounds and languages told through real lived experiences. *Seniors' Stories* volume 10 will be available at all local libraries by the end of November.

NORTHSIDE PRODUCE MARKET

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:27): The Northside Produce Market is celebrating a significant milestone, its twenty-fifth anniversary, having served the North Shore community since 1999. What started as a fundraiser for the North Sydney Community Centre has now become a beloved local event held on the first and third Saturday of each month. The market is not only a chance to shop for fresh, locally grown produce, predominantly from across New South Wales and the Sydney Basin, but also a platform to support our Aussie farmers and makers. I was thrilled to be taken on a behind-the-scenes tour to meet some of the stallholders who sell everything from seasonal vegetables, herbs, flowers, fresh milk and other home-grown produce to fine pastries, wines, handcrafted goods and much more. A special mention to the stallholders at Brooklyn Boy Bagels, Hearthe cakes and pastries, Made by Max, Farmer and Son, and Nonie Restaurant. I acknowledge Straight to the Source and Tawnya Bahr for all the work they do in partnership with Australian farmers and growers. I congratulate the North Sydney Community Centre for their tireless work in keeping the market flourishing, especially market coordinator Lisa MacDonald for her fantastic work in ensuring each market is as incredible as the last.

MURWILLUMBAH SERVICES CLUB

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (16:28): Murwillumbah Services Club is losing two stalwarts. I always find Murwillumbah Services Club such a welcoming venue, and that vibe has a lot to do with its friendly, professional and hardworking staff. The club has farewelled two of its most valued members, senior receptionist Annie Martain, who worked there for 39 years, and outgoing chief executive officer Guy Diven, who led the club for 21 years. Murwillumbah Services Club's Facebook page paid tribute to both. Annie had been the smiling, welcoming face of the club for nearly four decades. She was always happy to lend an ear for a friendly chat or pass on some other wisdom. The club said that she will always be a part of their family and truly will not be the same without her. Guy was celebrated for his vision, energy and deep commitment to the Murwillumbah community. His tenure saw Murwillumbah Services reach new heights, including winning Club of the Year at the ClubsNSW Awards in 2008 to 2009. Guy's passion for community outreach has helped strengthen the club's role. Phil Kelly takes over as CEO next week.

ST CLEMENT'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills) (16:29): I acknowledge the St Clement's Anglican Church in Lalor Park for its outstanding contributions to my local community. St Clement's runs several outreach programs and makes a real difference in providing support and care to people in need. One of its great initiatives is its youth program, which gives children a fun and safe place to grow, learn and make new friends. The program has had a wonderful impact on many families and young children in the local area over many years. I also recognise the church for its contribution to the Christmas season. This year St Clement's is running a gingerbread afternoon, which brings together kindergarten to year 9 students for an afternoon of making great gingerbread trees and learning about the reason for the season. This will be followed by the women's gingerbread night later in December, which will bring together women from across the community to celebrate the Christmas season. I thank the lead pastor, Mark Tough, for all the support he provides the community as well as the other staff.

CONGOLESE YOUTH SOCCER TEAM

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (16:30): In many parts of the world football—the round ball kind—is not just a sport, it is a religion. So it is no surprise that it can play a vital role in helping new migrant

communities adjust and giving young people purpose. I recently met with representatives from the Congolese youth soccer team to discuss their important place in my community. They recently tasted success in the African Cup NSW, which is an annual tournament that unites African Australians through fierce competition and cultural passion. Teams can trace their heritage back to 20 African nations. A celebration of African heritage, the competition has been played in New South Wales every year since 1999 and is a great example of Western Sydney's distinct sporting spirit. I note that the Congolese team, who represent the Democratic Republic of the Congo, has had several recent triumphs, including beating Sudan in the round of 16 to make their way into the quarterfinals. I wish them the best as they face off against Zambia this weekend. I also acknowledge Liverpool Rangers for sharing Ireland Park and MacArthur Bulls player Charles M'Mombwa for being an effective role model for the guys.

TRIBUTE TO VALDA JUNE HILLIER

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:31): I pay tribute to the life of Valda June Hillier, known as June, who was born in Fremantle in Western Australia in 1929. When her family arrived in Sydney and travelled over the Harbour Bridge for the first time June was anxious, thinking they would have to drive over the top of the arch. Growing up in Mosman, June's life focused on school, work and the Mosman Methodist Church. She had a beautiful singing voice and could also play the piano. June went to Mosman High School and studied commercial art and dietetics before marrying her husband, Robert. Following Robert's death in 1988, June moved to Shoalhaven Heads in 1989. Over 35 years June was an active member of the Red Cross, volunteered with the local bush fire brigade and joined Probus when she turned 70. She was always very generous with her time and money. June was a very supportive mother to Kerry and Mark and was a very proud and much-loved grandmother to Katie, Drew and Toby, and great-grandmother to Max, Blayke, Marley, Raylan and Bobby. June was a progressive liberal and a great friend. I will miss this enormous local character. Vale June Hillier, my friend and much-loved Shoalhaven Heads local.

PCYC HAKA WARRIORS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (16:32): The rich heritage of Pacific Islands culture was on display this month as 18 talented students from Arthur Phillip High School competed against 10 other schools in the 2024 PCYC Haka Warriors at Ken Rosewall Arena at Sydney Olympic Park. The program aims to connect youth with their heritage, instilling pride in their cultural identity and demonstrating how cultural identity can shape and strengthen their lives. The energy, spirit and commitment displayed by the Haka Warriors is testament to their teachers and the strength and unity of Arthur Phillip High School. I congratulate Oliana Milford, Briana Piu, Rachael Sefanaia, Teila-lane Anapu, Prince Anga'aelangi, Noah Latu, Eli Heather, Sariah Mulipola, Alexander Piu, Isope Iakauola Jnr, Osaiasi Akuai, Faith Fa'amausili, Whitney Mapa, Kayleila Raukete, Seinafo Sae, Mikayla Tu'itavake and Amelia Piu. Thank you for your contributions. Good on you.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): I commend the member for Parramatta for her pronunciation.

SMALL BUSINESSES

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (16:33): As we approach the Christmas season, it is an opportune time to recognise and celebrate the invaluable contribution of small businesses in Willoughby and across New South Wales. Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, providing vital goods and services, creating jobs, and fostering a sense of community. In challenging times this year, their resilience, determination and hard work remained a source of inspiration. The small businesses of Willoughby are pillars of my community, contributing not only economically but also socially. This Christmas I encourage everyone to shop locally and give these businesses the support they need and deserve. Supporting local businesses is the best way to express our gratitude to those who work tirelessly throughout the year to serve our community so well. By shopping local, we not only support our economy but also strengthen the unique fabric of our community. Let us take this festive season as a time to thank and celebrate the small business owners, employees and their families who enrich our lives every day. To the small businesses of Willoughby, thank you for your dedication, your passion and your unwavering commitment to serving my community. You are at the heart of what makes Willoughby a truly wonderful place.

ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (16:34): It was an honour to celebrate 120 years of St John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Riverstone last weekend, a place that has become a cornerstone for many in my community. St John's story began in 1904 with the remarkable sight of His Grace Archbishop Kelly, alongside 50 men on horseback, marching into town to bless the building the parish still gathers in to this day. Since then, the parish has grown alongside the Riverstone community, providing a place for many to flourish through faith and fellowship. I acknowledge the parish Priest, Father Zakaria Gayed, for his continued service to the

congregation; Bishop Vincent Long for joining the celebration; and the parishioners for their warm hospitality. In a world that moves extremely quickly, parishes like St John's provide something timeless and invaluable. It is where our young people find friendships that guide and sustain them and where parents discover a supportive network through all the seasons of raising a family. This parish is a place where everyone, from every generation and every background, can feel they belong.

GIDGET FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (16:35): Today at State Parliament I attended the Gidget Foundation Australia and Federation University Graduate Diploma of Health (Perinatal Mental Health) launch. The Gidget Foundation seeks to raise awareness of, advocate for and deliver specialist clinical services for the prevention and treatment of perinatal mental health challenges. It does this through supporting the mental health of expectant, new and potential parents to ensure they receive accessible, timely and specialist care. In Australia, one in five mothers and one in 10 fathers experience perinatal depression and anxiety. The foundation helps by providing free individual and group therapy and other tailored programs to support new parents. I pass on my sincerest congratulations to CEO Arabella Gibson and board members Simone Short, Strephon Billingham, Jarrod Bowditch, Lindsay Cane, Jessica Davis, Emma Maple-Brown, and Mirela Leko. Well done on your fantastic work and commitment. I look forward to seeing how this course will save lives.

KIM TREVITHICK

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (16:36): Today I talk about Kim Trevithick, a Blacktown local with a tireless love for the city. Kim is best known for brightening up the Blacktown CBD with her busking and visible and outspoken love for the Parramatta Eels. She is immediately recognisable and is a local celebrity. Kim is unfortunately restricted in her movement but her wheelchair gets her around Blacktown, where she provides entertainment through busking and keeps an eye on, and reports promptly, any safety issues. Alongside her is her husband, Fred. This pair of good Samaritans make their way around the CBD, offering help to those more in need. Kim often visits my office to report the day's happenings, making helpful suggestions and providing feedback. Her performances can also be witnessed on TikTok. Soon Kim will become a worldwide sensation. I thank Kim for her unwavering love of Blacktown. I look forward to many more years of her advocacy, busking and friendship.

SISTER MARJORIE MCLACHLAN

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:37): I wish dear Sister Marjorie McLachlan, OAM, from St Agnes' Parish a very happy ninetieth birthday for Saturday 23 November. A much-loved and respected woman in the town of Port Macquarie, Sister Marjorie is renowned for establishing programs that help our most vulnerable through the toughest of times. Sister Marjorie established St Agnes' soup kitchen over 20 years ago to feed the homeless and those struggling financially. In the 1980s, Sister Marjorie journeyed to Papua New Guinea to educate indigenous students at a public school near Port Moresby. Her care and generosity have led her to focus on improving the lives of those with disabilities and mentoring people with mental illness. Through St Joseph's Convent, Sister Marjorie was instrumental in providing housing assistance through Hunter Carers for the intellectually disabled in Newcastle. In Port Macquarie, Sister Marjorie's soup kitchen feeds up to 200 people each week. Even after 70 years of service, Sister Marjorie is still donating her time, preparing meals and greeting guests at the hub. A true servant of the people and admired by many, I wish Sister Marjorie a very happy ninetieth birthday.

ABC GIVES

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (16:38): I acknowledge the ongoing work that ABC Radio Sydney, in partnership with Foodbank, has been undertaking through its annual campaign ABC Gives. ABC Radio Sydney has been raising money for Foodbank to help meet the growing demand for hunger relief throughout New South Wales. Foodbank has been supporting school breakfast clubs to make sure that children do not go hungry and are able to achieve their full potential. Foodbank wants to increase the number of school breakfast clubs in 2025 so that even more children will not struggle to learn because of an empty stomach. The donations to ABC Gives make sure that Foodbank can scale up. This is especially necessary as we lead up to the holiday season, in which families may experience further financial stress. ABC Gives helps relieve some of that stress for both schoolchildren and their families across New South Wales. I commend the vital charitable work that ABC Radio Sydney, in partnership with Foodbank, is doing to better lives and fill empty stomachs across New South Wales.

MCHAPPY DAY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:39): Every year McDonald's puts on its largest fundraiser, McHappy Day, which raises much-needed funds for Ronald McDonald House Charities. In 2023 McHappy Day

raised over \$6.4 million to help Ronald McDonald House Charities to provide more than 40,000 nights of a home away from home for seriously ill or injured children and their families while they undergo treatment in hospital. That makes me, and everyone here, McHappy. This year for McHappy Day I joined McDonald's in my local communities at Cremorne and North Sydney. I was put to work behind the counter, cooking my favourite chicken nuggets, handing food out at the drive through, taking and packing orders, making coffees, as well as shilling for donations from customers. I think this is the closest that I will get in comparison to Donald Trump. I acknowledge Lachlan, manager of the North Sydney McDonald's at Victoria Cross station, which has only been open for a few months. I thank Vivek, store manager of Cremorne McDonald's, for welcoming me into his store and letting me get behind the counter, particularly the drive-through. I thank the entire team behind McHappy Day. I am inspired by the work that they have done for seriously ill children across our country. I look forward to watching the Ronald McDonald House Charities flourish in the future.

Private Members' Statements

JOHNNY SMITH

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (16:40): I acknowledge in the gallery Karlie and Damien Clegg, as well as the star of the show, Johnny Smith. It is often said that it takes a community to raise a child. Today I share the story of Johnny Smith, a remarkable young fella. Johnny is an Aboriginal youth from our community. He grew up away from his parents—not by his choice—from a very young age. That set him down a difficult path, including with his learning and literacy. Johnny's story begins with a spark of interest around going fast, being the master of his own destiny and a connection that would change his life. Johnny crossed paths with Damien and Karlie Clegg—owners of a local furniture transport company, Williamson Bros—at a motorbike event.

For Johnny, school did not feel like the right fit. He found himself disconnected and uninspired by the classroom, which is a situation that countless young people can relate to—including my son—and stopped going altogether. He was uncertain about his future but knew that the traditional academic route was not for him. However, sometimes all it takes is one person—or two in this case—to recognise a young person's potential to open a door they did not even know existed. Damien and Karlie suggested to him that he come to work at Williamson Bros, washing trucks et cetera. Johnny could not believe it. He said, "Really? Can I? Can I come down and wash trucks?" The lack of necessary documents delayed his start until Karlie stepped in to help him secure a birth certificate, a photo ID card, a tax file number and a bank account—documents that we sometimes take for granted—so that he could officially join the team.

Since then, Johnny has not looked back. He has become a true asset at Williamson Bros. Colleagues describe him as hardworking, polite and brimming with positivity. Every day Johnny walks to work, bringing with him a contagious enthusiasm. Through his job, Johnny has not only earned a pay cheque but also pride, stability and self-confidence. Despite his challenging circumstances, Johnny has saved up to buy things for himself, even managing to purchase his own motorbike, a major achievement for any young person. Recently, he took another bold and massive step by paying for his own braces at a cost of \$13,000—he is not even 18 yet—which he is eagerly paying off. In fact, most of it is paid off. He is investing in himself, his health and his future.

Along his journey, local organisations dedicated to supporting young people have helped him obtain his white card and, through driving lessons, his learner licence. He is now on track for his provisional licence. These milestones are not just symbols of achievement; they are stepping stones toward his independence and aspirations. With Real Futures assisting with the occasional food voucher and Williamson Bros staff taking him to Woolworths to guide and assist him towards healthy eating choices, Johnny is improving his habits. He is also learning essential life skills, such as how to budget for groceries and put together healthy meals. His progress has not gone unnoticed—by anyone in the community.

But Johnny's path has not been without obstacles. Recently on his usual walk to work, he was stopped and questioned by the police, without Johnny understanding why, and the physical intrusion on his life left its mark. For a while afterwards Johnny stopped going to work, feeling hesitant to make that walk again. He had attended almost every day for nearly two years, and now he did not want to return. Johnny is breaking cycles, though, and reshaping his life. He is proving to be a role model for young adults who might feel trapped by their past. He is a shining example of what can happen when a community rallies around its youth. For Johnny, working at Williamson Bros has provided an alternative path to success. He has found pride in his work and joy in his accomplishments, all while building a foundation for a brighter future.

I recently had the pleasure of accompanying Johnny on his walk to work one morning. I listened to his goal of setting up a solid life for himself. He is determined to keep developing his skills, with his sights set on obtaining a forklift licence and a first aid certificate with assistance from Real Futures. His community has given him the tools, but it is Johnny's determination and dedication that will set his future. Johnny's story is a reminder of how powerful community support can be in changing a young person's life. It emphasises the importance of

programs, mentorship and alternative pathways to employment. Not every child thrives at school. It is vital that we provide diverse routes to success.

With all my heart I commend Damien and Karlie Clegg, and their team at Williamson Bros, for their commitment to supporting Johnny within the community. Johnny's inspiring journey is a testament to their impact and to the power of a community that cares. To anyone listening to this speech, I ask, "Who can you mentor? Who can you help by bringing more positivity in their life? I challenge you to go out and do that small thing to help that one person who may just need a start in life—just like Johnny." And I say to Johnny, "This is all about you. Do not stop making us smile, do not give up trying to make good decisions and do not for one moment second-guess how far you have come. You make us all proud."

SMALL BUSINESS FORUM

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (16:45): Last night I was delighted to be joined by the Hon. Stephen Kamper in his capacity as Minister for Small Business to hold a small business forum at Parliament House, which was geared towards small business owners in my electorate. With around 30 passionate and dedicated attendees, the forum was a fantastic opportunity for us to consult with small business owners and learn how we can best support them. It demonstrated the Minns Labor Government's commitment to not only work for but also work with small business owners to help our State succeed. From 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. we heard from an exceptional array of guests, including the Minister for Small Business; Dr George Tomka, director of innovation and commercial research at the University of Wollongong; representatives from the workers compensation agency, icare; and the Hon. Sophie Cotsis in her capacity as Minister for Industrial Relations.

Minister Kamper spoke of the Minns Labor Government's extensive initiatives to support small business, including establishing the highly efficient Service NSW Business Bureau, co-signing a Charter for Small Business with Business NSW, reforming procurement, slashing red tape and more. Dr George Tomka detailed the incredible achievements of the University of Wollongong's iAccelerate service, which is a startup incubator and business accelerator. Offering a range of programs and technologies to nurture new ideas and scale up existing firms, Dr Tomka listed numerous successful interactions between iAccelerate, SMEs and startups within the Illawarra and my electorate. He also provided information on how iAccelerate can assist small businesses grow and develop. Icare representatives spoke on the numerous incentive schemes and benefits available for small businesses to assist with filing for workers compensation and mental health support. Many small business owners are too often intimidated by or unsure of how to navigate these complex legal and financial areas, and many attendees appreciated that practical advice.

My personal highlight of the night was hearing from the small business owners in my electorate. Their immense enthusiasm for their craft and dedication to working constructively with the Government was deeply inspiring. When attendees raised their difficulties with navigating the complexities of the sector, it was done so in a spirit of cooperation and partnership to seek real solutions. Owners and representatives of organisations such as Finlease, Glenbernie Orchard, Sutherland Shire Chamber of Commerce, ShireBiz and more made the trek to Parliament—not to complain but to work with us and let us know about the roadblocks they have faced and the successes we should double down on.

I was extraordinarily proud of the passion and drive of those small business owners. They are the dynamic and pulsing heart of the Heathcote electorate, going to inordinate lengths to provide the goods, services and meaningful work that sustain our unique quality of life. I thank the Hon. Steve Kamper, the Hon. Sophie Cotsis and Dr George Tomka. I thank the icare representatives for their wonderful presentation and all attendees for their time and effort, and for their generous cooperation with the Minns Labor Government. I look forward to the opportunities that the networking last night unfolded. It was the start of the conversation around assisting them during challenging times and I look forward to working with small businesses in the Heathcote electorate in 2025.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (16:50): I acknowledge the member for Heathcote and the work she is doing with small businesses in her electorate. Small businesses are the economic backbone of New South Wales and Australia. They are the single largest employer yet, for over a decade, they were completely left behind and ignored by the previous Government. The work that our Government has done in terms of creating resources and streamlining information has been absolutely paramount. I acknowledge the work that the member has done in making sure that they have access to those resources during tough financial times. I commend her work.

BELIEF FOUNDATION

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (16:51): Today I contribute a private member's statement that has been inspired by a constituent of mine, Mike Singer. He has asked me to deliver a speech that is a reflection of his family's journey in the healthcare system in our area. So I stand in the Chamber today on his behalf. The story I will share is a difficult but inspiring one. It is the story of a 13-year-old boy in my electorate with a very rare

combination of lung diseases and a father who is on a mission to save him. At age 12, Tom Singer became so unwell he was immediately admitted to Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick. At first, all they knew was that he had shortness of breath and fatigue. There was no clear answer even after repeated hospital admissions that would only get longer and a barrage of tests, sometimes several a day.

Meanwhile, Tom's symptoms deteriorated. He lost 20 per cent of his body weight, mostly due to vomiting. When he was at home, he would try to vomit quietly to avoid waking up his brother during the night. After two years Tom and his parents, Mike and Emma, got a diagnosis that is rare and difficult to pronounce. In fact, Tom's presentation is so rare to the world that it will be reported in international medical literature to assist global understanding of very rare lung diseases. Tom has had to ask a lot of questions over the past two years—what is wrong with me? Is there a treatment? Will I be okay?—with only uncertain answers. But sometimes that kind of uncertainty can move us forward to learn more and do more.

During the pandemic, we saw what modern medicine is capable of. The coronavirus was first detected in December. By January, it was completely genomically sequenced. Within 100 days, there were vaccine candidates for trial. And before a year had passed, there was a vaccine. A process that normally takes over a decade was compressed into 12 months. It shows what is possible when a village collaborates with cutting-edge technology on a problem deemed important enough. That is why Tom's father, Michael, is establishing a foundation with BELIEF—the BE Lung Fit Foundation—to bring coordination and technology to bear on rare lung diseases.

Lung diseases impact one in three Australians. Many diseases, like cancer, are widely funded and researched and have treatments that are rapidly advancing. But many people, like Tom, will face respiratory illnesses that take us to places we have never been before. These rare lung diseases disproportionately impact Indigenous and low-income communities. The human cost and the cost to our health systems are devastating. The BELIEF Foundation will create a centre of excellence for funding, research and technology development on rare lung disease, empowering collaboration on breakthrough treatments that we know can work. It is supported by Professor Adam Jaffé, a world leader in childhood lung diseases. But it also deserves all of our support. We need to work together to create a world where children like Tom have all the answers that medicine is yet to discover.

Mike wanted me to take the opportunity in this House to express his deep gratitude and respect for the hardworking doctors, nurses, allied health workers and NSW Health staff, without whom Tom would not be here. To use Michael's words, it takes a village to save a child. Special thanks is owed to Dr Hannah Corbett, who has responded with distinction to this village's cries for help. But Mike also wanted me to share a story of a night not long ago when he was lying next to Tommy as he struggled with life, shivering and vomiting uncontrollably. Amidst his gasps for air, Tom cried to his father, "Dad, please save me." It is a cry no father should have to hear, but it is Tom's plea not just to him but to all of us. It takes a village to save a child—this village; our village.

OATLEY ELECTORATE

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (16:55): On the very last sitting day I take this opportunity to reflect on what a wonderful 2024 it has been—that is, of course, if those opposite do not decide to use the reserve week. We will see what happens. This year we saw an incredible Paris Olympic Games, with some success on the global stage for our very own breakdancer, Raygun; a very interesting presidential race in the United States, which certainly turned some heads—we might even see Elon Musk as a high-ranking government official; who would have thought?—and an AI explosion that, I must say, created some fantastic Instagram captions. I also opened my second commuter car park in opposition at Beverly Hills railway station this week with my own red ribbon from home, which means we are now two for two.

On the home front in Oatley, my team is working harder than ever before. I thank the people in my electorate for continuing to put their trust in me. It is not an easy job but someone has to do it. In all seriousness, being in opposition has been both one of the greatest challenges and one of the greatest opportunities in my political career. It shows that, despite challenges, we can deliver better outcomes for those in my community and, for that matter, throughout New South Wales—all whilst holding this Government accountable. I truly believe the St George community is the best place to live, work and raise a family not only in New South Wales but also in the whole of Australia. We are truly blessed.

This year some incredible things have been accomplished, many of them years and even decades in the making. They include, as I mentioned, the opening of a brand-new commuter car park at Beverly Hills, bringing more than 200 new parking spots to that station, which will be so important for the local economy and the local area for many years to come. Construction on stage three of the St George Hospital redevelopment is progressing well and looking fantastic. Work is also continuing nicely to widen King Georges Road from two to three lanes in each direction, which will get local residents home sooner and safer. I was also privileged throughout the year to hand out a number of grants to support local community organisations and schools like Aspect in Peakhurst;

the Chinese Australian Services Society, or CASS; Penshurst West Public School; and Riverwood Public School, just to name a few.

This year was another full year of achievements within my community. It is only thanks to the amazing people across my local area that we were able to do so well. Next Friday I will be hosting the fourteenth—I cannot believe it—annual St George Community Awards in order to recognise the many wonderful and dedicated volunteers and unsung heroes in the St George area who keep our local area moving. These are always fantastic nights and I truly cannot wait to congratulate and thank, with the over 350 people attending, all the award winners as we celebrate their work.

In my shadow ministry portfolios—and there are many—it was another action-packed year. I took part in the celebration of many community and cultural events in our multicultural calendar across New South Wales from Lunar New Year to Ramadan to Hanukkah. Meeting with stakeholders across the industry, science, innovation and technology spaces has also been an exciting experience. They continue to be portfolios that I am extremely passionate about and I look forward to continuing to hold the Government to account in those spaces well into the future. As shadow Minister for South-Western Sydney, I have also had the pleasure of meeting and fighting for that community for better services and infrastructure across the region.

Finally, I have had the opportunity to work alongside some excellent people this year, many of whom I am lucky enough to call some of my closest friends.

As every good MP knows, you cannot do this job well without good, talented staff. I thank each one of them—Clayton, Jayden, Jess and Will—for helping me work tirelessly for our community each and every day, from answering phone calls to mobile office visits, to train stations and shopping centres, to running my office and at least trying to keep me on time, which is not an easy feat. I also thank Olivia Simpson and Raif Hasan for the part they played on my team this year and their efforts to support the community.

Most importantly, my biggest thanks go to my wife, Adla, and our kids, Hurricane and Tsunami—I mean James and Sam—for allowing me to do the job I love most. I love you guys so much. You make me the proudest dad and husband in the world. I am very much looking forward to some more time spent around the dinner table and a bit of time to kick my feet up and relax with you guys. Finally, as the end of the year fast approaches, I wish everyone in this House—all the staff, the members of Parliament and the attendants—and everyone in my community a very merry Christmas, a happy, joyous festive season and a happy new year.

HEALTH AND ARTS

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (17:00): Artistic expression grew in lockstep with human cultural development and has long played an integral part in how we teach, learn, communicate and heal. Since our earliest ancestors began telling stories to make sense of the world we have evolved to learn from narrative, be it through visual media, song or performance. Creativity can help us navigate the journey of battling an illness or injury to process difficult emotions in times of emergency and challenging events. The creation and enjoyment of the arts helps to promote holistic wellness and can be a motivating factor in recovery. Including the arts in healthcare delivery has been shown to support positive clinical outcomes for patients while also supporting other stakeholders, including healthcare providers, a patient's family and loved ones, and the wider community.

A growing body of evidence confirms the significant and measurable impact of arts across multiple healthcare settings. In Liverpool, with so many organisations and networks of culturally diverse groups, there is fertile ground to utilise this impact for good in our health system. That is why the South Western Sydney Local Health District has launched its *Health and Arts Strategy 2024 - 2029* to integrate health and arts as sustainable and viable tools to improve community wellbeing. The vision is a future where health and arts drive innovative, high-quality programs where creativity supports inclusive and healthy communities.

The strategy is best described in terms of four main areas of focus. The first focus, capacity and coordination, refers to the need for effective governance that coordinates resources and people to deliver programs. Over the past five years significant resources have been allocated to grow health and arts programs, with many successful projects delivered. Those projects have not only improved our community's overall wellbeing but also enriched our cultural landscape. Continuing to realise the benefits of health and arts collaboration is best done when we engage experts, which allows for the maximisation of organisational capacity. The strategy calls for the establishment of a clear governance structure that ensures accountability and facilitates sustainable coordination between the health and arts sectors while continuing to leverage the considerable expertise that exists within south-west Sydney.

The second area of focus concerns partnerships and collaboration. South-west Sydney is a community largely built on a strong culture of working together. The health district seeks to use this approach in its strategy by bringing together key stakeholders to deliver initiatives that benefit our community. Those stakeholders include

government, non-government organisations, local councils, educational institutions, artists and community organisations. It is the inclusion of a broad range of stakeholders that will allow the strategy to promote a holistic approach to wellbeing. To better facilitate those partnerships, the health and arts strategy proposes creating a front door—a point of contact for organisations willing to work with the district. It also involves the district actively and outwardly engaging with local stakeholders to continue to deliver the strategy. The end goal is to create a responsive and adaptable collaboration system that can advocate at all levels to ensure that south-west Sydney remains a hub of wellbeing and artistic expression into the future.

The third pillar of the strategy is promotion and community engagement. As members of this place, we already know the importance of engaging with the people we represent when we make decisions on legislation. The district also realises this and proposes that the broader community be consulted and engaged in the design and implementation of initiatives. The arts offer unique ways to convey healthy messaging to the broader community. It can often be a language in and of itself. There is already fantastic work being done across south-west Sydney and the strategy seeks to promote that success on a more consistent and effective basis.

The final area of focus is research and innovation. As I have mentioned, there is a growing body of literature that supports the idea that there are quantifiable benefits to health and arts initiatives. The strategy suggests that we use this to continue research and add to that body of work. The district will leverage its existing partnerships with research organisations, universities, cultural organisations and education providers to build capacity in health and arts research, education and training, knowledge exchange opportunities and funding. By building upon the existing body of work, the strategy will help contribute to a more holistic and patient-centric approach to health care, recognising the intrinsic connection between health, wellbeing and culture. Recently I participated in a panel to launch this strategy. It was wonderful to see the range of community members and stakeholders who were present to celebrate the launch of the strategy, which will enable us to approach health care in a different way across south-west Sydney.

WOLLONDILLY SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (17:05): When we think of a new, you-beaut, top of the range, spare no expense, cutting edge development and the marketing campaign that goes with it, we picture idyllic homes, big streets, parks and shops. There are also images of families with their loved ones, old and young. Finally, of course, we have the images of young children and teens dressed to go to school. This all looks great in the catalogues, posters and online advertisements, and a new resident moving into Wollondilly would expect these things. However, the reality is something different.

I have spoken at length in this place about the disappointment my community and I feel when looking at the provisions for the needs of residents, such as sewers, jobs, police and health services. We also need schools—and here is the catch—for all students, primary and secondary. That is right: People who move into a new development do not have only young children. It is obvious to say that high schoolers are part of the families moving into their new homes in the growth areas of Wollondilly. There are also young families that have grown whose children have to leave Wollondilly on buses to travel to a high school 40 minutes away.

The solution that every developer seems to come up with is to plonk a cheap primary school into the mix. Meanwhile, the homes and population keep adding up. To make matters worse, existing villages have varying levels of growth, leading to some awful situations where schools in one village may not have enough classrooms yet the school in the next town may have too many. It is madness, and that is just the primary schools. As at today, there are no high schools planned for Wollondilly. We have a way to go to convince the Government, and I am confident the work I am doing with the Minister for Education and Early Learning will lead to great things. However, when I came into this job, the one public high school in Wollondilly Shire Council area, Picton High School, had no functioning hall and the open classrooms were disastrous.

I will never forget taking the Minister for Education and Early Learning there the students telling her of the worries they had for their school. Those students deserved much better than to be cast aside by the former member for Wollondilly. I discovered on coming into office that due to the company that was employed to fix the hall going bankrupt, the project sat idle for four years. I had to convince the Government to restart this process, and thankfully the hall is opening. Members should remember that there are 1,300 students in attendance with no hall.

At the same school, my community was promised a new redesign and a state-of-the-art facility. What was delivered was an amazing-looking building and campus with no internal walls in a number of sections. This led to stairs—literally, stairs—being marked as classrooms. The poor outcome led to a worse learning environment, which is being fixed as I speak, again at more cost to the Government. There is no winner when things like this get kicked between one area and another. The time that has been wasted in redesigning this school is a great shame. The cost could have gone into planning a new, second public high school.

Further education, or education that follows high school, is not an option at all for the Wollondilly electorate. We have the University of Sydney farms on our border, but even Camden likes to claim those as its own. We were promised outreach education facilities in Wilton New Town, but to date we do not even have a town centre. Our residents are forced to travel for university and TAFE. Apprenticeships are high in Wollondilly. Statistically, tradies are the highest and fastest growing employment sector. Yet the Government has not invested in this trend, leading to packed roads into and out of Wollondilly every day.

For children who have greater needs, the answer is not easy. There is only one school for children with multiple complex disabilities in Wollondilly—Tangara School in Mittagong. Even if the available spots were tripled, the need would not be met for all residents. The department seems intent on pushing families towards mainstream schools, causing further strain on schools in the north and south of my electorate. These children need extra special care. The list is long. My community should know that, while the wheels of government are dreadfully slow, I am making representations and fighting for what is right. I will not sit idle while halls are left in disrepair, schools are unplanned and classrooms are underutilised. I am not afraid to fight, as the independent voice of my community. I look forward to continuing this fight not only for the community but with them and their children for the schooling that we deserve in the Wollondilly electorate.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (17:10): I acknowledge the comments and concerns raised by the member for Wollondilly. In my previous life, I delivered mental health education workshops at Picton High School. I appreciate the anticipation of the community for the redevelopment of the school and then the subsequent disappointment of the community when the substantial cost of the works resulted in not a single additional place or extra capacity for students. I also respond as a member of a government that has recently invested over a billion dollars into essential school maintenance, including \$6 million within the Liverpool electorate for incredibly basic school maintenance, which was not done for over a decade. I acknowledge the member's concerns about the needs of her fast-growing community. The Government will work with her to address those needs. She is a much better advocate than the previous member for Wollondilly.

BLACKTOWN ELECTORATE

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (17:11): Over the past couple of weeks I have been speaking about the unfortunate closure of the Commonwealth Bank branch in Doonside. I update the House that last Monday a protest rally was held outside the branch and over 150 people attended. The rally was covered on *A Current Affair* and Channel 7 national news, a positive news item for Doonside for a change. They highlighted the importance of cash and the Federal Government announcement of an inquiry into making sure that our currency is legally tendered and accepted in shops.

The Commonwealth Bank is closing a branch every eight days. It has closed almost half its ATMs in the past four years. It has made \$9.8 billion in profit, which is \$1 million per hour. Every hour, the Commonwealth Bank generates \$1 million in profit. Banks have a social responsibility and often talk about the importance of the community and the role that branches play in the community. The Commonwealth Bank has closed branches in Rooty Hill, Quakers Court, Marayong and Kings Langley while directing customers to the Doonside branch, but now the Doonside branch is closing. This has caused a lot of unnecessary angst in the community, especially with people who are elderly or have disabilities or chronic illnesses. Banks seem to have this idea that customers should go to a major centre to do their banking.

Last Friday I had a meeting with a couple of Commonwealth Bank representatives. The meeting was not too fruitful as far as keeping the Doonside branch open, but I hope that they will work with the local community to identify support needed by the community. They might hopefully sponsor a few things in the area. We are still arguing to keep the branch open. Other matters have popped up since these discussions which are new to me. Ochlophobia is a fear of crowds. For people who suffer from ochlophobia and do not like being around people, visiting a suburban branch is a good way to do their banking. After 60 years of service, I hope the Commonwealth Bank will sit down with us and support the local community.

Tonight I also thank my extraordinary team, led by Elizabeth Banks, who has been with me since I was elected to this place. No matter is too big or too small for her, and she is relentless in constantly following up all the different matters in our community. Not all matters fit into the realm of the State, but we go above and beyond to help everyone. I also thank my other full-time staff who work so hard in the office, including Nick Nikolaidis, Wendy Chen and Kim Campbell, and everyone who has come in as replacements when needed, including Carol Israel, Maya Uluc, Stephan Jaeggi Mundine and Trae Jaeggi. They have done a great job while backfilling the team.

As the Parliamentary Secretary to Minister Paul Scully, I thank him, his staff and his department. The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure a gigantic department. If I start naming everyone, I will be here all day. The Minister has been wonderful in supporting and working with the community. His department is

pretty controversial at the moment. It is always in the news. Many matters need to be addressed. I acknowledge Gino and Caitlin from the Minister's office, who are non-stop. I have been able to liaise with them and work with them very closely.

I also thank my family, including Anne, my wife, and my son, Stephen junior. They have been wonderful in their support of me and understanding of the time that is needed to do this job. I thank them very much. Finally, I thank everyone in my electorate. I would not be the member for Blacktown without them. I would not have spent a great 20 years in political life, whether in council or Parliament, without the great support of the community. I also thank my Labor colleagues. I will not name anyone specifically. The Labor Party has 300-odd members, and works very closely to support us. I wish everyone a very merry Christmas and a wonderful 2025.

SMALL BUSINESSES

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (17:16): For the final time this year, I support our local small businesses. Small businesses are the backbone of our local economy. Everyone in my community knows Goodfields, a wonderful cafe in Lindfield. I recently chatted with the owners, George and Anthony, and they listed all of their different expenses, including rent, electricity, gas, staff and fresh produce. Sadly, there are even more expenses, with government taxes and charges such as GST and workers compensation premiums. Small businesses are doing it tough, like the entire economy. But this Christmas and this summer I encourage everyone to shop local at small businesses.

In New South Wales there are over 850,000 small businesses that account for 97 per cent of all businesses. Locally, there are 14,786 small businesses in Ku-ring-gai and 32,529 in the northern beaches. In October 2024 the Small Business Momentum Survey by the Small Business Commissioner found that, firstly, 34 per cent of businesses indicated they had plans to grow, alter or expand operations, which is sadly a decline of 4 per cent since September and, secondly, that 16 per cent of businesses expected revenue to increase compared to 34 per cent that expected a decline.

There are challenges to small business, but there is hope. The survey report found 30 per cent of businesses indicated they were confident about their individual business prospects. That is an increase of 5 per cent since September. The report also found, since September, the Momentum index increased by one point to 100.8 points and 45 per cent of businesses have plans to expand and are looking to hire additional staff. That is a steady rate. It also found 82 per cent of businesses indicated they were concerned about the cost of business inputs, which is also steady.

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry recently released a Small Business Conditions Survey and called for reforms. I highlight suggested reforms that I think are worth considering. The survey found: firstly, business processes and regulations should be streamlined—this should occur at a Federal level as well as across State and Territory borders where possible; secondly, a central hub for information and assistance for small businesses would be helpful, and more of this support should be available; thirdly, incentives for Australians to support more small businesses and for small businesses to keep operating should be created; fourthly, industrial relations settings are not conducive to positive outcomes for small businesses; and fifthly, the overarching sentiment was that red tape for small businesses must be reduced.

What can we, as elected officials and servants of the people, do to support small businesses? For starters, echoing the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, I believe we need ongoing deregulation by cutting red tape where required. Red tape costs the Australian economy \$176 billion each year, according to the Institute of Public Affairs. I welcome the Small Business Commissioner's report entitled *Rightsizing regulation: Review of small business experiences with regulatory policymaking processes*. While I welcome the report, it is very theoretical and bureaucratic. Recommendation 8 is to establish an independent oversight body. No offence, but creating a new bureaucracy, sadly, is not public policy. It is simply outsourcing.

Public policy to cut red tape could include ensuring that all forms of documentation are digital and not just simply PDF in print, scan and email form; secondly, creating harmonisation between all Australian governments, particularly when it comes to payroll tax; and, thirdly, ensuring that for every new regulation, two regulations are repealed, which the O'Farrell Government championed. The Minister for Work Health and Safety knows that icare needs to guarantee that every dollar raised from workers compensation premiums is put towards injured workers. I have spoken to the Minister about that. That money should not go to executive bonuses, CEO salaries or Las Vegas conferences. I am very relieved that icare, after much advocacy, has established a small business hub to understand and listen to small businesses.

That hub should include face-to-face interactions on the ground and a dedicated small business hotline and website. That hub has been created, which I welcome. Finally, with all due respect to the Minister for Small Business, we need a full-time champion for small business. The current Minister also has responsibility for Lands

and Property, Multiculturalism and Sport. Those portfolios do not directly relate to Small Business. I believe we need a full-time champion for small business that directly sits in the Government's economic team, either complementing the responsibilities of the Treasurer or the Minister for Finance. Government has an important role to play to support small businesses. It begins by listening and understanding them. I encourage people to shop local and with small businesses over Christmas.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (17:21): I appreciate the advocacy of the member for Davidson for small business and ideas about how to improve the policy space. However, I have concerns about some of the member's suggestions, including a complete transference of everything into the digital sphere. As the Parliamentary Secretary for Customer Service and Digital Government, I know the Government is doing a significant amount of work in the digital inclusion space because no attention was paid to it by the previous Government.

Significant portions of our community in the Sydney metropolitan area as well as rural and regional areas, and across different age and cultural demographics, experience digital exclusion. Pushing everything into the digital sphere may exclude some people in our local community and some of our local businesses. I appreciate his comments regarding icare. I note that under the former Government, icare was an absolute disgrace. It did not fulfil the functions that it was vested to fulfil. We cannot have regulation without compliance.

PROSPECT ELECTORATE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:22): Christmas is a time for family and community spirit. It is an opportunity to give gifts, give thanks and share love and goodwill. As the end of the parliamentary sitting calendar comes to a close, I reflect on what a big year 2024 has been and thank my community in the Prospect electorate. I express my sincere gratitude for the community groups, churches, religious organisations and charities in Prospect that have worked tirelessly to support our community. It has brought me an immense amount of pride to see our community care for one another throughout the challenges of the cost-of-living crisis. Their efforts are a testament to the strength of our thriving Western Sydney community. I wish them all a joyful festive season surrounded by family and loved ones.

I also thank the many people working through Christmas, including our essential workers, police, firefighters, medical professionals, and hospitality and retail workers. As we celebrate the end of another year, they batten down the hatches for the busiest season. In Western Sydney, we live in multicultural harmony, respecting each other's values and beliefs and championing what unites us. I am so proud to represent Western Sydney, which is a safe and welcoming home for all. It is an immense privilege to represent the wonderful electorate of Prospect. I thank neighbours, fellow community members and local families for continuing to place their trust in me as their State member of Parliament.

Representing my community is one of my proudest achievements, and I look forward to continuing our work in the new year to achieve more wins for Western Sydney. With the myriad challenges faced by our community this year, my electorate staff have worked around the clock to help individuals, families and businesses in Prospect. I thank my hardworking staff for their dedication to the electorate of Prospect as well as for their friendship and support. They include my very hardworking and extremely dedicated senior executive officer Caitlyn Long, George Mplioakas—I apologise for messing up that Greek name; we call him Smiling George—Emma Cutmore, Mitchell Hearne, Dustin Dao, Mary Azar, Masi Haddad, Nirvana Prasad and our always smiling cleaner, Rahini.

I thank our Premier Chris Minns and Deputy Premier Prue Car for their steadfast leadership throughout another successful year of government. In 2024 we hit the ground running and we have worked every day for the people of New South Wales. I thank the fantastic team in the Premier's office, particularly Cherie Burton, James Cullen, George Psihoyos—once again, I apologise for messing up that Greek name—and the entire CLU, who have been integral to our success. As Parliamentary Secretary, I thank the Attorney General, the member for Maroubra and my old friend, and his committed team, especially Phil Kelly, Dylan Parker, Rose Dandolo and the Department of Communities and Justice for their dedication and work.

I acknowledge the diplomacy and gravitas of the Speaker, the Hon. Greg Piper, who keeps our Chamber in order. I thank his hardworking team, including Jason, Jodie and Shu-fang. I thank our Government Whip, Nathan Hagarty, and the Whip's office, in particular Colleen Symington. We love Colleen. She is the cog that keeps our Parliament running. I thank and wish a happy Hanukkah to the Leader of the House, Ron Hoenig, and his hardworking team, especially Omar Rodriguez for his commitment. I also thank the Legislative Assembly Clerk's office, particularly Helen Minnican, and the Parliamentary Counsel's Office.

I thank the fantastic team in the Department of Parliamentary Services, including Hansard—you guys are amazing—the special constables, education, IT, maintenance and catering for their exceptional service and

dedication throughout the year. I thank my parliamentary colleagues on all sides of politics—from my old friends who have been with me over the past nine years, to my new friends from the class of 2023. Despite our political differences, we care about our communities and pledged to serve New South Wales. We should be proud of our bipartisan achievements and carry those efforts into 2025. Finally, I thank my wonderful family, including my beautiful wife, Bettina, and our daughters, Geneva, Camille and Olivia. Their love and support means everything to me. Each action in this place and the work in my electorate I do to ensure they are proud of me. I wish everyone a happy, holy and blessed Christmas with family, friends and loved ones.

GREAT KOALA NATIONAL PARK

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley) (17:27): I was just in the Premier's office with one of my constituents, and he was genuine and gracious. I thank him for that. But I draw the attention of the House to 2021, when Premier Chris Minns himself stated that "transparency and integrity are the very least New South Wales deserves from the Government". Now is the moment for the Premier to stand by his own words. Along with my constituents, many of whom work in the native forest industry, I call on the Minns Labor Government to transparently and openly explain the process surrounding the proposed Great Koala National Park. In particular, I call on the Government to explain its engagement of Mandala Partners, a consultancy that was, astonishingly, established just six months before being handed a major contract to evaluate the economic and social impacts of the park.

How can we trust the integrity of a report from a company with such limited experience? Mandala Partners, founded in June 2023, had completed no substantial portfolio projects at the time it was contracted by the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The report lacks transparency. It omitted clear terms of reference, scientific data and detailed cost analysis. Even more concerning is the conflict of interest at play. CEO of the Australian Climate and Biodiversity Foundation Lyndon Schneiders is as green as they come. He is a conflicted former CEO of the Wilderness Society, whose partner drafted Labor's policy for the very park we are discussing.

This same Lyndon Schneiders now sits on the park's community panel, alongside other environmental non-government organisations with a long history of bias against the forestry industry. The lack of impartiality is glaring. As if they represent our community. Adding to the lack of trust is my own encounter with Atticus Fleming, the director of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, in one of my first official meetings after being voted in. One minute after meeting him, he laughed in my face when I told him I was a National Party member. Is this the behaviour we expect from a senior public servant? Is this the kind of leadership that instils trust and integrity in a government process?

The Mandala report presented to the industry advisory group in October is filled with flaws. It fails to consider the intricate structure of wood supply agreements on the North Coast. Mandala's assessment crudely reduced timber volumes by 40 per cent without accounting for species preferences, contractual caps and floors, or the variable economic impact on sawmills. This is not just oversight; it is downright negligence. Forestry Corporation of NSW holds the data needed for an accurate evaluation, but Mandala Partners never requested it. Maybe it was deliberate, or maybe they were not up to the quality of what our community expects. If this Government were committed to transparency and accuracy, it would have ensured that Mandala consulted the appropriate stakeholders and experts. Instead, the process was controlled by National Parks, under the direction of Atticus Fleming, and lacked formal meeting notes or recorded minutes. You have to be kidding.

We must ask why Mandala Partners were selected. The Government's procurement guidelines mandate transparency, ethical conduct and strict management of conflicts of interest. Yet while evaluating the park, Mandala Partners was simultaneously working on a project commissioned by the Australian Climate and Biodiversity Foundation to promote forest carbon projects aimed at shutting down the native forest industry. This dual role undermines any confidence in the objectivity of its findings. The Minns Labor Government must explain how this is not a clear conflict of interest. The Premier owes the people of New South Wales a transparent and public account of this process.

The stakes are high. Mandala's flawed analysis estimates that the park would strip 40 per cent of the timber supply on the North Coast. Yet its report ignores the economic fallout for sawmills, the ripple effects on regional communities and the long-term damage to hard-earned livelihoods. Our forestry industry is one of the most sustainable in the world. We plant, harvest and replant, ensuring that the same land continues to produce timber while sequestering carbon. In fact, Department of Primary Industries scientist Dr Brad Law's peer-reviewed study found koala occupancy of 70 per cent in the hinterland forests of north-eastern New South Wales, whether State forest or national park.

The Labor Government's own Great Koala National Park study found 12,111 individual koalas within the assessment area, at 63 per cent occupancy, further supporting Dr Law's research. This proves categorically that responsible forestry and wildlife conservation can coexist, or that State forests are much better at conserving koalas. But Mandala's report disregards this science. Instead, it aligns with an ideological agenda pushed by city-

based activists and environmental NGOs who neither understand nor respect the realities of regional life. This is not just about trees. It is about people, jobs and trust. It is about the environment. We need the best scientific, data-based solution.

The process surrounding the Great Koala National Park is indicative of a broader problem in the Minns Labor Government. It is a lack of transparency, a disregard for proper consultation and a failure to uphold the standards of integrity the people deserve. The Premier should follow his own advice and provide the transparency and integrity he promised, prove to us that this process is not a sham and address the conflicts of interest and glaring omissions in Mandala's report. He cannot use it as evidence in his decision-making unless it is transparent.

WESTERN SYDNEY ARTS ALLIANCE

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (17:33): The Western Sydney Arts Alliance is an unincorporated, membership-based collaborative network representing over 40 art and cultural organisations and local councils in one of Australia's most dynamic and diverse regions. It works to elevate the profile of Western Sydney's vibrant arts sector by advocating for greater recognition, investment and support for the artists, cultural practitioners and creative communities who call Western Sydney home. The alliance was established to strengthen the arts and cultural fabric of Western Sydney by fostering collaboration, championing local talent and advocating for the arts at regional and national levels. Its vision is to create a thriving, inclusive and well-supported arts ecosystem that reflects the rich diversity of our local area. Drawing on the power of the collective voice, it wants arts and culture in Western Sydney to be valued as essential components of a healthy, resilient and vibrant community.

Recently the Minister for the Arts, the Parliamentary Secretary for the Arts and I attended the Western Sydney strategy forum with members of the alliance. They identified seven key focus areas. Firstly, the alliance aims to amplify arts and culture in Western Sydney, using an integrated communications and advocacy strategy to make stakeholders, community members and decision-makers aware of the cultural offerings of our region, showcasing the work of local artists and cultural organisations, and highlighting the importance of arts and culture in enriching lives and strengthening communities. Secondly, the alliance is focused on respecting and celebrating Western Sydney's First Nations cultures, ensuring that their languages and stories are respected and understood.

Thirdly, the alliance serves as a unified voice to influence government leaders, funding bodies and other key stakeholders, ensuring that Western Sydney's arts scene receives the recognition and resources it deserves. The aim of advocating for greater investment and support is to create opportunities for the region's artists and cultural organisations to thrive. Fourthly, the alliance recognises the valuable role the arts play in promoting mental health and wellbeing by fostering inclusivity and providing accessible spaces for people to come together, share their stories and build confidence. The alliance is committed to creating sustainable, long-term career opportunities in the arts for the people of Western Sydney.

The arts sector is a significant employer in the region, encompassing a broad range of professions, from performers and artists to production crews, arts managers, set designers, technicians and more. It is important that the Government works with the alliance to ensure that future generations have access to innovative education and career pathways that will help them develop the skills and experience they need to succeed in the creative industries. Western Sydney is one of the most culturally diverse regions in Australia. By promoting the unique contributions of each cultural group within the region, we help foster a sense of belonging and shared identity. I am passionate about the role the Government must play in ensuring that we celebrate cultural diversity through creative expression, helping to build bridges between different communities and ensuring that all voices are heard and valued.

A final key focus for the alliance is to provide a platform for organisations and artists to collaborate, share resources and work towards common goals. The very existence of the alliance brings together a wide range of stakeholders, from grassroots arts organisations to government leaders. This is an effective way of ensuring that the voices of the arts community are heard when decisions about the future of Western Sydney are made. There is much to be done, but the alliance is a strong grassroots voice committed to making the arts accessible to everyone regardless of age, ability or socio-economic status. Critical to this is creating spaces, big and small, where all members of the community can express themselves creatively and connect through shared cultural experiences.

I thank the alliance's working group for its collaboration with Create NSW on the development of a plan aimed at enhancing the diverse landscape of arts and culture in Western Sydney and modern Australia. The working group is represented by Mouna Zaylah, Dolla Merrillees, Alicia Talbot, Anne Loxley and Krissie Scudds. The work these people have done with the community is incredible. We need to foster the arts in Western Sydney. It is not just about the infrastructure. You do not have anything if you do not have an investment in the people. That is what this is about: having a strong alliance that can work with the Government so that we can achieve that.

BALMAIN ELECTORATE

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (17:37): It has been quite a year in 2024. We have done some big things here in Parliament, some of which have been of great interest to my electorate. Many constituents have contacted me to discuss the passage of legislation and the business of the Chamber. We have banned unfair no-grounds evictions. After more than a decade of advocacy from tenant advocates and my Greens colleagues pushing for meaningful protections for renters, it has finally been achieved. There is still more to do if we are to ensure that everyone has a safe, secure and affordable place to call home, but in the meantime this is an incredible win. I thank everyone who joined us in working towards this reform, especially the many people who shared with me their experiences of unfair no-grounds evictions.

We have improved our laws around equality in New South Wales. While it is disappointing that Labor did not support the stronger version of the equality bill first introduced by the member for Sydney, we have taken a huge step forward and provided vital protections for the LGBTQIA+ community.

Now trans and gender-diverse adults can update their birth certificates without the need for invasive surgery and threatening to "out" someone is legally recognised as a form of coercive control. These are critical improvements that will make a real difference in the lives of so many. My Greens colleagues and I have been doing all we can to defend the right to protest in New South Wales. That right is a cornerstone of our democracy, which is why I introduced a bill to disallow anti-protest regulations and introduced The Greens bill to repeal undemocratic anti-protest laws. At a time when there is increasing concern about the lack of action on climate change, it is so important that people can hold decision-makers to account.

I thank the thousands of people who joined our campaign to fix the Rozelle Interchange. A Legislative Council inquiry was established to investigate the decisions that led to the disastrous project and to find workable solutions to fix the mess. In response, the Government committed to a range of measures to improve traffic flow from local streets onto Victoria Road and to make the area safer for pedestrians and cyclists. My community and I will continue to watch the issue closely. We have had a lot on outside Parliament too. Following a huge response to our pedestrian safety campaign, our community secured \$17 million in funding for new cycleways and pedestrian crossings to improve pedestrian and cycling safety around White Bay, including a new signalised pedestrian crossing at Robert Street and Victoria Road, which I look at very proudly every time I go past.

We secured an increase in funding for the Norton Street Italian Festa, one of the community's fantastic street festivals. I thank the Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport, who is in the Chamber, for responding to my request for the additional funds on behalf of the organisers. Our local main streets are so important to our community, and we need to make sure that events like the Norton Street Italian Festa continue to get the support and recognition they deserve. Finally, funding was promised for new facilities at Leichhardt Oval, with all levels of government making significant contributions. The upgrades will include new female change rooms, which will be welcome news for many in our community who have called for more investment in women's sport. Next on the list is to ensure the playing surface is properly maintained. We do not want a repeat of the recent debacle when the A-league women's pinnacle round was forced to move from Leichhardt Oval due to poor pitch quality. My community will keep a close eye on that as well.

There are so many other things I would like to mention. Time being short, I need to make it quick. Earlier this year we helped secure State Government funding to support the rollout of an additional 136 electric vehicle charging stations across the inner west, making our area one of the biggest winners under the State Government initiative. I was so happy to support the Leichhardt Community Men's Shed to move to a new, larger space at Callan Park, finally ending a years-long search for a new home. Its programs are so popular, and their previous shed was so small that they had to turn away potential new members. Earlier this year, thanks to the Glebe Society, the Elsie Women's Refuge was added to the State Heritage Register, recognising its huge impact on women and children and its role in women's activism. As we mark this milestone, we must continue supporting frontline services, especially with the ongoing crisis of violence against women.

Of course, there is more. It has been a huge year. I thank everyone who has been in touch with my office, who has supported one of my campaigns or who has taken steps, no matter how big or small, to make our community an even better place. I give a big shout-out to my team in the Balmain electorate office. They do a fantastic job and care so much about the community. I am very happy to have them with me. I thank Ned, David, Rochelle, Alison, Hamish and Olivia for all their work. I look forward to doing it all again next year.

INGHAM INSTITUTE FOR APPLIED MEDICAL RESEARCH

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (17:42): I recognise and commend the extraordinary contributions of the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research in Liverpool. Over the years, the institute has not only become a beacon of innovation and scientific excellence, but also cemented itself as a vital resource for our community.

Its groundbreaking research is impacting lives across Sydney and beyond. At the core of the Ingham Institute's mission is the drive to translate medical research into real-world solutions. The work done at the institute directly improves the health and wellbeing of our community. It is not just an institution of academia; it is a pillar of hope for families and individuals seeking cutting-edge treatments and advancements in medical science.

The Ingham Institute leads the charge in various key areas of medical research, including cancer, strokes, neurology, obstetrics, paediatrics, mental health, robotics and new health technologies. Clinical trials are another crucial aspect of the Ingham Institute's work. The trials offer patients in our community the opportunity to access the latest treatments that are not yet widely available. They give individuals hope by providing new treatment pathways when traditional options may not have worked. With clinical trials spanning cancer, strokes and other life-threatening conditions, the Ingham Institute is transforming lives.

The recent 12th Annual Research Excellence Awards highlighted many outstanding contributions, including awards for excellence in teaching and early career researchers, and the prestigious Lady Mary Fairfax Distinguished Researcher Award. These recognitions reflect the high level of talent and dedication within the institute, and the lasting impact the research will have not only in our community but also on the global stage. At the heart of all this remarkable work, the Ingham Institute is not just advancing science; it is creating a brighter, healthier future for us all. By focusing on the real-world application of research, it ensures that the benefits of the institute's work are felt right here in our community.

The research into cancer, stroke, neurology, obstetrics, paediatrics, mental health, robotics and health technologies continues to change lives, and I am proud to support the mission. I thank the talented and dedicated team of researchers and medical professionals who devote their lives to making our community healthier and stronger. I acknowledge chair Terry Goldacre, research director Professor Les Bokey, AM, interim CEO Katie Quinn Gilbert, and all board members.

LEPPINGTON ELECTORATE DEVELOPMENT

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (17:46): I address the serious concerns raised in Horningsea Park and surrounding communities over a controversial development by Trifalga Property Group on the well-known former Trash and Treasure market site along Camden Valley Way. The 124-lot residential subdivision called Greenlands Horningsea Park has sparked considerable backlash from the community. Residents of Horningsea Park feel their voices have been disregarded in the face of unchecked development. They believe while more housing is necessary, this proposal comes at a cost to their quality of life and neighbourhood identity. Trifalga Property Group may argue that the low-rise development addresses the housing shortage, but local residents know it will have a huge impact on their daily lives.

Despite the former Trash and Treasure site's entry point being on Camden Valley Way, the new development will seal off the main road and instead channel the vehicles from the 124 new lots into local suburban streets, which are already clogged every morning and afternoon peak. From the very beginning, the community has encountered a lack of transparency. Back in 2022, in the early stages, residents reported that they were not properly notified about the proposal, missing out on crucial opportunities for input. That is unacceptable. One resident shared with local media that she only found out about the development through a neighbour, and not through any official notice from the council or developers.

Fast-forward to 2023 and, despite concerns, the Land and Environment Court has approved the development following a conciliation conference with Liverpool City Council. The approval was granted even though the council previously rejected a similar development plan on the same site back in 2015. Back then, the council raised valid issues like the removal of land meant for public use and the potential for increased flood depths in the area, given it borders Cabramatta Creek. Unfortunately, the court's decision has left residents sidelined and powerless in the face of developers that seem able to push through plans regardless of local concerns.

The local roads were never designed to handle the additional traffic from a new estate of this size. Each morning, residents of the surrounding suburbs experience gridlock on streets that were once quiet neighbourhood roads. Now, with the addition of an estimated 200 to 300 more vehicles each day, streets like Taubman Drive, Tate Crescent and Blackman Crescent will be forced to handle traffic volumes far beyond their intended capacity. This will worsen congestion and pose risks to both drivers and pedestrians, including kids who attend the local John Edmondson High School, which is a short distance from the development. The development's traffic report dismisses this impact as "minimal", but anyone who lives in the area knows the reality.

Every additional car adds to an existing problem, and the burden on local roads will only grow worse. In May this year, I reached out to Trifalga Property Group on behalf of my constituents, formally requesting that it reconsider the design and implement a left-in, left-out access point on Camden Valley Way. The small adjustment could make a significant difference, allowing traffic to flow directly onto a collector road and relieve some of the

pressure on our local streets. Trifalga has chosen to ignore my letter proposing this practical solution, instead pushing ahead with a plan that places the development's needs above the wellbeing of the local community.

However, it is not just the traffic that is concerning. No new amenities are planned to support the influx of residents that will come with this development. There is no provision for parks, additional schools or essential services—all elements that are crucial for a growing community. It is one thing to add more housing, but, without the infrastructure to support it, the development risks straining existing resources and compromising the neighbourhood's liveability. The situation highlights a broader pattern of how developers, councils and regulatory bodies fail to properly engage with the communities they are meant to serve. When residents are shut out of the consultation process or are treated as an afterthought, it erodes trust. Developers need to recognise that their responsibility does not end when they simply hand the keys over. It extends to ensuring that they develop sustainable and prosperous communities where people want to live for many years.

The people of Horningsea Park are not asking for anything unreasonable. They want their neighbourhood to remain a safe, welcoming place to live. They want to ensure that new developments add to, rather than take away from, their community's quality of life. That means developers like Trifalga need to do more than just meet the bare minimum requirements. They need to listen to the people who will be directly affected by their projects and make adjustments that honour the character and needs of the community. I urge Trifalga Property Group to heed the calls of Horningsea Park residents and revisit their plans to ensure a responsible, respectful approach to development. The residents of Horningsea Park deserve better, and we will keep fighting to make sure their voices are heard. To that end, I will be launching a petition on my website to ask Liverpool council and Trifalga Property Group to reconsider the current plans and keep the left in/left out on Camden Valley Way. I encourage everyone to jump on my website and sign that petition.

MARK MARCINIAK

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (17:51): James Cook Boys Technology High School holds a special place in my heart. Not just because it is one of only two high schools in my electorate, but, as a former student, I take particular pride in its journey. Over the years the school has evolved significantly, and in the past decade I have witnessed an incredible transformation. At the centre of that change is a remarkable individual, principal Mark Marciniak, whose contribution to James Cook Technology High School and the Rockdale community at large has been immeasurable.

Mark, the son of Polish immigrants who sought refuge in Australia after World War II, grew up in a home where education and hard work were cherished. Inspired by his teachers and a passion for learning, he earned a Bachelor of Arts and a Diploma of Education. After teaching at various schools, he became deputy principal at Granville Boys High School in 2009. In 2014 Mark became principal of James Cook Boys Technology High School. At the time, the school faced declining enrolments, a poor public image and waning community confidence. The school's reputation needed to be restored. With high ambitions, a collaborative approach and a strong vision for James Cook, together with the staff Mark created the foundation for a unified strategy that honoured the school's history while setting ambitious goals for the future.

Under Mark's leadership, the team quickly strengthened ties with local primary schools through initiatives like immersion days, robotics workshops and sports events. Rebuilding community pride, enrolments climbed from just 32 year 7 students in 2015 to nearly 100 in subsequent years. One of Mark's many standout achievements includes the Technology Transition Program, which ensured every new student had access to laptops and software. The initiative positioned the school as a digital education leader, proving vital during the COVID-19 pandemic when online learning became essential. Under his leadership, James Cook's academic performance has soared. Students have outperformed State trends in NAPLAN results, particularly in reading. After years of neglect, infrastructure and improving school facilities also became a priority, with the addition of a state-of-the-art STEM hub and a fully equipped kitchen. Those facilities symbolise Mark's commitment to innovation and preparing students for success in an ever-changing world and so much more.

Mark's impact goes beyond academics. He transformed the school into a vibrant community hub, hosting events like Iftar dinners, Diwali celebrations and a memorable sixtieth anniversary event, which I attended. Those gatherings foster pride and belonging, strengthening ties with alumni and families. Looking ahead, James Cook's next chapter is equally exciting. In 2026 the school will merge with Moorefield Girls High School to become co-educational. This transition reflects the community's growing support for co-education, fostering an inclusive environment that promotes respect, collaboration and wider opportunities for students. Supported by infrastructure upgrades from the Minns Labor Government, the new co-ed school will offer a broader curriculum, diverse extracurricular activities and options for single sex-focused classes.

I have every confidence that Mark's leadership in this transition will once again exemplify his courage and vision. His legacy of transformation, compassion and excellence will guide James Cook into a bright future. Since 2014, Mark's dedication has left an indelible mark on the school and the Rockdale community. His leadership turned challenges into opportunities, building an environment where students thrive and families feel supported. Together with his team, Mark has cultivated a school culture defined by kindness, equality and a deep sense of pride in the community. His impact on this school and the Rockdale community has been and continues to be immense. I thank Mark for his unwavering dedication to James Cook Boys Technology High School and the students and families it serves. I look forward to continuing to work with him.

MARK COULTON, FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PARKES

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (17:56): I recognise the remarkable career and contributions of my friend and Federal colleague Mark Coulton, MP. This week Mark delivered his valedictory speech at Federal Parliament, almost closing the chapter on a remarkable 17-year journey as the member for Parkes. I first met Mark in 2007 while I was working at 2DU, the local radio station, when he was newly elected. The following year, on 17 June 2008, Mark became my very first guest on the first morning show on ABC Western Plains—and what a great first guest he was.

Mark Coulton is the epitome of a loyal and genuine gentleman, whose commitment to his constituents has been second to none. The respect and trust the community holds for him was absolutely evident in his re-elections in 2010, 2013 and 2019, which reflects his dedication and ability to connect with and advocate for his electorate. Representing an electorate as vast as Parkes, which covers almost 49 per cent of New South Wales at almost 395,000 square kilometres, is no small feat. Mark has tackled this responsibility with tireless energy and determination. From community halls to Parliament House, he has consistently given his all to ensure regional voices are heard and acted upon. His extensive background in agriculture provided the foundation for his political journey.

Before entering Parliament, Mark spent 30 years as a farmer and grazier. Alongside his wife, Robyn, he ran a mixed farming system, growing cereal crops and raising beef cattle until 2006. Mark also gained valuable experience in local government as a councillor and Mayor of Gwydir Shire Council from 2004 to 2007. This combination of real-world experience and grassroots leadership made him a natural fit for representing one of Australia's largest electorates. During his time in Federal Parliament, Mark has held a number of notable roles. He served as Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives and the National Party Chief Whip and also held shadow portfolios in Regional Development, Water, and Emerging Trade Markets.

From March 2018 to May 2019, Mark was the Assistant Minister for Trade, Tourism, and Investment, before being appointed to the Coalition Ministry in May 2019, which was a real honour. He served as the Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation and Local Government and later as the Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government until July 2021. I know he absolutely loved those opportunities. Each of those roles is, again, a testament to the respect that Mark commands amongst his colleagues and their trust in his ability to deliver. Whether it was in the Cabinet or on committees, like Indigenous Affairs or Appropriations and Administration, Mark approached every task with the same level of dedication and care.

One of Mark's standout qualities is his passion for regional Australia, and in particular the Parkes electorate. His achievements are too numerous to list comprehensively, but some deserve special mention. The first is the Western Cancer Centre in Dubbo, which is a shining example of his determination to improve regional health services. Historically, Dubbo has often been seen as Orange's poor cousin in health care, but the establishment of this world-class facility, including the only PET scanner west of the range in New South Wales, has changed that narrative. The centre is not only providing life-saving treatment to those who previously had to travel great distances but also attracting medical professionals from across the country. It is a legacy that will benefit the region for generations to come.

Mark's advocacy was instrumental in delivering other transformative projects like the Australian Opal Centre at Lightning Ridge, the Baaka Cultural Centre at Wilcannia and the state-of-the-art library in Broken Hill. He has been a relentless champion for the Inland Rail project, which he rightly views as more than just a railway line. Mark has been steadfast in recognising its potential to reduce freight costs, lower emissions and connect the Parkes electorate to every capital city in Australia. In his valedictory speech, Mark humbly remarked that there is a temptation in politics to point to the shiny things as markers of success. While the tangible projects are certainly noteworthy, Mark's true legacy lies in his ability to empower and uplift the communities he served.

From trade agreements to Medicare reforms, from infrastructure that creates meaningful employment to supporting farmers and miners, Mark has been a champion of initiatives that strengthen regional Australia. Mark has been a true champion of the bush. The countless hours he and Robyn have spent travelling vast distances, meeting with communities and advocating for them are deeply appreciated. It has been an absolute privilege to

work with him since I was elected as the member for the Dubbo in 2019. I am deeply grateful for his unwavering support and invaluable guidance through that journey. I thank him for his service, passion and belief in the potential of regional Australia. I wish him and his lovely wife, Robyn, all the very best. They deserve every happiness in the future. Well done.

ROUSE HILL HOSPITAL

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:01): I speak about the new Rouse Hill Hospital, noting how it will support many residents of Western Sydney, including those living in Hawkesbury. With an emergency department, medical assessment services and inpatient beds, the hospital facilities are likely to relieve a great deal of existing pressures faced by medical and emergency service staff across other hospitals in Western Sydney. Currently, constituents of Hawkesbury utilise Hawkesbury District Hospital, which NSW Health took over from St John of God on 1 July 2024. Hospitals located in Nepean, Springwood and Blacktown are also accessed, averaging a travel time of more than 30 minutes to each from central Richmond.

Rouse Hill Hospital was announced by the former Liberal-Nationals Government. It was and remains well received by Hawkesbury and Western Sydney residents. Having access to medical facilities with the latest digital technologies at a location central to Hawkesbury and north-west Sydney will afford adequate health care to many more families and communities. The Sydney Metro network will also complement the hospital, making it easier for patients and staff to travel to and from Rouse Hill Hospital without adding extra traffic to already congested roads, including Windsor Road and Richmond Road, which I desperately need upgraded.

Currently, the Rouse Hill Hospital project website displays milestones of the development achieved thus far. The Government strived to have input from various stakeholders involved, including community consultation. That important step has allowed communities to have a voice in what should be included in the major project, ensuring that a collaborative and futureproof development is made. Following the reveal of the master plan in November 2022, the public was informed that a number of health services will be included in the delivery of the hospital. Those are expected to be inclusive of an emergency department and primary access clinic, a day surgery unit, pathology, pharmacy and medical imaging services, as well as outpatient and ambulatory care services, including paediatrics, renal dialysis and rehabilitation services.

In May this year, Western Sydney communities were invited to view an artist's impressions of the new hospital, gaining an understanding of the facilities, services and layout of the projected site. I bring to the attention of the House an issue brought forward by several constituents in the Hawkesbury electorate. As it stands, Rouse Hill Hospital does not have plans to include a birthing suite. That component is a vital necessity to any major health network, ensuring that mothers, fathers, families and hospital staff are supported during the event of childbirth. I note that current design plans do include antenatal and postnatal services, but I find the absence of birthing suites to be absurd.

During a time when hospitals, staff and New South Wales constituents are reporting a lack of available beds for patients in dire need, it would make sense to offer a solution to at least one of the problems caused by this current Government. With that aside, a birthing suite offers a safe, secure environment where mothers and families can receive the care and respect that they deserve. The process of having a child can be daunting, and we are seeing an increase in anxiety experienced by mothers, fathers, partners and families. We should be doing all we can to offer the maximum support during this time, and that includes supporting our nurses and midwives. I would hate to see a government that does not support families, nurses and midwives, who help this great country grow to its best potential.

Currently, the expectant mothers of Hawkesbury's Box Hill and Nelson suburbs must go to Blacktown or Westmead public hospitals to give birth. Many residents are requesting that a birthing suite be included in Rouse Hill Hospital, and I support that desire. Childbirth is a major component of the healthcare system, and ensuring it is included will futureproof the major project for decades to come. With \$700 million being allocated for the project, I implore the New South Wales Government to review its development plans to ensure that it is meeting all healthcare needs of the rapidly growing Western Sydney population. I thank the constituents who raised the concerns with me and recognise the advocacy of the Box Hill Nelson Progress Association in particular for voicing the concerns of the community. I hope our collective concerns and requests are not ignored.

NUNDLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (18:06): When rural communities and villages band together, they can achieve great things. That is especially the case when smaller communities band together to welcome visitors to their backyard by holding unique and popular community events. That was the case when the Nundle community welcomed visitors to their village for three outstanding community events. The Nundle Country Women's Association [CWA] Art Exhibition, the Nundle Twilight Christmas Markets and Nundle Art of the

Street were all outstanding events held in the village, bringing hundreds of visitors to the southern end of the Fossickers Way. Everything was on offer in Nundle, from eye-catching works of art at the exhibition and on the street to handmade jewellery, candles, soaps and more at the record 51 stallholders who made up the Christmas events. It truly was a weekend to remember in Nundle.

Events are incredibly important to small communities. Events like the ones in Nundle become integral to the vibrancy and cultural make-up of our towns. Community participation is important. It breeds social cohesion, belonging and pride in the community, traits that we know are important to healthy communities. Events can play a significant role in building and maintaining a sense of community and a shared experience in regional New South Wales, and we see that throughout our region in times of drought, fire and flood when regional people come together to raise funds for those in need. It is that spirit that also drives the Nundle Twilight Christmas Markets, which raised important funds for the local swimming club.

The events, though, have much wider benefits. With the influx of visitors to the town, the local petrol station benefits, the shop benefits—people fill up and grab a drink on their way out—the cafe benefits, the local pub benefits from the hundreds of hungry customers who come through the door for lunch or dinner and grab a cold beverage on the way through, and other local businesses, like the Nundle Woollen Mill, benefit from the increase in foot traffic. I thank the Nundle CWA for inviting me along to open the art exhibition. It was a pleasure to join the Nundle community to celebrate the opening of the important events.

I thank the entire Nundle community for their outstanding hospitality over the weekend. It is great to see that fossicking for gold and special gems is once again allowed. It is a major tourism drawcard, and Nundle is the hills of gold. Gold fossicking and goldmining have been in the community's DNA for 172 years. The Tamworth electorate is better off with a strong Nundle, and I will continue to support the Nundle community. I thank all the organisations and the community who make it happen.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to resolution, at 18:09 until
Friday 22 November 2024 at 10:00.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

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

GRADUATION - JERA STEPHENS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Jera Stephens on their recent graduation from Ryde Secondary College. Having attended the ceremony in person, I witnessed the culmination of Jera's years of dedication and hard work. Completing Year 12 is an impressive achievement, and Jera 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 Jera 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 Jera and congratulate them on this exceptional achievement. May the future be bright and prosperous for Jera and their family.

GRADUATION - JAI TOBY

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Jai Toby on their recent graduation from Ryde Secondary College. Having attended the ceremony in person, I witnessed the culmination of Jai's years of dedication and hard work. Completing Year 12 is an impressive achievement, and Jai 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 Jai 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 Jai and congratulate them on this exceptional achievement. May the future be bright and prosperous for Jai and their family.

GRADUATION - VEDRAN TOSHEVSKI

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Vedran Toshevski on their recent graduation from Ryde Secondary College. Having attended the ceremony in person, I witnessed the culmination of Vedran's years of dedication and hard work. Completing Year 12 is an impressive achievement, and Vedran 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 Vedran 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 Vedran and congratulate them on this exceptional achievement. May the future be bright and prosperous for Vedran and their family.

100TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS OF THE ARDLETHAN HALL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—The Ardlethan Hall has recently celebrated its 100th Birthday and in conversation someone raised the question "if only the walls could talk". This building has played host for many community events, weddings, christenings, wakes, debutant balls, 21st Birthdays and 100th Birthdays. In October it was the venue for its own birthday party. A wonderful lunch put on by Meg Garrett and her team for over 100 people who attended from far and wide to celebrate and catch up with friends and reminisce past events. People enjoyed the exhibition of memorabilia displayed around the room, from wedding dresses, to quilts, photos and various older tech like gramophones, radios and movie projectors. Chair of Advance Ardlethan, Karen Wood was the MC for a luncheon held to honour this birthday and it was my pleasure to join Neville Gillett and his grandchildren for lunch. I believe Neville could also tell some stories of the hall and we noted that the children were now creating further memories for the next generations

STEPHANIE BACON- COWRA SHOW SOCIETIES RURAL AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to wish a warm congratulations Stephanie Bacon who was recently named as the Cowra Show Societies Rural Ambassador of the Year for 2024. As Rural Ambassador, Stephanie has been acknowledged for her dedication to rural life, her passion for community involvement, and her vision for a thriving agricultural sector. Throughout her journey, Stephanie has worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities within rural areas. She is known for her hands-on involvement in local projects such as running a young farmer challenge and serving on the executive of the Cowra Show Society. Stephanie's commitment is the future of agriculture, especially in advocating for young people in the industry. Her role as Rural Ambassador will involve representing the Cowra region at various events, sharing insights about rural life, and inspiring others to engage with agricultural pursuits. Stephanie's appointment as the 2024 Rural Ambassador highlights her ability to be a voice for rural Australia, championing innovation while respecting tradition. Her achievements underscore the significance of young leadership in the future of rural Australia.

MYLEE TRIUMPHS IN COUNTRY TO CANBERRA COMPETITION

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I would like to recognise and congratulate Mylee Taylor who has been announced as one of 13 winners of the prestigious 2024 Country to Canberra Leadership Competition. The Country to Canberra Leadership competition empowers young women from rural Australia to develop their leadership skills and pursue their ambitions. Each year, the competition highlights the achievements of remarkable young leaders, and the recent winners exemplifies this spirit. Mylee who hails from Boorowa, said her award-winning project was an artwork that depicted Police Commissioner Karen Webb as her role model. Mylee stated "This is because seeing her inauguration on my first day of Year 7 highlighted the endless possibilities available and inspired me to be brave enough to achieve my potential. " Through her initiative, Mylee not only showcased her leadership potential but also inspired her peers to engage in community service and advocacy. As part of her prize, Mylee received mentorship opportunities and a trip to Canberra, where she met influential leaders and engaged in workshops designed to enhance her skills further. Well done Mylee, I am sure you have a wonderful future ahead.

BILLABONG HIGH SCHOOL – RELAY FOR LIFE

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate the outstanding efforts of the Billabong High School Relay for Life team for their remarkable participation in this year's event. The team successfully raised \$3,000 towards cancer research and fight against cancer. A special mention goes to Mr Eccleston, whose dedication was evident as he actively contributed by setting up and packing down the event alongside the Air Force Cadets. Well done to the students, and staff of Billabong High School, who inspire the incredible teamwork and lead by example. Thank you to everyone involved, supporting such a worthy cause.

MS BICH THUY PHAM

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—Ms Bich Thuy Pham has an inspiring life story that touches us all. Born into a noble family in Vietnam, she eagerly awaited the chance to study in Australia, but the Fall of Saigon in 1975 changed everything. Her family faced severe persecution, and after multiple failed escape attempts, Ms Pham finally arrived in Australia in 1990, and leaving her young daughter behind. While in refugee camp, Ms Pham received a letter from her father urging her to "live fully, in honour of the hard journey" she had chosen. His words have become a guiding light throughout her life. Despite immense hardship, Ms Pham never complains. Instead, she helps others with her whole heart. With personal experiences in tough factory jobs and a strong sense of

justice, Ms Pham has tirelessly fought for workers' rights and supported migrant families and women affected by domestic violence. Through her work at Asian Women At Work and with industry unions, Ms Pham has uplifted the lives of countless individuals. I am deeply grateful to have Ms Pham in my local community and extend my heartfelt thanks for all her wonderful work.

FUNDRAISING DINNER FOR MINH GIAC MONASTERY

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—Recently, I had the privilege of attending the Vegetarian Dinner, organised by the Minh Giac Buddhist Association to raise funds for the construction of the Minh Giac Buddhist Monastery in my electorate of Cabramatta. The Monastery is set to serve as a keystone location for prayers, Dharma talks, meditation, and a spiritual space for personal reflection. It will also stand as a symbol of the enduring heritage of the Vietnamese-Australian Buddhist community in my electorate. The evening was a delightful blend of cultural performances and a delicious array of vegetarian cuisine, all infused with the peaceful Buddhist atmosphere. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to everyone who has contributed to this fundraising effort. Their generosity and support play an integral role in bringing this important project to life. I thank the Minh Giac Buddhist Association, Senior Venerable Thich Hanh Hieu, Venerable Thich Thong Tue and Mr Quang Minh for their kind invitation. As we look forward to the future impact of the Monastery on our community, I wish for a smooth and successful building process and await the completion of the beautiful Minh Giac Monastery in all its benevolence.

MRS THERESE NGOC LE-DANG

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—It is my honour to recognise Mrs Therese Ngoc Le Dang (also known as Kim Ngoc Dang) for her lifelong contribution to my electorate of Cabramatta and beyond. Mrs Dang's journey has been remarkable, from being one of the first women to hold a government position in the Republic of Vietnam as a diplomat in the late 1960s, to fleeing Vietnam after the Fall of Saigon and assisting in the establishment of the Vietnamese Community in Australia. Since arriving in Australia with her family as refugees in 1978, Mrs Dang has dedicated nearly half a century to empowering women and strengthening the community through her leadership roles in the Vietnamese Women's Associations, the Vietnamese-Australian Women's Forum, as President of the Tan Dai Viet Party, and many others. Now in her 80s, Mrs Dang continues to inspire, leading a project to honour exceptional Vietnamese refugee women in the lead-up to the 50th anniversary of Vietnamese settlement in Australia next year in 2025. I extend my deepest gratitude to Mrs. Dang for her leadership and dedication to enriching our society, and I wish her continued good health and success.

GURNAM SINGH

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour)—Gurnam Singh, founder of the Australian Indian Sports Educational and Cultural Society [AISECS], is a social entrepreneur who transformed his journey from an international student into a mission of fostering community togetherness. Originating from humble beginnings in India, he operates at the nexus of business, politics, and sports, leveraging community strength to drive new ideas and realities. Gurnam collaborates with federal and state stakeholders, believing that linking individuals and ideas can catalyze significant change. His vision blends his Australian experiences with his deep understanding of India, promoting cultural exchange through sports, culture, and education between the two nations. Gurnam also serves as Community Ambassador for Cricket Australia and founded the 'Swamy Army,' Australia's largest Indian cricket fan club. He supports the McGrath Foundation, raising awareness for breast cancer survivors by donning pink attire during annual Test Matches. In education, he works with NSW Police to foster positive relationships between officers and international students, earning a Community Engagement Award. He was the first Indian-Australian Sikh to speak at TEDx in 2020. With over 50 events organized in three years, he continues to strengthen Australia-India ties, embodying the belief that together, more can be achieved.

CABBAGE TREE ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL, PREMIER'S AWARD FINALIST

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I WISH to congratulate Cabbage Tree Island Public School on being among 12 Northern Rivers schools nominated as a Premier's Award finalist. The Premier's Awards celebrate the world-class services delivered by the NSW public sector to the people of New South Wales. By recognising excellence today, the awards hope to inspire a brighter future for New South Wales and Australia. The World-Class Education and Training Category, in which the 12 Northern Rivers schools group is nominated, is about recognising the importance of lifelong education and training opportunities with a focus on improving positive outcomes for the people of New South Wales. Their Initiatives to Support Flood Recovery nomination reads: Twelve schools in the rural northern NSW region worked together to address student wellbeing needs to provide support during natural disaster response and recovery. Specialised programs were implemented across schools to promote a strong sense of belonging and increase school attendance. Together the schools took a flexible, innovative and collaborative approach to build strong community relationships and ensure every child

had access to a quality education at a time of great need. As NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Disaster Recovery, I offer my congratulations.

WARDELL PUBLIC SCHOOL, PREMIER'S AWARD FINALIST

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I WISH to congratulate Wardell Public School on being among 12 Northern Rivers schools nominated as a Premier's Award finalist. The Premier's Awards highlight and celebrate the world-class services delivered by the NSW public sector to the people of New South Wales. By recognising excellence today, the awards hope to inspire a brighter future for New South Wales and Australia. The World-Class Education and Training Category, in which the 12 Northern Rivers schools group is nominated, is about recognising the importance of lifelong education and training opportunities with a focus on improving positive outcomes for the people of New South Wales. Their Initiatives to Support Flood Recovery nomination reads: Twelve schools in the rural northern NSW region worked together to address student wellbeing needs to provide support during natural disaster response and recovery. Specialised programs were implemented across schools to promote a strong sense of belonging and increase school attendance. Together the schools took a flexible, innovative and collaborative approach to build strong community relationships and ensure every child had access to a quality education at a time of great need. As NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Disaster Recovery, I again offer my warm congratulations.

EMPIRE VALE PUBLIC SCHOOL, PREMIER'S AWARD FINALIST

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I WISH to congratulate Empire Vale Public School on being among 12 Northern Rivers schools nominated as a Premier's Award finalist. The Premier's Awards celebrate the world class services delivered by the NSW public sector to the people of New South Wales. By recognising excellence today, the awards hope to inspire a brighter future for New South Wales and Australia. The World-Class Education and Training Category, in which the 12 Northern Rivers schools group is nominated, is about recognising the importance of lifelong education and training opportunities with a focus on improving positive outcomes for the people of New South Wales. Their Initiatives to Support Flood Recovery nomination reads: Twelve schools in the rural northern NSW region worked together to address student wellbeing needs to provide support during natural disaster response and recovery. Specialised programs were implemented across schools to promote a strong sense of belonging and increase school attendance. Together the schools took a flexible, innovative and collaborative approach to build strong community relationships and ensure every child had access to a quality education at a time of great need. As NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Disaster Recovery, I again offer my warm congratulations.

ALISON O'NEILL

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge Alison O'Neill of Albury, who has proven to be an inspiring leader as the Logistics Manager at Woolworths Distribution Centre, since 2005, whilst setting the standard for excellence in workplace culture. Over the years, Alison's leadership has been recognised with multiple awards, and as a logistics manager she has shattered barriers in a traditionally male-dominated industry. Alison's commitment to diversity and inclusion is reflected not only in her professional achievements but also in her personal advocacy. She founded the "Big Shed Community" fund, a powerful initiative supporting both team members and local projects. Her work in promoting mental health awareness and championing the LGBTQIA+ community has created a culture of support and inclusivity within her workplace. In the wider community, Alison leads with the same dedication, actively participating in the City to City Walk for the backing of local sports teams. Alison is also committed to growth by providing career development opportunities for local team members, helping them to build successful futures within the Woolworths Group. A mother of three and a proud new grandmother, Alison balances her family life with her professional accomplishments. Well done Alison!

ZAUNER CONSTRUCTIONS – NSW BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate Garry Zauner and the entire team at Zauner Construction for their outstanding achievement at the 2024 NSW Business Awards. Held on October 30th at the Sydney International Convention Centre, Zauner Construction was honoured with the Employer of Choice award for businesses under 21 employees or more. The state-wide recognition builds upon Zauner Construction's earlier success at this year's Riverina Murray Business Awards in June, where they were named Business of the Year. Despite decades of significant growth, Zauner Constructions has remained true to its founding values of mutual support and family-centred dedication. Celebrating 65 years as a family-owned and operated business, the company continues to build on a legacy of trust, excellence, and commitment to quality. Furthermore, I am proud to acknowledge the efforts of Kiah Beaumont, a key team member who was recognised as a state finalist and awarded Outstanding Young Business Leader. To Garry and the Zauner Team, thank you for your outstanding commitment and exceptional ongoing contributions to the construction industry, and to our community. Congratulations on this well-deserved honour.

KATE EVANS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Kate Evans, Year 12 student at the Shellharbour Anglican College, whose HSC Textiles & Design major project has been nominated for possible inclusion in the 2024 HSC SHAPE exhibition. Kate's children's dress was inspired by early colonial Australia and Indigenous Australia. Promoting a message of reconciliation through a celebration of country. SHAPE presents a selection of outstanding major projects by HSC Design and Technology, Industrial Technology and Textiles and Design students in NSW. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Kate on this this wonderful achievement.

DASHIELL KING

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Dashiell King, Year 12 student at the Shellharbour Anglican College, who has received a nomination for possible inclusion in Encore, for his performance programs in HSC Music. Encore is a showcase of outstanding performances by students from the HSC music examinations and a nomination is a remarkable achievement. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Dashiell on this this wonderful achievement.

HUGO MCNEILL

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Hugo McNeill, Year 12 student at the Shellharbour Anglican College, who has received a nomination for possible inclusion in Encore, for his performance programs in HSC Music. Encore is a showcase of outstanding performances by students from the HSC music examinations and a nomination is a remarkable achievement. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Hugo on this this wonderful achievement.

NEWLING PUBLIC SCHOOL CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Newling Public School at Armidale on celebrating their 50 year anniversary. The school celebrated this milestone by kicking off with a disco for students, followed by an awards gathering, open classrooms and luncheon for all to enjoy. I congratulate the current and past staff, P and C committees and students on their many contributions to the school over the past 50 years. I thank the current Principal Stephen Gadd, staff and support staff for providing the opportunity to the public and for organising these activities. I commend all those involved with the celebrations and would like to thank past and present staff for their hard work and commitment to the students, helping to shape their lives and providing the foundations for lifelong learning.

NUTRIEN AG SOLUTIONS BOULTONS OF WALCHA

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the achievements of Nutrien Ag Solutions Boulton's of Walcha, for winning the national AuctionsPlus Top Throughput Agency – Cattle 2024 award. Boultons were selected based on the total number of cattle listed on AuctionsPlus over the financial year, the agent's ability to demonstrate a high level of assessment quality and uphold the AuctionsPlus User Agreement. Over the past year Boultons has offered more than 9,500 head of cattle on the platform, higher than any other agency, underpinning their top spot in the cattle category. I congratulate Boultons not only on this accolade, but also on their impressive history of securing four AuctionsPlus awards over the last nine years. Congratulations to the hard working team behind the win, including Livestock Agents: Simon Newton, Mathew Larkings, Miles Archdale, Dan Coulthurst and Maddie Davidson, along with Peta Carter and Trish Donnelly for their valuable support, contributing to this wonderful award. I commend Boultons on being recognised as a business of excellence amongst their peers, for providing quality of customer service to producers in the New England, along with their invaluable contribution to the Australian livestock industry.

PLC SIGNATURE ART PRIZE EXHIBITION

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the Presbyterian Ladies College of Armidale on their Signature Art Prize Exhibition held recently. The exhibition was launched as a Foundation Scholarship fundraising initiative, with proceeds used to prepare girls to lead lives of significance, enforcing the school's mission, to empower and develop young women of character and purpose. I congratulate all involved in staging this event, which included not only an impressive selection of 130 entries from across Australia, but also various performances from students during the event. Thank you to school principal Nicola Taylor, staff and the school community for staging the event. Special thanks to judges Belinda Hungerford and Allison Bellinger, along with artists Paula Jenkins and Robyn Markey, for their expert group and installation of the art works. I commend all involved in the exhibition, especially for using this event to form a scholarship that keeps on giving, ultimately bettering the lives of recipients for years to come.

NOWRA POLICE STATION

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the Nowra Police Command for their successful open day, which brought together a diverse range of police resources and the local community. The event featured the police dog unit, Polair helicopter, mounted police, police rescue, marine area command, and other branches of the NSW Police Force, offering a unique opportunity for residents to engage with officers and learn about the various aspects of police work. With guided tours of the police station and custody areas, as well as interactive demonstrations, the day provided valuable insights into how the police serve and protect the community. It also aimed to strengthen relationships between the police and local residents by fostering an environment of openness and collaboration. The presence of police recruitment resources was a wonderful inclusion and gave community members the chance to explore potential careers with the NSW Police Force and encouraging local involvement in law enforcement. Congratulations to the Nowra Police Command and all the officers involved for creating a special day that truly strengthened community ties and showcased the dedication of the police to public safety.

PAULINE MCILVEEN

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to congratulate Pauline McIlveen on her well-deserved recognition as the recipient of Tennis NSW's Volunteer Achievement Award. This award, now proudly displayed in Maureen's Burrill Lake home, is a fitting tribute to Pauline's extraordinary commitment to the Milton Ulladulla District Tennis Association, where she has dedicated over 20 years to roles including secretary, treasurer, vice president, and president. Maureen's selfless service has made an enduring impact on the tennis community. Pauline's dedication stems from a lifelong love of tennis, nurtured in her early years playing alongside her father, Henry, in England. Even though Maureen has recently stepped down from official roles, she continues to support the association with unwavering passion. The awards night was a memorable celebration, with Pauline's daughter Suzanne, son-in-law Simon, and friend Mary Lou proudly by her side as she received this honor from tennis champion Casey Dellacqua. Pauline's achievements reflect the spirit of volunteering that strengthens our community, and her service stands as an inspiration to all.

SOUTH COAST TOY RUN

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—Mr. SPEAKER: I congratulate the South Coast Branch of the Ulysses Club for their incredible dedication to organising the South Coast Toy Run, which is now in its 34th year. This heart-warming community event will be taking place on Sunday 1 December and exemplifies the spirit of generosity and care that defines our region. Each year, the Toy Run brings together local motorcycle riders to collect new and unwrapped toys for children aged 3 to 17, with a focus on supporting older age groups often in greater need. Donations of non-perishable food items also ensure families can enjoy a traditional Christmas dinner. Funds raised through the event go directly to Family Services Australia Shoalhaven/Illawarra, providing vital support to local families in crisis. Entirely volunteer-driven and supported by local businesses, this initiative showcases the compassionate and community-minded nature of its participants. Riders and non-riders alike are encouraged to join the festivities, donate, or simply celebrate the joy of giving. Congratulations to the South Coast Ulysses Club for making such a meaningful difference during the holiday season.

THORNTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—I would like to congratulate the Year 6 debating team at Thornton Public School who recently won the Raymond Terrace Rotary Debating Challenge for the second year in a row. Despite a fierce challenge from the students of Salt Ash Public School, the Thornton team was victorious as the affirmation team for the topic - "That all major news outlets should be required to provide accurate and unbiased coverage of major events." I'm told the Thornton team had some fantastic arguments to support this topic as true. And not only did they take home the trophy again but also won \$500 for the school. This yearly event is organised by the Rotary Club of Raymond Terrace, and I thank you to all involved in co-ordinating this wonderful event. Congratulations once again to the events winners the Year 6 debating team at Thornton Public School!

MAITLAND IN FOCUS BOOK

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Congratulations to the Maitland City Heritage Group on the publication of the commemorative book, Maitland in Focus. The book has been a collaborative effort between Maitland City Heritage Group, acclaimed photographer Justin Reeder, and historian Patrick Wilson and has very much been a labour of love for all involved. I particularly thank the various local property owners and guest photographers. Without their valuable assistance, books like this are near impossible to draft and publish. The book is extremely well researched and reveals the city's rich historical and architectural landmarks in a way that will appeal to both Maitland locals and visitors alike. Maitland has a long

and proud history of keeping the stories of the people and places that have helped shape this city alive. With books like this we can continue to tell these stories for generations to come. Congratulations to all involved in this magnificent publication.

COUNCILLOR LORETTA BAKER

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Congratulations to former Maitland mayor and councillor, Loretta Baker, who retired from Maitland council after 16 years of service at the recent local government elections. Loretta was first elected to council in 2008 and became the city's first female mayor in 2017, leading the city for four years, including through the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. During her time as councillor Loretta was proudly committed to the arts and the art community and was instrumental in pushing small grants towards local arts and culture groups during the pandemic. As the first female mayor of Maitland Loretta has inspired others and her decision to retire from council was to drive generational change, allowing for more diverse representation. Loretta plans to continue her lifelong work as a nurse but will always remain a passionate advocate for Maitland and its people. My best wishes go to Loretta for her post political life.

INDIANS IN SYDNEY

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—Mr Speaker, Founded in 2007, Indians in Sydney has become a cornerstone of community connection, growing into the largest Facebook group of its kind in Australia. With over 135,000 members and millions reached, it is a dynamic platform that unites individuals from diverse backgrounds, fostering inclusivity and cultural understanding across New South Wales. Under the leadership of Nadeem Ahmed, Indians in Sydney has organized a variety of impactful initiatives, such as the Winter Drive and Meal for Everyone program, which provide vital support. These efforts reflect the group's commitment to social responsibility and compassion, helping those in need. The group's cultural contributions are equally noteworthy, with events like the annual Gala celebrating India's Independence Day and the collaborative effort behind the Largest Diwali Festival at Harris Park. These celebrations serve not only as a tribute to Indian heritage but also as a platform for sharing and embracing diverse cultural expressions, enriching Sydney's multicultural tapestry. Indians in Sydney exemplify the power of community, standing as a beacon of unity, compassion, and cultural pride in the heart of New South Wales. Its ongoing efforts continue to inspire and uplift, connecting individuals and communities across Australia.

NORTH-WEST DISABILITY SERVICE AWARDS 2024

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—The NWDS Awards Day was held on 23 October 2024. The Awards recognise the award recipients for their positive contribution to the disability sector over a long period of time. I recognise the following recipients. Outstanding Volunteer: Harjit Warring. Innovator of the Year: Tracey Twyerould. Service Area Award Recipients: Melanie Whitehorn, McHerley Liu, Lisa Clifford, Kyle Lambert, Kiki Grigoriadis, and Benjamin Magsico. Perpetual Award Winner, Ken Jones Staff Personal Development Award: Vicky Hwang. Outstanding Community Contribution Award: Michael Berndt. Excellence in the Facilitation of Dreams To Reality 2024: Catherine Uidam. The Service Area Award for Staff recipients: Eun Young Han (Angela), Joni Legaspi, Dong Oh, Shamila Weragama, Tanneh Johns, Ailsa Cunningham and Navdeep Kaur. High Achiever of the Year was Khizar Mirza (Omar). Team Player was Ashraf Virani. The Team of the Year: Accommodation Services. Winner Quality Service: Brian Heidari. Winner Doug Sewell Participant Attendance Award: Pamela Nahn. Winner John Barnard Staff Safety Award: Tim Davidson. Winner Castle Hill RSL Club: The Slattery Award Exceptional External Contribution to NWDS. Spirit of NWDS Winner: Suzanna Apap. Staff Winner, Spirit of NWDS: Engelin Reddy. I congratulate and thank all award winners for your contribution to disability services.

CRONULLA RSL NETBALL CLUB 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Cronulla RSL Netball Club on celebrating its 60th anniversary. The club began in 1964 with four teams and is one of the oldest surviving clubs in the Sutherland Shire Netball Association. Today it is a small, friendly and inclusive club which welcomes all abilities from A grade to beginner. The club's 2024 teams, families and volunteers were joined by life members and other supporters for a dual celebration of this year's season and 60 years of being part of local netball. The C1 team had the special honour of being victors in the club's anniversary year and were presented with their premiership caps. I acknowledge the many volunteers who have made sure the players can enjoy their games each week, including this year's club committee led by president Lynn Lapham with Alison Peachey, Karen Crombie, Kylie Langford and Laura Bond. I congratulate everyone involved on and off the court with Cronulla RSL Netball Club over its 60 years for your part in helping make netball in the Shire the success it is today.

ANNA NOONAN

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I acknowledge Anna Noonan, a remarkable individual whose tireless contributions exemplify the spirit of community service in regional and rural NSW. Anna combines her professional expertise and voluntary efforts to create lasting positive change in the lives of many in our electorate. Anna has applied her skills and advocacy to advance key initiatives in rural health, climate resilience, and human rights. Her work addressing the unique challenges faced by regional communities, particularly women in regional healthcare, reflects her commitment to equity and social justice. Anna has also been a champion for mental health awareness, including the impacts of climate change on rural communities. Her efforts in press freedom advocacy and ethical research design further highlight her dedication to building informed, resilient communities. Through her voluntary contributions and professional acumen, Anna has strengthened the social fabric of regional NSW, empowering others and driving systemic change. Her outstanding service deserves recognition, Anna's reach and help know no bounds, as she supports those overlooked or underserved, ensuring their voices are heard. I proudly commend Anna Noonan for her enduring dedication to the betterment of our communities. Anna is a true asset, and we are grateful for her extraordinary contributions.

JASON LEWIS

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Swimming is in Australia's collective DNA and I wish to congratulate Orange's Jason Lewis on being at the forefront of the sport in the Central West. Jason has just received his silver coaching accreditation from Swim Coaches and Teachers Australia. It is an endorsement that recognises his commitment to the development and improvement of swimmers in his squads, helping them reach their full potential. The silver accreditation also celebrates the success Jason has getting those swimmers to a higher level of performance, no small achievement considering the early morning starts both coach and swimmer commit to and Orange's limited swimming season. Jason's amazing dedication to his sport is also illustrated in his accompanying squads to various swim meets and carnivals, selflessly giving over his weekends to the kids in his care. The Orange Swim Club is one of the main benefactors of Jason's expertise and dedication with its swimmers on the rise as a result of his tutelage. I congratulate Jason Lewis on his dedication to developing young swimmers and helping them towards pathways to higher representation. The silver coach qualification is highly deserved.

LEANNE RAWLINGS

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to commend my constituent Leanne Rawlings on her resilience and spirit in rising above the trauma of her past to provide support for those in her community battling the same issues. A foster-mum to four and mother to her own teenage son, Leanne provides a safe and loving environment to the children in her care, giving them every opportunity to rise above the trauma in their young lives. Leanne has been doing this important work for a decade, using the empathy gleaned from her own past as a base for her care. While growing up with domestic violence, Leanne has risen above it and now has an Advanced Diploma of Mental Health and Cert IV in domestic violence support. She is heavily involved in her community, starting Serenity Space, a wellness and wellbeing hub. It provides sensory sessions, meditation, and art therapy for those in need. Leanne's motivation and empathy have created change within the lives of many within her town. All this on top of running her cleaning business. Leanne was also recognised as mum of the year for 2024, awarded by online platform Central West Mums and I offer my congratulations.

FRANCINE BARTLETT

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Francine Bartlett's tireless commitment to the Aboriginal community and her extensive volunteer work make her a standout figure in both her professional and personal life. As a dedicated social worker, Francine goes above and beyond to ensure that Aboriginal communities are supported and uplifted, while also dedicating countless hours to assisting rural refugees. Her work is driven by a deep passion for social justice and a strong belief in equality, making her an invaluable asset to those she serves. In her volunteer roles, Francine has demonstrated unwavering dedication, offering her time and expertise to help marginalised groups overcome significant challenges. Francine's exceptional dedication to both the Aboriginal and refugee communities showcases her incredible character and the profound difference she has made in the lives of many individuals. Thank you Francine for your selflessness and passion that continue to inspire and uplift the communities you serves.

SALLY WATERFORD

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—For many years, Sally Waterford has been a dedicated volunteer, serving our community in countless ways and making a difference in the lives of people of all ages, from babies to the elderly. Her unwavering commitment to others is driven by a deep compassion and a genuine desire to help, making her a vital part of our community. Sally's inclusive and encouraging nature has made her a beloved figure to all who have had the privilege of working with her. She doesn't just lend a helping hand—she walks alongside

people on their journey, offering support, care, and a sense of belonging. Sally's volunteer work goes far beyond simple tasks; she embodies the spirit of community, offering her time and heart to those in need. Whether supporting families, assisting the elderly, or helping individuals facing hardships, Sally has proven time and again that she is one of the true treasures of our community. Sally's work is a testament to the power of kindness, and she continues to be an inspiration to those around her. Thank you Sally for your selfless work.

ADAM STOKEFIELD

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Adam's dedication to the community through his volunteer work at Highlands FM is nothing short of extraordinary. Volunteering up to 60 hours each week, Adam plays a central role in connecting the community and ensuring that everyone has a voice. His commitment to inclusivity and his welcoming nature make him an invaluable member of the team. Adam's tireless efforts go far beyond the call of duty, as he consistently goes out of his way to help individuals and contribute to the overall well-being of the community. Whether he's assisting with broadcasts, offering support to new volunteers, or helping to organise community events, Adam's involvement is a testament to his passion for making a positive difference. He brings a unique energy to Highlands FM, ensuring that it remains a hub of connection and communication for everyone. Adam's selflessness and hard work have made a lasting impact on both the station and the broader community. Adam is a key figure in ensuring that Highlands FM thrives, and his contributions help us all stay that little bit more connected.

APRIL HOOD

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise April Hood from Wingham, for her recent success as runner-up in the 2024 Australian Pinup Pageant at Chromefest. April, also known as Miss Evangeline Ruby, brings vintage 50s glamour to life every day. She dons her vintage frocks, perfectly styled hair, and makeup, not for attention, but to spread joy. Volunteering at Lifeline Wingham, April's presence brightens the day for many. She's known to bring smiles to the faces of those she encounters, whether in the community or at work. April's success in the pageant, after just a short time in the world of pinup, is proof to her passion and positive impact on the community. I congratulate April and thank her for bringing a little happiness to those around her.

JAMES TURNER

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise James Turner, a finalist in the Australian Institute of Sport's [AIS] Sport Performance Awards. James, from Diamond Beach, has earned this nomination following his impressive performance at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris, where he won dual gold in the (T36) 100 and 400-metre events. His time of 11.85 seconds in the 100 metres equalled the Paralympic record. James is now competing for the title of Male Para-Athlete of the Year, alongside fellow nominees Thomas Gallagher and Timothy Hodge. The AIS Sport Performance Awards are an opportunity to recognise the efforts of athletes across all levels, and James's nomination is evidence of his hard work and sportsmanship. The AIS will present the awards at a gala event on December 4 in Melbourne, where 50 finalists across 19 sports will be celebrated for their contribution to Australian sport. We wish James the best of luck as he continues to inspire Australians with his achievements.

KEELEY TAYLOR

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to recognise Keeley Taylor from Taree, who has recently been named Young Volunteer of the Year in the 16 to 25 age group at the 2024 RFS Youth Awards. Keeley's journey with the Rural Fire Service began at just 14, inspired by the devastating 2019 bushfires. She joined the Taree RFS brigade, where she quickly became involved in various roles, including community engagement and training. In addition to supporting local events and running the brigade's social media, Keeley plays an active role in firefighting, having already gained experience in multiple incidents, including a 12-hour shift on her second-ever fire. Her efforts reflect a deep commitment to her community, and Keeley is an important part of the brigade's push for youth involvement. She continues to inspire others, all while balancing her studies and volunteer work. Keeley is a true asset to the Taree community, and I am proud to acknowledge her outstanding achievements. I congratulate Keeley on this well-deserved recognition.

A QUESTIONABLE FUNDRAISER

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—The Comboyne's Ex-Servicemen's and Bowling Club recently came alive with the glitz and glamour of the roaring 20's as the community turned out in full style for a trivia night fundraiser. Attendees embraced the evening's theme, dressing in flapper-inspired attire complete with fringed dresses, feathered boas, headbands, and pearls. The array of costumes added a lively and elegant flair, making it a night to remember. In addition to the stylish outfits, the event was packed with entertainment as attendees tested their knowledge through a range of trivia questions and enjoyed interactive games that brought endless laughs.

The night proved not only to be a fun escape but also a wonderful example of community collaboration. Thanks to everyone's amazing contributions, \$800 was raised. These funds will go towards upgrading play areas at Comboyne Public School, benefiting local children and creating a more enjoyable school experience. Well done to the organisers of the event and all the participants, it's great to see the community come together in such a fancy, fun way to raise funds for our children.

CELEBRATING WAUCHOPE'S RUGBY LEAGUE LEGENDS

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—The Wauchope community is filled with pride as Joe Taylor and Allen Lewis are inducted into the Group Three Rugby League Hall of Fame. Allen Lewis, a talented halfback, began his journey in Wauchope and made his mark in 1990 with a memorable victory against France. Known for his skill and determination, Lewis debuted in first grade in 1988 and quickly became a key player. His leadership shone when he returned to captain-coach the Blues in 2006, guiding the team to a grand final. Today, he remains dedicated to developing young talent, ensuring his love for the game thrives in Wauchope. Joe Taylor's equally inspiring, started his first-grade career at just 16, he embodied the resilience and dedication of the sport. His time as captain-coach with Murwillumbah was full of success. Upon returning to Wauchope, Taylor played a crucial role in the club's premiership victories and is remembered for both his talent and the warmth he brought to the field, Taylor had his last game for the Blues in 1976. The induction of Joe Taylor and Allen Lewis is a heartfelt tribute to their character and journey.

CELEBRATING FRIEDA GORMAN

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Frieda Gorman, the dedicated Careers Advisor at Bellingen High School, recently received the prestigious Excellence in Primary School Careers Programming Award at the annual Careers Advisers Conference held on October 31 in Darling Harbour. This recognition highlights her remarkable contributions to careers education, celebrated among over 350 professionals from NSW and ACT. Frieda's extensive experience and involvement in regional careers associations underpin her exceptional ability to empower students to pursue pathways aligned with their aspirations. As a leader of the Clarence Coffs Careers Adviser Network, she organises various excursions and events, showcasing her vital leadership skills. Frieda's innovative approach begins at the primary level, providing students with improved access to meaningful post-school opportunities. Her K-12 Careers program introduces young learners to various careers, while her tailored initiatives support diverse learning needs, including vocational education and training courses. Frieda's dedication and passion make her an invaluable asset to both the school and the community. Her work truly shapes the futures of countless young learners, and the entire school community is proud to celebrate her outstanding achievement. Congratulations, Frieda!

CAMERON SHALHOUB AND NIC WATKINS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I recognise the bravery of Cameron Shalhoub of Greenhills Beach and Nic Watkins of Cronulla who rescued a woman from rough surf off Cronulla's unpatrolled Blackwoods Beach last week. Cameron was on his usual morning walk when he noticed someone struggling in heavy current a few hundred metres offshore. A man nearby rang the lifeguards who urged that a buoy be taken to help the woman while they sent a boat out. Cameron managed to take the buoy out to the woman, but they started drifting out while waiting for lifesavers. As he was trying to bring the woman to shore, Cameron found himself tiring as she panicked about whether there were sharks around. Nic saw what was happening and swam out to help Cameron get the woman to safety. Both Cameron and Nic showed courage in such challenging conditions to put the safety of others before their own. I congratulate Cameron and Nic on their selfless actions which helped prevent a tragedy.

MORISSET SPINNERS AND WEAVERS

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—Whether they're spinning a yarn or weaving the fibres of new friendships, the members of the Morisset Spinners and Weavers have been a tight knit community group for the past 40 years. It all began in 1984, when an advertisement was placed in a local newspaper calling on anyone who had an interest in spinning and weaving to come together at the Anglican Church at Morisset. A mere handful of women showed up for that initial meeting, but since then the club has grown to over 50 members, and they've stitched up some wonderful accomplishments. In 1998 they were named Australian champions in the Back to Back Wool Challenge, before becoming world champions in the 2000 Back to Back International Wool Challenge. Gillian Mould, Jean Piddington and Helene Taylor have also received high commendations of excellence for their woven works at the Sydney Royal Easter Show. This week I had the pleasure of hosting Club President Lyn Abbott, Lorelle Calvert, Annie Struczewski, Mwyfanwy King, Margo Newsome, Lynette Hall, Gillian Mould, Jean Piddington, Helene Taylor and 101-year-old Marjory Whitbourne at NSW Parliament. Congratulations on your 40th anniversary and all your accomplishments.

EPPING ROTARY – PRIDE OF WORKMANSHIP AWARDS

Ms MONICA TUDEHOPE (Epping)—I recently had the privilege of attending the Epping Rotary Pride of Workmanship Awards Night. This event was truly inspirational with many community members taking part. The Pride of Workmanship Awards Ceremony holds a special place in the Epping Rotary calendar. This is the time when Rotarians come to select those exemplary few who have demonstrated their commitment to integrity and excellence in their field with a focus on pride in their work. The award recipients were; Jennifer Elvery from Australia Post Epping, Wendy Maguire from Hairworks North Epping, Dr Ken Lau at the Family Medical Practice at Carlingford, Sylvie Brown a volunteer from North Epping, Tracey Wright from the Epping Club, Robert Phillips the retiring Chairman of the Epping Community Bank and Heather Pinto a retiring general manager of CCA. I congratulate all the award winners, and I thank Epping Rotary under President Bruce Jacob for their ongoing efforts to uplift and celebrate the contributions of local individuals. Their dedication to fostering pride in workmanship is something we can all be proud of.

DIVA CHARITY NEW UTE

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—On behalf of the Coogee electorate, I would like to acknowledge the incredible work of the Diva Charity Ute, a true symbol of compassion and innovation within our community. This eye-catching Ute, adorned with vibrant designs, serves as a mobile force for good, traveling throughout the Eastern Suburbs to raise funds and gather donations for those in need. The Diva Charity Ute isn't just a vehicle; it's a beacon of hope. It actively supports individuals and families facing adversity by collecting essential items such as food, clothing, and supplies. At events and community drives, this unique ute becomes a focal point for generosity, encouraging locals to come together and contribute to meaningful causes. The initiative's clever use of the ute highlights how something as practical as a vehicle can be transformed into a tool for connection and support. Its presence in the community spreads awareness about the importance of giving while fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility. I commend the dedicated team behind the Diva Charity Ute especially their founder Christina Iskandar for their unwavering commitment to helping others. Your efforts are an inspiration and a reminder of the strength in community spirit.

MICHAEL VESPER

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—On behalf of the Coogee electorate, I acknowledge the life and contributions of Michael Vesper, an extraordinary Bondi local who left a profound legacy. Known for his remarkable creativity and passion, Michael was a fixture in the Bondi community, celebrated for his ingenuity and contributions to the local cultural fabric. Michael's inventive spirit was unmatched, with his intricate mechanical sculptures captivating all who encountered them. His works weren't just artistic creations but testaments to his unique vision and commitment to craftsmanship. Beyond his talent, Michael was admired for his warmth, humor, and dedication to enriching the lives of those around him. Michael's presence brought people together, fostering connection and inspiring creativity. While he will be deeply missed, his legacy lives on in the hearts of all who knew him and through the artistry he shared. Today, we honor Michael Vesper's memory, celebrating his life and the indelible mark he left on our community. May his creativity and kindness continue to inspire us all and may he rest in peace.

SCULPTURE BY THE SEA 2024

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—On behalf of the Coogee electorate, I would like to acknowledge the 2024 Sculpture by the Sea exhibition, a beloved and iconic event that transforms the Bondi to Tamarama coastal walk into an extraordinary outdoor art gallery. This annual celebration of creativity and community, now in its 26th year, continues to captivate locals and visitors alike, showcasing breathtaking sculptures from Australian and international artists against the stunning backdrop of our coastline. Sculpture by the Sea highlights the vibrancy of our community, bringing together people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with art in a uniquely accessible way. This year's collection features an inspiring range of works, sparking conversation and reflection while celebrating the role of public art in enriching our shared spaces. I commend the organizers, artists, volunteers, and sponsors especially the Chairman Ross Drinnan and NSW Directors Simon Bloomfield, Alicia Parker and David Handley AM who make this world-renowned event possible, as well as the visitors who contribute to its success. Sculpture by the Sea not only enhances our cultural landscape but also strengthens our community bonds, reminding us of the power of art to connect and inspire. Congratulations on another remarkable year!

FS8 HURSTVILLE AND HURSTVILLE PHYSIO PLUS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to take a moment to congratulate FS8 Hurstville and Hurstville Physio Plus for their outstanding achievements in winning prestigious awards at the Georges River Local Business Awards earlier this year. This annual event is dedicated to recognizing and celebrating exceptional

businesses within our local community, and these two services have made significant contributions to health and fitness in the Hurstville area. FS8 Hurstville received the award for Outstanding Fitness Services. With a focus on prehabilitation, injury prevention, and active recovery, FS8 Hurstville fosters a supportive, non-judgmental community where members of all fitness levels can thrive. They're committed to mobility, flexibility, and overall strength, and facilitate a high-energy, accessible atmosphere. Hurstville Physio Plus won the award for Outstanding Physio Services. Hurstville Physio Plus has been providing exceptional physiotherapy services to the Hurstville and broader St George community since 2000. With a focus on high-quality, individualised care for clients of all ages and backgrounds, their skilled team of physiotherapists is dedicated to helping clients recover faster, stronger, and more effectively. They also won this award in 2023, a testament to their fantastic work. Congratulations to both FS8 Hurstville and Hurstville Physio Plus!

GEORGES RIVER LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to take a moment to congratulate Honey and Rose Bakery Cafe and GC Dental and Facial Aesthetics for their outstanding achievements in winning prestigious awards at the Georges River Local Business Awards earlier this year. This annual event is dedicated to recognising and celebrating exceptional businesses within our local community. Honey and Rose Bakery Cafe received the award for Outstanding Bakery/Cake Business. This beloved local bakery is renowned for its exquisite cakes and cupcakes, crafted with love and artistry for any occasion, be it a wedding, birthday, or a simple celebration. Their commitment to quality is evident in every bite, making them a cherished destination for dessert lovers in our area. GC Dental and Facial Aesthetics receive the award for Outstanding Health Improvement Services. At their state-of-the-art dental practice, the dedicated team believes in providing patients with access to the most advanced and innovative dental care available, offering a comprehensive range of services. Their focus on patient-centred care and comfort sets them apart, making them a trusted provider in our community. Congratulations to both Honey and Rose Bakery Cafe and GC Dental and Facial Aesthetics!

KINGSGROVE COMMUNITY AID AND ANTS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Kingsgrove Community Aid Centre and Australian Nursing and Training Services for their remarkable achievements in winning prestigious awards at the Georges River Local Business Awards earlier this year. This annual event is dedicated to recognizing and celebrating exceptional businesses within our local community, and these two organisations have made significant contributions. The Kingsgrove Community Aid Centre received the award for Outstanding Community Services. As a community-based, not-for-profit organisation, it is dedicated to addressing the needs of the local community, particularly for those who are socially, economically, and linguistically disadvantaged. Their services include Child Care, Family Programs, Aged Care, Allied Health Care, and support for people with disabilities. Australian Nursing and Training Services won the award for Outstanding Education Services. As a Registered Training Organisation, ANTS offers courses in Aged Care, Disability Care, Community Services, and Mental Health. The organisation helps students develop employability skills for careers in the care industry. Established in 1990, ANTS was the first college to introduce assistance nursing courses, enhancing national care standards. Congratulations to both the Kingsgrove Community Aid Centre and Australian Nursing and Training Services!

INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—The 19th of November 2024 marked International Men's Day, a day of worldwide celebration in recognition of the positive value men bring to the world, their families and communities. It provides an opportunity to highlight positive role models and raise awareness of men's wellbeing. This year's theme for International Men's Day in Australia is 'Men's Health Champions,' which involves men helping other men understand how they can improve their health. I thank all men who make a positive contribution to society and wish them the very best and a Happy International Men's Day.

SOCIAL INCLUSION WEEK

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—The 23rd of November 2024 to the 1st of December 2024 marks Social Inclusion Week. Social Inclusion Week is an important week and initiative which aims to help all Australians feel included and valued and provide everyone the opportunity to participate fully in society. The aim of the week is achieved through connecting local communities, workmates, family and friends, in order to build and strengthen relationships or networks and address isolation and exclusion of those who may be marginalised. I wish everyone a happy social inclusion week and I thank all who are taking part in this wonderful initiative.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY 2024

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—The 3rd of December 2024 will mark International Day of People with Disability [IDPwD], which is a joint effort between government, schools, organisations, community

groups, businesses and individuals. It provides an opportunity to increase public awareness, understanding and acceptance of people with disability. This year's theme is 'Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future'. I wish all who celebrate International Day of People with Disability the very best.

DEE WHY RSL TOASTMASTERS

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, I wish to congratulate the Dee Why RSL Toastmasters on celebrating its 60th Anniversary. This fantastic community organisation and its people have dedicated themselves to empowering others to build on their communication skills, with a focus on developing and improving public speaking. Meetings include table topics, comprising one-minute impromptu speeches through to the longer prepared speeches of five to seven minutes duration. For participants, the Toastmasters provide a supportive and positive learning experience, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth. The Dee Why RSL Toastmasters will celebrate their 60th Anniversary with a dinner on 18 November and I feel confident that all the speakers will excel. Congratulations to the Dee Why RSL Toastmasters on this fantastic milestone and I thank them for the important work they do in empowering others in our community.

BEECRAFT SURFAID CUP MANLY 2024

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—I wish to recognise the annual Beecraft SurfAid Cup which returned to Manly this month with a mission to raise funds for SurfAid to provide essential goods and services to isolated and remote communities in Indonesia and the Solomon Islands. I am extremely pleased to announce that this year, SurfAid raised an incredible \$38,410. This is a wonderful effort, and a testament to the compassion and community spirit felt on the day. As mentioned, these funds will go towards delivering essential resources to SurfAid's partner communities to improve access to goods and services that so many of us take for granted such as housing, clean water, healthcare and nutrition. I acknowledge the generous sponsors of this year's event, including Fishbowl, RCVRI Wellness and Recovery Centre, Surfline, Harbord Hotel, 4 Pines and PKF Australia. I also wish to give a shoutout to the Allan Hall/Big Hill Beach Cottages team who raised an impressive \$10,939 for the event, and to Beecraft who have been the key sponsor of the event five years running and who also happened to claim first place! Congratulations SurfAid on organising another great event at an iconic location for such an important cause.

GRANVILLE SOUTH CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS HIGH SCHOOL

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I was delighted to join the cast of Hamilton, John Kennedy, Director of Educational Leadership, Department of Education; Jason Clare MP, Federal Minister for Education; and Ola Hamed, Cumberland Council Mayor on a visit to Granville South Creative and Performing Arts High School on 25 October 2024. The cast of Hamilton Australia & New Zealand made an unforgettable visit to Granville South Creative and Performing Arts High School, which inspired and empowered the students to explore and develop their talent in acting, dance, and music. The Hamilton Casts' generosity in sharing their professional expertise and passion for the arts has left a lasting impact on the Granville South Creative and Performing Arts High School community. The contributions of such initiatives are invaluable to the personal and creative development of students. These experiences go beyond the classroom, offering young people an opportunity to engage directly with professionals who have mastered their craft. May this experience serve as a stepping stone toward even greater achievements in the future.

2023-2024 CLUBGRANTS INITIATIVE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I would like to acknowledge Bankstown Sports Group for the incredible impact of its 2023-2024 ClubGRANTS initiative, which has seen over \$1.2 million allocated to support local community organisations and programs across the Bankstown, Hill Shire and Cumberland areas. A significant portion of this funding – over \$250,000 – has been directed towards organisations working at the frontlines of domestic violence prevention and support, including the Re-Love organisation, Sweet Dreams Foundation and Revesby Women's Shelter. Bankstown Sports Group's commitment to the health and safety of the community has also seen \$60,000 donated to local sporting clubs to install defibrillators at their venues and \$100,000 allocated to Bankstown City Aged Care for programs supporting dementia patients. In addition, Bankstown Sports Group has made a significant contribution of over \$60,000 to organisations dedicated to supporting individuals with disabilities. The \$1.2 million invested by Bankstown Sports Group is a clear reflection of its ongoing commitment to "Make a Difference" within our community. Through this support, countless individuals and families are receiving the assistance they need to overcome adversity and thrive and I thank Bankstown Sports Group for their unwavering dedication to improving the lives of those in need.

OUTLOUD 2024 RESPECT & UNITY SHOWCASE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I would like to congratulate everyone who was involved in the Outloud 2024 RESPECT & UNITY Showcase held at Bankstown Central on Thursday 24 October 2024. This event celebrated the incredible work of young students who have participated in the RESPECT and UNITY music mentoring programs. RESPECT and UNITY is an award-winning music mentoring program for boys and girls ages 10-12 years in Western Sydney primary schools. Through singing and songwriting, students can learn about important topics like domestic violence, gender equality, healthy relationships, consent and bullying. The showcase celebrated the original songs created by students from Bass Hill, Georges Hall, Punchbowl and Condell Park Public Schools. This event was a testament to the power of music as a tool for education and empowerment, and a celebration of the voices of our young people in our community. I commend all students for their hard work and creativity, and we thank everyone who has supported this inspiring initiative. The 2024 RESPECT and UNITY Showcase is a reflection of how we as a community can work together and continue to foster respect, unity and understanding and create a brighter future for all.

SAY NO TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TUG O' WAR CUP

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—The Canterbury-Bankstown Say No to Domestic Violence Tug O' War Cup was held on 20 November 2023, and we were thrilled to see our community unite once again in the fight against domestic violence. This annual event is more than just a fun competition – it is a powerful display of solidarity, strength and commitment to ending domestic violence in our community. Local businesses, schools, services, families and residents came together at the John Mackay Indoor Sports Centre to participate in the Tug O' War Cup. Domestic violence remains a devastating issue that impacts too many lives, and it is only through collective action that we can hope to eliminate it. The Tug O' War Cup is a fun and engaging way to reinforce a serious message: CBCity says 'No' to domestic violence and 'Yes' to healthy, respectful relationships. Through this event, our community was able to stand united in promoting positive change and awareness, sending a clear message that we do not tolerate abuse in any form. This was an incredible day of fun, community spirit, and a reminder that together, we can make a lasting impact.

COOPER GIDDINGS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Dubbo golfer Cooper Giddings on his victory in the NSW Country Championship at Parkes Golf Club in early November. The prodigiously talented 16-year-old started the championship with a course-record equalling round of seven-under on the first day of the event and then held his nerve to record a score of four-under in round two to finish the 36 holes at 11-under par, a two-shot buffer over his nearest rival Ethan Harvey. Winning the championship booked him a spot in the following week's NSW Open. Cooper's attention then turned to the NSW Open, which was played at Murray Downs Golf and Country Club last weekend, where one of his rivals was world number 59 Cameron Smith, a six-time PGA Tour winner. Whilst Cooper didn't finish the Open on the podium, his selection to play in a tournament of this calibre is testament to his passion and the ability he has for the game he loves. Well done, Cooper, and good luck with your golf going forward.

LEAH DOELAND – DESTINED FOR LANDFILL - COVID COUTURE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise the creativity and artistic investment of local multidisciplinary art therapist, Leah Doeland. In 2020, as we endured Covid lockdowns, Leah couldn't buy painting supplies, so refusing to be thwarted by this inconvenience, Leah decided to express her observations of life, waste and landfill through art. Approximately four years on and hundreds of hours invested, Leah has created 12 incredible jackets, all themed and using materials/items that would have been destined for landfill. The jackets are colourful and eye-catching, not intended to be worn as fashion, but to be considered artworks with a message: can we use what we mindlessly throw away for a useful purpose? Leah's first project was a jacket fabricated from her children's snack sized chip packets! Then followed jackets made from bread bags and tags, used surgical masks and holey socks! An eclectic collection of statements to spark conversation and encourage us to contemplate what we are doing to the planet. The public will be able to view and appreciate Leah's jackets until November 13, as part of Sydney Craft Week where they will be on display at the Australian Design Centre's Object Space. Congratulations Leah!

MEN'S HEALTH EDUCATION RURAL VAN

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—"Saving local lives" is the mission of the Men's Health Education Rural Van [MHERV] as it arrived into Port Macquarie recently offering free health checks to men and women. Hosted annually by the Rotary Club's of Port Macquarie Sunrise and Port Macquarie West, this valuable

initiative focuses on a simple blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol test to identify if the participant is at risk of a heart attack or stroke. The concept of MHERV was created in 2008 by Rotarian Tony Mackenzie after identifying through Mudgee District Hospital the prevalence of rural men presenting late to hospital with poor health. Statistics today show that 41,000 Australian men die of preventable diseases each year. Since 2017, MHERV has uncovered 5,891 people requiring treatment and 441 in immediate danger of a stroke or heart attack, as the van tours across the rural and regional landscape of NSW. Although the service strongly focuses on blokes health checks and reducing the stigma of 'she'll be right' mentality, MHERV is also open to women. I thank the local MHERV committee members John Drinan, Meredith Evans, Geoff Moore and Shae Miller for promoting men's health and wellbeing in our community.

LEGS FOR LEGACY

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise the Mid North Coast Police District who recently competed in the statewide Legs for Police Legacy campaign raising awareness and funds for police families who have suffered the loss of a loved one. The Legs for Police Legacy is a 24-hour spin bike challenge supporting serving and retired police officers in times of tragedy and need. This year, over \$9,300 was raised statewide for NSW Police Legacy by our men and women in blue. I acknowledge our local organisers for powering away this October - Sargent Julie Hudson, Mid North Coast Police District Manager Jessica Welch, Chief Inspector Mick Aldridge, Chief Inspector Stuart Campbell and District Commander Superintendent Shane Cribb. NSW Police Legacy provides compassionate emotional support, lifetime networks and financial assistance for Police Legatees to improve their health and overall wellbeing when facing some difficult challenges generated by active service. Legs for Police Legacy started at 12pm on Sunday 20th October and continued non-stop till 12pm, Monday 21st October. At home, our Mid North Coast Officers obtained sponsorship this year from Your Life Fitness Centre in Port Macquarie. Thank you to all members of our police force for protecting and serving our community.

HELEN MCMULLIN

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—With the school formal season in full swing, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Helen McMullin who has been nicknamed Tweeds Heads' fairy godmother for providing formal wear to students in need. Through Formal Dreams, Helen is gathering near-new graduation garments and providing them free of charge to students who are unable to afford a dress or suit to celebrate their end of year school formal. Helen created Formal Dreams after finding out many graduating students were struggling to buy a formal outfit and some students were even avoiding attending their graduation due to the cost or not having an outfit to wear. Thank you Helen for recognising this need within the Tweed community and Northern Rivers more broadly. It is a gesture like those offered through Formal Dreams that can change a young person's life for the better and brings with it confidence and connection to their peers and their community. I applaud your ingenuity and commitment to reusing loved formal wear and bringing this positivity to our community.

MARINE RESCUE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—Marine Rescue NSW's Northern Rivers region responded to record demand last month, seeing the busiest October on record. Volunteers in the Northern Rivers region, which incorporates Point Danger in the Tweed down to Wooli in the south, completed 32 search and rescue missions during October. More broadly, Marine Rescue NSW radio operators managed 17,094 radio calls in October and responded to 127 incidents. Thank you to all Marine Rescue NSW volunteers for keeping boaters safe on the water, your service to your communities is greatly appreciated and acknowledged. I encourage all boaters to download Marine Rescue's free app, Logging On, in order to provide details of their trip and ensure their safe return. This app was recently named runner-up in the International Maritime Rescue Federation's award for Innovation and Technology in Maritime Search and Rescue 2024. Congratulations Marine Rescue NSW and thank you for all that you do.

YEAR 12

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—Congratulations to all Year 12 students from across the Tweed Electorate on completing 13 years of schooling. This is a significant life achievement and one you should all be incredibly proud of. This year's Higher School Certificate [HSC], which saw the biggest cohort of students sit final exams in October and November, is now behind Year 12 students and the next chapter of their lives has begun. I commend students for their hard work and commitment in completing the HSC and acknowledge the support provided by teachers, support staff, families and loved ones. I wish every graduating student a successful next step and applaud you for your educational accomplishments. Well done.

9TH KOREAN AUSTRALIAN YOUNG PROFESSIONALS' COCKTAILS FOR CHARITY

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I recently attended a Korean Australian Young Professionals' Cocktails for Charity event, hosted by the Korean Australian Lawyers Association. Now in its 9th year, the annual event brings together Korean-Australian young professionals for an evening of networking and raising money for a good cause. It was an incredibly insightful evening that supported the great work of Kindred, who are an amazing organisation supporting families of children with developmental delays and disabilities. I must say, as Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism, I always enjoy attending events like this that strengthen our community ties. It is fantastic to see our Korean-Australian community grow and thrive. I would like to thank National President of the Korean Australian Lawyers Association, Kenneth Hong, and his team for hosting me and my Parliamentary colleagues, as well as all the sponsors, and attendees who showed up in support of Kindred. I would also like to recognise and thank Kindred for their meaningful contribution to our community. I look forward to fostering this growing relationship with the Korean Australian community and wish them all the best in their future endeavours.

STARTTS REFUGEE BALL

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to attend the Refugee Ball in Darling Harbour, hosted by the NSW Service of the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors [STARTTS]. This organisation has been providing psychological support and community programs to help individuals and communities heal from torture and refugee trauma for over 35 years. The event was a great opportunity to celebrate resilience, advocate for refugees, and raise vital funds that go towards helping communities rebuild their life in Australia. STARTTS did an amazing job in running the night, blending sophistication with excitement and fun. It was great to catch up with leading advocates and organisations to truly honour the unwavering strength and resilience of our communities. I would like to thank STARTTS for the meaningful work they do to help individuals and communities with torture and refugee trauma for their invaluable contribution to our community. I would also like to thank CEO Jorge Aroche, and the entire STARTTS team for their warm invitation and hospitality, as well as all attendees for their generosity in support of this meaningful cause.

INNOVATIONAUS AWARDS

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, innovation in this generation is what will keep us moving forward. I recently had the pleasure to celebrate the recognition of Australia's innovational leadership at the 2024 InnovationAus Awards for Excellence. These prestigious awards celebrate the translation of Australian ideas and research into commercial success and social impact across a wide range of categories. The annual event, now in its fourth year, recognised the nation's remarkable innovators and their outstanding products and services – made right here in Australia. As the Shadow Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, I am always delighted to celebrate the impressive work and successes of our country's innovators. I must say, it was a truly insightful evening and a great celebration of brilliant ideas. I would like to thank Founder and Editorial Director, James Riley, as well as the entire InnovationAus team for hosting the event and congratulate all the award recipients on their fantastic contributions to our community. I look forward to seeing where the future of innovation takes our country next and celebrate more up and coming ideas soon.

GREEN POINT COMMUNITY CENTRE - 30TH YEAR CELEBRATIONS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—It was an absolute pleasure to recently attend the Green Point Community Centre to celebrate their 30th birthday. This remarkable milestone is a testament to the enduring impact this organisation has had on our local area. Green Point Community Centre is more than just a place; it is the heart of our community. For three decades, it has been a space where people come together, build connections, and support one another. It is community-minded and community-driven, and its positive influence can be felt across generations. I would like to pay special tribute to Marie and her incredible team of volunteers, whose dedication and tireless efforts make this centre such a vibrant and welcoming space. Your commitment to organising activities, delivering services, and fostering social inclusion truly enriches our lives. You consistently go above and beyond to provide programs of real practical and social value, ensuring that no one in our community feels left behind. As the Member for Terrigal, it has been a privilege to support your vital work over the years. Congratulations again on 30 wonderful years of service to the community.

BUBBADESK

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the incredible innovation that is BubbaDesk—a true game-changer for parents and families here on the Central Coast. BubbaDesk, founded by Lauren Perrett, represents an inspired response to a challenge so many parents face in today's world: balancing the demands of career and family. Lauren's story resonates deeply. She turned her personal experience of navigating postnatal anxiety and concerns about traditional daycare into a pioneering

solution that empowers parents to work while staying close to their young children. As Australia's first and leading coworking space with onsite childcare, BubbaDesk provides a unique and flexible option for parents. It offers a supportive environment where parents can maintain productivity, pursue career opportunities, and nurture their professional ambitions—all while remaining connected to their little ones during those essential moments. This is a venture helping families achieve that often elusive work-life balance. It is a shining example of how innovation and empathy can transform lives and strengthen communities. Thank you, Lauren, for showing me around BubbaDesk and for your incredible dedication to supporting parents. I wish BubbaDesk continued success as it inspires and empowers families across the region and beyond.

KALE PUATA

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Kale Puata, an extraordinary young man, whose achievements, and dedication inspire us all here on the Central Coast. From his earliest days as a Nipper with North Avoca Surf Club, Kale has shown an unwavering commitment to serving his community. Having completed the Nipper, Rookie, and Youth programs, he continues to patrol North Avoca beach, contribute to the IRB team, and take part in youth and leadership camps. Beyond his club, his dedication extends far and wide, with countless hours spent volunteering for initiatives such as Surf Life Saving, the NSW Youth Advisory Council, and Air Force Cadets. Recently, Kale received the prestigious Youth Community Service Award 2024, presented by Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC at Government House. This accolade, recognising senior high school students across NSW who exemplify community service, is a testament to Kale's incredible contributions. Through his work with charities like Coast Shelter, Clean4Shore, Gotcha4Life, and more, Kale has touched countless lives, embodying the true spirit of giving. Congratulations Kale on this well-deserved recognition. Your dedication, compassion, and leadership make our community, and indeed the world, a better place.

ROY WILLIAMS

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—This statement acknowledges the dedication and volunteer service of Roy Williams from NSW SES Portland Unit. The Portland Unit was recognised at the NSW SES Central West Command Awards Ceremony on Saturday 16 November 2024 for their involvement in the 2019-2020 bushfire response. Roy played a crucial role supporting and protecting communities of NSW during the catastrophic bushfire season where Lithgow was surrounded by flames. Linda received National Emergency Medal in recognition for her efforts. Like many NSW SES Members, Roy displayed resilience, agility and fortitude in adapting to changing conditions in trying times as the SES assisted displaced locals and provided support to other emergency services. It takes a special kind of person to volunteer their time and put others safety before their own for the betterment of the community. Without the SES, our communities would be left unequipped to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies. Roy's tireless efforts, bravery, and commitment to helping communities in need are truly commendable. Thank you, Roy, for your invaluable contributions, ensuring the safety and well-being of so many. Your service has made a lasting difference.

LINDA GARLAND

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—This statement acknowledges the dedication and volunteer service of Linda Garland from NSW SES Lithgow Unit. The Lithgow Unit was recognised at the NSW SES Central West Command Awards Ceremony on Saturday 16 November 2024 for their involvement in the 2019-2020 bushfire response. Linda played a crucial role supporting and protecting communities of NSW during the catastrophic bushfire season where Lithgow was surrounded by flames. Linda received National Emergency Medal in recognition for her efforts. Like many NSW SES Members, Linda displayed resilience, agility and fortitude in adapting to changing conditions in trying times as the SES assisted displaced locals and provided support to other emergency services. It takes a special kind of person to volunteer their time and put others safety before their own for the betterment of the community. Without the SES, our communities would be left unequipped to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies. Linda's tireless efforts, bravery, and commitment to helping communities in need are truly commendable. Thank you, Linda, for your invaluable contributions, ensuring the safety and well-being of so many. Your service has made a lasting difference.

JESSIE DAVIDSON

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—This statement acknowledges the dedication and volunteer service of Jessie Davidson from NSW SES Bathurst Unit. Jessie has played a crucial role supporting and protecting communities of Bathurst and NSW during the catastrophic natural disasters, pandemic and incidents of all kinds. At the NSW SES Central West Command Awards Ceremony held on Saturday 16 November 2024 Jessie received NSW SES 15 Year Long Service Award in recognition for her enduring efforts and years of volunteer service. Like many NSW SES Members, Jessie continues to display resilience, agility and fortitude in adapting to changing conditions as the SES provides assistance and support in times of emergency. It takes a special kind of person to

volunteer their time and put others safety before their own for the betterment of the community. Without the SES, our communities would be left unequipped to respond to natural disasters and other emergencies. Jessie's tireless efforts, bravery, and commitment to helping communities in need are truly commendable. Thank you, Jessie, for your invaluable contributions, ensuring the safety and well-being of so many. Your service has made a lasting difference.

GLAUCOMA AUSTRALIA

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—As somebody who appreciates firsthand the importance of eye health, I commend the advocacy work of Glaucoma Australia which has its base in Artarmon. Founded in 1986, Glaucoma Australia supports the needs of glaucoma patients across Australia. The disease of glaucoma was first discovered in the 17th century, yet its role as a cause of blindness has only been known since the 19th century. Its prevention will hopefully be the work of the 21st century. The purpose of Glaucoma Australia is to improve the lives of people with glaucoma and those at risk, by increasing early detection and positive treatment outcomes through education, advocacy and research. Since its inception Glaucoma Australia has committed over \$1 million to support Australian glaucoma research across a diverse range of projects. Working collaboratively with health care professionals and eye specialists. Glaucoma Australia helps individuals to understand and take an active interest in their own eye health. I am so grateful for the work that Glaucoma Australia has done to increase community awareness of the condition and the need for people to have regular eye check-ups to maintain optimal eye health.

WALTER BURLEY GRIFFIN SOCIETY

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—Walter Burley Griffin is a national icon, credited for the design of our national capital Canberra and other cities including the Riverina town of Griffith. Importantly, this remarkable Chicago-born architect and town planner has a direct connection with the Willoughby community. In 1921, he and his wife Marion Mahony Griffin designed the beautiful harbourside suburb of Castlecrag with a pattern conforming to the Australian natural environment. The Griffins called Castlecrag home for many years and I am delighted to say there is a Society in my community dedicated to honouring his legacy. In 1988, the Walter Burley Griffin Society was established to promote a better understanding of the lives, ideals, vision and works of Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffin. It does this through its collection of original sources relating to the Griffins as well as educational resources. In Castlecrag, Canberra and elsewhere, the Society promotes the conservation of landscape designs, buildings and other works designed by or having an association with the Griffins. I thank the Walter Burley Griffin Society for all it does to preserve the legacy of Castlecrag's most illustrious residents.

CELEBRATION OF SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—The spiritual nourishment of our youth is such an important part of their formal education, and I was proud and happy to celebrate Special Religious Education [SRE] in this place on Tuesday 12 November. In my community of Willoughby, there are a multitude of volunteers from different faith traditions who give up their time to teach special religious education in the local primary and secondary schools. It was great to see many of these volunteers in person at the parliamentary celebration. I offer my heartfelt thanks for the work they do in the classroom to spiritually enrich our children and educate them in the teachings of the world's great religions. I appreciate how fundamental this special religious education is to forming the spiritual life, moral compass and personal character of our children and youth. I give thanks to Murray Norman of Better Balanced Futures for organising this special event and the invaluable work that he and his team do for the worthy cause of SRE in our State.

MELISSA ARANDALE AT CASINO CUP

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—After only twelve months of greyhound training, Grafton's Melissa Arandale is set to rug up greyhound Teresita in the Group 3 Casino Cup. In the heats of the cup, Teresita led throughout to win her heat, scoring by four lengths over Gypsy Joker from talented greyhound trainer Robert Cooke. Teresita ended up receiving an ideal box draw for the final. Five or six runs ago Teresita won a fourth grade at Grafton and has been going strong ever since. What great efforts from Melissa to make the cup final after only twelve months of training. Melissa's husband Mark is the on-course race caller so is not far from her side in support. I wish Melissa all the best for a good run for Teresita in the Casino Cup. Congratulations on a notable achievement Melissa and all the best for many great outcomes in the future.

PICKLEBALL GRAFTON

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to congratulate Grafton Para-Pickleballer Gideon Litchfield for his outstanding success of becoming the number one Para-Pickleballer in Australia. Pickleball is a paddle and ball sport incorporating a balance of court dimensions, rules and equipment to allow for all skill levels and age groups to enjoy. Para-Pickleball is an inclusive adaptation of the sport to include players with disabilities.

Grafton Pickleball Club formed in March 2024 and holds numerous weekly events. From social events to competitive play, the club's culture is inclusive and family friendly. A congratulations also goes to Catherine Griffen, who has achieved a third-place ranking in Australia in the 60+ women's singles category. A great sporting addition to the local community that is becoming more and more popular, Pickleball is a great opportunity for social connection while encouraging mental and physical wellbeing. Well done to Gideon and Catherine for their achievements and I am sure we will see more local names in the rankings in the future.

DANIEL SIMPSON TURNING DREAMS INTO REALITY

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to acknowledge the determination and focus shown by publican Daniel Simpson of the Rod n Reel Hotel in Woodburn. Daniel didn't study chemistry at school but that didn't stop him from making his dreams come true, learning all about beer making techniques during a brewing course and creating a microbrewery behind the bar of his pub. The dream started over twenty years ago on a visit to the United States and Canada where every bar had their own little craft beer on tap, this stuck with Daniel, and he worked toward making this concept a reality after purchasing the Rod n Reel. Daniel has now proudly created seven unique craft beers that are on tap. From pale ale to lager there is something on offer to suit all tastes. Not only is the beer well received by the visitors to the pub, but Daniel also makes use of the malted barley remains by sending them to Dave Hogan's pig farm in New Italy, what a great use of the by-product. Congratulations Daniel, I look forward to calling in for a taste of your craft beer creations soon.

NORTH SYDNEY BOYS HIGH SCHOOL

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker I want to recognise the outstanding academic achievements of several students from North Sydney Boys High School. These students consistently impress, and as the school year comes to a close, the boys' successes are far from over. I congratulate Naman, who competed in the Young ICT Explorers 2024 competition, a not-for-profit competition supported by the CSIRO and the Smith Family. Naman won first place in the Year 11-12 category for NSW for his inspired project 'Autoflow - Minimising Traffic Congestion & Emissions with Prioritised Path Planning and Simulation of Futures'. As the NSW winner, Naman's project has qualified for the 2024 National Finals. Fantastic work, Naman. I also congratulate Nathan, Vincent, Layton, Henry, Frederick, Eason, Shawn, Oscar, Shaosong, Alexander, Sam, Thomas, Franco and Jim, who have been awarded the 2024 Australian Mathematics Trust State Awards. The Australian Mathematics Competition is the largest, most prestigious, and longest-running maths competition for Australian school students. This recognition is a remarkable accomplishment for each of them. I acknowledge the fantastic staff at North Sydney Boys High, who support and encourage their students to thrive and excel both academically and in their extracurricular ventures.

BUBBADESK OPENS IN NEUTRAL BAY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Speaker As a single mother, I understand how difficult it can be to strike a harmonious work-life balance while raising young children. My children have brought immeasurable joy to my life, but juggling full-time work and caring for them is not without its hurdles. I acknowledge the incredible organisation BubbaDesk and their game-changing approach to combining work and childcare. I am thrilled to announce that BubbaDesk will be launching in Neutral Bay in January next year. BubbaDesk is Australia's first co-working space offering onsite childcare – an innovative solution for parents navigating the complexities of balancing work and family. The Neutral Bay facility will boast amenities designed to support productivity and promote a happy and healthy environment for children while their parents are at work. These include private call spaces, blacked-out sleep rooms, and a breastfeeding room. The co-working space will fully cater to the needs of parents who are transitioning back to work and even features an onsite boardroom. I want to acknowledge and congratulate visionary BubbaDesk Founder Lauren Perrett. Her hard work, dedication, and passion have yielded something truly inspiring, and I applaud her for her compassionate outlook and vision.

SCHOOL SPORTING ACHIEVEMENTS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—It has been fantastic to see schools across our community finish the year with such impressive sporting achievements. Congratulations to the Neutral Bay Public School students who excelled in the Northern Suburbs Tennis Association Primary School Challenge. Of the four teams that entered, two took home gold and one earned silver. A fantastic result for all involved. I congratulate the year 9 and Year 11 team from Monte, who were the winners and runners-up at the NSW Beach Volleyball Schools Cup. Well done on an outstanding effort. The Mosman Prep 1sts Cricket team also deserves recognition for their 41-run victory over Pittwater House in the Mosman-Pittwater Shield game. Great work, boys. Special congratulations to Marist College Year 8 student Ava, who earned a silver medal at the NSW All Schools State Regatta. What an outstanding achievement. I congratulate Zachary from Sacred Heart, who represented both Sacred Heart and MacKillop at the Primary Schools Sports Association Cricket Tournament in Armidale and was

a member of the winning MacKillop team. The talent displayed by our North Shore schools is incredible, and I look forward to seeing even more success in the year ahead. Well done to all!

WOONONA EAST PUBLIC SCHOOL UPGRADED PLAYGROUND

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)—As your local Member of Parliament one of the most rewarding parts of this job is hearing community members feedback on what our government has been able to do to assist them. Recently, through the Community Building Partnership Grant program, Woonona East Public School were able to make some very needed upgrades to their school playground. The playground was able to receive upgrades to their slide and add some new fun and exciting elements for the children to enjoy. After seeing the results of the upgrades and receiving feedback from the students who were so excited, grateful, and overjoyed to be able to have a new playground, it goes to show how important the CBP program is and the overall benefits it has to the community. This would have not been possible without the Woonona East Public-School P & C Association who put in the application, but also the school, staff and students who work extremely hard each and every day. I feel extremely proud to have played a part in helping Woonona East Public School and anyone that I can in the Keira Community.

LACHLAN HESS AND JUSTIN HESS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I recognise twin brothers Lachlan and Justin Hess on their '30 for 30' campaign to boost blood donation. The men ran the campaign to honour the memory of their sister Nicole who passed away in 2020 from Ewing Sarcoma, a rare form of soft-tissue cancer, and would have celebrated her 30th birthday on Tuesday. They started 30 for 30 to build strength in numbers for blood donation and bring the community together to remember Nicole's death, while saving lives. The brothers booked 30 chairs at The Shire Donor Centre in Miranda to commemorate her birthday and put out the call for people to fill the seats and roll up their sleeves to give blood. Lachlan says they were touched that complete strangers signed up for the cause and joined them to donate blood, while friends of themselves and Nicole also gave blood in Adelaide, Maroochydore, and Castle Hill. 41 people registered as part of their team and Australian Red Cross Lifeblood says their blood donations will save 111 lives this year. Lachlan and Justin have made a difference in helping Lifeblood achieve the three blood donations it needs every minute to save lives.

BALAR MALAR SCHOOL

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—The Balar Malar Tamil School, with support from the NSW Government and with Minmi Public School, is operated by a dedicated team of volunteers, many of whom have extensive backgrounds in education, the Tamil language, cultural studies and community development. They bring a blend of cultural heritage knowledge and teaching skills to inspire students. The school is committed to offering affordable and accessible education to preserve and promote the Tamil language and culture in the Wallsend electorate. Students are typically aged 5-12, and the focus is on speaking, reading, and writing skills. Tamil history and traditions are also explored using engaging interactive methods such as storytelling, music, and games. Advanced levels may explore Tamil literature and complex grammar to deepen students' understanding of language structure and cultural nuance. Various events celebrate Tamil heritage, often aligning with traditional Tamil festivals and incorporate student performances, cultural showcases, and traditional Tamil games. Annual events like Tamil New Year and Balar Malar Annual Day celebrations bring together families and foster community bonding. Congratulations to Dinesh Manivannan and Balar Malar School for the wonderful things you are doing in our local community.

JOSHUA PIDGEON - BISHOP TYRELL ANGLICAN COLLEGE

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—On Tuesday 12 November at the 12N Hub at Honeysuckle, the Hunter's youngest and brightest business minds were recognised at the 2024 Young Business Mind Awards. The event was organised by Career Links, attracted 45 entries from 13 regional schools, with around 200 students, teachers, parents, sponsors and innovation industry representatives present. Winner of the Design and Technology category, for a second consecutive year, was Joshua Pidgeon from Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College. Joshua's project, Guardian ADS, addresses the problem of unexploded landmines, as many as 110,000,000. He plans to study engineering, mechatronics or aerospace after school. Students and teachers entered video pitches outlining their big ideas which were then judged by sponsors and business representatives across categories Sustainability, Business Enterprise, Social Enterprise and Design and Technology. MC Ryan Muir, himself a successful young entrepreneur, one of last year's YBMA participants and CEO of RAM Manufacturing, spoke on Risk Taking and Courage in Entrepreneurship. Sponsors presented the awards to the successful students and teachers. Congratulations, Joshua. Your innovation and entrepreneurship will help to shape the future and to drive positive change.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—A few months ago, we all voted in local government elections to elect our local mayors and councillors. Most of the constituents I represent live in the City of Newcastle, but a sizeable minority reside in the City of Lake Macquarie. Both cities have new civic leaders, and I warmly congratulate Councillor Adam Shultz who is the new Mayor of Lake Macquarie, and Councillor Ross Kerridge, the new Lord Mayor of Newcastle, and also to all those new and returning Councillors. As someone who served on Newcastle Council before my election to the New South Wales Parliament, I know how important it is for representatives at all three levels of government to work collaboratively to get the best outcomes for those we serve. I'd also like to recognise and congratulate Lake Macquarie City Council who was recently named the best Council in New South Wales. This is the second time they have won the AR Bluett Memorial Award, and they are the only Council in the entire state to have been recognised in this way twice.

LET'S FISH LAKE MAC

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—I'd like to recognise passionate local Michael Guest, director of the popular fishing television series Reel Action, for his incredible work in organising the upcoming Let's Fish Lake Mac competition. With a deep love for all things aquatic and a strong commitment to protecting our environment, Michael inspires others to share his passion for fishing and the outdoors. This annual event, now in its fourth year, is making a splash in our community by bringing people together for a weekend of fun and friendly competition on Lake Macquarie, Australia's largest coastal saltwater lake. Let's Fish Lake Mac is about more than just fishing—it's an opportunity for families, friends, and neighbours to connect, create memories, and celebrate our natural surroundings. With \$100,000 in tagged fish ready to be caught, it's sure to strengthen community spirit and showcase the best of Lake Macquarie. Thank you, Michael, for the work you are doing to bring our community closer together.

EMILY FELLOWS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—I've previously recognised Warners Bay-based activist Emily Fellows for her incredible efforts to raise awareness about ADHD through her 21-for-21 challenge. Today, I'm delighted to provide an update on Emily's achievements and the lasting impact of her campaign. Emily's challenge of running 21 kilometres every day for 21 days has now concluded, and her dedication has resulted in an extraordinary \$9,020 raised for the ADHD Foundation. This generous contribution will support the Foundation's invaluable work, including its free national helpline and community resources for individuals with ADHD and their loved ones. Emily's passion for this cause and her commitment to creating positive change in our community are truly inspiring. Her efforts have brought awareness, encouragement, and support to so many who are impacted by ADHD. Congratulations, Emily, on this remarkable accomplishment. You've made a meaningful difference, and I'm proud to celebrate your outstanding contributions to our community.

RILEY NEILANDS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—Congratulations to Year 10 student Riley Neilands of Warners Bay High School on being selected to work as part of the sound and stage student team for the 2024 Schools Spectacular. Riley and his fellow team members will be producing and running the major NSW Creative and Performing Arts showcase at Qudos Bank Area on Friday 29 and Saturday 30 November. As a member of Warners Bay High School's own Music, Sound and Stage team, Riley has also been involved in helping to produce the local performing arts student showcase, Star Struck. It was there that this "whiz kid" was scouted for this opportunity and asked to join a team usually composed of older students. Next week he will be honing his skills at the Arena ahead of the big show. Riley is also a talented musician, having placed in school talent shows as a guitarist. Great work, Riley, and I wish you all the best for the Schools Spectacular and in all your future creative endeavours!

UGL'S 125 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—On Sunday 17 November, UGL hosted a Celebration Day at the Newcastle Operations site in Broadmeadow to celebrate UGL's 125-year anniversary. Organised in conjunction with HunterNet, the event acknowledged the heritage of Goninan and UGL on the company's oldest site in Australia. In addition to sharing UGL's broader Transport business plans with the local community, the event was full of activities, including rides, food trucks, facepainting, giftbags, stalls and workshop tours. Over the last 125 years, UGL have played a pivotal role in shaping Australia's defence, energy, resources, technology,

and transport sectors, and have provided thousands of employment and career opportunities for Novocastrians. This is an amazing achievement, and I'd like to thank UGL for their contribution to our community.

SHANE MATTISKE

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—I would like to acknowledge the incredible achievements of Shane Mattiske. After being at the helm of the Newcastle Jets for nearly four years, Shane will be stepping down from his role as Chief Executive Officer at the end of the year. Following his appointment in 2021, the Newcastle Jets have gone from strength-to-strength and are now well positioned to embark on a new era with Maverick Sports Partners. In addition to increasing the club's community projects and record level sponsorships, Shane's leadership has also resulted in 10,000 memberships for only the third time in the club's history. With the beginning of this new chapter for the Newcastle Jets, Shane plans to take a couple of well-deserved months off. I'd like to thank Shane for his contributions to our sporting community and wish him all the best for his future endeavours.

SCHOOL SPECTACULAR SOLOS

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—Local students Symphony Riley and Savannah Smith will be stepping into the spotlight as featured artists in this year's School Spectacular performances on November 29 and 30. Featuring students from 400 schools across NSW, this year's show is expected to host an outstanding 32,000 audience members over two nights. Both Symphony and Savannah have been selected for the prestigious featured artist roles and will be representing the Hunter School of the Performing Arts. Year 11 student Symphony will be showcasing her impressive pipes in a solo and two group songs, whilst Year 10 student Savannah will dazzle in the spotlight as a featured dancer. I'd like to congratulate both Symphony and Savannah on their incredible achievements and wish them all the best in their upcoming performances!

PAM LUKE COMMUNITY CIRCLES WINGECARRIBEE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise to recognise Pam Luke. Community Circles Wingecarribee commenced in April 2023. The pilot project assists people within the community who are isolated and vulnerable to connect with their communities. This connection aims to recognise the uniqueness of the person and shapes the connections to enable people to live meaningful and connected lives. Pam has been running weaving classes as a volunteer, creating a space for creativity and connection within the community. Pam a proud Gundungurra Aboriginal woman born and raised in the Southern Highlands. Pam has been a dedicated volunteer for Community Circles, running weaving classes that provide a space for creativity, connection, and inclusivity. Pam has been a constant source of support in the Aboriginal Community. Pam has generously supported those in need, often volunteering by helping in gardens or homes. Her years of service at Vinnies Op Shops have further demonstrated her unwavering commitment to making everyone feel welcome and valued. I thank Pam for her kindness, inclusivity, and dedication, which are undoubtedly a true testament to her incredible contribution to our community.

JENNIFER NILSSON-PODER

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I would like to acknowledge Jennifer Nilsson-Poder, a remarkable young constituent in the Balmain electorate, for her inspiring advocacy on behalf of women and girls in sport. Jennifer wrote to me earlier this year, sharing her passion for promoting greater recognition of women and girls in sport. She is particularly excited about the achievements of the Sydney FC Women's team. Jennifer's determination and leadership at the age of twelve are truly commendable. She is a shining example of the power of young voices to drive meaningful change. Her advocacy efforts have made a significant impact, as she has recently inspired the City of Sydney to award the Sydney FC Women's team with the Key to the City. Congratulations Jennifer on your achievements so far. I have no doubt that this is only the beginning, and I look forward to seeing what you accomplish next.

FAIR TRADE GIFTS

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I would like to congratulate Fair Trade Gifts on their recent opening in Rozelle. The store stocks quality fair trade products - all handmade and supporting many communities and makers from around the world – and featuring products from local businesses Global Conduct Fairtrade in Balmain, All of the Good Things and Earthica Australia. The fairtrade model aims to support farmers and workers in developing countries to achieve sustainable and equitable trade relationships through a unique pricing model, setting rigorous standards across the supply chain, and fostering strong producer communities through local and regional networks. I am so pleased to have a new shop on Darling St supporting beautiful handmade fairtrade products - thank you for having me along to your opening. Congratulations to Gai Berry, Gina Castaneda, Jan Johnston and Nimmy Zappert for promoting more local options for fair trade and sustainable living.

ISABELLE HAYWARD

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I recognise Port Hacking High School's Isabelle Hayward on receiving a Youth Community Service Award from Her Excellency, The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC, Governor of New South Wales on 25 October. The Youth Community Service Awards recognise high school students for their exceptional service and engagement with their local community, with each student receiving a trophy and certificate of commendation from the Governor who is also Patron of The Order of Australia Association NSW Branch. Isabelle was nominated in recognition of her involvement as a member of the Student Representative Council, spearheading events which have included the World's Greatest Shave, Harmony Day, Gotcha4Life, Mental Health Awareness Month and Down Syndrome Australia. Furthermore, Isabelle is working towards her gold award in the Duke of Edinburgh Program and volunteers with the Gynea Netball Club as a coach, umpire, mentor and administrative assistant where she has been recognised as umpire of the year and achieved her foundation coach accreditation. I congratulate Isabelle on receiving this recognition and thank her for her continued contribution to her school and our community.

ASSYRIAN DIQLAT SCHOOL – ASSYRIAN AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to the Assyrian Diqlat School on celebrating their 50th Anniversary with a celebratory dinner on Saturday 9th November at Eden Venues, Edensor Park. Assyrian-Australians are a vibrant and historic part of our Western Sydney community, with historic ties to Prospect Electorate. An initiative of the Assyrian Australian Association, the Assyrian Diqlat School is a dynamic community institution teaching the Assyrian language, formed in 1974 when the AAA Board decided to convert an old fibro cottage on their Smithfield Road property into a school. With an opening class of 15 students, student enrolments have ranged between 140 and 240 students annually over the past decade. As part of the celebrations, the Assyrian Diqlat School published its 50th Anniversary commemorative book, reflecting on the milestones reached over five decades, and acknowledging the sustained efforts of our proud Assyrian community to keep their ancient language alive. More than 5,000 students have passed through the school since opening, with many becoming interpreters, translators and priests. My heartfelt congratulations go out to Dr Benjamin Daoud, President, Assyrian Australian Association, Alice George, Principal, Assyrian Diqlat School, all Board members, teachers, students and volunteers on marking a wonderful occasion.

GREATER BLACKTOWN BUSINESS CHAMBER

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Wednesday 30th October, I was pleased to meet with local business owners, operators and volunteers at the Business After Five Networking event from the Greater Blacktown Business Chamber, hosted by Sydney Zoo, Eastern Creek. GBBC helps establish local business connections and build a sense of community spirit in the greater Blacktown area, including in our local Prospect Electorate. By teaming up with Sydney Zoo for a networking event, GBBC highlighted to our local business and community leaders about the Zoo's amazing 8-year journey to date, providing a modern and innovative environment for thousands of animal species. Established in 2015, Sydney Zoo was founded with the objective of creating amazing experiences for the local and international community, introducing them to a range of animal species from all over the world, while also educating on animal welfare and conservation. Today, the Zoo is home to over 4,000 animals, including an aquarium and Australia's largest Reptile and Nocturnal House. My heartfelt thanks go out to Trevor Oldfield AM, President, Greater Blacktown Business Chamber, all the Board and team at Sydney Zoo for hosting an amazing evening. I look forward to the next GBBC Business After Five Networking event.

ST ANTHONY'S MERCY DAY AWARDS – YEAR 6

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Serah Paul and Angelina Saide on receiving a 2024 Mercy Award on 27th September 2024, at St Anthony's Primary School, Girraween. An exceptional student in the 6G Class at St Anthony's, Serah received the Mercy Award for Respect, recognising her courteous and thoughtful nature. Serah is a role model for her peers, listening attentively and displaying excellent manners. Treating everyone with respect and compassion, Serah is following the footsteps of St Anthony of Padua. Angelina is an outstanding member of the 6W class, who also received the Mercy Award for Respect. Facing challenges with quiet determination and a resilient attitude, Angelina exceeds school expectations. Demonstrating kindness and thoughtfulness in every interaction, Angelina is a living example of the St Anthony's motto, 'in word and deed'. Mercy Awards recognise students who embody the Mercy values of hospitality, justice, compassion, respect, service and courage. Serah and Angelina were selected as the Year 6 winners of this important award. Congratulations again Serah and Angelina. You are commended for the example you set to your peers. Thank you Principal Patricia Reilly, and the dedicated school community for supporting our students through their Catholic faith.

MANDALA HAIR

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge Mandala Hair in Concord who celebrated an amazing milestone last month - 9 incredible years in business! Mandala Hair is a community hub, where clients are made to feel like family. Throughout the years, Mandala Hair has become an integral part of the Concord community. I sincerely congratulate the dynamic duo who lead Mandala Hair – Diana Celati and Samantha Gonzalez. Diana and Sam are truly inspirational. In the 9 years of Mandala Hair, they have both become mums and have led a business that is going from strength to strength. Mandala Hair has established itself as a trusted hairdressing salon because of a commitment to being at the forefront of the latest trends and techniques, which has resulted in a loyal clientele. Deanna and Sam's passion for their industry, combined with their warm and welcoming approach has created a salon experience that is fun, enjoyable, relaxing and rejuvenating. I also congratulate their hardworking staff – Natalie, Sharon, Georgia and Jessie! Here's to many more years of success! Congratulations to Deanna and Sam, and the entire Mandala Hair team on this fantastic achievement. I wish you all the very best always.

CHRISTINE KELLY

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge the hard-working contributions of local Pharmacist and small business owner Christine Kelly who has been serving the Inner West community for over 20 years. As the owner and principal pharmacist of The Pharmacy, Leichhardt, Christine has provided outstanding support to the community. Outside of her contributions as a businesswoman, Christine serves as Branch Executive and Committee Member of the NSW Pharmacy Guild as the Inner West representative. Through her advocacy, she ensures the Inner West community has a seat at the table on healthcare matters that affect us. Christine's success as a pharmacist, businesswoman and leader are a testament to her tireless work ethic and passion for the pharmaceutical industry, and for people. I sincerely thank Christine for her dedication to the community and I wish her all the best.

CUCINA ESPRESSO

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to recognise Cucina Espresso in Concord which is a vibrant hub of community spirit, exceptional food, and warm hospitality and service. Owners Rocco & Carlo Calautti supported by their family Vanessa, Felicia, Damian and Adam Calautti have created a welcoming space where locals come together to enjoy great coffee and delicious Italian cuisine. Along with their hardworking staff, Rocco, Carlo, Vanessa and Damian make every visit feel like you are visiting family. The menu boasts an array of authentic Italian dishes, crafted with fresh ingredients and passion. Every bite of food and sip of coffee is a testament to the Calautti family's commitment to quality. At Cucina Espresso, it's not just about the food – it's about the experience. They have created a sense of belonging, making it a beloved local spot for the community. Rocco, Carlo, Vanessa and Damian's dedication to their customers shines through in every aspect of their business. After more than a decade since they first opened, they have built a loyal following, and Cucina Espresso has become an integral part of Majors Bay Road. I wish the Calautti family and their staff all the very best.

MARITA MACRAE

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater)—I want to acknowledge the service of Marita Macrae. Marita has been active in professional and volunteer bush regeneration for many years. She is a strong advocate of planting species that are native to Avalon and Pittwater in our backyards because those plants support native insects, birds and animals. She believes the more we learn about native Australian flora and fauna, the more we will want to protect it. Marita was a co-founder of Pittwater Natural Heritage Association in 1994 and has served as vice-president of the Avalon Preservation Trust. Other environmental memberships include the Australian Conservation Foundation, National Parks Association, Birds Australia and Australian Bush Heritage Fund. Her many Awards for bush regeneration include a Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] in 2004. Marita has let her own garden grow wild and plants as many endemic plants as possible while keeping out the weeds. Marita says she has learnt so much volunteering and that it is a very powerful thing to do. Marita is such a wonderful role model and a beloved member of our community. She inspires me to protect Pittwater's beautiful, natural environment in the work I do in this place.

ST JOHN AMBULANCE PARRAMATTA

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—I would like to acknowledge the work of St John Ambulance Parramatta's hardworking volunteers and the importance of the vital medical assistance they provide at community events. St John Ambulance volunteers' selfless dedication to their volunteer efforts keeps our community safe, helps to prevent tragedy and ensures community events can run smoothly. The delivery of world-class first aid at public events by St John's means that our community can enjoy these activities and feel a sense of security. I thank Parramatta St John's volunteers for all they do including Ian Wardman, Jackie Moshtaghi-Qaziani, Andrew

Gallagher, Walter Gray, Mark Cockburn, Zinitis Duckmanton, Brian Daniell, Hayley Espanol, Jennifer Rennie, Tienelle Kelly, Joshua Cannistra, Tamara Kort, Vincent Lo, Sally DeNatis, Mitchell McInnes, Vanessa Irvine, Matthew Lee, Pari Mantri, Bingying Chen, George Schwalbe, Kirushna Ekamparam, Roland Pepperell and Justine Cattermole.

PARRAMATTA'S LANES COME TO LIFE

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—Parramatta's nightlife has never been better. Every year, Parramatta Lanes is held in the heart of our city. It is a celebration of the vibrant, joyous and lively atmosphere in Parramatta, a reflection of the community in Parramatta. Throughout the CBD, food, music and performances were present, with people from all cultures and walks of life present. A free festival, welcoming people from across the state. I'm so proud of our city, and that we really turned out for this, with 20,000 people attending over the 4 days of operation. With live performances from bands, DJs artists across Australia and the world, delicious food from vendors including viral Tik Tok favourites Spudholes, Flappy's, Thirsty Monkey and more, along with inspiring performances from Grace Cummings, Sunset Bros, The Bodega Collective, Club Chrome DJs and BALTHVS. Karaoke CLIPPED and the thought provoking and impressive shopping trolley dance in Parramatta Square drew huge crowds every night ensuring Parramatta Lanes lived up to its name as the best street festival in Australia. Congratulations to the team at City of Parramatta Council for an excellent, well-managed and successful event.

DURJA PUJA CELEBRATIONS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—Durja Puja celebrates the goddess Durga's victory over Mahishasura and the victory of good over evil. The local Bengali community enjoyed celebrating Durja Puja thanks to the efforts of the Bengali Association of NSW Inc. The celebrations would not have been possible without the generosity of sponsors, and mammoth efforts of Cumberland City Council, the management committee and countless volunteers actively supporting the management committee, ensuring the event ran smoothly. Over two months and many sleepless nights, with only one aim, the Bengali Association created a wonderful and unforgettable experience for everyone that incorporated all the traditional elements of this annual cultural celebration. Thanks to Arup Dutta, Sourav Mukherjee, Arindam Kanjilal, Sudip Sinha, Swagata Chatterjee, Sampa Ghosh Dastidar, Prabhati Banerjee, Aishwarya Karanjai, Rameshwar Roy and Shovon Thakur for their hardwork. I wish everyone who celebrates a joyous and blessed Durga Puja!

LIVERPOOL ARTS SOCIETY ANNUAL EXHIBITION

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—Liverpool is home to so many talented artists and creatives. Their talents on were on full display at the Liverpool Arts Society's 2024 Annual Exhibition at Casula Powerhouse. This annual event is now in its 26th year, and represents an opportunity for our local artists to not only share their work but also sell their work or win financial support to continue their creations. There were many fantastic artworks across a variety of mediums, including oil, acrylic, mixed media, watercolour, sculpture, ceramics, drawing, and photography. I proudly sponsored this year's oil/encaustic category, which was won by Hedar Abadi with his artwork, Waiting for Rain. Hedar was born in Iraq and has facilitated visual arts workshops for organisations like Settlement Services International and CORE Community Services secondary schools in Western Sydney. I acknowledge the runners-up in the oil category: Fangmin Wu's Young Cadet and Martin Shaliapin's Pantoney's Crown In The Day's Last Light. Well done Liverpool Arts Society!

MAINSBRIDGE MARKET DAY

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—Recently, the Friends of Mainsbridge held their first ever market day on the Mainsbridge School grounds in Warwick Farm. Mainsbridge School provides high quality education from kindergarten to Year 12 for students with moderate and severe disabilities and complexities and complex health conditions, under the expert leadership of Principal Nicole Katen. It was a beautiful day to join people from across Liverpool to raise funds for much-needed sensory resources. Lots of goodies were on offer thanks to a variety of stalls set up by parents, community members and local services. Lotions, soaps, candles, jewellery, accessories, tea towels, toys, food. There was truly something there for everyone! I was able to pick up a great occupational therapist T-Shirt by the Learning Nest, which is run by a local speechie! Events like this take a huge amount of effort to organise, and it was lovely to see students, parents and the school community enjoy themselves immensely. Well done Friends of Mainsbridge on bringing this wonderful event to life and your ongoing support for the Mainsbridge school community.

URUGUAYAN SOCIAL & SPORTING CLUB

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—As we are well and truly in the Christmas season, it's been wonderful to see a number of markets popping up around Liverpool. The establishment of these markets not only provides a platform for local creators to share their talents with our broader community but also generates much needed local economic activity. One of these markets was established by Elevate Your Business in

partnership with the Uruguayan Club in Hinchinbrook. Sheila Graupera started this initiative as a space where people from our community can share the love and passion for what they love to do and create. I caught up with a couple of Liverpool's youngest entrepreneurs at a recent market day, which coincided with Grandparents Day. I met Scarlett, who makes and markets her own candles at just 8 years old, and Sasha, an 11 year old who creates a variety of gifts that she ships across Australia. They are just a couple of many small business people who are benefiting from this new initiative, and I look forward seeing it go from strength to strength!

CUBBY HOUSE TOY LIBRARY HUB IN ST IVES

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Monday 25 November 2024, the Cubby House Toy Library Hub will be launched at St Ives. Since 1979, the Cubby House Toy Library has supported Northern Beaches families and the educational needs of children by providing toy libraries for children to borrow toys. The new St Ives toy library, in partnership with Ku-ring-gai Council, will now be able to help local Ku-ring-gai families. It will also help contribute to environmental sustainability by reducing long term waste and landfill. I recognise and thank Kerry Dominish and Jane Georgiades at EarlyEd, for their wonderful work through The Cubby House Toy Library.

AUSMUSIC T-SHIRT DAY: INXS

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On 30 November 2024 we will celebrate Ausmusic T-Shirt Day. The purpose of Ausmusic T-Shirt Day is to raise awareness and celebrate Australian music and raise funds for music workers in crisis. This includes musicians, managers, crew and music workers through crisis relief, mental health and wellbeing programs. Australia has some of the best music in the world. We should be proud and promote our music. On 21 November 2024, I was proud to join parliamentary colleagues on the steps of the NSW Parliament to promote Ausmusic T-Shirt Day, organised annually by the NSW Parliamentary Friends of Music and Hon. John Graham MLC. In 2024, I proudly wore my INXS t-shirt. INXS is one of the greatest Australian bands, established by the Farriss Brothers in 1977 on the Northern Beaches. They were a new sensation! Andrew Farriss, Jon Farriss and Michael Hutchence each went to Davidson High School, our wonderful performing arts school. Let's get behind our Australian music and music workers. To channel INXS, it's "What You Need", they "Need You Tonight", and Australian music can "Never Tear Us Apart".

BOMADERRY AND BERRY SCOUTS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises the incredible work of the 1st Bomaderry and Berry Scout Group. Since the merger of the Berry and Bomaderry Scout Groups, this dynamic organisation has been providing an engaging program for 5- to 14-year-olds, focused on fun, friendship, and personal development. Operating from the Scout Hall on the Shoalhaven River, the group helps young people build confidence, resilience, and leadership skills. This success is a direct result of the dedication of leaders like Karen Turley, known as "Cricket", and Mikee Kelly, known as "Monkey". Their passion and commitment to creating a positive, supportive environment for young people has been invaluable. Their leadership, alongside the hard work of all involved, has led to a significant increase in participation, with parents consistently praising the impact of Scouting on their children. I commend the 1st Bomaderry and Berry Scout Group for their commitment to shaping the future of our youth. Thanks to the leadership of Cricket, Monkey, and all the volunteers, this Scout group continues to have a positive impact on the community, fostering skills and values that will benefit local kids for years to come.

IAN CLIFFORD

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Kiama local, Ian Clifford, a passionate advocate for preserving Australia's 142 heritage lighthouses. An electrical engineer by trade, Ian is the president of Lighthouses of Australia, a volunteer organisation dedicated to promoting and protecting these iconic structures. Ian's love for lighthouses began as a child near Cape Byron's famous lighthouse. Moving to Kiama 30 years ago, he was delighted to see the town's historic lighthouse shining in his window—until one day, it wasn't. Taking immediate action, he contacted authorities and soon became its unofficial custodian. Now entrusted with its maintenance, he ensures the light burns bright every night, embodying the role of a modern-day keeper. Kiama Lighthouse, built in 1886, still boasts its original glass lens, and thanks to Ian's efforts it now operates with a reliable LED system. Beyond Kiama, Lighthouses of Australia tirelessly advocate for restoring sites like Jervis Bay's Point Perpendicular Lighthouse. Ian's dedication to preserving these symbols of safety and resilience is inspiring. On behalf of the community, I thank him for his unwavering commitment and tireless efforts to ensure our lighthouses continue to shine brightly for generations to come.

KIAMA HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today, the Parliament of New South Wales recognises an exceptional group of senior students from Kiama High School Debating team—Adam, Aidan, Nyasa, and Sarah. These

exceptional students made it all the way to the Regional Finals of the 2024 Premier's Debating Challenge. They fought valiantly in the final against Smiths Hill, narrowly defeated and gracious in defeat. The adjudicators were full of praise for the team's ability to articulate their points with clarity and conviction. Throughout the competition, the team demonstrated tremendous growth, showcasing their ability to debate with skill and confidence. A huge congratulations to Adam, Aidan, Nyasa, and Sarah for their hard work, dedication, and exceptional performances throughout 2024. You've made Kiama High School proud, and we look forward to seeing your continued success in the future. As a former NSW Department of Education Public Speaking and Debating Adjudicator and Coach, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Kiama High School staff, teachers, parents, and the local community, for their continued support of our students. Here's to more achievements and to the bright future ahead for Kiama High School!

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS LEWISHAM

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown electorate, I would like to recognise the incoming Christian Brothers' Lewisham Student Leadership Team. Their 2025 Student Leaders include Captain John Kotselas; Vice Captains Antonio Raciti and Andrea Catanzariti; Prefects Theo Malliaros, Alexander Riley, Christopher Panagiotlaris and Jonathan Nolan. House Captains include Archie Hirst, Ben Ong, Lucas De Sousa, Connor Papadimitriou, Reuben Elias, George Rehayem, Jayden Candotti and Daniel Shakir. Becoming a representative for your school is a highly rewarding way of contributing to the strength and connection of our community - whether at school, in our neighbourhoods, or around the world. We look forward to seeing the work and initiatives of these Student Leaders in 2025 and the contributions they will make to their school community and our electorate of Newtown.

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—It is with great pride that I acknowledge the outstanding achievements of the 2024 Year 6 students at St. Francis Xavier's Catholic Primary School. This dedicated group has demonstrated remarkable growth, leadership, and a strong sense of responsibility throughout the year. Their positive contributions have made a lasting impact on the school community, and they have set an excellent example for their peers. I would like to congratulate the members of the Year 6 class of 2024: Ruo-Tung (Antonia) Chiou, Daniel Jeffremkov, Jayden Joseph, and Faith Melgar. Each student has shown a commitment to excellence, whether through academic achievements, active participation in school events, or their willingness to help others. Their involvement in fundraising, special events, and supporting younger students has helped to create a warm, inclusive environment at St. Francis Xavier's. As they transition to high school, I am confident that these students will continue to excel and embody the values of faith, kindness, and perseverance. I wish them all the best in their future endeavours and look forward to seeing the wonderful things they will accomplish.
