

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Friday 28 March 2025

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

The CLERK: I announce that the following paper petition signed by more than 10,000 persons has been lodged for presentation:

Kosciuszko National Park Wildlife Management

Petition requesting that the Legislative Assembly repeal the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act 2018 and ensure that feral animals are not prioritised over native wildlife in a national park, received from **Dr Joe McGirr**.

The SPEAKER: I set down discussion on the petition as an order of the day for a future day.

[Notices of motions given.]

Bills

RETURN OF PROCEEDS OF CRIME (GAMBLING BUSINESSES) BILL 2025

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (10:19): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Today I introduce my private member's bill, the Return of Proceeds of Crime (Gambling Businesses) Bill 2025. This is the second time I have introduced the bill, and I will keep introducing it until it passes. The problems that the bill deals with can no longer be ignored. Governments should never be in the gambling business. In a sense the New South Wales Government is in the gambling business, because every year NSW Treasury fills its coffers with taxes from gambling companies like Betfair, Ladbrokes and the TAB. That causes a massive conflict of interest when it comes to gambling reform. If somebody is making a lot of money from crime, a part of them is not going to want less crime. The Premier and every member of the Government will say that they do not want to profit from the proceeds of crime. I say, if that is the case, prove it.

Sadly, right now, sports gambling companies in Australia are directly connected to crime. It is a statement of fact that Betfair, Ladbrokes and the TAB all receive stolen money and keep it. We know that because judges in court, in case after case, have looked at all the evidence and ruled that Betfair, Ladbrokes and the TAB have received stolen money and then chosen to keep that money. As I have asked before in this place, if someone stole a wallet or a purse and gave it to someone else, would it be fair for that person to keep it? Of course it would not. We would expect that person to give the stolen wallet or purse back. In New South Wales the law requires that person to give back the stolen wallet or purse. Why is gambling money treated differently? Why is it currently legal in New South Wales for gambling companies to knowingly keep stolen money, rather than giving it back to the victims?

New South Wales laws must be changed to require that the proceeds of crime, currently being hoarded by gambling companies, are given back to victims. That is what my private member's bill will do. We need every member in this place to get behind this sensible law. Currently, gambling companies see stolen money as profits. But to the victims, that money is often their life savings. In the past, gambling companies have pushed back against

reform by arguing that they cannot ever be sure that the money they received was stolen and so they should not have to give the money back to the victims.

That is a pathetic argument for a number of reasons. For a start, gambling companies are meant to do checks to ensure that gamblers are not using the proceeds of crime to gamble. If people are gambling with the proceeds of crime, the gambling companies obviously are not doing those checks properly. To give members an example of how badly those checks are being done, think about this: South Australia's Independent Gambling Authority has found that 50 per cent of problem gamblers—that is one in every two—admits to committing crimes in order to gamble. That means a lot of stolen money is being gambled and gambling companies are not bothering to do anything to stop it.

As I have previously explained, under my bill—which I call on the Government, the Opposition and the crossbench to support—there can be no doubt that gambling companies have received the proceeds of crime. The bill requires a court to rule that gambling companies have received the proceeds of crime and then allows the court to make an order that those proceeds of crime must be returned to the victims who are also identified by the court. Can any member explain to me how gamblers can be sent to jail for gambling-related crimes and yet the courts cannot order that the stolen money be returned to the victims? How on earth can any member fail to back my bill that would require gambling companies to return stolen money to victims? Most MPs go out of their way to declare that they support law and order. If they really support law and order, they should prove it by supporting my bill.

As I have said previously, my bill is based in part on a Federal bill which was tabled by Federal Independent Andrew Wilkie. A similar bill is before the Tasmanian Parliament, and one is about to be introduced in the Victorian Parliament. One of the cases these laws are based on involved a man called Gavin Fineff and his victims. He was a financial planner from New South Wales who had developed an addiction to sports betting. His addiction was facilitated and actively exploited by gambling companies Sportsbet, Ladbrokes and TAB. Gavin defrauded 12 of his clients, stealing amounts ranging from \$60,000 to \$745,000. When his crimes were discovered, Gavin quickly confessed everything. He then helped prosecutors and forensic accountants to work out how much money was stolen and from whom. Gavin was eventually sentenced to nine years in jail.

Recently one of my advisors visited Gavin at the Emu Plains Correctional Centre where he is being held. Gavin is paying for his crimes, but guess what happened to the victims' money? Two of the gambling companies kept all of the stolen money they received from Gavin, and one of the companies gave back just a tiny portion of the stolen money to the victims. That is because at the time of sentencing the judge did not have the power to order that the stolen money be given back to the victims. My bill will give judges that power. Under the bill, victims will get their money back and have their devastated lives at least partly repaired.

There was a time when I thought my bill would be supported by one of Australia's biggest sports gambling companies—Sportsbet. For weeks, representatives of Sportsbet met with me and seemed to play along, saying they agreed with my bill in principle. I suspect they knew that saying no to this bill would not pass the pub test. Incredibly, after weeks of making all the right noises, Sportsbet did a backflip and said it would not support the bill after all. I do not really care what Sportsbet wants or does not want. If that is its attitude, then to hell with it. In the same way that I would not ask Jack the Ripper for advice on public safety, I am not about to rely on Sportsbet to help reduce gambling harm.

Ultimately, I only care what the major parties and the crossbench think. I am asking you all to think about the victims here. As politicians with the power to change laws, why would we not do everything we can to reduce the harm to victims by returning their stolen money? Do any of us want gambling companies to continue to knowingly keep the proceeds of crime? I say to Sportsbet and all of the other gambling companies: Change is coming, and not just in New South Wales. I anticipate that, in time, similar bills will be introduced in every State and Territory in this country. New South Wales can and must be first State to pass this legislation. We must hold the gambling companies to account by forcing them to give stolen money back to victims. This bill must become law.

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

Debate adjourned.

CRIMES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (YOUTH CRIME) BILL 2025**First Reading****Bill introduced on motion by Mr Alister Henskens, read a first time and printed.****Second Reading Speech****Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (10:29):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I acknowledge the North Coast mayors who are in the gallery to hear the introduction of this important bill, the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Youth Crime) Bill 2025. I particularly acknowledge Mayor Robert Musto, Mayor Nikki Williams, Mayor Steve Allan, Mayor Kinne Ring, Mayor Adam Roberts and general managers Bede Spannagle and Mark Griffioen. I thank them for attending Parliament and for their interest in this very serious issue that is impacting their communities and, indeed, many communities around our State. Unfortunately, the attempts by Chris Minns to deal with the youth crime crisis experienced around our State have not been successful. Twelve months ago Chris Minns said that we need a short, sharp intervention through the introduction of a new bail test under section 22C of the Bail Act for 14- to 18-year-old youths who were repeat offenders of serious break and enter offences or motor vehicle theft.

However, last week Chris Minns left it to the Attorney General alone to announce defeat on the youth crime legislation. The Attorney General was forced to seek a longer extension to the youth bail reform of 12 months ago until April 2028 but, before he could get that extension, he was forced to explain why he needed it. In explaining to Parliament why he needed more time, he was forced to reveal that many of the programs promised 12 months ago were not in place. The Attorney General was not able to give an evaluation of the laws that 12 months ago he promised he would give to Parliament this month. He became "No Data Daley" as no metrics of measurements were presented other than statistics that the top bureaucrat, in the budget estimates hearing only a couple of weeks before, had said were misleading. He was left with a pretty transparent attempt at kicking the problem of youth crime down the road so that, in the words of one MP, youth crime would be out of sight and out of mind. In the original second reading speech on the bill to insert a new section 22C in 2024, the Attorney General said that the section would work as follows:

... in tandem with a suite of measures and supports that aim to provide therapeutic and community-based solutions to address offending behaviour and support regional communities so that they can continue to support and care for their young people.

We can all agree that the best youth crime response is to prevent it altogether. But, unfortunately, the problems of youth crime have continued notwithstanding Labor's section 22C, and notwithstanding the wraparound services that have been promised by the Government. It was quite clear from debate last week in Parliament that those laws have not been working. MPs explained how people in regional areas were so afraid of their homes being broken into that they had baseball bats under their beds and obsessively checked that all doors and windows were locked at night. In recent weeks Daniel McNamara was tragically killed while riding his motorcycle from a petrol station and being struck by a vehicle allegedly driven by a 14-year-old driver. One of the passengers in the vehicle was a youth who was on bail.

The youth crime occurring around the State is not limited to impacts on the broader community. The lives of these young people themselves are put at risk. Also within the past few weeks, a 17-years-old teenager was killed and others, aged 13, 14 and 16, were seriously injured in a high-speed crash. The vehicle was allegedly stolen. Each of the boys in the vehicle was known to police. The problems of increasing youth crime since the State election was never just limited to Moree. The problem is happening all over the State. It is happening in metropolitan areas, including in my electorate. There is a new Instagram page taunting the Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai police with post-and-boast crimes including break and enter offences and videos of young offenders riding in stolen vehicles. One post brags about stabbing an innocent shopper at Hornsby Westfield only a few weeks ago.

The current situation around the State clearly requires constant review and monitoring by this Parliament. In its wisdom, the upper House agreed that we need to keep youth crime in sight and in mind. The upper House agreed with the Opposition that the Government should not kick this issue down the road until April 2028, and section 22C will now extend for a shorter time until 1 October 2026 when, after 2½ years of operation, the results of the Minns Government reforms can again be assessed by the Parliament. But the Opposition is not going to sit on its hands like the Minns Government and wait until then.

The Opposition is introducing a bill, which any reasonable government would support, to reform further bail and sentencing of serious repeat offending young people between the ages of 14 and 18, which it is hoped will strongly deter them from committing future crimes. In doing so, the Opposition is motivated by the need for results and not ideology. The soft approach has failed all over our State, but especially in places like Moree,

Kempsey, Grafton, Casino, Coffs Harbour, Griffith, Goulburn, Albury and Dubbo. A stronger approach to actually benefit these young people as well as the community is needed. In addition to a different bail test, there is a need for clear laws that will prevent these repeat serious offenders from reoffending if a court determines that they should not be held on remand pending their trial and should be given bail. This bill will do that.

For a start, under Labor's laws the only serious repeat offences that its bail laws concern are serious break and enter offences and motor vehicle theft offences. There are a lot of serious indictable offences that are not covered by Labor's laws. Why is there a lighter bail test for repeat offences where one of them may involve murder, sexual assault, assault causing grievous bodily harm, knife crimes or fire-bombing offences than for repeat motor vehicle theft or serious break and enter offences? Surely a sensible law to deal with serious repeat offenders would include all serious indictable offences. Our bill will make that change.

We believe that these repeat young offenders should not be on the streets between the hours of 8.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. It should be a universal and mandatory condition of bail that they have a curfew between those times. That will stop these young people committing repeat offences when many of these break and enters and motor vehicle offences occur at night-time. We also believe that these serious repeat offenders should have electronic monitoring so they know that they are being watched if they try to commit any further crimes. We should make it clear to these young repeat offenders that there are very strict conditions attached to their bail. Under this legislation their bail will be revoked if they breach any bail condition, commit another offence or tamper with their monitoring device. We want monitoring to be by a government agency to ensure that government is responsible for doing it properly.

The cost to government of electronic monitoring is a fraction of the cost of keeping these young people on remand. Some say that not all young people's circumstances are suited to electronic monitoring, so this law may mean that those young people will not be granted bail and held on remand.

In response to that criticism, I say that it is for the Government, the youth justice system and our family and community services [FACS] system to provide them with the necessary supports. As a former FACS Minister, I know it takes over a million dollars each year to keep a young person in juvenile detention. It is a false economy for the Government not to be providing these repeat offenders with the home support that they need. While the current FACS Minister has said a lot about reforms to out-of-home care, why has she said not one thing about the need to provide a proper environment of support for these serious repeat youth offenders?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): Order! The member for Kiama is interjecting from the advisers' area. He is not on the floor of the Chamber so I cannot call him to order.

Mr Gareth Ward: So if I were interjecting from inside the Chamber, that would be okay?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): If the member for Kiama were inside the Chamber, I would call him to order. The member will cease interjecting.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: There is no shortage of money in the FACS portfolio. I had a budget of over \$8 billion in 2021 when I held that portfolio. It is about time that the Government showed how it is using its resources to deal with these problems rather than just passing a section 22C bill and forgetting all about youth crime. As one MP said, an approach of out of sight, out of mind is all we are getting from this Government. Finally, the best way of stopping these young people from offending in the future is to make them face their victims. We will introduce victim impact statements for these serious repeat youth crime offences so the accused can hear firsthand how their crimes have changed people's lives for the worse. It will also make the victims believe that the criminal justice system does hear and understand the impacts of these crimes on the community, and takes these impacts and community safety into account when sentencing these young people.

I now turn to the bill in detail. Schedule 1 concerns amendments to the Bail Act. Item [1] of schedule 1 to the bill repeats in section 22C (1) (a) the current provisions and tests under section 22C of the Bail Act put into law by the Minns Government 12 months ago. But those provisions need to be added to and improved, which is what this bill will achieve. With respect to how the courts are applying the high degree of confidence test for the granting of bail, it is fair to say that there has been some unwillingness to apply it and refuse bail, as was perhaps intended by the Government last year. Decisions like *R v TW*, *R v BH*, *R v TB* and *R v JS* in the NSW Supreme Court show a judicial opposition to the fact that a different and harder test is in place for children between the ages of 14 to 18 than applies to adults, even on "show cause" offences under the Bail Act.

These concerns result in Supreme Court judges being disposed to be satisfied on the evidence during a review of bail that they have a high degree of confidence that an indictable offence will not be committed on bail with appropriate conditions, even for these repeat youth offenders. The Attorney General has not released the rate of the Supreme Court granting bail after a magistrate has refused bail under section 22C as it currently stands. One can assume that the figures do not support that section 22C is successful, as the continuing youth crime would

suggest. In the new section 22C (1) (b) (i) under this Coalition bill, a compulsory curfew from 8.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. will be imposed as a condition of bail in all of these repeat youth crime cases involving serious indictable offences. It is a usual condition of bail granted by the Supreme Court decisions if the matter falls under section 22C to impose either home detention or at least a curfew between those hours.

In the new section 22 (1) (b) (ii), electronic monitoring by a government agency is also a mandatory condition of bail. If the courts are going to continue to give bail in circumstances covered by section 22C in a significant number of cases then the Government should be doing everything it can, in the interests of community safety, to ensure that the conditions are complied with.

Electronic monitoring for youth offenders has been used in many Australian jurisdictions—including Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory—but it has never been used in New South Wales. This bill is true reform that will require it to be used in this State.

Despite the Attorney General suggesting last week by selectively quoting from a review of that State's pilot that Queensland has not been happy with electronic monitoring, electronic monitoring has been in place in Queensland since 2021 and was extended for another two years in the past few weeks. Electronic monitoring has dramatically reduced reoffending in domestic violence parole cases, as measured by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, the government data agency. It reported a reduction of 33 per cent in reoffending. It is reasonable to think that a similar result will be achieved for reoffending rates by young persons with a history of committing serious break and enter or motor theft offences or serious indictable offences. The introduction of electronic monitoring is a further support to judges, such that if they grant bail, they know that the conditions they impose will be enforced, as the court would no doubt want. Courts do not make orders without wanting and expecting those orders to be complied with. The Coalition is supporting the enforcement of those conditions of bail.

Under new section 22C (3A), inserted by schedule 1 [2] to the bill, bail granted under section 22C will be revoked in one of three circumstances: first, a failure to comply with the bail conditions; second, the young person being charged with another crime; or, third, any interference with the electronic monitoring device. In order to ensure that that revocation operates properly, new section 22C (3B) provides that bail can be granted again by the court if the breach of bail was a very trivial breach, like exceeding the curfew by a few minutes, or if there are other exceptional circumstances. It is a privilege for these repeat offenders to be granted bail, having regard to the seriousness of their circumstances. By having clear consequences for their reoffending, the Opposition believes that the existing law is tailored more in favour of community safety.

New section 22C (6) in schedule 1 [3] provides that the definition of "relevant offence", where a repeat offence will trigger the application of section 22C, is expanded to include any serious indictable offence. Under section 4 of the Crimes Act, a serious indictable offence means an offence that is punishable by imprisonment for life or for a term of five years or more. New section 22CA (1) in schedule 1 [4] to the bill states that the mandatory curfew from 8.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. can be varied either to be more stringent, such as involving home detention, or if it allows the relevant young person to engage in a therapeutic activity and the bail conditions are varied to indicate that change. New section 22CA (2) identifies considerations by the bail authority in assessing whether a young person is suitable for electronic monitoring.

Those provisions largely reflect the Queensland Act. They include, in new section 22CA (2) (a), whether the young person has the capacity to understand the condition and any other condition with regard to their particular circumstances; in new section 22CA (2) (b), whether the relevant young person is likely to comply with the conditions and any other condition having regard to their circumstances; in new section 22CA (2) (c), whether an adult person has indicated they will support the young person and notify a police officer of changes in circumstances or any breach of the conditions; and, in new section 22CA (2) (d), any other matter that the court thinks relevant.

New section 22CA (3) in schedule 1 [4] provides for the possibility of an order that the young person remain in custody until the electronic device is fitted and any other orders necessary to facilitate the operation of the electronic monitoring device.

Examples are then given as to the types of orders that may be necessary. Schedule 1 [4] to the bill in the new section 22CA (4) makes it clear that the definition of a young person under the section is the same as under section 22C. Schedule 1 [5] to the bill has transitional provisions with regard to the amendments that apply to offences charged after the commencement of the amendments where the offence has been committed before the commencement.

Schedule 2 to the bill concerns changes to the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1992. Schedule 2 [1], [2] and [3] facilitate the use of victim impact statements in the Supreme Court, District Court and Children's Court for the sentencing of offenders who fall within section 22C, as amended by the bill, to include serious indictable

offences. As I have already said, this will have great benefits for the administration of justice in these matters and in deterring future crimes by these offenders. Schedule 2 [4] is a similar transitional provision with regard to the amendments so that they apply to offences charged after the commencement of the amendments where the offence has been committed before the commencement. The bill has been the product of great collaboration within the Coalition. I thank the member for Northern Tablelands. I thank the Leader of the Nationals and the Deputy Leader of the Nationals for their input. I also thank my regional colleagues, the member for Goulburn and the member for Albury, for discussing this important issue, and I recognise the member for Clarence and the member for Oxley.

Mr Adam Crouch: And Terrigal.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: And the member for Terrigal, the member for Tamworth and almost every other member. This is an incredibly important issue for many communities around our State. This bill offers true change, such as mandatory curfews and electronic monitoring of young persons, for the first time. We are offering a much tougher approach. Importantly, we expand the Government's laws to include serious indictable offences. Importantly, these young offenders will have to face their victims and face the consequences of their actions. The Coalition's core beliefs in individual responsibility are promoted through this piece of legislation. We have had the opportunity to see how the Government's legislation has been operating, and, frankly, it is failing our State, and it is failing our communities.

This bill will significantly improve the current situation. I hope that this second reading speech has been of assistance to the Government and to the crossbench in understanding what the Coalition is introducing. This is only a beginning, not the end. We will continue to keep youth crime in sight and in mind. We will act responsibly in the interests of this community, and I hope that these reasonable provisions will be supported by the Government, that it will not play politics—as it always does—and that it will be constructive with regard to these matters. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): I acknowledge Gary Lee, Mayor of Nambucca Valley, who is in the gallery today.

PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT OPERATIONS AMENDMENT (E-WASTE) BILL 2025

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (10:54): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I introduce the Protection of the Environment Operations Amendment (e-Waste) Bill 2025. I acknowledge in the gallery the Kiama Municipal Council deputy mayor—or, perhaps more appropriately, mayor in charge of deputy—Melissa Matters, and CEO, Jane Stroud. I thank them for being here today. We do not inherit this planet from our parents; we borrow it from our children. Let us consider the challenge before us, which is the escalating crisis of electronic waste, or e-waste. It is a toxic avalanche of discarded smartphones, computers and appliances, growing five times faster than our global capacity to recycle it. In 2022 the world generated 62 million tonnes of e-waste, which is an 82 per cent surge since 2010, and projections indicate that we are on track to reach 82 million tonnes by 2030.

Australia's contribution to that global e-waste stream is particularly concerning. While the world grapples with this issue, we generate more than double the global average of e-waste per capita. In 2022 alone, across the world, we collectively buried \$62 billion worth of recoverable natural resources within this e-waste. This is not just waste; it is a wasted opportunity. It is a crisis demanding our immediate action. It is a challenge for each State, including New South Wales. Today, I seek to do something about this challenge by introducing watershed legislation. The bill is designed to confront the challenge head-on. The bill proposes to amend the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 to prevent e-waste from being sent to landfill and to mandate e-waste recycling, fundamentally transforming our approach to electronic waste management in New South Wales. It hits the triple-bottom-line bullseye. It addresses environmental challenges by deferring waste from landfill, and it addresses social challenges such as unemployment with major opportunities in disability employment.

In addition, the economic benefits are obvious—the bill saves people money by reducing taxes associated with putting waste into landfill. The bill is inspired by the efforts and dedication of individuals like Shoalhaven City Council's 2022 Young Citizen of the Year, Wade Cawley from the Kiama electorate, who is repurposing

waste and establishing his own e-waste business to upcycle and help to keep recyclable materials out of landfill. His dedication is commendable, and we acknowledge his significant contribution. However, individual actions, while valuable, cannot stem this growing tide of e-waste alone. We need systemic change, and the bill provides the framework for that change.

The status quo is irresponsible and unacceptable. The practice of sending e-waste to landfill poses significant environmental and public health risks. As the Australian Institute of Physics highlights, e-waste contains a cocktail of substances, including lead, mercury, cadmium and brominated flame retardants. When those materials leach into the soil and groundwater, they contaminate our environment, damage fragile ecosystems and can have severe consequences for human health. That represents not only an environmental hazard, recognised by groups such as Clean Up Australia, it is also squanders valuable resources—including gold, silver and other critical minerals—that are essential for a sustainable future and our technological advancement. We are, as it has been said, quite literally throwing gold, silver and critical resources into landfill.

The bill will not only prevent further environmental harm; it will also unlock significant economic potential for our State. CSIRO modelling indicates that doubling our circularity—that is, doubling the amount of materials that are kept in use—would boost Australia's GDP by \$26 billion over 10 years while simultaneously slashing greenhouse gas emissions by 14 percent. This demonstrates the clear economic and environmental benefits of transferring to a circular economy. We can make once finite resources become infinite. To provide a more specific context for New South Wales, let us consider the potential economic benefits within our State. The e-waste recycling industry has the potential to generate new employment opportunities in New South Wales. It is estimated that for every 10,000 tonnes of e-waste processed, approximately 30 full-time equivalent jobs are created. That translates to potential job creation in collection, sorting, dismantling, processing and refining of e-waste.

Furthermore, a local e-waste recycling industry can reduce the reliance on overseas markets for valuable materials, enhancing New South Wales' economic resilience. However, we must heed the warning from Professor John Thwaites, the chair of the Monash Sustainable Development Institute and the former chair of the Circular Economy Ministerial Advisory Group, who recently highlighted Australia's failing circular economy, indicating that our performance is lower than the global average.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The time for consideration of general business notices of motions for bills having expired, the House will now proceed to orders of the day. I set down resumption of the interrupted second reading speech as an order of the day for a later hour.

Committees

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Reports

Debate resumed from 26 March 2025.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that the House take note of the report entitled *Accountability measures for decision-making: Critical Communications Enhancement Program*.

Report noted.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (11:01): As Chair: It is with great pleasure that I address the House today as the chair of the Legislation Review Committee. The committee tabled its twenty-fifth digest of the Fifty-Eighth Parliament on 18 February 2025. In the digest the committee examined six bills that were introduced during the prior sitting week. It also reviewed nine regulations and statutory instruments, one of which it reported on with comment. Eight regulations were examined and found not to reach the reporting threshold under the Legislation Review Act, and they are set out in part 3 of the digest. As members are aware, the committee has the important role of reviewing all bills introduced and all statutory instruments tabled in Parliament. The committee's scrutiny of legislation informs members of both Houses and the community about the potential impact of legislation on personal rights and liberties, and any potential inappropriate exercise of government or legislative power.

I draw members' attention to the key issues raised. The committee reported on the Crimes Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025, which amended the Crimes Act 1900 and the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002. The amendments made it an offence to block, impede, or hinder, without reasonable

excuse, a person accessing or leaving a place of worship. The bill also made it an offence to harass, intimidate or threaten a person accessing or leaving a place of worship. The bill further authorised police officers to issue move-on directions in relation to demonstrations, protests, processions or assemblies outside or near places of worship in certain circumstances.

In its report, the committee highlighted that the two new offences for individuals in or near a place of worship could restrict certain activities, which would impact on a person's freedom of expression, movement and assembly, and the implied freedom of political communication. The committee noted that the bill included safeguards such as a defence of reasonable excuse and exemptions for industrial action. However, as the offences carry significant penalties, including imprisonment, the committee referred the issue to Parliament for further consideration.

The committee also reported on the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Racial and Religious Hatred) Bill 2025, which amended the Crimes Act 1900, the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 and the Graffiti Control Act 2008. The amendments increased the penalty for the offence of knowingly displaying a Nazi symbol by public act in circumstances where it is displayed near a Jewish school, a synagogue or the Sydney Jewish Museum, without reasonable excuse. The bill also amended the definition of "public act" to include graffiti. The amendments to the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 allowed offences partially motivated by hatred or prejudice against a particular group of people to be an aggravating factor in sentencing.

The committee highlighted amendments to section 93ZA of the Crimes Act, which would create an aggravated version of the offence of displaying a Nazi symbol if it is displayed near a Jewish school, a synagogue or the Sydney Jewish Museum, with the penalty being a fine of \$22,000 and/or two years imprisonment. The committee previously reported on the issue when the original offence of displaying a Nazi symbol was introduced. Consistent with that report, the committee noted that the amendment may restrict a person's freedom of expression and association. However, the committee acknowledged that the amendments narrow the scope of the offence to public acts of displaying Nazi symbols near Jewish schools, synagogues or the Sydney Jewish Museum. It also acknowledged the exemptions for displaying Nazi symbols in connection with Buddhism, Hinduism or Jainism, or where it is done reasonably and in good faith for limited purposes, as well as the intent of the bill to protect individuals from activity that may incite, or amount to, acts of hatred or prejudice. For those reasons the committee made no further comment.

The committee also commented on the private members' bills the Crimes Amendment (Display of Nazi and Terrorist Symbols) Bill 2025 and the Summary Offences Amendment (Public Assemblies) Bill 2025, which were introduced as cognate bills and which similarly seek to amend section 93ZA of the Crimes Act 1900 regarding the display of Nazi and terrorist symbols, among other proposed changes. I turn now to another private member's bill that the committee reported on, the Greyhound Racing Ban Bill 2025, which seeks to ban greyhound racing in New South Wales and activities associated with the greyhound racing industry.

The bill also creates offences to protect greyhounds involved in racing and measures to discontinue Greyhound Racing NSW. The committee noted that the bill includes a wide regulation-making power to make regulations regarding anything necessary or convenient for carrying out or giving effect to the Act. The committee acknowledged that wide regulation-making powers allow for more flexibility in regulatory responses and that regulations are subject to disallowance. However, as the regulation-making power would prescribe matters with little limit, the committee referred the issue to the Parliament for its consideration.

Finally, the committee reported on the Court Security and Surveillance Devices Amendment (Body-Worn Recording Devices) Regulation 2024, which seeks to extend by one year the trial of the use of body-worn recording devices by sheriff's officers in courts. The committee previously commented on the Court Security and Surveillance Devices Amendment (Body-Worn Recording Devices) Regulation 2023, which permitted sheriff's officers to use body-worn recording devices in court premises for a one-year trial period. It highlighted that the use of these devices in court could impact on a person's privacy rights. I commend the digest to the House.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (11:07): I make a contribution to debate on the Legislation Review Committee's *Legislation Review Digest No. 25/58*. I thank the chair for her leadership of the committee and the secretariat, who do a wonderful job. Unfortunately, I do not have any references to Henry VIII clauses in this report, which I know Mr Temporary Speaker looks forward to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): They are a personal favourite of mine.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL: Absolutely. Six bills were considered in the period. One bill had no issues, but issues were raised with the other five bills. The Crimes Amendment (Display of Nazi and Terrorist Symbols) Bill 2025 and the Summary Offences Amendment (Public Assemblies) Bill 2025 were found to have issues with the freedom of expression and association, which the committee made no further comment on; and with the right to

liberty, freedom from arbitrary detention and absolute liability offences, which were referred to the Parliament for its review.

The second bill that the committee looked at was the Crimes Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025. That was found to have issues with freedom of expression, movement and assembly, and political communication, which were referred to Parliament; with the reversal of onus of proof, which was a strict liability offence that the committee made no further comment on; and with the expansion of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act, freedom of political communication and commencement by proclamation, which the committee referred to Parliament.

The Crimes Legislation Amendment (Racial and Religious Hatred) Bill 2025 was found to have issues regarding the freedom of expression and retrospectivity. The committee referred the issue of retrospectivity to Parliament for consideration. The committee looked at the Housing Amendment Bill 2025, which was found to have issues regarding the wide power to compulsorily acquire land. That serious matter was referred to Parliament for consideration. The inappropriate subdelegation of significant legislative powers was also referred. Finally, the committee looked at the Greyhound Racing Ban Bill 2025, which was found to have issues regarding a wide general regulation-making power. Specifically, the bill proposed:

... to create a general regulation-making power in section 16 of the proposed Greyhound Racing Ban Act 2025 (the Act) to prescribe anything 'necessary or convenient' for carrying out or giving effect to the Act. The Committee notes that there does not appear to be any provisions which define or narrow the ordinary meaning of 'convenient' or 'necessary'.

The Bill may therefore include a wide regulation-making power. Unlike primary legislation, regulations are subordinate legislation that are not required to be passed by Parliament and that the Parliament does not control when they commence.

We therefore ask the Parliament to take a very serious look at that aspect of that bill. That concludes my comments on the report. I thank all who were all involved.

Report noted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (11:11): As Chair: I speak about report No. 5/58 of the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics, entitled *Implications of orders for the production of papers pertaining to the office of Speaker*, dated 17 March 2025. The report examines the implications for this House of orders for the production of papers held by the Executive that pertain to the office of Speaker, consistent with a referral made to the committee by the House on 20 February 2025. The referral from the House was made in the context of a resolution passed in the other place on 19 February 2025, which, among other things, sought the production to the other place of documents in the custody of the Premier or the Premier's Department relating to office-holder vehicle use by current and former Speakers of the Legislative Assembly.

The documents sought in relation to current and former Speakers included all driver and car logbooks, emails, diary entries, text or electronic messages and notes relating to repairs, maintenance and cleaning of office-holder vehicles since 23 March 2019. The referral from the House provided that the committee's inquiry should investigate any related matters. Given the significance of the issues raised, the committee resolved to obtain further information to assist in its deliberations. As Chair, I wrote on behalf of the committee to the Premier's Department and the Cabinet Office to request that no decision be made to comply with the section of the order for papers pertaining to the office of Speaker while the committee's inquiry was in progress. I also wrote to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly to request any additional information that he could provide in relation to the matter.

The committee received an expert briefing on matters relevant to the inquiry from Professor Emerita Anne Twomey, AO, of the University of Sydney, who is an acknowledged expert on constitutional law and the doctrine of the separation of powers. I thank her for sharing her knowledge and expertise with the committee. The committee's final report, tabled on 17 March 2025, raises several issues concerning the matter for inquiry. The report details the committee's concerns that the production of papers pertaining to the office of Speaker to the other place would be inconsistent with the principle of comity between the Houses. The principle of comity is fundamental to our bicameral parliamentary system.

The Constitution of the State establishes the two Houses of Parliament as separate and sovereign bodies, with neither House able to exercise authority over a member of the other House or inquire into the other's operations.

That principle, originating in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, has been upheld in this Parliament on numerous occasions in rulings by Presiding Officers and in various committee reports. The committee's report notes that the production to the other place of papers pertaining to the Speaker appears to be unprecedented in the history of this Parliament, and that the creation of such a precedent may lead to further orders by the Legislative Council to produce documents relating to the operations of this House that are held by third parties.

The Committee additionally considered how an order for papers relating to the office of Speaker may be outside of the scope of the powers of the upper House. That power is grounded in the basis that the production of State papers held by the Government is necessary for the other place to exercise its function of scrutinising the Executive. The report noted that the Speaker made a statement to the House on 20 February 2025 in which he referred to his status as an Independent member elected by this House and accountable to only this House. Further, the Committee noted that the documents relating to the Speaker's use of office-holder vehicles are held by the Premier's Department in an administrative arrangement, and that all related expenses are incurred out of the Speaker's own budget, the use of which he is accountable for to this House.

For those reasons, the committee's report questions the scope of the order for papers by the Legislative Council pertaining to the operations of the Legislative Assembly's most senior parliamentary officeholder, the Speaker, recognised constitutionally as the Assembly's independent and impartial representative. The report refers to correspondence received by the committee from the Cabinet Office confirming the Premier's decision to provide the relevant papers to the Speaker, rather than to the Legislative Council. I note that the Speaker has now received those papers and has made them available to members of the House. I thank my fellow committee members. This inquiry was conducted over a very short time frame, and it was very efficient. The committee members were collegiate and collaborative in their approach, and the report was unanimous. I thank everyone who contributed to it.

I make some additional remarks. At a time when threats to the safety and security of members of this House are at an all-time high, and when we must remind ourselves that democracy is fragile, it is imperative that we protect our parliamentary structures and protocols. It is deeply concerning that this order for papers was supported by both the Government and the Opposition, when it ultimately sought to breach the security and safety of current and former members through the public release of private addresses. For both the Government and the Opposition to support such a breach of the comity of Houses by a person who has little respect for this place, and little respect for the safety and security of members, sets a dangerous precedent.

I hope this is the last time the Government and the Opposition pander to that individual. In future, I hope they stand up to him. I hope that they stand up for parliamentary protocols and processes, and for the safety and security of members. That was all put at risk by this order for papers. I thank the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Helen Minnican; the Deputy Clerk, Carly Maxwell; and Sue Hunt and Jessica Zhang of the committee secretariat for their professional support throughout the process. I commend the report to the House.

Reported noted.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr): The question is that the House take note of the report. Fingers crossed there is a Henry VIII clause.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (11:18): As Chair: I do not know about that, Mr Temporary Speaker. However, we still have reports to go—the day is early. I take note of *Legislation Review Digest No. 26/58*. On 18 March 2025, the committee tabled its twenty-sixth digest of the Fifty-Eighth Parliament. In the digest, the committee examined eight bills that were introduced in the prior sitting week, and also reviewed eight regulations and statutory instruments which were examined and found not to reach the reporting threshold under the Legislation Review Act. Those are set out at part 2 of the digest. As members are aware, the committee informs both the House and the community about the potential impacts of legislation on personal rights and liberties and any potential and inappropriate exercise of government or legislative power.

I draw the attention of members to some of the key issues raised in the digest. The committee reported on the Bail Amendment (Extension of Limitation on Bail in Certain Circumstances) Bill 2025, which extends the temporary limitation test of granting bail to young people charged with certain offences as set out in section 22C of the Bail Act 2013. The bill amends subsection 22C (5) of the Act to allow the temporary test to continue until 4 April 2028. In its report, the committee highlighted its previous report on the Bail and Crimes Amendment Bill 2024, which introduced section 22C and gave the provision effect from 3 April 2024 until 4 April 2025. Consistent with its previous comments, the committee noted in its report that section 22C requires bail authorities to refuse bail to a young person alleged to have committed a relevant offence while on bail for a separate relevant

offence, unless the bail authority has a high degree of confidence that the young person will not commit a serious indictable offence on bail.

The committee acknowledged that the limitation on bail is a temporary measure and that it seeks to address repeat offending in young people that may pose a risk to community safety. However, the committee observed that extending the temporary test until 4 April 2028 extends the time in which the provision may adversely impact individual rights such as presumption of innocence and the right to liberty and freedom from arbitrary detention. The committee also noted that the limitation on bail may conflict with article 37 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which provides that imprisonment of a child should only be used as a measure of last resort. The committee further noted that the threshold of a high degree of confidence is at the discretion of the bail authority and that young people may lack the capacity to understand the consequences of being refused release on bail. For those reasons, the committee referred the matter to Parliament for consideration.

The committee also reported on the Crimes Amendment (Inciting Racial Hatred) Bill 2025, which amended the Crimes Act 1900. The bill passed Parliament on 21 February 2025, with amendments, prior to the tabling of this digest. In accordance with section 8A (2) of the Legislation Review Act 1987 and the committee's practices, the committee considered and reported on the bill as introduced. The amendments created a new offence for committing a public act with the intention of inciting hatred towards another person or group on the grounds of race, where a reasonable person who was the target of hatred would fear for their safety or fear harassment, intimidation or violence. The provision adopted the meaning of "public act" that is provided for in section 93Z of the Crimes Act 1900.

The committee commented that the bill may be seen to place restrictions on the right to freedom of expression and association, as contained in articles 19 and 22 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. However, it noted that those rights are not absolute and may be limited by laws necessary for respecting the rights of other people and for the protection of public order. The committee noted that the bill's intent is to ensure public safety. It also acknowledged the inclusion of safeguards, including a reasonable person test and the exclusion of direct quoting or referencing of religious texts for the purpose of religious teaching from being captured under the new offence. For those reasons, the committee made no further comment. However, I note that the amendment extended religious text to religious debate.

Finally, I turn to private members' bills. The committee reported on the Health Services Amendment (Splitting of the Hunter New England Health District) Bill 2025, which seeks to amend the Health Services Act 1997 and the Health Services Regulation 2018. The bill was referred to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services for inquiry and report on 20 February 2025. The proposed amendments would dissolve the Hunter New England Local Health District and create the Hunter Local Health District and the New England North West Local Health District. The amendments would grant the Minister for Health the power to transfer assets, rights and liabilities from the Hunter New England Local Health District to the proposed local health districts by order published on the NSW legislation website.

In addition, the bill would exempt ministerial orders from being regarded as a breach of contract, a breach of confidence or a civil wrong by the New South Wales Government and any other affected party. The orders may not give rise to a remedy due to a change in the beneficial or legal ownership of an asset, right or liability. In its report, the committee observed that the bill would give the Minister wide powers to make orders. It noted that the orders may impact individuals' freedom of contract. This is because the orders are exempt from being considered as either a breach of contract or an event of default under contract.

The committee acknowledged that the orders are required to be published on the NSW legislation website and that they may enable flexible and timely management of establishing new local health districts. Unlike regulations, however, orders are not required to be tabled in Parliament and are not subject to disallowance under section 41 of the Interpretation Act 1987. The committee noted its preference for ministerial orders to be included in regulations to ensure an appropriate level of parliamentary oversight. For these reasons, the committee referred the matter to Parliament for consideration. I commend the digest to the House.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (11:25): I speak in contribution to the debate on the Legislation Review Committee's *Legislation Review Digest No. 26/58*. I thank the chair for her laser-like efficiency on the work of the committee. I also thank the many brilliant minds in the committee secretariat. Despite their youth, they seem to have incredible intelligence and the ability to create reviews of legislation so quickly. The committee considered eight bills during this period of review. I will leave the most exciting part to the end of the speech. We identified issues in five bills. The committee found an issue in the Bail Amendment (Extension of Limitation on Bail in Certain Circumstances) Bill 2025 concerning the right to the presumption of innocence, liberty and freedom from arbitrary detention requirement for granting bail. This issue was referred to Parliament for review.

The Crimes Amendment (Inciting Racial Hatred) Bill 2025 was found to have an issue with freedom of speech, but the committee had no further comment on this. The committee found issues regarding ministerial orders in the Health Services Amendment (Splitting of the Hunter New England Health District) Bill 2025. This issue was also ordered to Parliament for further review. The Transport Administration Amendment (Sydney Metro Governance) Bill 2025 had issues regarding commencement by proclamation, but the committee had no further comment on this issue. The final bill that we looked at was the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment Bill 2025. This bill had two clauses that were of particular interest to me. One was a Henry VIII clause, and the other clause had retrospectivity issues.

I will now speak in more detail on the Henry VIII clause. The bill would amend section 1.8 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, which provides a regulation-making power to enable regulations to amend schedule 9 to the Act. The committee previously commented on a similar regulation-making power in *Legislation Review Digest No. 8/58*, which reviewed the Greater Cities Commission Repeal Bill 2023. That bill allowed regulations to amend schedule 9 concerning areas that formed the Six Cities Region. The committee's comments have been consistent that the proposed provisions may amount to a Henry VIII clause by allowing the Executive to amend the operation of the parent Act without due reference to Parliament. The committee generally considers Henry VIII clauses in bills to be an inappropriate delegation of legislative power, as regulations are not subject to the same level of parliamentary scrutiny as primary legislation. On that note, I conclude my comments on the digest.

Report noted.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (11:29): As Chair: On Tuesday the Legislation Review Committee tabled its twenty-seventh digest of the Fifty-Eighth Parliament. In the digest the committee examined seven bills introduced during the last sitting week. It also reviewed three regulations and statutory instruments, which were examined and found not to reach the reporting threshold under the Legislation Review Act. Those are set out in part two of the digest. As I have previously said in the House, the committee informs members of both Houses and the community about the potential impact of legislation on personal rights and liberties, and any potential inappropriate exercise of government or legislative power. I note that it is a joint standing committee and that the Legislative Council elects members to it as required under the legislation. The committee does not only deal with bills introduced in the Legislative Assembly. I will not go into the comity of both Houses because I know it is controversial at the moment.

The committee reported on the Claim Farming Practices Prohibition Bill 2025, which seeks to create the Claim Farming Practices Act 2025. The bill proposes banning claim farming, which is the practice of contacting another person to encourage them to make a personal injury claim with the expectation of receiving a fee or benefit in return. The bill also seeks to amend the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014 to impose penalties on legal practitioners found guilty of the new claim farming offences. In its report, the committee highlighted the bill's proposed extraterritorial application and commented that it may impact the rule of law principle that a person is entitled to know the law that applies to them at any given time. The committee further noted that the proposed extraterritorial application is broadly worded to apply to the Act "so far as the legislative powers of the State permit". The committee referred the issue to Parliament for its consideration.

The committee also noted the bill's reversal of the onus of proof for establishing an exemption, commenting that it may impact the common law principle that a person charged with a criminal offence has a right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty. In that instance, because the offences would not attract a custodial penalty and the fines would apply to law firms rather than individuals, the committee made no further comment on the issue. Finally, the committee highlighted the bill's proposed wide regulation-making power, including allowing regulations to make savings or transitional provisions that may have retrospective effect. The committee generally comments on provisions that are drafted to have retrospective effect because they impact the rule of law principle that a person is entitled to have knowledge of the law that applies to them at any given time. Accordingly, the committee also referred that matter to Parliament for its consideration.

The committee also reported on the Community Improvement Districts Bill 2025, which seeks to create the Community Improvements Districts Act 2025 and make consequential amendments to the State Debt Recovery Act 2018. The bill proposes a framework for the formation and governance of Community Improvement Districts, which would enable groups of local businesses to develop proposals to provide services, activities and projects in defined geographical locations. In its report, the committee highlighted four separate issues that

reached the reporting threshold under the Legislation Review Act. The first issue relates to the bill's proposed wide regulation-making power, including allowing regulations to make savings or transitional provisions that may have retrospective effect. The committee referred the issue to Parliament for its consideration.

The second issue the committee highlighted was that the bill would allow the Minister for Transport and Transport for NSW to delegate their functions to any person or class of persons authorised by regulations. The committee commented that may provide for a wide delegation of statutory functions to a class of unknown persons, potentially enabling private individuals to perform functions that may be expected to be performed by public officials or authorities. The committee also referred the issue to Parliament for its consideration. The report further highlighted two issues requiring no further comment, those being commencement of the Act by proclamation and the introduction of strict liability offences.

Finally, I turn to the private member's bill, the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Racial and Religious Hatred Legislation Repeal) Bill 2025, which seeks to repeal recent changes made by the Crimes Amendment (Inciting Racial Hatred) Act 2025, the Crimes Amendment (Places of Worship) Act 2025 and the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Racial and Religious Hatred) Act 2025. The committee noted in its report that the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Racial and Religious Hatred) Act 2025 commenced on 2 March 2025. The bill seeks to retrospectively repeal the Act and insert a transitional provision into the Crimes Act 1900 to provide that prosecutions related to the Act are to be treated as though the Act never commenced. The committee reported on this issue, noting that the retrospective repeal of the Act may impact the rule of law principle that a person is entitled to have knowledge of the law that applies to them at any given time.

However, in this instance the committee acknowledged that if the bill did not repeal the Act retrospectively, the offences it created would be enforceable for the short period of time between its enactment and repeal. As this may impact the rule of law principle of the equal application of laws, the committee made no further comment on the issue. That concludes my remarks. I thank committee staff and commend the digest to the House.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (11:35): We are really catching up on these committee reports. I contribute to debate on the ongoing work of the Legislation Review Committee in *Legislation Review Digest No. 27/58*. For the third time today I thank the chair of the committee for her leadership and the brilliant secretariat team involved in this committee. There were seven bills for consideration in the review period. Six were identified to have issues. The Claim Farming Practices Prohibition Bill 2025 was found to have issues in regard to the extraterritorial application of laws and wide regulation-making powers with retrospective effect—which were referred to Parliament for review—and the right to the presumption of innocence with respect to reversal of onus of proof.

The Crimes Legislation Amendment (Racial and Religious Hatred Legislation Repeal) Bill 2025 was found to have an issue regarding the retrospective application of the repealing provision, on which the committee made no further comment. The Industrial Relations Amendment (Transport Sector Gig Workers and Others) Bill 2025 was found to have issues regarding, firstly, a broad power to make contract of carriage declarations and, secondly, freedom of contract. On both those issues the committee made no further comment. The Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025 was found to have a number of issues regarding wide regulation-making powers with retrospective effect, the granting of exemptions, the wide delegation of powers to unspecified persons, commencement by proclamation, the extraterritorial application of laws and continuing absolute and strict liability offences. A number of those issues were referred to Parliament for review.

The Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill 2025 was found to have issues regarding wide regulation-making powers with retrospective effect, on which the committee made no further comment. Finally, the Community Improvement Districts Bill 2025 was found to have issues particularly in regard to wide regulation-making powers with retrospective effect. The committee generally comments on provisions that are drafted to have retrospective effect because they impact the rule of law principle that a person is entitled to have knowledge of the law that applies to them at any given time.

The committee notes that this would be in conflict with section 39 of the Interpretation Act, which requires statutory rules to commence on the date on which they are published on the NSW legislation website. The provision further specifies that where one or more provisions of a regulation is expressed to commence before publication, they are taken to commence on the date they are published on the website rather than the earlier date. For those reasons, the committee referred this matter for serious consideration by the Parliament. That concludes my comments on the *Legislation Review Committee Digest No. 27/58*.

Report noted.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): It being 11.40 a.m., the House will now proceed with Government business.

*Bills***SCREEN AND DIGITAL GAMES INDUSTRIES BILL 2025****Second Reading Speech**

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (11:40): On behalf of Ms Jenny Aitchison: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill 2025 to this House. The bill is a legislative initiative that seeks to harness the dynamic and evolving world of screen and digital gaming. Supporting screen and digital games production brings both economic and social benefits. Productions made in New South Wales create jobs both in cities and in the regions. They also tell important stories that reflect the diverse cultures and communities that make up our wonderful State. When season one of *Bump* premiered on Stan in 2021 it was the platform's biggest ever premiere, breaking all-time viewing records for any local or international series. Generating an estimated 565 jobs in New South Wales, season four launched in December 2023. *Bump*, from New South Wales-based production company Roadshow Rough Diamond, continues to grow emerging talent. Multiple first-time directors have been given opportunities on the series and have gone on to direct other projects.

Another Screen NSW-supported production, *Fizzy and Suds*, is the ABC's first factual preschool series. The series, which hails from the Northern Rivers-based Tilt Media, is the ABC's first production to be certified as "inclusively made", having been produced with people living with disability, and was financially supported by the Screen NSW Production Finance program and its Post, Digital and Visual Effects Rebate. Of course, who can forget having the Harbour Bridge shut down a few years ago for the production of *The Fall Guy*? That film showcased incredible scenes all around Sydney, starred Ryan Gosling and Emily Blunt, and created an enormous number of jobs in the screen industry here in Sydney.

Much like the intricate storytelling in all our favourite films, this bill represents a new chapter in our ongoing narrative of innovation and progress in improving workforce capacity and capability. The first element of the bill I touch on is our approach to helping bring the current, outdated legislation into the twenty-first century, primarily by including digital games. The Film and Television Industry Act 1988 has served us well, but it desperately needs a refresh to reflect and support the film and digital games sectors in New South Wales. The year 1988 was the era of films like *Crocodile Dundee II* and *Emerald City*, and *Home and Away* aired for the first time. The creative industries have changed enormously since then, digital games more so than anything. The year 1988 was before the internet was even available in Australia, and *Super Mario Bros.* and *Final Fantasy* were the biggest games going around.

Some 81 per cent of Australians play digital games, with New South Wales home to 22 per cent of Australia's game studios and 16 per cent of its full-time employees. I am proud that many of those are based in Western Sydney. Among many New South Wales digital games businesses is Blowfish Studios. An award-winning developer and publisher of interactive entertainment, based in Sydney, Blowfish has gained a reputation as a blockchain game pioneer. Its latest game, *Phantom Galaxies*, was supported by Screen NSW through the Digital Games Rebate and integrates Web3 technology in an open-world space action role-playing game. This project employed 62 New South Wales residents and provided advanced skill development opportunities for New South Wales game practitioners.

Including digital games in this legislation is critical. It will allow the Government to set appropriate policy and regulatory settings for this sector to build growth and employment, as it does for film and television. In addition, the bill further modernises the existing legislation by updating the objects of the Act to include the recognition of screen and digital games storytelling as a public good. In doing this, it affirms the Government's commitment to sharing our local stories with each other and the world. The Government should not stand in the way of the growth of the industries that provide this function.

As such, the objects of the Act have also been updated to include the promotion and cooperation between the New South Wales Government, local councils and industry to be able to harness more support for the screen and digital games industries. Similarly, the bill includes key principles that public service decision-makers across the New South Wales government and local councils must consider in relation to facilitating screen and digital games production. These principles include ensuring that approvals are timely, fees are reasonable, and the default response is to support the production unless there are specific reasons not to—the "yes unless" clause.

The principles draw on and align with the principles in the Making NSW Film Friendly Premier's Memorandum and the Local Government Filming Protocol issued under the Local Government Act. The bill introduces accreditation for screen production friendly councils. This reflects the key role that councils play in supporting the film sector and allows the most supportive councils to be recognised for their valuable role in our

State's rich creative ecosystem. Eligibility and the process for accreditation will be determined by guidelines issued by the Minister, allowing time for these matters to be developed and consulted on with key stakeholders.

Criteria for accreditation of councils could include effective, long-term compliance with the Local Government Filming Protocol, including maintaining a film contact officer role and prominently displaying information about filming application and permit processes on their websites. It could mean promoting filming in their area to the industry by contributing location images and information to the Screen NSW locations database. It may include council film contact officers completing a Screen NSW-run screen-friendly training and certification course. Overall, to be accredited, the Government will be looking to councils that are willing to go above and beyond in encouraging filming in their local government areas and in making it easier for screen productions.

Having served on Parramatta council for 17 years, I know what a difference it can make to screen productions to have a council that supports and encourages them. While I cannot say I was filled with pride seeing local pubs and Parramatta jail starring regularly in *Housos*, it created huge opportunities locally and contributed to a much-loved and hilarious show. When I was a little kid, I had the opportunity to star in the very background of a XXXX ad, when it was filmed in my home town of Canowindra. While a brass band walked down the street into the pub, the crowd was cheering. They brought out all the kids from the Catholic school and primary school to make the background noise, and that was our contribution. That town has gone on to host many film and TV productions since then. My mum was an extra in a production of *Inspector Morse* that was done in Canowindra. More recently, the production of Nicole Kidman's film *Strangerland* was very much welcomed by the entire town.

Second, the bill introduces a new regulation to facilitate the establishment of a Screen and Digital Games Industries Advisory Committee, in place of the current Film and Television Industry Advisory Committee. This new committee will serve as a vital platform for collaboration, innovation and strategic planning, ensuring that our policies and initiatives are aligned with the needs and aspirations of these dynamic sectors. It will provide important strategic advice to the Government and serve as a voice for industry. Industry expertise is essential, so the chair and the majority of the committee will have expertise in the screen or digital games industry. The new committee will have up to 10 members and will be more representative, with at least one member to identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, and one member who must have digital games industry experience.

In addition, we understand that the Opposition will move an amendment to require that, as well as bringing relevant industry expertise, one member of the advisory committee must live or work in regional New South Wales. I thank the shadow Minister for the Arts and Heritage, the member for Tamworth, for his bipartisan support for the bill and agenda, and for his suggestion of this amendment to encourage perspectives and advice from experts across New South Wales.

This is a good amendment, which the Government will support.

The role of the new committee also includes advising on the annual allocation of program funding between film and television industry funding programs. An independent deputy chair will also support robust advice in this regard. The committee will act as a bridge between the government and industry, ensuring that our legislative framework is responsive and adaptive to the rapid changes in technology and market dynamics. It is proposed that the Screen and Digital Games Industries Act and regulation commence on 1 July to allow the current Film and Television Industry Advisory Committee to complete its term and ensure that there is no gap before the appointment of a new committee. I take this opportunity to express the Government's appreciation for the significant expertise of the current members of the Film and Television Industry Advisory Committee. We thank them for their important contributions to Screen NSW's support for the sector.

Finally, the bill proposes amendments to division 4 of the Local Government Act to deliver on and be consistent with the goals outlined earlier. Specifically, in section 116, the number of days within which a council must acknowledge receipt of an application to film has been reduced from seven days to two business days. This reflects contemporary business practices and technologies, such as automated email responses, which are the norm. In addition, amendments are proposed to section 117 to provide that the maximum application fee payable and the number of days within which an applicant must pay fees to a council be outlined in the Local Government Filming Protocol instead of the Act and regulations.

As mentioned, there are a number of legislative instruments related to screen production, and it is important that they are consistent and coherent. Including details on fee schedules in the Local Government Filming Protocol provides greater flexibility for future amendments if required. The Government aims to build a future where the screen and digital games industries not only thrive but also contribute significantly to our society and economy. In the world of digital games, the conclusion of one level often marks the beginning of another, filled with new challenges and opportunities. This bill represents the end of one chapter and the beginning of another in our

legislative journey. It is a testament to our commitment to fostering vibrant and sustainable screen and digital games industries. I commend the bill to the House.

Second Reading Debate

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (11:51): I contribute to debate on the Government's Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill 2025. The Opposition will support the bill. However, I foreshadow that we will move an amendment, which I will address in detail at a later point. The bill seeks to update film and television legislation while also including the digital games industry. The Government's bill repeals the Film and Television Industry Act 1988, replacing it with the Screen and Digital Games Industries Act. The bill also seeks to replace the Film and Television Industry (Advisory Committee) Regulation 2024 with the rebadged Screen and Digital Games Advisory Committee Regulation 2025. The bill follows the release of the NSW Screen and Digital Games Strategy in October 2024, which called for an update of the legislation.

The screen and digital games industries are vital to the economic and cultural wellbeing of New South Wales. According to the NSW Screen and Digital Games Strategy, the gross value add of the New South Wales screen sector is more than \$1 billion annually. Digital games are playing an increasing role in the local economy, with direct contributions to the economy now exceeding \$100 million per annum. There is untapped potential for the digital games industry in New South Wales. Worldwide, the industry is now worth more than \$249 billion. New South Wales should rightly seek a larger market share in digital games, and the Opposition looks forward to driving any initiative that will benefit the industry in our State. The Coalition is a strong supporter of the screen industry. The *Making NSW Film Friendly* Premier's Memorandum, the Made in NSW fund, and the Post, Digital and Visual Effects Offset are all successful initiatives that were established by the Coalition in government.

I now address the Opposition's foreshadowed amendment to the bill. The Opposition will move an amendment to ensure regional representation on the Minister's Screen and Digital Games Advisory Committee. A major concern with the Government's bill is that there is no mention of the region, with no specific focus on the regions in the bill. The regions play a large part in the industry, and I am deeply concerned that this Government is overseeing a sharp swing away from focusing on regional New South Wales and towards Sydney and the metro areas. There is work to be done in the cities. A second film and television studio is a must, and I recognise the shadow Assistant Minister for the Arts, Innovation, Digital Government and the 24-Hour Economy, the Hon. Jacqui Munro in the other place, who made a contribution about that.

It would be detrimental to the industry if the Government fails in its responsibility to look after and foster the screen and digital games industries in the regions.

Some of the world's most iconic films were shot in regional New South Wales. *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* and *Mad Max 2* were filmed in Broken Hill. *The Dish* tells the story of the Parkes Observatory and many of its scenes were also filmed in Forbes. *Muriel's Wedding* was filmed in Tweed Heads and *Danny Deckchair* was filmed in Bellingen. The regions have been at the very heart of New South Wales filmmaking throughout the industry's history, and there is no justification for centralising it in Sydney. Our regions are in fact home to industry leaders, and I acknowledge two outstanding regional leaders in the screen industry.

Located in the Northern Rivers area, Northern Rivers Screenworks offers professional industry programs and activities for people at every career stage to develop their skills and help build a diverse and thriving regional screen sector. Screenworks works hard to support and develop the screen industry across regional, rural and remote Australia. Also, SLR Productions in Coffs Harbour is a leading Emmy and multi-award winning children's and family entertainment company. It has created, produced and financed quality programs available in over 160 countries worldwide, and that content is very important. Those are just two examples of thriving companies that want to showcase the rest of New South Wales.

The New South Wales Opposition is calling on the State Government to push the Federal Government to back our State's screen industry by implementing Australian content quotas of up to 20 per cent for major streaming services, including a sub-quota of 20 per cent for available children's content. That call follows from the concerns, which are regularly raised at the annual Australian Children's Content Summit in Coffs Harbour, over major platforms not supporting the local industry. We are calling on the State Government to push the Federal Government to support the New South Wales screen industry, which has a proud and storied history of producing world-class film and television, supported by an incredible cohort of talented directors, producers, artists and other creatives.

That industry provides jobs for more than 3,500 skilled workers across the State, and Australian productions contributed \$496 million to the New South Wales economy in 2022-23. We need the Federal Government to ensure that our local screen industry has a fair go when it comes to foreign-owned video-on-demand streaming services. We urge the State Government to up the ante and back New South Wales

when it talks to the Federal Government about this issue. It is critical that our regions are represented on the Minister's advisory committee as well, and the New South Wales Opposition will move an amendment to that effect. The issues faced by the industry in the regions are unique. For the benefit of the House, I will address some of the issues that stakeholders have raised with me.

Our regions are brimming with the talent of both highly trained industry professionals and passionate workers. But the tyranny of distance and the cost of travelling and staying in our major cities is driving regional workers interstate. Workers in the Northern Rivers are finding it more affordable to travel to Brisbane and the Gold Coast for work than to Sydney. Workers are simply choosing to take their skills elsewhere—or worse, leaving regional New South Wales and relocating to other cities. This is an untenable situation for our State if we are to maintain our status as a globally recognised leader in film and television. Our neighbour Screen Queensland has a range of initiatives targeted at regionally based practitioners. Those initiatives include both financial and in-kind support that aims to increase the level of production, industry skill and employment, as well as screen industry activity in regional Queensland. I encourage the Government to consider similar initiatives to support our regions.

I also note that Netflix is running programs to pay regional workers, but we also need this Government to step up in that space. Clearly, these issues are unique to the regions and justify regional representation on the advisory committee. Their contributions will be valuable to the board's direction, and their feedback will continue to provide for the overall health and wellbeing of the sector. I thank the Government for its cooperation in relation to the amendment I will move, particularly the Parliamentary Secretary for the Arts, and also Clara Klemski from the Minister's office for her cooperation in working with us on it.

The Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill 2025 seeks to update legislation regarding the New South Wales film, television, and digital games industries. The bill repeals the Film and Television Industries Act 1988 and replaces it with the Screen and Digital Games Industries Act 2025, making minor amendments to existing legislation and adding the digital games industries into legislation. As previously stated, this is uncontroversial legislation due to the nature of the amendments, which are minor. Part 2 of the bill sets out the functions of the secretary and includes provisions to provide financial and other assistance to the screen and digital games industries, to provide advice to Government, and to undertake production for the State and government agencies. Part 3 of the bill establishes the new Screen and Digital Games Industries Advisory Committee and outlines its key function, which is to advise the Minister on the operation of the screen and digital games industries. Further detail is outlined in the regulations.

Part 4 of the bill sets out principles for New South Wales Government agencies and councils to follow regarding decisions relating to screen and digital games production. The principles include that fees are kept to a minimum, applications for access to locations and services are dealt with in a reasonable time frame, and access to locations is supported whenever appropriate. The bill also includes the concept of screen-production-friendly councils, which is an accreditation process for local government. I have spoken to local government representatives who look forward to greater detail and engagement from government in relation to this concept. I note that the guidelines for the accreditation will be determined by the Minister. I am not sure why consultation and work on these guidelines were not done prior to this legislation; in fact, it would have been helpful to our debate if the House had been given the benefit of knowing what a screen-production-friendly council looks like, but that opportunity has not been provided in this bill.

The Opposition again encourages the Minister to give regional New South Wales every consideration throughout the consultation and implementation of this friendly councils concept. Part 2 of the proposed Act includes the screen and digital industries regulation and outlines the composition and functions of the committee. The Opposition will be moving an amendment in relation to the membership of the committee and thanks the Government for its consideration in this regard. I note that the committee replaces the existing Film and Television Industry Advisory Committee. I take this opportunity to recognise the many current and former members of that committee for their contributions. Membership of the committee has increased from seven to 10. The regulation changes the role of the member without industry experience.

Under the Film and Television (Advisory Committee) Regulation, the chair of the committee is someone without industry experience. This is a sensible probity regulation that removes issues of conflict of interest and ensures that someone with proper governance experience leads the board. The government's Screen and Digital Games Industries (Advisory Committee) Regulation shifts that independent position to the deputy chair. It would be good practice for the Government to continually review this regulatory shift to ensure that probity issues are continuing to be effectively managed. I note these are remunerated positions. The Opposition will be providing the proper scrutiny of any appointments.

The last part of the bill details changes to the Local Government Act, which affirms the intention of part 4 of the bill relating to the principles to be applied to assist the screen and digital games industries. The Opposition

has consulted with Local Government NSW regarding these amendments and acknowledges that these changes are uncontroversial. Local government looks forward to being consulted regarding its involvement in the Government's Screen and Digital Games Industries Strategy. In closing, the New South Wales Opposition will be supporting the bill. It is an uncontroversial bill that has support in the industry and among local government. The New South Wales Opposition has consulted widely in relation to the bill and will be moving the foreshadowed amendment as a result. It is the Opposition's expectation that the Government will consult widely in relation to the planned screen-production-friendly council initiative. I sincerely hope this initiative will be embraced by councils across New South Wales, not just in metropolitan areas.

I note the Minister's statements regarding turning New South Wales from a "no" State to a "yes" State regarding filming. I do not believe those statements are entirely accurate or fair. New South Wales has a proud history as a hotbed of world-renowned film and television productions, and our digital games industry is developing well. The Opposition looks forward to the foreshadowed standalone Digital Games Strategy. We would like to see it come sooner than in three years, as mentioned in the Government's Screen and Digital Games Industries Strategy. I thank those who gave us feedback on the bill, particularly Lisa O'Meara from Screenworks and Suzanne Ryan from SLR Productions, who are committed advocates for the industry in regional New South Wales.

Again, I thank the Minister's office, led by Clara Klemski, for working cooperatively with us, and I thank the agency for helping with the amendments. I also thank Parliamentary Secretary Julia Finn, the member for Granville. The Opposition remains committed to working with industry to ensure the best outcomes for film, television and digital games in New South Wales. I look forward to moving the Opposition's amendment.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (12:04): I am proud to make a brief contribution in support of the Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill 2025, which delivers real, practical changes that will ensure New South Wales remains a leader in both screen and digital games production. The bill is about jobs, innovation and making it easier for our creative industries to thrive. Whether it is by streamlining film approvals or by removing barriers for game developers, we are ensuring that our State remains the engine room of Australia's creative economy. I will start with digital games. The industry is booming worldwide, and yet New South Wales has been missing out. Already one of the world's largest and fastest growing entertainment sectors before COVID-19 hit, the digital games industry expanded further during the pandemic. However, New South Wales is home to just 22 per cent of Australia's game development studios and only 16 per cent of the sector's full-time employees. I take the Opposition's comments, but we are committed to ensuring that New South Wales fulfils its potential. Those statistics are simply not good enough.

Games are a massive part of our culture and economy—81 per cent of Australians play them—but beyond entertainment, they are driving innovation in technology, education and training. Digital games development will be a crucial pillar of a modern, digital and creative Australia. Making digital games involves every type of media, from animation to sound, music and cinematography. In addition to the direct economic benefit, games production adds complexity, talent and a range of transferable skills to the economy. That is why the Government is stepping up. Alongside the introduction of the bill, we are making it easier for game studios to grow by lowering the minimum expenditure threshold for rebates from \$500,000 to \$350,000, giving emerging developers a fair shot at success. We are also launching the Digital Games Seed Development Program and Market Travel Funding Program, investing \$1.5 million over three years to help local studios develop and promote their work.

The changes mean more local talent can compete on the world stage, with this bill as the catalyst. It also embeds equity of access to such opportunities into the digital games landscape. We have incredible talent in New South Wales. Digital games like Not Doppler's real-time multiplayer car battler *Crash of Cars* and the zombie-smashing *Earn to Die* series have generated over 300 million downloads worldwide to date. Not Doppler is a Sydney-based game development studio and publisher founded in 2005. The *Earn to Die* games are among the most globally popular games published by any mobile developer in Australia. *Earn to Die* launched in 2015 and quickly reached number one on the iOS Paid Games Charts in 135 countries, accumulating over 160 million downloads as a free-to-play title on Google Play.

Continued Government investment in businesses like Not Doppler will increase games industry employment in New South Wales, demonstrating the kind of world-class creativity that exists in our State. It also means that we can break away from being a net consumer of gaming content and provide avenues for local creatives to showcase not only our creativity but our unique and diverse cultural mix and influences, which we are extraordinarily proud of. In passing the bill, we will be backing our developers, attracting investment and making New South Wales the place to be for digital games by signalling that we are hungry to develop content and not just consume it.

That also holds true for our screen industry. New South Wales has always been the beating heart of Australian film and television production. Our State is home to more than half of the nation's screen production

businesses, with 15,000 people employed in the sector. Our State has been the root of the global stereotype of Australians.

If you ask them about Australia, many people from across the world will reference *Home and Away*. That is an enduring stereotype. But red tape has been holding back productions, costing time and money, and making it challenging to compete against other States.

The bill introduces practical reforms that will make a real difference. It will allow local councils to be accredited as "screen production friendly", encouraging them to attract film and TV projects to their communities. It will streamline approvals, requiring government agencies and councils to process applications efficiently and minimise fees. If a production wants to use a location, access should be granted unless there is a clear and compelling reason to say no. Those changes will make it easier and faster for productions to get up and running, supporting jobs and investment across the State.

We have already seen what is possible when we support the screen industry. Productions like the soon-to-premiere *The Narrow Road to the Deep North* and the incredibly popular *Return to Paradise*, shot around Sydney and in regional New South Wales locations, showcase our amazing landscapes, our talented crews and our vibrant communities. *Return to Paradise*, shot on our coast at Wollongong and Shellharbour, has been sold around the world, including to the BBC. Those stories matter not just for cultural reasons but also because they bring in millions of dollars, create jobs and boost tourism. Furthermore, they provide an opportunity to ensure we tell our stories and provide the world with an insight into the extraordinary people and communities that make New South Wales so special today. Once again, we seek to produce content for the world rather than just consume it.

I refer to a local production out west that, I am not embarrassed to share with the House, reduced me to a sobbing mess not just once but twice. It is a wonderful anthology that reflects the Australia of today, which is why it resonates with so many. We have seen with productions like *Heartbreak High* that such stories have the potential to reach a worldwide market. We love seeing New South Wales on screen, whether it is our stunning coastline, our bustling cities, our outback towns or our diverse communities. The bill will make sure that we see even more of it. The world is our oyster.

Finally, this legislation brings the outdated Film and Television Industry Act 1988—which is almost as old as I am—into the modern era. By replacing it with the new Screen and Digital Games Industries Act, we are creating a framework that reflects today's industry. The new advisory committee will ensure that funding and policy decisions are made with industry expertise and with a focus on diversity and inclusion. The bill is a win for jobs, local economies and creativity. It is about making New South Wales the best place in Australia to make films, TV shows and digital games. I thank the Minister, the Parliamentary Secretary and member for Granville, the Minister's staff and the department staff, who have performed such an incredible amount of work to bring the bill to the House. Those things are not easy to do, and I thank them for their work and for the work that they will do in future in this space. I urge all members to support the bill.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (12:12): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill 2025 and indicate that we support the bill. Fridays seem to bring a nice multipartisan vibe to the Chamber. As my colleague in the other place Ms Cate Faehrmann so enthusiastically put on record, The Greens absolutely love and support the Australian film and television industries. We love our local creative industries and wholeheartedly back any efforts to support them to grow and thrive. The bill is one such effort. It seeks to assist, promote and strengthen the screen and digital games industries in New South Wales, and provide a regulatory framework for the NSW Screen and Digital Games Strategy that the Government released in October last year.

That strategy had four key priorities: creating stories, building sustainable growth, improving capacity and capability, and developing audiences to increase demand. The bill seeks to act on those priorities by establishing the Screen and Digital Games Industries Act 2025, which would replace the Film and Television Industry Act 1988. Who would ever have thought we would replace the word "television" as technology advances over time. The bill also establishes a Screen and Digital Games Industries Advisory Committee to advise the Minister about the screen and digital games industries—noting that we may be able to name the current Minister for Transport as the Minister for advisory committees at some point in the future.

The new Act will be accompanied by a regulation and associated amendments to the Local Government Act 1993 to create a voluntary accreditation scheme for "screen production friendly" local councils. Currently there is no framework for councils to support the film industry in their local area. While there are guiding principles within the Local Government Act, a memorandum from former Premier Gladys Berejiklian—last updated in 2009—is the only formalised structure. Technology has since moved on. The Act will empower the secretary to keep a register of councils accredited as "screen production friendly", as well as a list of spaces and

other locations accessible for screen production, to be maintained on the department's website. We hope to see that list of councils and spaces grow long. As the member for Newtown, I already anticipate that many locations within the vibrant inner city and inner west areas will be on that list.

I am proud to represent a vibrant community that contributes so much to the screen and digital games industry in New South Wales and beyond. So many of the wonderful people who make Newtown a special place are artists, creatives, actors, producers, animators and filmmakers. According to Screen Australia, the two Federal electorates of Sydney and Grayndler, which cover the Newtown electorate, have 66 cinema screens with over 8,000 seats that are regularly enjoyed by Newtown locals. I am sure that many locals enjoy participating in gaming, and others create gaming technology and are involved in the gaming industry. More than half the tickets for sports and arts events bought by inner westies are for events within the local community, compared with the national rate of only 3.6 per cent.

I give a shout-out to some of the wonderful local organisations that have done so much to fight for creative industries in New South Wales. It is a pleasure to have the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance in the heart of the Newtown electorate in Redfern. The Dendy Cinema in Newtown frequently hosts great independent film festivals, including the Palestinian Film Festival, which I thoroughly enjoyed attending last year. There are so many film and digital production companies and freelancers in the electorate—indeed, too many to name in this debate contribution. The bill will establish the Screen and Digital Games Industries Advisory Committee, whose purpose will be to advise the Minister on the screen and digital games industries in New South Wales. That committee will replace the Film and Television Industry Advisory Committee and expand its membership from seven to 10 people. That expansion follows consultation with the sector and reflects the growing size and diversity of the industry.

The Greens were pleased to hear outlined in the second reading speech the skills matrix that will be used to assess and appoint committee members. That will include, among other things, considerations of location, age, cultural and linguistic diversity, and subject matter expertise. At least one member of the committee must be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, and at least one member must have digital games industry experience. I also hope that due diligence will be done in appointing committee members to ensure that they have good workplace practices in terms of safety, and to support diverse communities, women and others. They should have good practices that support the diversity of the industry.

I echo comments from my Greens colleague in the other place, Cate Faehrmann, that people from other marginalised communities, including LGBTIQ+ people and people with a disability, must also be represented on the committee. It is essential that advisory bodies reflect the diversity of voices and stories in our communities. I understand that the member for Tamworth has indicated that he will move an amendment on behalf of the Opposition to include the requirement for at least one committee member to be a subject matter expert from regional New South Wales. The Greens support that foreshadowed amendment.

Creative communities and policies that support the creative industries, including those working and creating in film and digital gaming, need the backing of government. That is what the bill will accomplish. However, introducing this legislation and creating a way for councils to pat themselves on the back for being "screen production friendly" is not enough. Advisory committees are not enough. We need to make sure that we fund creatives at every level, ensuring that the next generations of creatives and production and technical workers are supported to emerge and thrive. That goes far beyond arts policy; it is why The Greens support free tertiary education, and why we want to see rents capped so that students and artists can afford to live in the communities that benefit so greatly from their work.

We want to ensure that independent gaming and film is supported, not just the mega-budget and star-studded projects, and that means backing in those who are innovating and creating on the fringes. That is why The Greens have a national plan to pay artists properly, by instigating a Federal pilot of the program A Living Wage for Artists for up to 10,000 artists. Artists say that the main challenges they face to stay in the industry are the pressures of living in an expensive city and the pressures of dealing with freelance, contract and often insecure work. Addressing the living wages of artists is one way we can ensure that they do not leave the industry. We also know that it is critical to ensure local content, as the member for Tamworth mentioned. That is why recently I was pleased to see the Australian Greens announce a commitment to strengthen Australian storytelling on screens by legislating local content quotas that require streaming services to invest 20 per cent of their Australian subscriber revenue into locally made and owned content, and to ensure they are regulated like Australian broadcasters.

I have the pleasure of representing in this place the many artists and creatives that form a big part of our inner city and inner west community. I recognise that many of those artists and creatives—those who have worked tirelessly in the screen industry for years—can no longer afford to live in the heart of our city. While The Greens absolutely support this reform, we also urge Labor State and Federal governments to recognise that support for the creative industries and for film, for gaming, for production and for independent arts requires a holistic approach

that adequately funds the whole industry. Backing in the film and gaming industry is about much more than a few snaps with a celebrity swanning up to a red carpet event. We must deliver real funding and support for the screen, gaming, arts and creative industries in New South Wales and across the country. I hope we can work constructively with the Government to ensure that funding. I thank the Minister's office for its collaborative approach to working with us on the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (12:21): I will deviate slightly from the speech I have prepared on the Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill 2025 to express my appreciation for film, television and games. As I was walking into the House the Whip said, "Dave, give a plug to games like *Roblox*." I do not know if members have heard of *Roblox*. It is probably one of the biggest and most popular games out right now. I grew up playing games and watching television. To be fair, a lot of those games and films inspired me to do different things in life. I do not know if any members remember Atari games as well as Alex Kidd by Sega—the member for Blacktown probably will. Those games have turned into the games we have now. Do members know the average age of a gamer, according to some surveys?

Mr Kevin Anderson: Is it 50?

Dr DAVID SALIBA: Not yet, but it is higher than members would realise. It was 38 a couple of years ago. Gaming plays such a big role in our lives. It is an escape and a chance to have fun and bond with others. My nephews love the iPad. They love *Roblox*, and they love playing many different games. I am able to connect with them over that. We play FIFA against each other. I am a pretty decent FIFA player on PlayStation. I am happy to play against any member in the Chamber. Gaming is able to establish relationships. It is important to talk about expanding our ability to derive a local network of film, television and gaming in New South Wales. I have spoken in the Chamber about my engagement with some local film producers in Western Sydney during the making of the film *Echo 8*. I was able to see some of the sets and appreciate how difficult the work is.

Last week participants in the Lebanese Film Festival came to Parliament to watch proceedings. We had a good chat in the Strangers' Restaurant about their experiences in film. There is such passion there. It is great to see that we are taking that passion seriously and seeing that work shine through. I support the bill, and I commend the Minister for the Arts for his work in this space. The bill aims to modernise film and television legislation by expanding coverage to the digital games industry. That is important. The digital games industry is growing commercially. We talk about some films, but some internationally produced games generate hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars in revenue.

If we are serious about bolstering our economy, then we need to jump on this to ensure we have a competitive economic advantage, particularly as we traverse the digital age. The bill does a bunch of things. It contains provisions to renew and modernise previous legislation to reflect current and emerging technologies in the industry. We are expanding our technological depth every year. Comparing society in 2025 with 2015, for example, we see that television was transformed with the introduction of Netflix and streaming. It changed the way we live and our commerce structures. I note the Government Whip is in the Chamber. He will be very excited about this speech.

Mr Nathan Hagarty: *Roblox*.

Dr DAVID SALIBA: Yes, *Roblox* is a very good game. Our society is evolving quickly. It is great to see that this bill reflects our evolution in the digital space, which I could talk about for a long time. The bill demonstrates this Government's commitment to reducing red tape. The bill will provide the highest possible level of government cooperation with filmmakers to encourage screen production in New South Wales, which is so important. At the same time, it will show the New South Wales Government's astute understanding of the rapidly growing digital games industry and offer support through appropriate policy settings and legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (12:25): On behalf of Ms Jenny Aitchison: In reply: I thank members for their contributions to debate on the Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill 2025. I thank the member for Tamworth for his considered contribution, and I acknowledge both his engagement with the Government on this bill and his deep passion for economic development and growth in New South Wales. He can rest assured that the enormous contribution that the regions have made to the screen industry is valued by the Government. A skills matrix has been developed for appointments to the committee that take into account a range of different skills, cultural backgrounds and geographies.

The Government supports the amendment of the member for Tamworth, which will require the committee to include a representative who lives and/or works in regional New South Wales. We also support the Regional Filming Fund, which is administered by Screen NSW. I thank the member for Liverpool, the member for Fairfield and the member for Newtown for their contributions to the debate. The member for Liverpool emphasised the

importance of producing work for the world and not just being consumers. Australia has a creative export deficit, and this is one of the ways we can promote Australian content and produce more content in New South Wales.

I was alarmed to hear that, despite having one-third of Australia's population, New South Wales only has 22 per cent of Australia's game development businesses and 16 per cent of its employees. These games have a huge worldwide audience. The member for Liverpool spoke about Not Doppler Studio's incredibly successful *Earn to Die* series, which is making huge inroads for Australian game developers around the world. The member for Newtown mentioned the strength of the creative industry in her electorate, including the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance in Redfern and the Dendy Cinema in Newtown. She emphasised the important contribution that independent filmmakers and game developers make. The member should rest assured that the New South Wales Government values independent creatives and not just the big, blockbuster developers.

The member for Fairfield brought his incredible passion for gaming to the Chamber and noted that the average age of gamers is 38, which is much older than most people would think. This is also a much bigger market than most people realise. He also noted the important work being done by the Lebanese Film Festival, which has done great work to support local productions and to bring films from Lebanon to Australia.

I acknowledge the bipartisan support for the legislation and thank the members of this place and the other place for their constructive engagement on the Government's Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill.

I will make some general comments about the bill first before touching on some of the matters and amendments raised in the debate. The bill proposes to repeal the existing film and television industry legislation and replace it with contemporary equivalents, signalling to the screen and digital games industries that the Government is here to support them. As I noted in my second reading speech, supporting the screen and digital games industries brings both economic and social benefits to the State. The bill aligns with the Government's vision of recognising screen and digital games storytelling as a public good and promotes cooperation between the New South Wales Government, local councils and industry to support the screen and digital games industries.

I will now address some of the matters raised in debate. I thank the member for Tamworth for his engagement. The Government agrees with the member's perspective about the need for a regional representative with relevant industry experience on the Screen and Digital Games Industries Advisory Committee. I highlight that regional New South Wales also benefits from film productions large and small, such as *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga*, which was partly filmed in Hay, the ABC's *Total Control*, and *Muster Dogs*. Those have all been financially supported by Screen NSW and showcase regional New South Wales in all its splendour. They have employed hundreds of local workers and boosted tourism and small businesses. It only makes sense that the committee should have a representative from regional New South Wales.

I also acknowledge the valuable feedback provided by Local Government NSW in relation to our proposed amendments to the Local Government Act to include removing reference to the maximum application fee payable and the number of days within which an applicant must pay fees to a council, and instead moving them to the Local Government Filming Protocol. I highlight that that "lift and shift" reflects good legislative practice of not duplicating provisions across instruments and is also intended to ensure that the protocol does not contradict the Act. The Government will continue to consult closely with councils and Local Government NSW on the development of the refreshed protocol. Further, I acknowledge discussions with Local Government NSW about the proposal to change the date for acknowledgement of receipt of a filming permit application to two days instead of seven. I acknowledge the very real resourcing issues that some councils experience. [*Quorum called for.*]

[*The bells having been rung and a quorum having formed, business resumed.*]

I note that reducing the number of days to two business days reflects the contemporary ability of councils to acknowledge receipt by email. That is often an automated process, which further assists councils to reduce red tape and potential resourcing constraints. I appreciate the opportunity for the department to clarify that that is the Government's intent. In closing, the Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill is the next step in the Government's vision for the State's screen and digital games industries. I thank Opposition and crossbench members in this place and the other place for their detailed engagement on and support for the bill. I thank the Opposition for its constructive amendment and the agencies that collaborated with us to make the bill possible. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Mr Kevin Anderson.

Consideration in Detail

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): By leave: I will deal with the bill in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 to 14 and schedules 1 to 3 be agreed to.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (12:36): I move Opposition amendment No. 1 on sheet c2025-070:

No. 1 Composition of Advisory Committee

Page 8, Schedule 2, proposed section 4. Insert after line 31—

(7A) At least 1 member must—

- (a) have relevant experience in the screen or digital games industry, and
- (b) reside or work in regional New South Wales.

In my second reading debate contribution I outlined the importance of regional representation on the advisory committee. I thank the Minister's office for its support and cooperation during debate. I recognise the work of the Parliamentary Secretary, the member for Granville, and thank the agencies for their cooperation. We need to know and remember that New South Wales does not stand for Newcastle, Sydney, Wollongong. The lights burn bright in regional New South Wales. It is clear that regional New South Wales would like to hear the phrase "lights, camera, action" more often. The bill will open up a whole new sphere of opportunity for games developers. I commend my amendment to the House.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (12:37): The Government supports the amendment, which addresses the composition of the Screen and Digital Games Industries Advisory Committee by proposing that the committee be required to include one member who resides or works in regional New South Wales and has relevant industry experience. The Government wants to make sure that regional voices are heard, and it wants to support the next generation of creative talent across all parts of the State. We support the amendment.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The question is that Opposition amendment No. 1 on sheet c2025-070 be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The question is that clauses 1 to 14 and schedules 1 to 3 as amended be agreed to.

Clauses 1 to 14 and schedules 1 to 3 as amended agreed to.

Third Reading

Ms JULIA FINN: On behalf of Ms Jenny Aitchison: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

PRODUCT LIFECYCLE RESPONSIBILITY BILL 2025

Second Reading Speech

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (12:39): On behalf of Mr Jihad Dib: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. The bill proposes a new Act to establish a product stewardship framework for brand owners of certain products, the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Act. The Act will create a framework for regulating product stewardship for any product and is futureproofed to handle emerging environmental issues. The framework established under the bill allows the Minister to prescribe, by regulation, requirements across the entire life cycle of a product, including the development, design, creation, production, assembly, supply, use or re-use, collection, recovery, recycling or disposal of the regulated product. This legislation is intended in the first instance to be used to provide a framework for the regulation of product stewardship for batteries.

The fact is that while batteries are an incredibly important part of society and will help us decarbonise our economy, they pose a risk to people when not properly disposed of, when damaged, when mishandled or when improperly designed. This bill would enable the New South Wales Government to take comprehensive action and escalate its response to reduce the likelihood and prevalence of battery fires in the waste supply chain and prevent further deaths, injuries and property damage. We have been prompted to action by the lithium ion battery fire crisis in New South Wales. According to Fire and Rescue NSW, these batteries are the fastest growing fire risk in

New South Wales, with 324 incidents since 2024, including 33 injuries and 1,125 evacuations. This is up from 171 incidents in 2022.

Battery fires are an escalating risk in New South Wales, driven by the growing number of lithium ion batteries throughout the community. While these batteries have significant benefits, the risk of fires from unsafe or mishandled lithium ion batteries is growing. This bill provides us with a system to be able to easily and quickly regulate products causing problems, whether that is a risk to safety or a risk to our environment. Whilst these laws will work alongside Commonwealth laws, this is nation-leading reform. New South Wales will lead the way for new mandatory product life cycle schemes that we hope other States will adopt.

Batteries are an example of how, too often, products are designed without any consideration of what will happen to them when their use has ended. This must change. That is not to say that there are no responsible product producers; there are, and we celebrate those businesses. This legislation is targeted at companies that are producing products with limited thought to the end state—poor-quality products that are too often focused on planned obsolescence. This is not a good outcome for our society or our environment. Products and materials should remain in circulation for as long as is safely possible. This legislation also provides the legislative framework to ensure there is regulatory oversight of product stewardship organisations when dealing with products that can cause harm. This is to ensure that product stewardship organisations are fulfilling their agreed responsibilities and measures can be taken where they are not. This legislation allows the Government to enter into a contract with a product stewardship organisation.

The bill carries significant penalties for brand owners—the owner of a product name—who fail to comply with product stewardship requirements set by the regulations and, in particular, for contraventions of safety requirements identified by the regulations. Research from the waste and recycling industry in 2024 estimated the waste and resource recovery sector deals with between 10,000 and 12,000 fires a year in trucks and at facilities caused by improperly disposed of lithium ion batteries. When batteries are placed in kerbside red bins or commercial bins, they end up in waste trucks and can make their way to landfills or resource recovery facilities. This causes problems because they can ignite when punctured in the back of a truck or in recycling processing machinery.

When lithium ion batteries are damaged, they can enter a process called thermal runaway. They create very hot fires that are extremely difficult to extinguish and release toxic gases into the air.

Ironically, we saw this the day after this bill was introduced in the other place. On 19 March in Maitland, Fire and Rescue NSW responded to a fire in a townhouse. The cause of the fire is still being investigated. However, Fire and Rescue NSW stated that the intensity of the fire and the difficulty putting it out was contributed to by several lithium ion batteries that had gone into thermal runaway.

When an emergency responder, truck driver or facility worker is exposed to a battery fire, they risk serious safety and health consequences. They can experience burns, exposure to hazardous chemicals on their skin and harm from breathing in vapours from the burning battery. The hazardous chemicals in lithium ion batteries can also leak into landfills as they are compacted and exposed to moisture over time. There is a risk that the liquid could breach the landfill lining, leach into surrounding waterways and travel in the groundwater to other sites. These events can have serious water pollution and human health impacts. This is why the New South Wales Government must take urgent action now to address these significant challenges.

Battery fires are a problem across Australia. The environment Ministers meeting in December 2024 identified the need for urgent reforms to product stewardship arrangements for batteries to address the escalating risks of battery fires and create a safe circular economy. Ministers recognised the need to act quickly to reduce the risks of battery fires, with the New South Wales Government committing to progressing this legislation. We will not stand by idly and watch this crisis. The existing voluntary schemes are inadequate for the challenges we face. New South Wales is leading the way nationally, because we must, providing a comprehensive regulatory framework with appropriate oversight to protect the environment and human health. This approach is an escalation from the voluntary approach employed under existing Commonwealth accreditation, which does not have the same regulatory oversights or mandatory obligations.

New South Wales is initially taking a twofold approach to regulation. The first component of the Government's response is this bill. The bill will allow the Government to establish product stewardship schemes and cover potentially harmful products. This legislation has been drafted as a standalone Act so that it can easily be used by other States and Territories as a template to regulate product stewardship. We hope that other Australian States and Territories will adopt this legislation to harmonise the approach. During development of the bill we consulted with other jurisdictions to understand their challenges. Standardising this approach across States is important to provide consistency nationally. We have chosen this legislative response to ensure there is appropriate regulatory oversight on product stewardship organisations, which is not present in voluntary schemes.

The bill provides a comprehensive suite of considerations and oversight improvements to ensure that brand owners take responsibility for products across their life cycles and that risk is managed appropriately to protect human health and the environment. The obligations on brand owners are appropriate, and the bill includes meaningful but measured penalties for noncompliance. There is a particular focus in the bill on penalties for noncompliance with safety requirements. Ultimately we are trying to protect the community, protect infrastructure, keep people safe and limit environmental impacts. The second step to addressing batteries is to draft regulations to make product stewardship mandatory for problematic products, including certain classes of batteries where there is an existing Commonwealth stewardship accreditation. This allows the Government to act urgently to address battery fires and reduce free riders in the system. A free rider is a company or organisation that is not paying into the system but whose products benefit from it. We will work collaboratively with industry when finalising these regulations.

Another reason we have pursued this action in New South Wales is that the Commonwealth battery schemes are voluntary, are inadequate for the challenges and, to date, have seen very low recovery rates of approximately 15 per cent.

The schemes are not currently effectively able to address the challenge we face. Most embedded batteries—batteries encased in a product—are not currently able to be collected under the Commonwealth schemes. Fire and Rescue NSW advise that these embedded batteries are some of the batteries most likely to cause issues in waste management infrastructure. These batteries can be found in consumer household electronics, including vapes, electric toothbrushes, power tools and kids toys, and also in products like kids light-up shoes.

To address this challenge, we must evolve our regulatory response and respond to the greater risk. Under the current settings and voluntary schemes, the prevalence of fires, deaths and injuries is escalating. We want to achieve the best possible outcomes, and the success of the container deposit scheme [CDS], Return and Earn, is recognition that mandatory product stewardship can provide a very successful model. The CDS scheme has resulted in over 90 per cent of drink containers returned and 82 per cent of the community participating in returning containers through the scheme.

The Environment Protection Authority [EPA] has engaged extensively with stakeholders on the risks posed by batteries, the current product stewardship arrangements and on opportunities for reform. This included during the preparation of a draft regulatory impact statement in 2024, which was done in collaboration with the Victorian Government's Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action. The Government has reflected that feedback as much as possible in this legislation. I thank everyone who provided feedback on these important reforms.

This framework provides us the appropriate tools to escalate our response, evaluate our approach, adapt as we need to over time and deal with this challenging problem. We are committed to addressing the significant challenges in our waste system and protecting the community and the environment. There is a great deal of regulatory detail in the bill. This was set out at length by the Minister for the Environment in her second reading speech in the other place. For those interested in the detail of the regulatory aspects, I refer to that speech, which is on the public record. Batteries are an important component of our everyday lives and will be essential as we decarbonise our economy. However, the harms from battery-related fires, resulting from the incorrect disposal of batteries, is a problem we cannot ignore.

Fire and Rescue NSW has highlighted that lithium ion batteries are the fastest growing fire risk in New South Wales, and we want to ensure that we are protecting the people of New South Wales. Poor-quality batteries continue to enter the market, with limited safety systems to prevent them overheating or igniting. Fires are either igniting spontaneously in homes, or when these batteries and products are punctured in a waste truck or at a waste facility when people dispose of them improperly in waste bins. While there are existing voluntary product stewardship schemes for batteries, scheme participation rates are as low as 15 per cent. This means that there are many battery suppliers free riding on the participation of others, which limits the funding available for schemes to deliver wide-reaching communications.

It also reduces the funding available for providing convenient and accessible collection point infrastructure. Mandatory participation in product stewardship would properly resource collection infrastructure and also public communication about problematic batteries and products with batteries embedded, and also tell people where to take these products to dispose of them properly. This legislative framework provides the appropriate regulatory oversights for dealing with a serious and a very dangerous problem. The framework can be used to establish product stewardship schemes for other products that may have emerging harms. The threat to human life and environmental health from battery-related fires cannot be overstated. Without comprehensive action to address the incorrect disposal of batteries, as the first product proposed to be managed by the improved framework set up in this bill, there will continue to be avoidable, preventable tragedies.

I take the opportunity to thank some key people who have worked closely with the Government, and with the EPA, in developing this legislation. I know these people will also be working closely with us as we develop regulations.

While there are many within industry who have worked with us, I particularly thank Gayle Sloan from the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Association of Australia, Brett Lemin from the Waste Contractors and Recyclers Association of NSW and Suzanne Toumbourou from the Australian Council of Recycling. They are all fierce advocates for their industry, for their members and for a better, stronger, safer and more circular waste system.

We would not be delivering this nation-leading reform without them. I thank Jeff Angel from the Total Environment Centre. Jeff is one of Australia's longest-serving environmental campaigners and someone we can always rely on for support and also for a push in the right direction. I also place on record the dedicated work of the EPA's waste and circular economy team, some of whom are in the gallery with us, together with the EPA's lawyers and the drafters at the Parliamentary Counsel's Office who have worked tirelessly to deliver the bill. This is an Australian first. We are proud to be the first government in Australia to pass a bill like this. The time for action is now. This is an important step in that plan. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (12:55): On behalf of the Opposition, I contribute to debate regarding the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. The bill addresses the pressing need for a sustainable approach to product and end of life management of batteries in New South Wales, and we welcome this legislation. The core objective of the bill is to establish a robust product stewardship framework. It places the onus on brand owners to manage the environmental impacts of their products throughout the entire life cycle. That means considering environmental factors from the design phase, through production and distribution, to consumption and eventual disposal. As outlined by the Parliamentary Secretary, one critical issue that the bill helps address is the growing risk of fires caused by improper disposal of lithium ion batteries. These batteries, found in countless everyday devices, pose a significant hazard when discarded incorrectly. Fires linked to lithium ion batteries have become an increasing concern in waste facilities and in homes that are in suburbs across New South Wales, leading to dangerous incidents, costly damage and disruptions to waste management operations.

By implementing stronger product stewardship requirements, the bill can drive better end of life management for these batteries, encouraging safer disposal practices, promoting battery recycling programs and reducing the risk of fires that endanger both workers and the environment. It encourages manufacturers to innovate, to rethink product designs for greater sustainability and to implement practices that reduce waste and promote resource recovery. By doing so, we move closer to a fully circular economy where products are designed with their end of life in mind, ensuring minimal environmental impact. The bill also introduces offence provisions to enforce compliance. These are essential to ensure that the principles enshrined in this legislation are upheld and that brand owners who neglect their responsibilities are held accountable.

Having said that, we must acknowledge the challenges ahead. The key to that lies in implementation. We know from history that brand stewards and owners often have difficulty with their mandatory recycling and life cycle responsibilities. But, as the Parliamentary Secretary outlined, we have had great success with that in New South Wales, as best demonstrated by Return and Earn. Implementation will require investment from brand owners, and there will be a need for effective enforcement mechanisms. Collaboration between government, industry and the community will be vital to navigate these challenges successfully. For the benefit of the House and perhaps for the Minister in the other place to respond to, I note some concerns brought forward by the Australian Sustainable Business Group. In particular, I highlight the following questions from the group:

2. Will the Government agree to exempting (ring fencing) those products which have an existing or listed under a proposed Commonwealth Product Stewardship scheme?
3. Will the Government provide a priority list of products that are to be considered for the NSW PS scheme in the future?
- ...
6. Will the Government and its regulator provide a document or other reassurance on how it will avoid duplication of regulation, reporting, (action) plans and other informational requirement being undertaken or to be undertaken by the Commonwealth under Product Stewardship schemes?

I think they are fair questions that I have no doubt will be effectively dealt with. It is worth recognising that New South Wales already has a strong foundation in product stewardship. We have already heard about the success of the Return and Earn scheme, which was introduced under the former Coalition Government, and all members can be enormously proud of it.

It demonstrates that well-designed stewardship schemes can drive positive environmental change. They can engage the public and support economic opportunities in recycling and waste management sectors. The bill will build on that legacy by extending the principles of product responsibility across a broader range of products and industries. It is a logical step forward in ensuring that manufacturers and brand owners actively contribute to a more sustainable future.

Furthermore, the potential benefits of this legislation extend beyond environmental protection. By fostering innovation in product design and waste management, it will stimulate growth in the circular economy and enable New South Wales to continue to be a leader in sustainability. The Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025 is a forward-thinking and necessary step towards environmental stewardship in our State. It reflects our commitment to sustainable development and positions New South Wales as a leader in environmental responsibility. For that reason, I commend the bill to the House.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (13:00): The Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025 is an important bill that seeks to establish a mandatory product stewardship framework for brand owners of certain products. As all members know, technology powers more and more items used in many parts of our daily lives—from our toothbrushes and mobile phones to micromobility scooters and power tools. Increasingly, lithium ion batteries are becoming important components of our everyday lives and will become essential as we decarbonise our economy. A major issue is the number of fires resulting from that use. The harms from battery-related fires resulting from incorrect battery disposal are growing rapidly. Fire and Rescue NSW has highlighted that lithium ion batteries are the fastest growing fire risk in New South Wales. I imagine that statistic is reflected across Australia and indeed in other parts of the world.

Poor-quality batteries continue to enter the market with limited safety systems to prevent them overheating or igniting. Fires ignite either spontaneously in homes or when the batteries and products are punctured in a waste truck or at a waste facility after people dispose of them improperly in kerbside and commercial waste bins. The problem is escalating in New South Wales. Fire and Rescue report almost one battery-related fire per day. In 2024 there were 323 incidents, including 33 injuries and 1,125 evacuations. Research from the waste and recycling industry in 2024 estimated the waste sector deals with between 10,000 and 12,000 fires a year caused by the improper disposal of lithium ion batteries.

Sadly, just last month, a 21-year-old international student died in a house fire in Guildford that was suspected to have been caused by an e-bike battery. In 2024 two people died in Lake Macquarie from a battery fire. Batteries, when not disposed of correctly, pose significant risks to human health and the environment. It is critical to address the problem. In the two years of reporting since data collection started in 2022, there have been a total of 456 lithium ion battery incidents. The number rose from 171 in 2022 to 285 in 2023, an increase of two-thirds. The heat map by local government area shows that the densely packed City of Sydney area chalked up 25 fires in 2023, up from 16 in 2022, which is an increase of 56 per cent in just one year. Those figures are only for fires where the fire brigade was called to attend, so they probably understate the overall number.

In my electorate of Liverpool the number of lithium ion battery fires rose from just one in 2022 to 11 in 2023—a thousandfold percentage increase in just 12 months. Canterbury-Bankstown had three fires in 2022 and 15 in 2023, which is a 400 per cent increase. They are concerning figures that highlight a trend that we must act upon.

Although there are existing Commonwealth voluntary product stewardship schemes for batteries intending to properly manage batteries at the end of their life, scheme participation rates are as low as 15 per cent. That means many battery suppliers are free-riding on the participation of others, which limits the funding available for schemes to deliver wide-reaching communications about disposal and convenient and accessible collection point infrastructure.

Using New South Wales laws to mandate participation in product stewardship for those who do not want to join voluntary Commonwealth schemes would require free riders to participate and would enable incredibly important communications and infrastructure to be developed. Mandatory participation would improve resourcing available for public awareness campaigns about battery risks and advertising of collection point networks, and enable innovative responses by market leaders. It gives New South Wales the strongest powers in the country to ensure that we respond to the lithium ion battery issue.

The Minister for Emergency Services mentioned recently that Fire and Rescue NSW is working with the Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, Minister Whan, and the TAFE crew on some great education practices. The bill will enable New South Wales to step in to address ineffective voluntary Commonwealth schemes. In practice, New South Wales schemes could be created where there is no existing mandatory product stewardship scheme for a particular product established under Commonwealth law. The framework established under the bill allows the Minister to prescribe by regulation the mandatory environmental outcomes that must be

delivered by product stewardship schemes for any aspect of the life cycle of a product, including the development, design, creation, production, assembly, supply, use or re-use, collection, recovery, recycling or disposal of a product.

The legislation also provides the framework to ensure there is regulatory oversight of product stewardship organisations when dealing with products that can cause harm. The use of a product stewardship organisation to manage and oversee a scheme enables an escalating response where brand owners have failed to deliver sustainable product stewardship outcomes. The bill carries significant penalties for brand owners—the supplier who owns a product name—who fail to comply with product stewardship requirements and in particular for contraventions of safety requirements. The bill replaces existing provisions about product stewardship in the Plastic Reduction and Circular Economy Act 2021 and the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001.

I understand that the NSW Environment Protection Authority has engaged extensively with New South Wales government agencies, waste and resource recovery operators, battery recyclers, current Commonwealth voluntary stewardship scheme operators, waste and battery recycling peak bodies, environmental advocates, suppliers and sellers of batteries, retail online marketplaces, and environmental regulators in other Australian jurisdictions. Stakeholders are broadly supportive of taking action to prevent battery-related fires and increasing producer responsibilities. They recognise the significant dangers of battery-related fires and the need for New South Wales to act urgently. I thank the Minister and her team and the department for their hard work. The issue of lithium ion batteries is concerning and deserves attention and action from this Government. Lithium ion batteries are here to stay, so let us make sure we deal with them well.

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (13:07): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate in support of the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. The Greens welcome this important legislation as a significant step toward tackling the growing waste crisis in New South Wales. The bill ensures that the responsibility for waste management is placed where it belongs, on the producers, rather than burdening individuals, local councils and taxpayers. For too long our waste management system has relied on voluntary schemes that have proven ineffective and inadequate.

Despite efforts under the current system, only 10 per cent to 15 per cent of batteries in New South Wales are being properly collected and recycled. The rest are ending up in landfill or, worse, posing environmental hazards and fire risks. We cannot continue to allow hazardous waste like lithium ion batteries to endanger our communities and ecosystems. The issue of free-riding, where some businesses collect levies but fail to reinvest in proper recycling infrastructure, has only exacerbated the problem. Without firm regulation, we cannot expect meaningful change. The bill ensures that producers take full responsibility for the entire life cycle of their products, from design and manufacturing to disposal and recycling.

The Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025 establishes a mandatory product stewardship framework that allows the Minister to set regulatory requirements across the entire life cycle of a product. It is a nation-leading approach that targets batteries initially but could be expanded in the future to other hazardous waste streams such as medical waste and solvent chemicals. Producers will now be required to ensure their products are designed with sustainability in mind, which will encourage recyclability, durability and the reduction of material waste. The bill also introduces significant penalties for noncompliance, reinforcing the commitment to creating a genuinely circular economy in New South Wales. The Greens have long championed the principle of product stewardship. We believe that, while consumers should be conscious of the waste we create and sensible in how we dispose of our rubbish, it is producers who should bear responsibility for the waste their products create.

The bill aligns with our longstanding commitment to a circular economy, one that prioritises waste reduction, resource recovery and environmental sustainability. We also recognise that battery-related fires are a growing concern. I note that many members have spoken about them today. Fire and Rescue NSW has identified lithium ion batteries as one of the fastest growing fire risks. Tragically, lives have already been lost due to battery-related fires, and the frequency of incidents continues to rise. My father was a firefighter for 30 years. I can only imagine what he would be dealing with if he was still fighting fires today. The need to resolve the issue for the safety of both consumers and emergency services could not be greater. The need to better manage it will not simply go away as the uptake of e-bikes and e-scooters only continues to grow across our State. The urgency of the issue cannot be overstated.

By ensuring batteries are properly managed and recycled, the bill will directly contribute to reducing those dangers. That will allow us to continue to push for the expansion of e-bikes, e-scooters and other battery-powered micromobility devices as part of our sustainable cities transport solutions within a properly integrated transport system. E-bikes are a crucial part of the transition to cleaner, more efficient urban transport. They offer a sustainable alternative to cars as they reduce traffic congestion, lower emissions and make cities more accessible. With growing concerns about air pollution and the need to decarbonise our transport, we must prioritise infrastructure and policies that encourage e-bike adoption. Alongside the kind of stewardship approach that is

included in the current bill, we must prioritise expanding bike lanes, increasing options for safe and secure parking for shared bikes, and integrating e-bikes into public transport networks to make them a more viable option for the daily commute.

As we work toward a zero emissions future, e-bikes must play a central role in transforming the way we move around our cities. In the last couple of years, I have been able to take my three kids about 3,000 kilometres on our e-bike. Because we travel to local places, it has saved us a great deal of driving across our city when we can avoid it. While the bill is a critical first step, it must not be the last. The framework it establishes should be swiftly extended to cover other problematic waste streams. We need to see product stewardship requirements applied to electronics, vapes, hazardous chemicals and textiles. A circular economy cannot function if we pick and choose which products are included; it must be a comprehensive and evolving system.

But we must also acknowledge that some types of waste cannot be so easily dealt with. Plastic pollution is another pressing environmental challenge that needs our urgent attention. While recycling and waste management are important, they cannot solve the crisis if plastic production continues to grow unchecked. Every year, millions of tonnes of plastic are produced—much of it designed for a single use—only to end up in landfills, waterways and oceans. The solution must start at the source: reducing plastic production, eliminating unnecessary packaging, and ensuring that alternative materials are prioritised. Governments must hold corporations accountable for the sheer volume of plastic they put into the environment. Policies that restrict harmful plastics, replace them with re-usable alternatives and promote material innovation are essential in breaking our dependence on plastic.

Without decisive action to curb production, the burden of plastic waste will only continue to grow and harm ecosystems, wildlife and human health. That is why I sought to extend the ban on lighter-than-air balloon releases last year, and why I will soon bring another private member's bill to this House for members to consider the reduction of single-use plastics in New South Wales. In the meantime, The Greens will support this bill. We will closely monitor its implementation. We will hold the Government accountable to ensure that producers comply with their new responsibilities and that this legislation delivers real outcomes. The goal should not be to issue fines regularly but to drive systemic change so that products are designed with their full life cycle in mind, making them more repairable, re-usable and recyclable.

The bill represents a long overdue shift in responsibility away from individuals and towards producers who profit from products that cause waste.

It sets a precedent for stronger waste management policies that prioritise the environment and public safety. I commend the Government for introducing this legislation. The Greens look forward to its successful implementation, and to working with the Government to expand its reach to other critical waste streams. For our communities, our environment and future generations, this is a necessary and very welcome step forward. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (13:14): I support the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. The Government understands that batteries are a growing waste disposal and resource recovery dilemma. Batteries should not be placed in kerbside bins where they can cause fires, but that leaves residents with limited simple options for disposal. There is limited information on where to put batteries, and they commonly end up in the red-lid bin service, where they become a health and safety risk. Batteries are also an escalating issue. With digitalisation, batteries are increasingly placed in products they were not in before, such as children's toys, pregnancy tests, lamps and wireless appliances. Even products like light-up shoes for kids contain embedded batteries. Moving towards material circularity is a big job, and we need to work together to futureproof our recycling system. Batteries are incredibly important to our society, but the risk and threat posed by batteries must be carefully managed.

The bill aims to reduce the threat of batteries to human health and our waste and resource recovery infrastructure, and to ensure that a potentially dangerous waste stream is not causing unintended harms. On 12 August last year, one of the City of Parramatta's recycling trucks had a fire caused by batteries that were incorrectly thrown out into a yellow recycling bin. The entire load of recycling had to be dumped on the road for Fire and Rescue NSW to attend and extinguish the fire. Batteries do not belong in red-lid garbage, yellow-lid recycling or green-lid bins for food organics and garden organics, known as FOGO bins. The council posted that message on social media and directed people to detailed information on the council website about battery recycling options, asking residents and business owners to take batteries to a collection point to be recycled. Council hosts several e-waste drop-off events per year, and it had promoted an event on Sunday 18 August for electronics and battery disposal, but the incident demonstrates that we need to do more.

Local residents and business owners lead busy lives. Recycling needs to be convenient and accessible. What are we doing to fix that? This bill aims to place some of the responsibility for the risks that batteries pose back in the hands of brand owners and those who make the products. Brand owners are ultimately those in the

best position to improve the design and quality of batteries. The concept of life cycle responsibility is known as product stewardship, which is essentially making producers responsible for what they produce across the different phases of a product's life, from use through to disposal. The bill allows the Government to target products at any point from inception to end of life to improve the circularity of resources and reduce potential harms.

The bill provides a framework for mandatory product stewardship where previously product stewardship for batteries has been voluntary. Voluntary schemes can assist in establishing pathways or providing incentives for investment. However, without being mandated, they lack the teeth to compel participation, and free riders emerge. Some producers are financially pulling their weight, while others get a free ride and benefit from the efforts of others in the system. By regulating product stewardship, the Government can clearly define the responsibilities of producers and ensure everyone contributes to the solution. That allows more money to go towards moving us forward and experimenting, innovating and finding new solutions. Mandates ensure the entire industry contributes, which effectively evens the playing field and prevents free riders.

There are existing mandatory product stewardship schemes that work. One example is the container deposit scheme [CDS].

Under that scheme, any business supplying beverages in containers must enter a supply agreement with the scheme coordinator and register any eligible containers. Suppliers pay contributions to the scheme according to the total quantity of eligible containers they supply into the State. The CDS has been immensely successful and is the biggest litter reduction scheme introduced in New South Wales. I can testify to that. This year on Clean Up Australia Day, compared to the same day in years gone by, there has been a gradual reduction of plastics. It is great to see fewer water bottles in our waterways and causing problems. They are now being recycled. The scheme has recycled over one million tonnes of material and is one of the cleanest recycling streams with the highest quality output for things like glass and plastic.

The CDS scheme has resulted in over 90 per cent of drink containers returned and 82 per cent of the community participating in returning containers through the scheme. There are existing voluntary product stewardship schemes already available for batteries; however, there are low rates of industry participation. B-cycle currently collects approximately 15 per cent of batteries. Mandatory industry participation will help fund collection points, consumer education and awareness campaigns. Currently, a refund system, like the CDS scheme, has not been included in this proposed model for batteries; however, it may be considered in the future.

Whilst producers may pass the increased cost along to consumers, I remind members that currently the cost of fires and waste service disruption is falling on taxpayers. The bill will mitigate against the threat that batteries pose to our community, recycling systems and infrastructure and help to fireproof our future. The framework in the bill allows us to manage emerging product risks in the future and provides a framework for robust product stewardship. I thank the Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary, the member for Blue Mountains, for their work alongside their dedicated staff, stakeholders and advocates. I am proud to be part of a Government that is committed to facing challenging problems in our waste and recycling system to protect the community and the environment. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (13:21): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. We welcome the bill. I note that the Minister's staff are in the Chamber. I acknowledge the contribution made by the Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment and I commend the Minister for the Environment for this important reform. I recognise the work of our spokesperson, Dr Amanda Cohn, in the other place and her briefing on the bill. This matter is very concerning. I am personally quite obsessed with batteries. A friend of mine named Fraser texted me after listening to the Federal Leader of the Opposition's speech about nuclear. He said, "There are 10 million homes in Australia. If you gave everybody solar and battery, it would still come out and, of course, everyone would then have freely democratic energy for 20-plus years and the life cycle would be around 200 billion. That is still well below the nonsense of the nuclear proposition." I digress.

It is concerning that people have lost their lives. Someone who did not understand how to charge e-bikes and used an inappropriate charger tragically died in a house fire this year. The legislation is important. I am focused on the duty and responsibility of manufacturers to ensure that buyers understand the proper use, storage and disposal of battery products. The Greens have long called for stronger product responsibility to address the waste crisis more broadly. Mandatory product stewardship is a welcome step towards addressing that, particularly because it shifts the responsibility from individuals, councils and ratepayers and puts the onus on businesses.

This bill addresses the flammability issues of lithium ion batteries and the lack of education from manufacturers and importers about how to properly dispose of them. Now there is an onus to do this. This bill will provide a system to regulate products that cause problems. I welcome that it can be applied across the board.

I put on record that I finished the tour of all of the Fire and Rescue stations in my electorate last year. At one station I observed a drill carried out on operating the jaws of life on a vehicle. When we were chatting, the firies said how concerned they are about using the jaws of life on electric vehicles because the whole car is a battery. I am not yet aware of any manufacturer that has been able to get around that issue with a switch, and so firefighters have to wait for an electrician. That is of concern to me. We love electric vehicles and the move away from fossil fuels, but this is a perfect example of manufacturers not really thinking of the consumer. It is a real risk that our firies and other emergency services worry about, because time is of the essence when someone is involved in an accident.

It is our hope that this law will influence design requirements and result in products that are 100 per cent recyclable or re-usable and that will last longer, be safer and cause fewer fires. Educating buyers about risks is paramount. We must insist that manufacturers do more to educate buyers. How many e-bike users understand how flammable their bike is? People need to be explicitly told that batteries are highly flammable, and they need to understand how to dispose of them. There is excellent battery stewardship across the country. The Battery Stewardship Council operates B-cycle, which is our national accredited battery stewardship scheme and is supported by the Commonwealth and all State and Territory governments.

Since 2022, B-cycle has more than doubled the national battery collection rate and recovered millions of kilograms of batteries. B-cycle has over 5,200 drop-off points across the country, including more than 1,000 in New South Wales. This has provided people with a safe way to dispose of batteries and divert them out of landfill. Who would want to be here in 50 years when nothing can be done on land because of toxic waste underneath the soil? The bill carries significant penalties for brand owners who fail to comply with the product stewardship and safety requirements set out by the regulations. The end goal should not be for fines to be issued regularly but, rather, for producers to change their behaviour and consider where a product will end up at the end of its life. They should design products and parts that are repairable, re-usable, recyclable, longer lasting and safer.

I give a big shout-out to the Shedding Community Workshop, which does incredible work in my electorate. I also acknowledge the work of the Library of STUFF. I have probably got one of the greenest areas in the State. You can basically get anything fixed at the Shedding Community Workshop. When I was a kid, you could take anything to get fixed. I miss that. Products are now designed to be destroyed, and they pretty quickly become useless. We want this Act to speak to manufacturers and designers so they think of the future and the circular economy we hope for. We want this stewardship to be applied to a wide variety of products, such as hazardous chemicals and solvents, medical waste and appliances. I thank the Minister for the Environment for introducing this important law reform. The Greens are very happy to support it.

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (13:29): I support the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. New South Wales is facing a significant challenge from battery-related fires. In Canterbury-Bankstown lithium ion battery incidents are increasing year on year, from three in 2022 to 15 in 2023 and over 20 in 2024. We are not alone. Around Australia governments are facing significant challenges from the growing risk of battery-related fires. The bill is an important step to address those challenges. The bill enables the New South Wales Government to take comprehensive action and escalate its response to reduce the likelihood and prevalence of battery fires and reduce further deaths, injuries and property damage.

We know that mandatory product stewardship can be effective. The New South Wales Container Deposit Scheme, or CDS, is an example of product stewardship done well and used by the community. Before the CDS was introduced in New South Wales, more than 160 million drink containers littered our environment. The scheme has now collected over 13 billion containers in New South Wales. New South Wales is leading the way on product stewardship nationally by providing a comprehensive regulatory framework with appropriate oversight to protect the environment and human health. We are taking a stand on reducing the risk of battery fires and protecting human health and the environment.

The need to act is clear. Battery fires are a growing threat. Without action, we are putting lives at risk and our firefighters will need to respond to an increase in incidence. Our firefighters tell us that lithium ion batteries are the fastest growing fire risk in New South Wales and my local fire station in Revesby has confirmed that concerning trend. Those fires are caused most frequently by e-bikes and e-scooters and consumer electronics such as vapes, electric toothbrushes, vacuum cleaners and children's toys. It is vital that we reduce the risk of those fires occurring in the first place.

The bill will give us new and enhanced tools to minimise the potential harm of products throughout their life cycle. Batteries are an important component of our everyday lives and will be essential as we decarbonise our economy. However, the harm from battery-related fires caused by the incorrect disposal of batteries is a problem we cannot ignore. The risk of battery fires is not unique to New South Wales. We hear from the community and stakeholders about battery fires in homes, businesses and public places across Australia. We have also heard of

the devastating impacts in the waste and resource recovery sector. In December 2022 Canberra's recycling facility was damaged by a suspected battery fire. Rebuilding that facility will cost tens of millions of dollars.

New South Wales is leading the way by demonstrating how governments can respond to this challenge. New South Wales is setting a standard that other State and Territories, and the Federal Government, can follow. The bill has been designed to establish a standalone Act so that it can be used as a guide for other jurisdictions. We recognise that consistency across borders is important for businesses, and we want to reduce any unnecessary friction. Our approach has been to act not only urgently and decisively but also in a way that can be replicated across Australia.

The bill builds on a raft of achievements by the Government to protect the environment. Last year the Government passed the Environment Protection Legislation Amendment (Stronger Regulation and Penalties) Bill 2024. That bill made urgent changes to protect the environment of New South Wales and the health of our State's people. It increases penalties for those accused and found guilty of environmental crime. As the Minister said in her second reading speech at the time, that landmark bill was the most significant improvement to environmental regulation in this State since the Environment Protection Authority was created in 1991. That bill was passed by the Government.

Earlier this year the Government passed the Protection of the Environment Legislation Amendment (FOGO Recycling) Bill 2024. That bill mandated the source-separated collection of food and garden organics—also known as FOGO—waste from households and of food waste from businesses, and mandated the reporting of food donations by large supermarkets. That bill was passed by the Government. At every step of the way we have demonstrated our commitment to protecting human health and the environment and meeting the waste challenges we face in New South Wales. This bill demonstrates that commitment. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (13:34): I make a brief contribution to debate on the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill and acknowledge the contributions made by my Greens colleagues the member for Balmain and the member for Ballina. The Greens support the bill. It is a sensible step in the right direction towards reducing waste and protecting our environment and communities. The bill seeks to establish the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Act, which would allow the State Government to establish a mandatory product stewardship framework for brand owners of certain products. The Act would give the Minister power to set regulatory requirements that must be met by the relevant actors at every stage in a product's life cycle, from design and development to production, supply and disposal.

In her second reading speech, the Minister acknowledged that the timing and urgency in introducing the bill was prompted by the alarming spate of lithium ion battery fires across the State. The Greens absolutely agree that these incidents are cause for concern and require urgent action. According to data from Fire and Rescue NSW, in the Inner West local government area—part of which falls within the electorate of Newtown—there have been 27 lithium ion battery fires since 2022. Many people in the inner west community were early and enthusiastic adopters of e-bikes as a more climate-friendly alternative to cars. That choice should not expose them to risk of injury or serious harm. Indeed, I am aware also of a number of battery-related fires that occurred in public housing dwellings in our community. The impact that has on our communities is significant.

It is critical that we do more to make sure that communities do not fear battery-related mobility devices and bicycles. They should feel safe and secure in the knowledge that members of the community have taken up their use. However, gaps in the current regulatory landscape challenge that. It is not just e-bike riders who are at risk; waste workers who have to handle damaged or discarded lithium ion batteries are also exposed to toxic gases and chemicals, which can cause burns and respiratory injury, as are the first responders who are called to the scene of battery fires. While there is an existing stewardship scheme for batteries run by the Battery Stewardship Council called B-cycle, it is voluntary and uptake rates are concerningly low. Currently only 10 per cent to 15 per cent of batteries in New South Wales are returned through B-cycle. The bill seeks to increase that to as much as 90 per cent.

Crucially, the bill recognises that greater care needs to be taken at all stages of the product life cycle, not just at the post-use and disposal stages. According to Fire and Rescue NSW, the increased risk of lithium ion battery fires is connected to the proliferation of poor-quality batteries that are not equipped with appropriate safety systems to prevent overheating. These quality issues represent failings during the design, manufacture and assembly of batteries. It is clear that higher standards must be set and enforced at all stages. The bill would empower the Minister to set such standards through regulation. If established, the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Act would allow the imposition of mandatory requirements around not only the materials and manufacturing processes but also material traceability, labelling and packaging, and the impact of a product on the environment or on human health.

It is genuinely exciting to consider the broad range of products that such an Act could be applied to beyond the immediate problem of lithium ion batteries, like disposable vapes, mobile phones and unwanted clothes. Textile waste is a growing problem not just in New South Wales but also across the country, and a product stewardship scheme for apparel and shoes could be a game changer in diverting those items from landfill. In her contribution to debate, my Greens colleague in the other place Dr Amanda Cohn said that it would be a great shame for the opportunity posed by the bill to be used only to respond to battery fires and then gather dust on a shelf. There are many other opportunities to use such a scheme.

The Greens wholeheartedly support the passage of the bill, which we hope will be the first of many steps towards meaningfully addressing our waste problem. We look forward to working constructively with the Government to expand product stewardship frameworks as soon as possible. I commend the bill to the House.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (13:38): I support the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. At its core, the bill provides a framework to make brand owners responsible for their products across their life cycle. The Government has been very clear that it is concerned about the potential harms from batteries. Batteries are incredibly important to our society. However, when they are of poor quality, improperly disposed of or at the end of their life, they can cause significant harms.

This Act will give government the power to escalate regulatory options to deal with products where problems are identified, like batteries. The framework established by the bill will allow the Minister to prescribe, by regulation, requirements across the entire life cycle of a product. They could include requirements for a product's development, design, creation, production, assembly, supply, use or re-use, collection, recovery, recycling or disposal. The Minister will have the power to impose compulsory requirements on brand owners with respect to looking after products at the end of product life, including via a new scheme that has the option of using a product stewardship organisation.

This Government will ensure that products will be better managed to protect human and environmental health by putting responsibility on businesses for the products they produce. The legislative framework enables the Government to prescribe regulatory requirements for products where there is a need to oversee an aspect of the product's life cycle. The bill ensures that the Government has effective regulatory oversight of product stewardship organisations when dealing with products that can cause harm. The bill also provides the flexibility for government to address emerging products that may be causing harm to the environment and human health and ensure that we remain on the front foot of environmental regulation. The Government intends to apply the framework for the urgent regulation of product stewardship for batteries.

We recognise the importance of products that contain lithium ion batteries and the role they play in society. However, we also recognise that those batteries are the fastest growing fire risk in New South Wales. Action is needed now to reduce the risk to people when these products are not properly disposed of, or are damaged, mishandled or improperly designed. In New South Wales we have seen the rapid and devastating impact on the waste industry, the community and our emergency services from products that contain lithium ion batteries. The Government will act, using this legislative framework, to take comprehensive action to reduce the likelihood and prevalence of battery fires and to prevent further deaths, injuries and property damage.

The proposed legislative reforms will ensure that we have a fit-for-purpose framework for mandatory product stewardship for batteries and any other potentially harmful product entering New South Wales. We need to keep dangerous products out of the general waste system and ensure that they are properly designed by the manufacturers who make or supply them. Product stewardship schemes can provide for participants to deliver products directly or to take them to drop-off points or transport and collection services and ensure the recycling of collected products. New powers will enable the NSW Environment Protection Authority to engage product stewardship organisations to administer schemes established by regulation and require brand owners of regulated products to join those schemes. This important power can be used if other arrangements implemented by brand owners alone are not achieving the appropriate outcomes.

The proposed legislation is flexible and allows other types of products to be covered into the future via regulation. This level of regulation is required to ensure a standardised and mandatory approach. The bill includes fit-for-purpose steps that government can take to protect the environment and prevent harm to human health. This is a nation-leading reform. By creating a standalone Act and flexible legislative framework, New South Wales is creating a model for other jurisdictions to adopt. This Government is leading the way to establish a nationally aligned approach. The framework will help other jurisdictions to comprehensively address potentially harmful products while also reducing the impact on the market of different approaches across States and Territories. That recognises the ongoing extensive collaboration between New South Wales and other jurisdictions to address harm to environmental and human health from products like batteries.

With this framework, the New South Wales Government will be better able to protect the environment, prevent harm to human health and work with brand owners to deal with products that can cause harm. The Government is committed to protecting people now and into the future. The framework created by the bill will ensure that the New South Wales Government has the appropriate regulatory oversight to manage known risk to human health and the environment but the flexibility to handle issues into the future as new products enter our market.

The bill is fit for purpose and ensures that New South Wales is regulating for the present time as well as having the ability to escalate our regulatory response as new problematic products emerge in the future. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (13:44): I support the Government's Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025, which establishes a product stewardship framework for brand owners of certain products and for related purposes. With the indulgence of the House, I acknowledge in the public gallery my mum, Margaret Bowcher, my uncle, James Urquhart, and his partner, Erica. I had not seen my uncle in about 20 years before he came to Australia. He had the lead role in *Les Misérables* for 18 years and is quite the distinguished citizen of the stage. It is wonderful to see him, Erica and Mum in Parliament and to spend some time with them. I thank them for being here.

Mr Stephen Bali: Is that why you're quite a performer?

Mr GARETH WARD: No, it is all comparative. They are the quality thespians; I was the C-grade thespian. That is why I went into State politics.

Dr Hugh McDermott: Don't make it worse for us.

Mr GARETH WARD: I acknowledge the interjection from the Parliamentary Secretary and take his encouragement and advice on this occasion. The bill immediately addresses the prevalence of batteries and associated fires that are becoming a trend. We have seen trucks on fire in the Kiama electorate and elsewhere, as members have acknowledged. Sadly, we have also seen the tragic loss of life from battery fires in homes. I acknowledge that the legislative framework provides regulatory oversight for dealing with this dangerous problem and can be used to establish product stewardship schemes for other products that may have emerged and are also causing harm, as outlined by the Minister in her speech in the other place on 8 March.

Whilst I acknowledge and support the fact that the bill will improve future product design and stewardship, that will not address the thousands of tonnes of e-waste and products that are already in circulation and filling our landfills, which are forecast to reach capacity by 2030. We must address the discarded smartphones, computers, appliances, vapes and plastics, a toxic avalanche growing five times faster than we recycle it. I mentioned those factors earlier today, when introducing what I might describe as a complementary bill. In 2022 the world generated 62 million tonnes of e-waste, an 82 per cent surge since 2010. We are on track to hit 82 million tonnes by 2030. In Australia we contribute more than double the global average, bearing \$62 billion worth of recyclable natural resources in 2022 alone. That is not just waste; it is a wasted opportunity. It is a crisis demanding our immediate action, and that is why I am pleased to support the bill.

Some members made comments about lithium ion batteries. Having spoken to local firefighters, I know that they are concerned about how many events they are attending that are caused by lithium ion batteries, directly as a result of poor oversight, regulation and legislation. The bill seeks to address that, and that is why it is worth supporting. But the bill can also be the impetus for championing the change we need with respect to design and recycling. Where we can, we should focus on recycling those items so that finite resources become infinite. As is frequently said in this place, we do not inherit this planet from our parents; we borrow it from our children. That is why the bill is worth supporting too. I am pleased to see that members from all sides of the House have rallied to back this legislation. I commend the Government and the Minister, and I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (13:48): I support the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025 and thank Minister Sharpe from the other place. She is ably represented in this place by her Parliamentary Secretary, the member for Blue Mountains. The key focus of the bill is to provide a framework to regulate product stewardship for batteries. This Government is undertaking comprehensive action to reduce the likelihood and prevalence of battery fires and prevent further deaths, injuries and property damage. All MPs can identify incidents where batteries have caused fires, and many have during the course of this debate. Those fires have put at risk house occupants; neighbours, particularly for those living in apartments or townhouses; Fire and Rescue workers; and police and ambulance workers at the site of the fire. Hence the need for these laws.

Faulty batteries are also causing fires at disposal sites and peoples' places of work.

The incorrect disposal of batteries and the poor quality of batteries, with limited safety systems to prevent them overheating or igniting, are all leading to these problems. Whilst this is mainly attributed to foreign companies with cheap and dodgy practices, in 2016 internationally recognised company Samsung had to suspend sales of the Galaxy Note 7 and announce an informal recall after it found that a manufacturing defect in phone batteries had caused some of the products to generate excessive heat, resulting in fires and explosions.

I would like to focus on a company operating in my electorate of Blacktown. Sell & Parker has been operating since 1966. It has expanded from metal recycling into Return and Earn; capsule recycling; licensed public weighbridges; public auctions, including ex-military equipment auctions; and, more importantly for this debate, battery recycling. Morgan and Luke Parker are directors of Sell & Parker, and their organisation employs approximate 400 employees over 15 locations, including recycling, Return and Earn, and battery collection and sorting in Blacktown. Sell & Parker is an accredited battery collector and one of only three battery sorters in the battery stewardship scheme, recognised by the Australian Government and backed by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. B-cycle mainly focuses on end-of-life lithium batteries. Morgan Parker is also a director on the Battery Stewardship Council board, which oversees the battery stewardship scheme.

In August 2024 Sell & Parker obtained designated and integrated development approval for a battery sorting and transfer station at its Kings Park site. Sell & Parker is working with the NSW Environment Protection Authority [EPA] for a licence and anticipates obtaining the licence in the near term. Sell & Parker is the only metal recycler in B-cycle and is working with the EPA to be a licensed facility to accept end-of-life lithium batteries in New South Wales. Minister for the Environment Penny Sharpe visited the Sell & Parker sites on 18 February 2022, when she was the shadow Minister. In return, once all the licensing is finalised, Sell & Parker would be most happy for the Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary to see all the modifications at its plant. As further background, Sell & Parker is the largest privately owned metal recycler in Australia and the largest supplier of ferrous scrap to BlueScope at Port Kembla. It is a vital link in producing green recycled steel. I spoke to Morgan, and he said this of the bill:

It's a great bill, and it's fantastic that the NSW Government is leading the Nation on Battery Stewardship. The companies that profit from selling these batteries need to contribute to their safe removal from the waste stream and this is a step in the right direction. We can't highlight enough how many fires these batteries are creating in the waste & recycling industry and the problems they cause.

It is not often I hear praise when it comes to the EPA. Often people are disgruntled with it for various reasons. But in this instance, Morgan Parker gave credit to Tony Chappel, the CEO of the NSW EPA, and the staff for their determination and efforts in working hard to make this bill a reality. He also paid credit to Minister Sharpe's vision to bring this bill before the Parliament, making New South Wales the first Parliament across Australia to implement this legislation. Hopefully, all the other parliaments will come on board. It is high praise, indeed, when a manufacturer says how wonderful the EPA is, and that should be passed on to both the Minister and the department.

The importance of this bill becoming legislation will be through the regulations. The regulations will implement the product lifecycle administration of the proposed Act, but it will need to capture all organisations involved to take responsibility for these batteries, including manufacturers and retailers through to the logistics supply chain.

Major retailers such as IKEA or Kmart are selling battery operated products, which may include e-bikes, that have a useful battery life as low as 70 hours. Those batteries are thrown away and cheap, low-standard batteries are then used as a replacement, which often causes house fires. Online retailers, particularly those operating internationally and selling cheap-quality products into Australia, such as Amazon and Temu, also have a social responsibility regarding the disposal of batteries. They sell poor-quality replacement batteries at a low price.

I particularly highlight one example. When the battery of an upmarket product like a Dyson vacuum cleaner fails, many consumers will use a cheaper alternative without realising they are delivering their lives into the hands of dodgy battery manufacturers. A genuine battery for a Dyson cordless vacuum cleaner ranges from \$119 for the V6 model to \$149.99 for the V11, compared to batteries that can be found online starting from \$25. Online sellers like Amazon and Temu must take some responsibility for choosing and sourcing inferior, potentially life destroying, products without appropriately labelling the product on their website.

I bring to the attention of the Parliamentary Secretary and the Minister the issue of illegally imported vapes, as the B-cycle scheme potentially will not have funding to safely dispose of them. The batteries in the vapes are reportedly of poor quality and prone to cause a fire when crushed during the recycling process. The bill is important. It is innovative—the first of its kind in Australia. I thank the Minister, the Parliamentary Secretary, the ministerial and the EPA staff for their tenacity to see the bill brought to the House. I wholeheartedly support the bill.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (13:56): I contribute to debate on the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. This is nation-leading reform that is absolutely essential. Product lifecycle responsibility is incredibly important. In recent years we have seen rapid and massive changes that have gone far beyond any of the regulation we have in place. The bill will establish a mandatory product stewardship framework for brand owners of certain products by drafting a new Act. It will enable New South Wales to step in to address ineffective voluntary Commonwealth schemes. While the bill can be applied to a suite of products, it is initially intended to be used to provide a framework to regulate product stewardship for batteries, which, as members know, are increasingly the most common cause of fires in New South Wales. The bill enables the Government to take comprehensive action to reduce the likelihood and prevalence of battery fires, to prevent further deaths, injuries and property damage.

Batteries are an important component of our everyday lives and will be essential as we decarbonise our economy. These days they are everywhere, from lawnmowers to bicycles to vapes. However, the harms from battery-related fires resulting from the incorrect disposal—and sometimes from the charging—of batteries are growing rapidly. Fire and Rescue NSW, has highlighted that lithium ion batteries are the fastest growing fire risk in New South Wales. Time and again we see poor quality batteries entering the market, with limited safety systems to prevent them from overheating or igniting. The fires are either igniting spontaneously or when these batteries and products are punctured in a waste truck or at a waste facility, when people dispose of them improperly in kerbside and commercial waste bins.

Fire and Rescue reports almost one battery-related fire per day, with 323 incidents in 2024, which included 33 injuries and 1,125 evacuations. Research from the waste and recycling industry estimates that the waste sector deals with between 10,000 and 12,000 fires a year caused by improper disposal of lithium ion batteries.

I refer to a tragic incident that occurred in my electorate last month, which I have mentioned previously in this House. On Tuesday 18 February a 21-year-old international student from Pakistan, Haidar Ali, died in a housefire in Guildford that is strongly suspected to have been caused by his e-bike battery. The fire started in his room when the battery was charging. His flatmates have told Fire and Rescue, the media and his wider circle of family and friends that the battery was frequently overheating. Haidar had his whole life ahead of him. He had been in Australia for two years studying civil and construction engineering. He lived with seven others in that house in Guildford and was working as an Uber Eats delivery rider. He was charging the battery for his Uber Eats bike when the fire that killed him started in his bedroom. Thankfully, the five others who were home at the time of the fire were able to get out of the house safely. Making things worse at that house, there was no working smoke alarm. It is an absolute tragedy. His entire family in Pakistan is heartbroken.

He is not the only person to have died in a fire caused by a battery. Last year two people died in Lake Macquarie from a battery fire. Sadly, there have been a number of others. While there are existing Commonwealth voluntary product stewardship schemes for batteries that are intended to properly manage batteries at the end of their life, participation rates in the scheme are as low as 15 per cent. That means that many battery suppliers are free riding on the participation of others, which limits the funding available for the schemes to deliver wideranging communications and means that the problem is not being addressed. Mandating in New South Wales law the participation in product stewardship of those who do not want to join voluntary Commonwealth schemes would require free riders to participate for the first time. Mandatory participation would improve resourcing available for public awareness campaigns about battery risks and advertising of collection point networks, and enable innovative responses by market leaders.

The framework established in the bill allows the Minister to prescribe by regulation the mandatory environmental outcomes that must be delivered by product stewardship schemes for any aspect of the life cycle of a product, including the development, design, creation, production, assembly, supply, use or re-use, collection, recovery, recycling or disposal of a product. That will go beyond the scope of just the battery fires that are causing this huge scourge at the moment. We will be able to look at it in future to further address plastic waste. There have been many reforms in recent years in New South Wales to reduce the amount of plastic being discarded in the environment, but there are still issues. There are islands of plastic floating in the Pacific Ocean. There are microplastics everywhere. We are finding out more and more about the dangers that they are causing. As much as we try to regulate plastic, new sources of plastic waste—vapes are a source of battery waste and plastic waste—are piling up everywhere.

The legislation is incredibly important. It provides a framework to ensure that there is regulatory oversight of product stewardship organisations when dealing with products that can cause harm. The use of a product stewardship organisation to manage and oversee a scheme enables an escalating response where brand owners fail to deliver sustainable product stewardship outcomes.

The bill carries significant penalties for brand owners who fail to comply with product stewardship requirements, in particular for contraventions of safety requirements.

The NSW Environment Protection Authority has engaged extensively with New South Wales Government agencies, waste and resource recovery operators, battery recyclers, current Commonwealth voluntary stewardship scheme operators, waste- and battery-recycling peak bodies, environmental advocates and many others in the development of this bill. Stakeholders are broadly supportive of taking action to prevent battery-related fires and increasing producers' responsibilities more generally. Everyone recognises the significant dangers of battery-related fires and the need for us act. This is incredibly important legislation, and I want to certainly ensure that we end the scourge of these lithium ion battery fires but also that we have the capacity to do more to control products, not only batteries but also plastic waste and all other sorts of waste, throughout their entire life cycles. This is incredibly important legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (14:05): Today I speak strongly in favour and support of the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. It is not a secret that we have a waste problem in this State. We are producing too much waste and do not have enough places to put it. Greater Sydney's landfill space is running out, and New South Wales' recycling rate has plateaued. We are also seeing more problematic waste, particularly e-waste, put into household bins. This creates health and environmental risks and limits the recovery of valuable resources. I commend the Government and the Minister for introducing legislation to address this mounting waste crisis.

This is the second bill in as many months before this House which aims to move New South Wales towards a circular economy. The first of these bills was, of course, the Protection of the Environment Legislation Amendment (FOGO Recycling) Bill 2024. When I spoke in support of that bill, I highlighted that we have not only a waste problem but also a consumption problem. Many of us have too much, while others have too little, and we fail to consider the whole-of-life impacts of what we consume. The whole-of-life impacts are the concern of the second bill, before us today. This bill would create a mandatory product stewardship framework for regulated products. The Government has stated its intention to regulate batteries in the first instance, to address the growing number of battery fires.

The need for this bill brings into sharp focus our failure as a society to adequately consider the life cycle impacts of an increasingly common product. Batteries are in our laptops, phones and cordless tools. They are in electric toothbrushes, smartwatches and kids' toys. They are also in e-bikes and e-scooters, which are becoming more prevalent with the rise of e-micromobility. These batteries are everywhere and will become only more ubiquitous as we move towards decarbonisation. There is an obvious education gap about safe handling, storage and disposal of batteries, and we are seeing an increasing number of battery fires in homes, rubbish trucks and waste facilities.

In Lake Macquarie many people have become keenly aware of this risk, following what Fire and Rescue NSW believed to be the State's first recorded deaths related to a lithium ion battery fire, in February 2024. We need a comprehensive framework to manage these products, from their design and production to their use, re-use, collection, recycling, reprocessing and eventual end-of-life management. This framework must be mandatory, to ensure industry-wide take-up, compliance and resourcing of the scheme, including to fund public education about a scheme's operation and the risks linked to a regulated product. It must also be flexible enough to ensure that the framework can apply to various harmful products in our waste streams.

This bill does just that. It would create a product stewardship framework that sees suppliers fund collection points and education. This, in turn, gives consumers the know-how and reasonable ability to return the regulated products they consume so that the products can, hopefully, be re-used, reprocessed, recycled or otherwise appropriately managed. It would give the Government a line of sight of the batteries brought into New South Wales, to help protect consumers' safety and feed into better standards at the Federal level. It would take demand off landfill, recover resources for re-use and decrease the use of virgin materials.

There is also an opportunity to create jobs in circular economy industries and facilities, including in the Hunter region as identified in the New South Wales Government's Hunter Regional Plan 2041. These outcomes can only be a good thing. I therefore support the bill and its focus on batteries. Given the impact on human health, industry and the environment, it is an appropriate place to start. But product stewardship must not end there.

I urge the Government to extend mandatory product stewardship to other products not regulated at the Federal level at the appropriate time, and with assistance for the industry to ensure strong uptake and support. There is no good reason why New South Wales cannot, in time, have schemes applying to other products, such as e-waste, used oil and paint. In short, product stewardship just makes sense. It is one vital part of responsibly dealing with the results of our consumerism. This is essential not only for public health and the environment, but it is also the morally right thing to do for future generations. Product stewardship is not a difficult concept to

understand. It is establishing the framework that is the difficult piece—and it is one that this bill, hopefully, achieves.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (14:10): My contribution to debate on the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025 will be brief. At the outset I express my very strong support for the bill. This is a long overdue and visionary piece of legislation that shifts the way we think about consumption, waste and corporate accountability in New South Wales. While the bill's focus today is on batteries, it also sets a framework for so much more. For too long, the cost of waste has been borne by governments, by the public, by our communities, by councils, and by the environment itself. As many people have said in this House, we have a huge environmental problem when it comes to waste and there is so much more we need to be doing in that space. This bill recognises a fundamental truth: Those who make it should take responsibility for what happens to it. It is clear and simple.

The Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill brings New South Wales into line with global best practice by placing the onus back on producers and importers to manage the environmental impacts of their products through their entire life, from design to disposal. It does this through three key mechanisms. First, it establishes clear and enforceable standards for product stewardship. Producers will be required to design products with reuse, repair, and recycling in mind, not just quick profits and planned obsolescence. Second, it ensures that companies contribute financially to the recovery and recycling of its materials they introduce into the market. Third, the bill empowers the Environment Protection Authority with the tools it needs to oversee and enforce those responsibilities with penalties that reflect the seriousness of environmental harm. This bill is pro-responsibility. It supports those companies already leading the way in sustainability, and it levels the playing field by requiring others to step up. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (14:12): I make a brief contribution to debate on the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. I support the bill. This Government recognises that households, businesses, and communities in New South Wales are facing an extraordinary threat from battery fires. We are experiencing a rapid escalation in the number of battery fire incidents, which have increased by 90 per cent over three years. This escalating fire risk presents a serious threat to the safety of our community and the environment. While these batteries have significant benefits, the risk of fires from unsafe, damaged, or mishandled lithium ion batteries is growing. According to Fire and Rescue NSW, these batteries are the fastest-growing fire risk in New South Wales, with 324 incidents in 2024 and 1,125 evacuations. That is an increase from 171 incidents in 2022. Since 2024, we have seen four deaths in New South Wales and at least 44 serious injuries. Those deaths have been attributed to e-bike battery fires in Lake Macquarie and Western Sydney. This increasing fire risk is being driven by the growing demand for lithium ion batteries in Australia.

Those batteries are relied upon to power an increasing number of devices, including consumer products like vapes, cordless vacuums, electric toothbrushes, children's toys, e-bikes and e-scooters.

Batteries power our modern lives, but when they are thrown in the garbage bin or disposed of incorrectly, they become ticking time bombs. Consumers in New South Wales face limited options for the safe disposal of lithium ion batteries. That is contributing to the disposal of hazardous batteries in our red bins and yellow bins, where the risk of fire is greatest. Fires in garbage trucks and waste and resource recovery facilities are occurring frequently and can be devastating. When batteries are placed in kerbside or commercial bins, they end up in trucks and can make their way to landfills or resource recovery facilities. That causes problems because they can ignite when punctured in the back of a truck or in recycling processing machinery. When lithium ion batteries are damaged they can enter a process called thermal runaway. They create very hot fires that are extremely difficult to extinguish and release toxic gases into the air.

Since 2020 Australia has lost several waste and resource recovery facilities due to fires started by batteries. We have seen the complete destruction of waste and resource recovery processing facilities in Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney. Each of those incidents has been a shock to Australia's circular economy, and they have highlighted our vulnerability. We must act now to address the threat presented by battery fires in New South Wales. The bill is about creating a framework to address those harms. We want to make sure that brand owners of certain products are responsible for what happens to them across their life cycle, particularly at end of life. We need to keep batteries out of our red bins, not only to recover the valuable materials that batteries contain but also to protect the community and our waste infrastructure. To achieve that, we need to ensure the community can access convenient disposal points for batteries.

The NSW Environment Protection Authority [EPA] has embarked on a two-year trial to collect embedded battery products at 21 community recycling centres across the State. So far, the initiative has collected over four tonnes of items containing embedded batteries, including vacuum cleaners, toothbrushes, power banks and vapes. Up to \$1 million in funding has been made available to promote those new disposal options. The EPA will also run an advertising campaign in mid-2025 to support the efforts. But it is also important that battery suppliers step

up to address the issue. That is why the New South Wales Government is introducing new legislation for mandatory product stewardship for batteries.

In New South Wales we have two prominent, but voluntary, national product stewardship schemes for batteries: B-cycle and Mobile Muster. For product stewardship schemes to be effective though, we need everyone to put in their fair share. Many businesses are doing the right thing, and they should be congratulated, but there are other businesses who choose not to contribute, and that needs to change. Mandatory participation in battery product stewardship programs will ensure that all battery producers are contributing to the solution. The legislation is not a silver bullet on its own, but it is an important first step to expand the coverage of product stewardship schemes and ensure that high-risk batteries that cause fires when improperly disposed of are being safely collected and recycled. All States and Territories are grappling with those issues, and New South Wales is leading the way with this legislation. We want to reduce harms from battery-related fires and protect the community. The bill is an important first step in managing that risk. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (14:19): The Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025 will empower the Minister to prescribe products subject to a mandatory product stewardship scheme and the outcomes that such a scheme must deliver. We urgently need to transition to a circular economy that includes mandatory product stewardship regimes across a range of problem products. Product stewardship makes producers responsible for the life cycle of their products, including after a product is no longer in use. It encourages producers to design products that are cleaner, last longer and are easier to repair, re-use and recycle. They drive producers to create products that do not end up in landfill. The situation is urgent because Sydney's landfill is set to reach capacity in five years.

While the crisis has loomed for two decades, we have largely relied on kerbside recycling of basic products like drink containers, and toothless voluntary waste reduction programs. Australia is now producing 74 million tonnes of waste each year. The latest waste generation data for New South Wales from 2022 to 2023 saw waste generation increase from previous years to 22.4 million tonnes. This month the productivity commission released an interim report into Australia's circular economy, which confirmed that our progress has been slow. The economy remains linear: we extract resources, make them into products, use the products for a short period and then throw them away. The process is repeated billions of times every day, driven by rampant consumerism that relentlessly pushes new over re-using.

It is not just the volume of waste that is a problem but also the types of waste. Many everyday products pose serious health and environmental problems. Batteries are one such product. They contain highly toxic materials that can leach into soil and groundwater, including the contaminants lead, cadmium and mercury. Batteries, especially lithium ion batteries, can ignite and have caused multiple battery fires in garbage trucks and at waste facilities in the State, disrupting waste services and causing work health and safety risks. Despite our knowledge of the significant environmental, health and safety risks of batteries, they are in everything we use, and their use is growing, not declining. They are in toothbrushes, alarm clocks, lamps, speakers and radios. They are in children's shoes, birthday cards, soft toys, hard toys, pens, books and pencil cases.

The batteries are often embedded, which means products cannot be re-used once the battery runs out. Even when batteries can be removed, they often need tools. Then the product and battery need to be taken to different and special waste streams away from kerbside pick-ups. In the inner city, where people live in small apartments, storing items that are no longer needed until a special collection or drop-off is challenging. Many people across the State are putting batteries and products with batteries into red-lid bins for collection. I welcome the commitment from the Government that batteries will be the first product subject to the product stewardship under the bill. We need to make getting batteries out of the general waste stream easy for everyone, and it is the responsibility of battery producers to develop solutions. I hope that products with embedded batteries will also be included.

There are many other problematic products that need to be addressed. The Federal Government has identified clothing textiles, tyres, plastics in healthcare products in hospitals, mattresses and child car seats as priority areas at the Commonwealth level. I will watch that action closely and call for State action if things move too slowly federally. Plastic remains a serious problem despite work to phase out single-use products. Plastic is everywhere in the waste stream, including in landfill, littered in parks and cities, and floating in our oceans, where they become microplastics that enter our food system through ingestion by fish. Yet it seems like everything is either made of plastic, wrapped in plastic or both. Even fruits and vegetables are often sold in plastic nets or bags, often at a cheaper price than loose items. Australia now produces 2.5 million tonnes of plastic waste each year, which is about 100 kilograms per person. Only 13 per cent is recovered, with most sent to landfill.

Most plastics are hard to recycle. Soft plastics recycling bins are no longer available. When they were, most plastic bags placed in them were stockpiled, not recycled.

Any hard plastic that is not the standard drink container or fruit punnet shape risks damaging recycling infrastructure and is sent to landfill. We need to fix that urgently. If Federal action fails to get outcomes soon, the new State laws in this bill should be used on plastic packaging. Current rates of waste generation will continue to overwhelm our waste management systems, including collection and landfill infrastructure. Kerbside collections are limited. We now need bold action to create a circular economy that reduces waste in the first instance and sees the limited waste that is generated recycled over and over again. I call on the Government to move beyond ineffective voluntary actions and to use the powers in this bill to roll out mandatory product stewardship schemes across multiple waste streams. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (14:24): I contribute to debate in support of the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. The legislation answers a question more and more people in New South Wales and the Strathfield electorate are asking: Who is responsible for the waste we see piling up in our streets, waterways and landfill sites? For too long, the answer has been unclear. As consumers, we are asked to do our bit to recycle, dispose of hazardous waste correctly and limit our consumption to produce less waste. Councils are expected to pick up the slack. Meanwhile, the companies that make and profit from these products have had few, if any, obligations to take responsibility once the product leaves their hands. The bill is about rebalancing that equation. It is about making sure the people who create a product and profit from it take responsibility for its entire life cycle, from production to disposal. The bill does that in a practical, staged and fair way.

The bill creates a product stewardship framework. That means brand owners—those who put their name on a product and bring it to market—will be responsible for how the product is collected, recycled or disposed of at the end of its life. The scheme will begin with batteries, which is a sensible first step. Batteries are everywhere in modern life: in our phones, e-scooters, power tools and toys. But they are also dangerous if not handled properly, posing fire risks in garbage trucks and poisoning soil and water when they end up in landfill. From there, the framework allows the Minister to expand to other product categories over time, such as textiles, electronics and packaging. Those are products that make up a large share of our waste, but for which we currently have no consistent or effective recycling solutions.

The bill gives the Minister power to set stewardship targets, which might include recycling rates, the use of recycled materials, or reductions in packaging. It also allows for the creation of product stewardship organisations, which will coordinate efforts across producers and ensure the costs of recovery are fairly shared. There are strong compliance and enforcement mechanisms. Companies will need to prepare action plans, report on their progress and comply with the standards set out by the regulator, which is the Environment Protection Authority [EPA]. The EPA will have the power to audit, enforce and publicly name companies that fall short. In short, this is not a voluntary scheme; it is a structured, enforceable scheme with teeth.

This is not just good environmental policy; it is good economic policy. In the Strathfield electorate, I have met local small businesses that are already building their operations around sustainability. They want a system that rewards innovation, not waste. They want to compete on a level playing field, where doing the right thing is not a disadvantage. This bill begins to deliver that. The legislation will also help councils. Right now, local governments bear the brunt of managing end-of-life products—everything from roadside dumping of e-waste to fire risks in garbage trucks due to improperly discarded batteries. By shifting the responsibility upstream, we lighten that burden and create more efficient, coordinated systems.

More broadly, the bill aligns with the principles behind the local Wellbeing Strathfield initiative, which is a 10-year vision to improve physical, environmental and economic wellbeing in the community. Cleaner streets, safer homes and smarter product design all contribute to the kind of community we want to build. If we want to advance the energy transition, we must ensure that batteries are safe and sustainable to use. Implementation will be key. Smaller businesses must be given time and support to comply. Community education will be essential, particularly in multicultural electorates like Strathfield, where many residents speak languages other than English at home. We must ensure the transition is inclusive, equitable and backed by clear, accessible information.

However, let us not lose sight of what the bill represents. It is a shift from wasteful systems to circular systems, from externalising cost to internalising responsibility, and from short-term convenience to long-term sustainability. It represents a shift in thinking.

It says that waste is not an accident; it is the result of choices about design, packaging, materials and systems. This legislation helps us make better choices by embedding responsibility into the very way products are made and managed. I commend the Minister and the Government for introducing the bill. It is smart, considered and

forward looking. It supports innovation, protects our environment and puts fairness back into the waste system. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (14:29): On behalf of Mr Jihad Dib: In reply: I thank the many members who contributed to debate on the Product Lifecycle Responsibility Bill 2025. Many members contributed, so I will not name them all. I particularly recognise the member for Balmain, who spoke in support of the bill on behalf of The Greens, and the member for Manly and former Minister, who spoke in support of the bill for the Opposition. I acknowledge the work of the former Minister on the green shoots of this reform. The Government is happy to consider the suggestions that he put forward. At its core, the bill provides a framework to make brand owners responsible for their products across the product's life cycle. We need to be able to easily and quickly regulate products causing problems, whether they are a risk to safety or a risk to the environment. The risk of battery-related fires in New South Wales is a prime example of the need for action.

At this point I thank the Fire Brigade Employees Union—the mighty FBEU—representing our firefighters in the State for their contribution to this landmark bill. The statistics provided to our teams working on this legislation were alarming but incredibly important to inform the direction of the bill. We have seen the devastating consequences of the improper handling and disposal of lithium ion batteries and the spate of fires not only in this State but nationwide. The bill will provide the regulatory framework to handle emerging environmental issues. The framework established under the bill allows the Minister to prescribe, by regulation, requirements across the entire life cycle of a product. The bill will also hold brand owners to account through significant penalties if they fail to comply with regulations.

In the first instance, this legislation is intended to provide a framework for the regulation of batteries. The bill will enable the New South Wales Government to take comprehensive action and escalate its response to reduce the prevalence of battery fires in the waste supply chain and prevent further deaths, injuries and property damage. The measures are urgent, and the time to act is now. Ultimately, we must protect the community and infrastructure, keep people safe, and reduce environmental impacts. The bill provides us with the appropriate tools to escalate our response, evaluate our approach, adapt as we need to over time, and deal with this challenging problem. As a Government, we are proud to be leading the way nationally in environmental protection. I thank the team at the Environment Protection Authority, who are in the gallery, for their good work, and also the industrious advisers from the Minister's office. They are always there to support me. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Ms TRISH DOYLE: On behalf of Mr Jihad Dib: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

ENERGY AMENDMENT (PIPELINES AND GAS SAFETY) BILL 2024

Second Reading Speech

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (14:35): On behalf of Mr Jihad Dib: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Energy Amendment (Pipelines and Gas Safety) Bill 2024 is about ensuring public safety when it comes to New South Wales gas infrastructure. The New South Wales energy system and the role of gas within that system are undergoing rapid change. As this change occurs, public safety remains at the forefront of our minds. For this reason, it is critical that our regulatory framework for gas infrastructure keeps pace. The amendments in the bill strengthen and harmonise the safety and technical regulation for pipelines and other gas network infrastructure in New South Wales.

The bill amends three pieces of legislation: the Gas Supply Act 1996, the Pipelines Act 1967 and the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. Schedule 1 to the bill amends the Gas Supply Act. The amendments in the bill are intended to modernise the Gas Supply Act and better harmonise it with the Pipelines Act as well as other similar energy legislation in New South Wales and other jurisdictions. The changes will enhance the governance, safety and operational efficiency of gas networks in New South Wales. Many of the changes are in response to issues raised with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water over the last few years by a wide range of stakeholders, including gas network operators, industry representatives and community members. The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water publicly consulted on the proposed

changes to the Gas Supply Act and the Pipelines Act in August and September last year. The feedback from the consultation was broadly supportive of the proposed amendments and the case for change.

The amendments include expanding government inspection powers to better investigate incidents, enable seizure of materials for comprehensive testing to determine failure causes, and direct actions to ensure network safety and reduce the chance of hazardous incidents happening. This is consistent with powers in other legislation from New South Wales and other jurisdictions. The enhanced investigation powers aim to allow effective and timely investigations to take place in response to gas leak and rupture incidents, such as the devastating explosion in Whalan last year, thereby reducing public safety risks.

The changes will also align offences and penalties in the Gas Supply Act and the Pipelines Act. Some of the current penalties are outdated. This bill increases penalties to ensure they are high enough to deter breaches of the regulatory framework. Correspondingly, Local Court penalty limits are also increased, and continuing offences introduced. The proposed introduction of penalty infringement and show cause notices would provide a structured and timely response to violations and ease reliance on court processes for the award of offences. Further amendments include general refinements to administrative processes, including the ability to delegate the Minister's and secretary's functions, and clarification to the regulation-making power for data collection. All amendments to the Gas Supply Act are intended to commence on the bill's assent. These changes will ensure that the regulation of the New South Wales gas network is consistent with other energy legislation and maintains public safety and operational integrity.

I now turn to schedule 2 to the bill, which amends the Pipelines Act 1967 No 90. The intention of the proposed amendments to the Pipelines Act are similar to the proposed amendments for the Gas Supply Act, bringing both Acts into alignment in terms of obligations, offences and investigator powers. The proposed amendments include introducing certain requirements such as compliance with Before You Dig Australia protocols and notification for damage to pipelines. An additional proposed amendment to the Pipelines Act is a new regulation-making power to prescribe minimum requirements for compulsory acquisition processes by licensees for pipeline land and easements. The regulation-making power will enable requirements, such as those modelled on the New South Wales Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991, to be indicated for the establishment of a land acquisition process that meets contemporary community expectations and that are consistent with other energy infrastructure.

I echo the clarification given by the Minister in the other place in relation to the amendment regarding compulsory acquisitions. In New South Wales gas pipelines are owned and operated by private companies. Unlike other forms of infrastructure such as roads or transmission lines, the Government does not acquire the land or easement required for a gas pipeline. What we are trying to do with the amendment in the bill is to ensure that the community and pipeline companies have clarity about the process that must be followed to negotiate land acquisition before resorting to compulsory acquisition. We intend to align those requirements as much as possible with those set out in the just terms Act. That will provide certainty to both communities and industry. Landowners who are affected by new pipelines have the right to know what they can expect in those circumstances in terms of due process. We want to provide them with that certainty.

The bill also includes refinements to administrative processes and delegations. The amendments to the Pipelines Act will occur in two stages. The amendments relating to fees and penalties being debts due to the Crown are proposed to commence by proclamation due to the need to make corresponding amendments to the Pipelines Regulation 2023. Those are expected to occur in the first half of this year. All other proposed changes are intended to commence on the bill's assent. Ultimately, the proposed changes aim to modernise and harmonise the Pipelines Act to be consistent with other New South Wales legislation and jurisdictions and to enhance the safety and operational efficiency of pipelines infrastructure in New South Wales.

I now turn to schedule 3, which amends the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. The changes are consequential to the penalty amendments in the Gas Supply Act and Pipelines Act. The proposed changes to the Criminal Procedure Act are required to enable indictable offences in those Acts to also be able to be tried summarily. Effectively, the change will improve efficiency by utilising alternative court levels, thereby alleviating burden on court processes for indictable offences. The bill is about modernising outdated legislation to promote public safety and meet community expectations. It is further evidence of the Government's commitment to sensible regulatory reform to support the transformation of New South Wales' energy system. I commend the bill to the House.

Second Reading Debate

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (14:43): I speak on behalf of the Opposition in debate on the Energy Amendment (Pipelines and Gas Safety) Bill 2024 and thank the Parliamentary Secretary for a comprehensive explanation of the bill. We share the view that the gas pipeline network and critical infrastructure in New South

Wales, like those in other jurisdictions around the country, are ageing and require maintenance and upkeep both in a physical sense and from a legislative perspective.

Obviously we are going through a significant change to our energy mix at this time, and the Opposition supports a safe and functioning gas pipeline system. The Parliamentary Secretary explained that the bill will amend three Acts: the Gas Supply Act 1996, the Pipelines Act 1967 and the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. Generally speaking, these changes will enhance the governance, safety and efficiency of gas networks throughout the State. We are pleased that these issues have been consulted on with a broad range of stakeholders over the past couple of years, including network operators, industry and, of course, community. We further note that public consultation occurred between August and September.

Importantly, the amendments include expanding government inspection powers to better investigate incidents and other commonsense things like enabling the seizure of materials for testing to determine failure causes and other safety issues across the network. I thank the Parliamentary Secretary for clarifying the changes made in the other place by the Minister regarding the issue of acquisition. It is fair to say that these changes will ensure that the regulation of the New South Wales gas network is consistent with other energy legislation and that there is good public confidence in the safety and management of the gas network across the State. For those reasons, I commend the bill to the House.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (14:45): I support of Energy Amendment (Pipelines and Gas Safety) Bill 2024. The bill will modernise and strengthen the regulatory framework governing gas supply and pipeline infrastructure in New South Wales. The Government's review of the Pipelines Act 1967 and the Gas Supply Act 1996 revealed key areas where the current regulatory framework needs to be improved. These improvements are necessary to address energy, technologies, enhance public safety and bring our regulations into alignment with other jurisdictions across Australia. The amendments proposed by the bill serve three primary objectives: enhancing governance and oversight, improving safety mechanisms and modernising operational procedures for the management of pipelines and gas networks.

In doing so, the bill ensures that New South Wales remains at the forefront of regulatory best practices while protecting our communities and supporting the energy transition. One of the most critical aspects of the bill is the expansion of inspector powers. The bill proposes new provisions that will allow inspectors to acquire information and records from any person for the purpose of assisting investigations. Additionally, it grants expanded powers of entry, search of premises and the authority to question and identify persons for investigation purposes. These changes are modelled after similar provisions in the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 and are essential for ensuring accountability and compliance with the gas supply sector. These powers are not excessive; they are necessary tools to ensure the safety of our communities.

When incidents occur like the tragic explosion last year in Whalan in my electorate, we must be able to act swiftly to investigate, identify risks and implement necessary safeguards. The expanded authority given to inspectors will help ensure that such incidents do not recur and that our gas infrastructure remains safe and reliable. Another major improvement introduced by the bill is the update to penalties. The reality is that some of the penalties in our existing laws are outdated and no longer serve as an effective deterrent. The proposed updates include the introduction of continuing offences with accumulating penalties for ongoing noncompliance.

Additionally, the bill introduces penalty infringements and show cause notices, providing authorities with structured and timely responses to violations, rather than relying solely on lengthy court proceedings. These changes align our legislation with comparable energy laws across the country and reinforce the importance of compliance. Moreover, the bill increases Local Court penalty limits, ensuring that courts can impose appropriate fines when breaches occur. These messages send a clear message that noncompliance will not be tolerated and those who fail to adhere to safety and operational standards will be held accountable.

A key feature of this legislation is the focus on end-of-life infrastructure management. As pipelines age and our energy sector transitions toward renewable fuels such as hydrogen and biofuels, we must ensure that our regulatory framework can support those changes. Proper decommissioning of infrastructure is just as crucial as its construction. Without a well-defined regulatory approach, ageing pipelines could pose significant risk to both public safety and the environment. The proposed amendments provide clear governance structures for decommissioning processes, ensuring that outdated infrastructure is safely retired with minimal risk to the community. The amendments to the Pipelines Act are particularly noteworthy. By aligning this legislation with the Gas Supply Act, we create a more cohesive and efficient regulatory framework. The new requirements, such as compliance with Before you Dig Australia protocols and the mandatory notification for pipeline damage, are commonsense reforms that will improve industry standards and reduce the risk of accidental infrastructure damage.

The bill also includes refinements to administrative processes, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of oversight. By allowing for the delegation of functions by the Minister and secretary, we ensure that decision-making is streamlined and responsive to emerging challenges. Additionally, clarifications to data collection powers strengthen our ability to monitor industry trends and enforce compliance effectively. Importantly, the amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act will improve the efficiency of our legal processes. By allowing indictable offences under the Gas Supply Act and Pipelines Act to be tried summarily, we alleviate pressure on our court systems while ensuring that justice is served in a timely manner. This is yet another example of how this bill modernises our legal framework to better serve the people of New South Wales.

There has been an extensive consultation process, as noted in the consultation paper by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water entitled *NSW Pipelines and Gas Supply Legislation Amendments*, dated August 2024. That consultation has been the basis of the development of this bill. Modernising outdated legislation is not just a matter of administrative housekeeping; it is a fundamental responsibility of good governance. As we continue to navigate the complexities of the energy transition, we must ensure that our laws provide clear, enforceable and forward-thinking regulations that uphold public safety and environmental integrity. For those reasons, I commend the bill to the House.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (14:52): On behalf of Mr Jihad Dib: In reply: I thank members for their contributions to debate on the Energy Amendment (Pipelines and Gas Safety) Bill 2024. In particular, and as always, I thank the member for Manly for supporting the bill on behalf of the Opposition, and the member for Mount Druitt. This bill is about ensuring the New South Wales gas network is safe. I once again acknowledge the devastating incident in Whalan last year. The New South Wales energy system and the role of gas within that system is undergoing rapid change. As this change occurs, public safety remains at the forefront of our minds.

The bill is about modernising outdated legislation to promote public safety and meet community expectations. It is further evidence of this Government's commitment to sensible regulatory reform to support the transformation of the New South Wales energy system. I thank members for their contributions to debate. I finish by acknowledging and thanking the many people in the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water who worked on the preparation of this bill and the fabulous team of ministerial advisers. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Ms TRISH DOYLE: On behalf of Mr Jihad Dib: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

BURNS OUTDOOR OBSTACLE TRAINING

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (14:54): Burns Outdoor Obstacle Training, or BOOTS, has been a cornerstone of fun, fitness and community in my part of Sydney for nearly a decade. Nestled on two acres in beautiful Bringelly, it has welcomed families, athletes and adventure seekers with obstacle courses, Ninja warrior challenges and group events for all ages. Founded by Wayne and Lorelai, the business was born from a passion for fitness after their son Javier's type 1 diabetes diagnosis. What began as backyard obstacles grew into a renowned training ground, even catching the attention of TV shows like *The Bachelorette*. It has also helped to shape future athletes like 11-year-old Hamish, who, after six years of training, placed third at the Ultimate Ninja Athlete Association National Championship and will represent Australia at the world championships in Dallas this July. As Burns Outdoor Obstacle Training prepares to close its doors at the end of 2025, this is the final chance to experience it. Whether you are a first-timer or a returning visitor, do not miss out. I thank Wayne and Lorelai.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (14:55): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the House to continue to sit past 4.00 p.m. until the completion of private members' statements, at which time the House do adjourn without motion until 12.00 p.m. Tuesday 6 May 2025.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (14:55): The Opposition does not object to the suspension of standing and sessional orders.

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

Motion agreed to.

Committees

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE GREATER SYDNEY PARKLANDS TRUST

Membership

Mr RON HOENIG: I move:

That:

- (1) Nathan Matthew Hagarty be appointed to serve on the Joint Select Committee on the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust in place of Sally Anne Quinnell, discharged.
- (2) A message be sent informing the Legislative Council.

Motion agreed to.

STANDING ORDERS AND PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

Membership

Mr RON HOENIG: I move:

That Liesl Dorothy Tesch be appointed to serve on the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee in place of Janelle Anne Saffin, discharged.

Motion agreed to.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS

Membership

Mr RON HOENIG: I move:

That Joanna Elizabeth Haylen be appointed to serve on the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics in place of Janelle Anne Saffin, discharged.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

MILLIN'S FREE RANGE BUTCHER

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (14:57): The Manly area is known for many things. It is the birthplace of surfing, home to the best beach in the world and, of course, the proud stomping ground of the greatest footy team. I am pleased to inform the House that we can add another title to the list. Manly is officially home to New South Wales's best banger, as in sausage. I extend huge congratulations to Millin's Free Range Butcher at Balgowlah Heights, which has cleaned up at this year's prestigious New South Wales Sausage King awards, snagging first place in both the traditional Australian beef category and the poultry category with their famous Malay satay chicken sausages. Just when you thought it could not get better, Millin's also took home second place for the gourmet lamb category with its Moroccan lamb and raisin bangers. I congratulate Millin's butcher on that outstanding achievement. What a great barbeque addition for this weekend.

SING EXPRESS

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (14:58): I recognise Dr Tina Broad and the unique and powerful pop-up choir program, Sing Express, that Tina founded in 2018. Built on the philosophy that everyone has a voice and that singing together is in our DNA, Sing Express has been bringing people together to experience the magic of group singing, often in just one night or over a few short weeks. The program's recent version, Sing Express Sisters, was a spectacular success, with over 70 women from Nowra to Batemans Bay joining to learn four songs over five weeks in the lead-up to International Women's Day. Their powerful performances included *I Am Woman* and *True Colours* and uplifted audiences at four International Women's Day events, celebrating strength, unity and the joy of music. Beyond its musical achievements, Sing Express fosters connection, wellbeing and kindness, partnering with MUCK Up for the Chorus for Kindness events, which raise funds for youth initiatives. Dr Tina Broad's dedication to community and music is truly inspiring, and I look forward to the next choir event.

JASMINE FOOTIT

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (14:59): This afternoon I congratulate and commend Mulgoa local Jasmine Footit for her stellar artistic gymnastics career, as she retires from competing in a sport which she has excelled in throughout her life. The 20-year-old's retirement follows ongoing injuries, which is not uncommon in elite athletes. She farewelled the sport by concluding with the Australian Gymnastics Championships and obtained remarkable results, ranking eighth all-round, fifth on the floor and sixth on vault. Jasmine has been recognised for her artistic gymnastics success by being named the latest recipient of the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation Senior Sports Star Award. I am pleased to learn that Jasmine will continue to contribute her artistic gymnastics career to the sport, as she plans to coach and judge the next wave of talent. On behalf of my electorate of Badgerys Creek, I congratulate Jasmine Footit on her extraordinary career and wish her continued success in the next chapter of her life.

LIVERPOOL WOMEN'S CIRCLE

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (15:00): Liverpool is fast becoming a hub of entrepreneurship and empowerment for women. This morning, the Zen Tea Lounge Foundation and WOTSO Liverpool officially cut the ribbon on a wonderful new initiative. The Liverpool Women's Circle is a space to connect, share stories and uplift each other in a warm, welcoming environment. The gatherings feature breathwork, dance and movement, as well as delicious food. Plus, it is a chance to enjoy free authentic Vietnamese coffee and drinks as a special treat from the supported employment program team at Zen Tea Lounge Foundation. Operating on the fourth Friday of every month at WOTSO Liverpool, which is located in the heart of our CBD, the initiative is an opportunity for participants to build a range of new skills and make new friends. We know that social connection is often the first step to a broader range of health and economic benefits, and I commend Amy Nguyen, the CEO of the Zen Tea Lounge Foundation, and her whole team for bringing this much-needed initiative to Liverpool.

COLLARROY TENNIS CLUB

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (15:01): I recognise Collaroy Tennis Club for hosting its inaugural Pride in Sport event last Saturday. This was a brilliant celebration of inclusion, community and equality. It was awesome to join in and see the Collaroy courts alive with colour, friendly—sometimes fierce—competition and genuine community connection. It takes a special club to actively welcome players of all backgrounds to show that tennis is for everyone. I thank David Keogh and Vito Cincinnato for their leadership in bringing this awesome event to life. Their passion for creating safe and welcoming spaces is sincere, and it is what community sport is absolutely all about. It was especially meaningful to see the event raise funds for Lifeline Northern Beaches, an organisation doing vital work to support mental health and suicide prevention in our region. It was also good to see local legends Layne Beachley, who is a mate of mine and turns out can play tennis, and Kirk Pengilly, who cannot play tennis, join in the fun and show their support. I congratulate everybody involved in this wonderful initiative. I hope this event becomes a regular fixture on our northern beaches calendar.

MUSLIM WOMEN'S WELFARE OF AUSTRALIA

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (15:02): I thank Muslim Women's Welfare of Australia for its kind invitation to attend its twentieth anniversary gala and Iftar earlier this week. It was wonderful to see the community come together to support this important organisation. I enjoyed listening to the many inspiring speeches. Muslim Women's Welfare of Australia has provided crucial health, education and service support to migrant women in Australia. President Faten El Dana has received numerous awards for the amazing difference she has made in the lives of Muslim women in our community. Those awards include the A. H. Beard Community Hero Award at the 2014 NSW Women of the Year Awards, the NSW Premier's Lebanese community award in 2012, and an Order of Australia Medal in the same year. I acknowledge the good work of Muslim Women's Welfare of Australia and commend those involved in supporting and empowering Muslim women in our community for the past two decades. I thank them for all that they do.

KAMBORA PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (15:03): I recognise Kambora Public School in Davidson, an outstanding local educational institution. Since 1979, Kambora has been more than a school; it is a vibrant community and place of learning and friendship. I am proud to support Kambora and will do so for many years to come. Kambora inspires and engages students, from its much-loved Story Dogs reading program to a vibrant music and arts scene, and even a Harry Potter library. I was proud to recently support the installation of new bubblers. I recognise new principal Nicholas Johnson and the dedicated teachers and staff. I also recognise the Kambora P&C, led by Lily Stewart. Kambora Public School is a very special place, and I look forward to supporting its strength of public

education and its power of a dedicated school community. I am proud to recognise Kambora in the Parliament of New South Wales and to support its continued success.

CAMDEN AND DISTRICT NETBALL ASSOCIATION

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (15:04): I congratulate Camden and District Netball Association on starting its 2025 season. It was a beautiful—if rather hot—morning on 15 March when we were joined by many dignitaries in the area to watch the amazing "march past" of all the teams. I will do a little roll call of all the teams we saw: Appin Waratahs Netball Club, Benkennie Netball Club, Bringelly Netball Club, Camden RSL Netball Club, Currans Hill Netball Club, Douglas Park Menangle Netball Club, Harrington Park Netball Club, Macarthur Netball Club, Mt Annan Netball Club, Narellan Netball Club, Oran Park Netball Club, Razorback Netball Club, The Oaks Netball Club and Wilton Netball Club. The march past was a sea of colour with balloons and fancy and theme dress. It was an incredible distribution of camaraderie and teamwork. And what really brought everyone together was the day of games that followed. I congratulate everyone. I was very pleased to declare the season open.

MERCY CATHOLIC COLLEGE CHATSWOOD

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (15:05): I acknowledge Mercy Catholic College Chatswood as it celebrates 135 years of excellence in education and service. Under the leadership of Principal Brenda Timp, the college continues to uphold the values of the Sisters of Mercy, fostering faith, learning and community spirit. The college recently marked this milestone with its 2025 Open Mass, a special occasion to reflect on its history and enduring impact. It was an honour for the school to welcome Sister Jenni Ryan, head of the North Sydney Mercies and former teacher at Our Lady of Dolours, along with Sister Loreto Conroy and Sister Anna, both former teachers and former heads of the North Sydney Mercies. As part of the celebration, students received symbolic Mercy ribbons in the colours of their houses—Mercy, Stormanston, Coolock, and McAuley—representing the school's strong traditions. I commend Principal Brenda Timp, all the staff, the student community and the Sisters of Mercy for their dedication and contribution to education in our community. Mercy Catholic College has a proud history, and I wish the school every continued success for its future.

COBARGO FOLK FESTIVAL

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (15:06): I congratulate the Cobargo community on a highly successful 2025 Cobargo Folk Festival. The three-day celebration of folk and roots music, song, dance and craft at the Cobargo Showground started 28 years ago as a street festival. The community-owned, not-for-profit Cobargo Folk Festival is wholly volunteer run, independent and non-commercial. The folk festival and the It Takes a Village fringe festival were held from 27 February to 2 March. This special free event, funded by Destination NSW, brings festival fun into the heart of Cobargo village, showcasing our incredible South Coast talent with music, inspiring talks, a documentary, a lively family bush dance and more. In 2025 the festival has grown back to its pre-Black Summer peak numbers, bringing in more than \$2 million to the economy of the Bega electorate. Not only did people visit for the three days in Cobargo; they also visited neighbouring Tilba Tilba, Bermagui and Narooma, adding a multiplier effect.

WALLY MITCHELL

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (15:07): Former Bourke mayor Wally Mitchell is a legend in his part of the world. With 38 years of service, Wally was the longest serving councillor on Bourke council before his retirement in 2012, with 12 of those spent as mayor. His life has been dedicated to his community. He was a founding member of the Isolated Children's Parents' Association and a board member of the Bourke Rural Counselling Service for 19 years. He is the last surviving inaugural committee member of the Louth Turf Club and is still active in the club. For many years he has been, and still is, an active member of Louth Chamber of Commerce. As well, he is still carrying out voluntary community work in Louth village. In recognition of everything he has done for Bourke and surrounds, he was named Bourke's Citizen of the Year in 2018 and awarded the Order of Australia in 2019. There is probably not a person in the Bourke district whose life has not been affected positively in some way by Wally. I congratulate Wally on his lifetime of achievement and thank him for his ongoing service to Bourke and surrounds.

TOWN AND COUNTRY REAL ESTATE MERRYLANDS

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (15:08): I acknowledge the outstanding contributions of Town and Country Real Estate Merrylands and the 35-year real estate career of its founder, Elie Kaltoum. Elie migrated from Lebanon to Australia in 1988, determined to build a future through hard work and dedication. He entered the real estate industry in 1990, studying at TAFE while working. In 1998 he established his own agency in Merrylands. Town and Country Real Estate is more than a business; it is a family enterprise, with Elie's son, Damian, working alongside him. The agency is deeply committed to the community, not only helping people find suitable homes

but also supporting local schools through work experience programs. Elie also trains employees through the Restart employment program, helping individuals gain the skills they need to succeed. Town and Country Real Estate Merrylands embodies the values of integrity, dedication and community service. I commend Elie and his team for their ongoing contributions and wish them continued success.

ANIME AT ABBOTSFORD

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (15:09): I sincerely congratulate a beloved local business in our community, Anime at Abbotsford, and the owners who celebrated their eighteenth anniversary in business. Bradley and Hansen opened their first store at Anime at Abbotsford at 317 Great North Road on 27 March 2007. At the time they found it hard to find stores that sold official Anime merchandise, so they began their business with the aim of providing authentic Anime merch for collectors. They are now the exclusive Australian distributor of Japan's leading Anime manufacturers. They stock popular and hard-to-find titles, a real delight for Anime lovers, near and far. Anime at Abbotsford has expanded with a second store in Haymarket in Sydney's CBD. Brad and Hansen frequently attend Sydney Anime conventions. The success of Anime at Abbotsford is testament to their outstanding knowledge and passion for the industry and their dedication to customer service. They are a pillar of the local community, often sponsoring local schools. I congratulate them on this remarkable achievement and wish them all the very best.

AUSTRALIAN CHIN LIEN CHINESE ASSOCIATION

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (15:10): On Sunday 3 March 2025, I had the honour of attending the inauguration ceremony of the sixteenth Executive Committee of the Australian Chin Lien Chinese Association. On this special occasion, I recognise the outstanding contributions of the former president, Mr Michael Chan, and his team to my Cabramatta electorate over the years. I am also honoured to congratulate the newly elected president, Ms Jennifer Tran, and her executive team. I am confident that, under Ms Tran's leadership and with the support of her capable executive team, my local community will continue to benefit from their dedicated services. A special mention must be made of the Kwan Yin Temple run by the association. It is a major place of worship for the Buddhist community in Canley Vale and provides various forms of charitable support, including assistance to local schools. Congratulations once again to all, and I look forward to the many wonderful contributions you will continue to make for our community.

JAN BLOOMFIELD

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (15:11): Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises an outstanding local resident, Jan Bloomfield. After 20 years of tireless contribution, Jan Bloomfield is stepping down from her leadership role with the Little Blowhole Landcare group. She leaves behind not just a beautifully restored coastal site, but a strong connected group of volunteers who continue to transform this patch into something extraordinary. Jan was the original volunteer when Landcare began at the Little Blowhole in 2009, tackling an area choked with noxious weeds on neglected dry pasture. Two years later, Jan stepped in to become the coordinator. With a background of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, she brought deep ecological knowledge to this eager team of volunteers. But it was her grit, warmth and wry humour that kept the group grounded and growing. Jan worked with councils, secured grants, organised working bees and more. The group meets monthly—a small team that gets their hands dirty for a few hours before sharing morning tea. With Jan's vision, they transformed this site into a picnic and wedding spot, rich in natural biodiversity. This group meets on the first Saturday of each month at 9.30 a.m. Thank you and well done, Jan Bloomfield.

SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (15:12): The Sydney Royal Easter Show opens at Sydney Olympic Park on Friday 11 April for all to enjoy. Munch on a dagwood dog or scrumptious scones baked by the Country Women's Association and take a ride on the Cliff Hanger—but maybe not in that order. In our digital age, it is important to get back to nature so make sure you take the time to pat a pig and feed the animals at the Farmyard Nursery. Make a beeline to the woodchopping or the Woolworths Fresh Food Dome to feast on fresh olives, cheese, or even gin-tasting, but don't forget to spoil the kids with a stop at the Showbag Pavilion. I encourage all show revellers to remain appropriately hydrated, be respectful of all the workers and volunteers and catch public transport, thanks to integrated ticketing. A special thanks to the Royal Agricultural Society, entrants, stallholders, judges, contactors, employees, the police and volunteers, particularly the indispensable St John Ambulance. The show closes on Tuesday 22 April, so get your tickets for all the fun of the fair.

GRANGE CHUNG

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (15:13): I acknowledge Chiswick local resident, Grange Chung, for his dedication to our community. Grange served in the Royal Australian Navy after graduating from the Australian Defence Force Academy with honours. During his time in the Navy, Grange served across a

range of roles, including seagoing, intelligence, representational and policy. Following his retirement from the Defence Force, Grange went on to work as a commercial pilot where he worked and lived throughout Asia. Upon his return to Australia, Grange continued his service in the navy in senior positions. Grange has put his hand up to run as the Liberal candidate for Reid in the upcoming Federal election. He is someone who genuinely cares about people and wants to work to make our area a better place. I sincerely thank Grange for his commitment to our community and wish him all the very best on 3 May.

OSCAR O'BRIEN

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (15:14): Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Oscar O'Brien from Kiama who is proof even the smallest hands can make a big difference, and fund a family holiday along the way. Eight-year-old Oscar has become something of a local hero, recycling 1,000 bottles and cans in two weeks as part of his mission to help fund a family trip to Japan in June 2025. Oscar is learning about recycling, keeping Kiama beautiful and saving money at the same time, motivated by the prospect of visiting Tokyo Disneyland following a struggle with travel sickness. Until recently, Oscar suffered from a severe travel sickness that made even 30-minute car rides a source of anxiety. Last year a flight to Melbourne boosted his confidence and he is determined to enjoy his travel. What began small has turned into a community effort. Local businesses including Saltwater Kiama, Tory's and the Kiama Farmer Market rallied behind Oscar's goal. Oscar has set his sights even higher, aiming for 50,000 containers before his family trip. For those looking to contribute, the O'Brien family offers convenient bulk pick-ups throughout Kiama for containers. I congratulate Oscar O'Brien. Well done.

Private Members' Statements

WATERLOO SOUTH ESTATE

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (15:15): The renewal of Waterloo south is an investment in the future of this community, not just by maintaining social and affordable housing but also expanding and improving it. It is a project that reflects the Government's commitment to safe, high-quality housing and a fairer system that prioritises those in need. For far too long, Waterloo south has been treated as a political football. Under the former Liberal Government, the estate was seen as prime real estate, a parcel of land it was eager to flog off to developers, with no plans to secure social housing, no commitment to residents and no interest in helping those in need.

The Minns Labor Government's approach could not be more distinct. We are not selling off Waterloo south; we are rebuilding it, expanding it and ensuring it remains a place where people can live with security and dignity. The renewal will increase the supply of social and affordable housing and provide modern, high-quality homes that will serve the community for generations. Yet, despite that, we continue to see deliberate misinformation from political opportunists, not just from the Liberals who abandoned Waterloo but from fringe parties and self-appointed activists who thrive on fear and outrage. Those individuals do not represent our community. They parachute in, hold up signs and call it activism, while the real work is being done to support tenants' rights before their eyes.

The reality for tenants is very different. Firstly, every affected household is receiving personalised relocation support, financial assistance and local housing options. Secondly, no-one is being left behind or forced into unsuitable housing. Thirdly, every tenant's support is designed to ensure their relocation is handled with dignity and care. Fourthly, every household is being offered options to stay in the local area if they choose. And, fifthly, every tenant has the guaranteed right to return. This is a carefully managed renewal, not displacement. Unlike the Liberals, who saw public housing as a liability, Labor sees it as essential to our city's future. Some claim that refurbishment would be a quicker solution, but that ignores the realities of ageing buildings, decades-old towers and walk-ups plagued by maintenance issues, accessibility challenges and inefficiencies that cannot simply be patched up. The homes must be rebuilt for the future and not left to decay.

Others say the project does little to address the housing crisis. But let us look at the facts. Waterloo south will deliver more social and affordable housing than exists today. The project is also just one part of a broader Homes NSW strategy, which includes unlocking surplus government land, forging stronger partnerships to expand social housing, improving maintenance programs where needed and building more homes where possible. Furthermore, Homes NSW has prioritised tenant voices, transparency and real engagement. A dedicated Waterloo Connect office, direct tenant support and regular consultations ensure the renewal is being undertaken with tenants, not to them.

We are even funding the Redfern Legal Centre so that it is resourced to provide independent tenant advocacy.

Some say the human services aspect of the process has stalled. That is simply false. The Waterloo Human Services Collaborative and Homes NSW are working daily to ensure that services are available before, during and

after the transition. The Liberals ignored the estate for years, and so-called activists exploit it for their own gain. Only Labor is delivering solutions. The Waterloo south renewal is not a sell-off or an eviction; it is a once-in-a-generation investment in social housing. Years from now, Waterloo tenants will be thriving in modern, high-quality homes, while today's loudest and most uninformed protesters will be a forgotten footnote to a project that changed lives for the better. That is the reality this Government is delivering.

STATE TAXES

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (15:20): Today I speak about taxes that continue to put pressure on the cost of living for people, families and businesses across New South Wales and in my electorate. A constituent named Enzo visited me and my staff. Enzo is an Italian immigrant who left his home to come to Australia many decades ago in search of a better life. Upon his arrival to Australia, he found work basically straightaway and worked for many years in labour-intensive jobs. He worked two jobs for a big portion of that period to make ends meet and save some money. He purchased the home in which he still lives in the Drummoyne electorate. During his working life, he decided to buy a second property in the hope that it would help him in his retirement. Enzo came to my office because, upon receiving his land tax bill, he can barely meet the payment let alone sustain himself as a self-funded retiree.

This Government has frozen the land tax threshold and, at the same time, raised land tax rates. That is hurting self-funded retirees in my community. In my electorate, my constituents are houseproud, and many seniors were migrants to Australia. They are generally people from European backgrounds from countries like Italy and Greece. They are hard workers who worked in any job they could find to get ahead. They never complained because they were so grateful to Australia for all the opportunity it brought them. They came without being able to speak the language, and saved every penny they could so that their children and grandchildren could have the best possible life. They worked so hard, and they made the decision to be self-funded retirees. Since they were often not educated, they could not comprehend investments on the stock market and bought property instead. They were so grateful to be in Australia that they did not want to ask the Government for a pension.

Now, like Enzo, many people are stuck because they cannot afford to pay their land tax bill. The rent they collect is not enough to live on after all their expenses. Another constituent came to visit us in the office with tears in their eyes. They had purchased one home about 20 years ago across the road from where they lived. They rent the house to a single mother with three kids. The rent they collect is not enough to cover the land tax bill, so they were forced to raise the rent. This person was not the stereotypical greedy landlord; this was someone who was feeling guilty for raising the rent because they did not want another family to struggle financially. But they were left with no other choice. For many in my community and across New South Wales, the land tax indexation freeze presents challenges. I call on the Government to support self-funded retirees in that situation.

Turning to stamp duty, I have doorknocked many homes in my electorate. There are so many potential downsizers who tell me they would sell their home immediately if there were decent, spacious apartments available on the market, and if they would not incur a massive stamp duty bill. We are in the middle of a housing crisis and every possible option should be on the table to get families and young people into suitable homes. We have a cohort of empty-nesters who are living in homes that are too big for them because it is too expensive for them to move elsewhere. Stamp duty is a massive deterrent for downsizers, and I want to see all members of this place work together to give reasonable stamp duty concessions so that empty-nesters have an incentive to downsize and young families can move into those homes. I was a kid who grew up with the privilege of happy memories playing in a backyard. I want to help families have a choice to purchase a home so that the next generation of children know what that is like. In this place, I will work productively on policies that help people. We can do that by looking at the State tax system.

I turn to payroll tax, which, at its core, is a tax on successful businesses. It is seen by some as penalising their decision to grow and be successful, which ultimately stalls the creation of more jobs in our State. I have spoken to countless local businesses in my electorate who have expressed the pressure they are facing under the current payroll tax system. I have also spoken to local accountants, who have told me that there are plenty of businesses that should and could expand but shy away from the decision because of payroll tax obligations, or because some businesses just simply cannot afford to be hit with the payroll tax bill.

I refer to an article by James Adonis, published by *The Sydney Morning Herald* in 2015, which sums it up. He wrote:

Of all the taxes in this country, surely payroll tax is the most absurd. It sends a very clear and succinct message to employers: do not hire any additional employees because, if you do, you'll pay the price, literally.

I hope the Government will consider payroll tax reforms to help small businesses.

CABRAMATTA ELECTORATE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (15:24): I speak about the new preschools in the Cabramatta electorate, which are expected to be built and completed by 2027. Every day, I am fortunate to see the vast learning and development that children undergo in their early lives. As a father of three children, I understand firsthand the importance of education, particularly high-quality early childhood education. The early years of a child's life are fundamental to their development and learning, and the Government believes that every child in New South Wales should have access to high-quality early childhood education.

Universal access to early childhood education ensures that every child has the opportunity to participate in a quality preschool program before commencing their schooling years. The previous Government failed to deliver for families in New South Wales. During the 12 years of Liberal-Nationals Government, it promised to build 500 new preschools, but delivered just one. As part of this Government's plan to rebuild public education, the 2024-25 budget is delivering record education funding, including \$8.9 billion for new and upgraded schools. That targeted investment will ensure growing communities get access to a world-class public education.

Some \$769 million will be invested to deliver 100 new public preschools, including building a new preschool at every new government primary school in New South Wales. Of the 100 new public preschools, 13 will sit on new redeveloped school sites. The remaining 87 preschools have been selected in areas where the Department of Education has identified that there is a need for public preschool places to support more children. School sites have been selected based on child development and socioeconomic data, projected demand for preschool, an infrastructure analysis and valuable insights gained through local feedback during the decision-making process. That is the evidence-based and evidence-supported approach to ensure that children have access to a high-quality preschool program before starting school.

I am delighted that the Cabramatta electorate will have six new preschools. They will be at Cabramatta West Public School, Edensor Park Public School, Governor Philip King Public School, Lansvale East Public School, Mount Pritchard Public School and Prairievale Public School. Additional preschools will provide young families in Cabramatta greater access to high-quality early education and will ensure that children have the best possible start to their learning. Together with the Minns Labor Government, I am proud to continue to deliver for the community. I commend the Premier and the Minister for Education and Early Learning for putting working families in New South Wales first, ensuring that children have equitable access to high-quality early childhood education. I look forward to continuing to work with the Premier and the Minister for Education and Early Learning to deliver outcomes for families in the Cabramatta electorate.

NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:28): I address a crisis that is unfolding in my community: a crisis of complete planning failure and two years of neglect that is affecting parents and children across the lower North Shore. The Minns Labor Government's lacklustre approach to planning and educational infrastructure is having a profound and detrimental effect that cannot be ignored any longer. Families in my community are feeling the weight of that failure. This is one troubling example. In November last year, when Cammeraygal High School announced it had hit capacity just 10 years after opening, students within the catchment area were turned away and redirected to Mosman High School. Some children had to walk past Cammeraygal to get on the bus to Mosman. They had to change between multiple buses to get to school. That is not just an inconvenience; it is a sign of a complete lack of planning and investment in the future of schools in my electorate.

Cammeraygal High School is a new institution and already at full capacity, yet the Government has failed to invest in new schools to meet the growing demand. My community is absolutely bursting at the seams, with no new schooling infrastructure planned to alleviate the pressure. Instead, the Government has earmarked Crows Nest for an influx of thousands of new homes, after failing to ensure an ongoing funding commitment for a St Leonards education precinct.

My community cannot cope with the increase in housing without adequate planning and infrastructure. It is not just a missed opportunity; it is a decision that will affect families for years to come. A St Leonards education precinct was committed to back in 2018 and has sat in the budget every year since then, with planning work underway for a new primary school and a new high school for the precinct.

In 2021 additional money was allocated for the precinct and Chatswood primary. Labor retained that funding allocation in the two budgets it has handed down since taking office and yet in its rhetoric in recent months Labor seems to have walked away from those essential commitments. While the Government claimed in its response to the transit oriented development documentation for the Crows Nest metro area that "there is no urgent need" for those schools, the reality is that, as the new housing projects progress, thousands of families will need access to education in my community. Labor has failed to plan for that need. The transport oriented development

[TOD] response came about because of the number of community members who, in their submissions—including my own submission—raised with the planning Minister and the Minister for Education and Early Learning the dire need for new educational facilities. It is disappointing that, within days of the TOD response saying that there is no need for additional capacity, Cammeraygal High School started turning students away.

I have met with the P&C presidents and the regional P&C president from Cammeraygal High School and Cammeraygal Primary School, within its catchment area, to discuss the growing concerns around school capacity and the potential cancellation of the St Leonards education precinct. During those discussions, it became clear that there is a shared sense of frustration and urgency among parents, particularly at feeder schools for Cammeraygal High School, such as North Sydney Demonstration School and, to a lesser extent, Anzac Park Public School. I have been told that parents are nervous about ensuring that siblings are not split up between Cammeraygal and Mosman high schools. A number of children were turned away from Cammeraygal High School in 2025 and parents are concerned about the impact on their cohort and friendship networks.

After my meetings with the P&C presidents, it has become increasingly clear to me that the St Leonards education precinct remains a critical project for the future of education in our area and that a potential cancellation would be incredibly detrimental to families now and into the future. With thousands of new families to be injected into my community and with no educational infrastructure to support them, it will be even worse. For the future of the children in my area, I urge the Government to reconsider its decision not to invest in education in my community. The education sector is not the only one feeling the strain. The Government's blanket planning policy also fails to address the pressing need for massive improvement in transport and other community infrastructure. That is a textbook example of poor planning under a one-size-fits-all solution.

My community is incredibly dense. We love it. It is vibrant. It is part of what makes the lower north shore an exciting place to call home. What my community does not need is density without supporting infrastructure. I live in an apartment building, and so do more than 70 per cent of people. But without investment in public transport, schools and open space, density becomes suffocating. Education is the foundation of our future, and we must ensure that every child has access to quality schooling in a setting that supports their development.

CHARLESTOWN ELECTORATE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (15:33): When the Minns Labor Government came to office two years ago, we faced a number of mounting crises. For many in my electorate of Charlestown and for countless more all around the State, perhaps the most pressing of those was the housing crisis. In the face of economic headwinds and with the State's finances left in a perilous position, this Government was faced with the task of fixing a broken housing system and addressing one of the largest contributors to the cost-of-living crisis. We had to address 12 years of neglect and disinterest by the previous Government. We had to make housing in this State more accessible and affordable and we had to deliver on the understanding that everyone deserves a safe and secure home.

It is by any measure a tall order and there is no doubt that we have a lot of work left to do. But I am pleased to report to the House that in my electorate of Charlestown and around the State green shoots of new growth are starting to appear. I have spoken before about the steps the Government is taking to address the housing crisis in the Charlestown electorate. The Transport Oriented Development program will allow for higher density housing to be built around Cardiff, Kotara and Adamstown train stations, where residents will have access not just to shops and services but also to public transport.

With the formation of Homes NSW, we are working to streamline the delivery of maintenance and support to tenants of public housing properties while also helping tenants to secure the right kinds of properties for their needs. We have streamlined and clarified legislation and regulation to assist renters to navigate a system that was often too difficult or overwhelming to properly engage with, balancing their needs with the needs of landlords.

We have made strata living a more attractive option by clarifying the rules and strengthening the rights and responsibilities of strata residents, owners' corporations and strata managers. We are also getting on with the job of actually building houses. In my electorate of Charlestown, Landcom has commenced work on a 38.8-hectare parcel of land along Myall Road in Garden Suburb. The development will deliver more than 100 dwellings, including 66 freestanding homes. In partnership with a community housing organisation, a minimum 30 per cent of those new homes will be set aside for affordable housing.

The development includes upgrades to Myall Road, which will mean safer access for both newer and long-term residents, shared footpaths allowing residents to walk or cycle to nearby destinations like Cardiff Shopping Centre and access to sporting fields. Importantly, the development will deliver a diverse range of housing options. Some locals have expressed reservations about the development, and I can certainly understand

where they are coming from. There are reasonable concerns about the preservation of native bushland and wildlife habitat. As the New South Wales Government's developer, Landcom has a responsibility to be an industry leader in responsible development. It should be delivering works at the very highest standard. How can we expect an industry to follow the standards set by the Government if the Government does not follow them?

I have spent considerable time examining this development in detail because of the community's concerns. Of the 38.8 hectares of land, 70 per cent has been set aside as a biodiversity stewardship site to be protected in perpetuity. A range of measures have been outlined to minimise impacts on wildlife: Traps will be used to keep domestic cats out of the bushland; pest species monitoring will help guard against invasions by feral animals; native fauna monitoring will ensure that numbers remain stable, preserving the health of the ecosystem; and nest boxes in a range of shapes and sizes, to cater for different species, will be placed throughout the zone so that native species can remain in the area.

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water will monitor the health of bushland in the stewardship site. Landcom has paid \$2.48 million to the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust, which will fund the rehabilitation and ongoing maintenance of the bushland. I understand why there is a level of distrust in development, but the simple fact of the matter is that we need new housing. We need more housing. This development is necessary, and it is being managed in the most conscientious way possible. The community rightly expects the Government to use all the levers it can to overcome the housing crisis while carefully balancing the needs of the environment for current and future generations. I do not shy away from saying that this is difficult work. But it is also necessary work, which this Government is committed to doing.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (15:38): Like much of the State, the Sydney electorate has been devastated by family and domestic violence. Last year, 25 women were murdered in New South Wales, which is the highest toll in nine years. A young couple from my electorate, Jesse Baird and Luke Davies, were murdered by a police officer who was known to Jesse. Murder is the most harrowing outcome, but survivors also have significant trauma that impacts on every aspect of their lives and can last for generations. They experience severe physical, emotional, psychological and financial harm, which has flow-on effects to health, mental health, education, employment, housing, and child protection and justice outcomes. I acknowledge the presence in the Chamber of the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

Family and domestic violence is the leading cause of homelessness for women. Women who escape family and domestic violence represent one-third of all clients of Specialist Homelessness Services. It is the most common form of child abuse, affecting one in four children and young people in Australia. Alarming, family and domestic violence rates continue to grow. Domestic violence related assault has been increasing by 3 per cent each year.

Intimidation, stalking and harassment are up 7.6 per cent. Apprehended domestic violence orders are up 6.9 per cent, with breaches up 9 per cent. Demand on Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services rose 17 per cent last year.

In the last budget, the Government strengthened funding for the family and domestic violence sector, including for change programs for perpetrators, safer housing for women and children, improved access to counselling, recovery services for children through the support of specialist workers, and safe refuges for companion animals. I commend the Minister for her advocacy in that regard. But specialist family and domestic violence services are still stretched. Many services have seen demand increase by 40 per cent. Women are being turned away and placed on long waiting lists. The waitlist for men's behaviour change programs is over 700 persons long, with average waits of five months.

The figures do not tell us the full story of violence and trauma, with many women experiencing immense suffering before they seek support, and with some never seeking support. We are simply not winning the battle and must do more. First and foremost, we need to strengthen the specialist family and domestic violence sector. The sector is on the front line and deals with prevention, early intervention and crisis response. It plays a critical role in reducing poor outcomes for those affected, including women and children. Baseline sector funding needs a significant boost to build more capacity to meet the massive growth in demand. New South Wales specialist services are underfunded when compared to other States. On a per capita basis, Queensland and Victoria spend substantially more on family and domestic violence services and programs.

When I last met with Domestic Violence NSW, I was joined by the member for Barwon, whose electorate has high rates of family and domestic violence. Family and domestic violence is a huge problem in rural areas. The higher costs to deliver services and difficulties in engaging a workforce mean many women and children trying to escape cannot get help. Funding in rural and regional areas needs to be increased. An uplift in funding is

especially needed in specialist women's homelessness services and refuges, domestic violence response enhancement, Staying Home Leaving Violence, men's behaviour change programs, the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services, and specialist workers for children and young people.

Around one in three migrant and refugee women have experienced family and domestic violence, which is at a significantly higher rate than the rest of the population. They face unique challenges that make escaping violence or asking for help difficult. We need tailored services that provide culturally safe support, including for international students and temporary workers, who are often excluded from mainstream services. Many brokerage services are unfunded by government, yet they are vital to ensuring that victims escaping violence have their immediate needs—like temporary accommodation, transport or emergency financial assistance—met. We should increase funding and allow for a more flexible, client-centred service, where expenditure is not fixed per client but varies depending on need.

We need more transitional homes that provide exit pathways out of refuges. Homes NSW only has 1,500 transitional properties. As most women and children stay for two to three years, properties rarely become available, which causes bottlenecks for women trying to leave refuges. Investing in the domestic violence sector will have long-term budget benefits across a range of portfolios and will make New South Wales a safer place. We must not give up; we can end the violence. I call on the Government and all members of this House to strengthen our response to family and domestic violence.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (15:43): I thank the member for Sydney for raising the issue of domestic and family and sexual violence in this place. He has raised the issue in the past and we have spoken about it as well. I thank him for his advocacy around making our community safer for everyone who might experience domestic and family, and I recognise the diversity in that. The member rightly mentioned that the Government has invested an additional \$245 million in domestic and family and sexual violence in this year's budget. We certainly need to continue our focus on the issue, on reducing rates and on preventing domestic and family violence. I am incredibly passionate about the prevention work. We need to hold perpetrators to account and change their behaviour, we need to do early intervention work, we need to support victims and we need to support the sector, which does such incredibly important work.

TRIBUTE TO AIRLIE MONTGOMERY

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (15:44): I celebrate the vibrant, brilliant and unforgettable Airlie Rain Montgomery of North Nowra. Airlie's favourite colour was purple. To her parents, Katie and Corey, Airlie was always their purple girl. Airlie's big sister, Arya, was the pink girl, and their bond was unbreakable. Arya could calm Airlie with just a touch, a word, a shared glance. Together with their brother, Lawson, they were the perfect trio. Airlie had autism, and she showed us a different way to experience the world. Her communication was unique, full of warmth, with catchphrases that became her own beautiful language. Like her words, Airlie's emotions came in waves, highs and lows, and every moment was lived with intensity and joy.

Airlie loved the outdoors—looking at leaves, playing in the dirt and throwing rocks into puddles. She loved animals, and elephants were her favourite. Airlie had many skills that children her age often cannot master. Airlie loved the methodology of numbers. At three, she could count to 100. She could recite the alphabet phonetically, and she could even do it backwards. Airlie also loved trains, and had many sets. With hundreds of train tracks, Airlie could create loops and tunnels without a plan in front of her. Her mind was an absolute marvel. Airlie adored books too, and bedtime stories formed a firm part of her daily routine. One of her favourite books was *Where is the Green Sheep?* Her days were filled with her favourite music from Blippi, Cocomelon and the Wiggles. Her signature song was *Mellow Yellow*.

Airlie loved school. Last year she surprised everyone when she performed in a school concert. She was front and centre on the stage. School helped Airlie well and truly come out of her shell. Since her passing, Katie and Corey have found out just how many friends Airlie had and how many people she touched in her short life. I thank our community for loving Airlie. She was truly special and will not be forgotten.

ISLAMOPHOBIA

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (15:46): A deeply concerning issue that affects communities across our State is the rise of Islamophobia. We are now in the holy month of Ramadan, a sacred time of observance, reflection, charity and community for Muslims. This should be a time of peace, unity and spiritual connection. Yet for many in our Muslim communities, this period has once again been overshadowed by fear and anxiety. Only a fortnight ago, a threat of violence was made against the Australian Islamic House [AIH] in Edmondson Park, a cherished place of worship and community gathering in south-west Sydney. The Australian Islamic House

is more than just a mosque; it is a hub for education, youth programs, interfaith dialogue and community service. It is a symbol of harmony and belonging.

The threat directed toward AIH was not only an attack on the Muslim community. It was an attack on all of us—on the values of inclusion, religious freedom and respect that bind us together as a society. I take this opportunity to stand in solidarity with AIH and all Muslim Australians, who deserve nothing less than to feel safe in their homes, places of worship and neighbourhoods. Last week on 15 March the world marked the United Nations International Day to Combat Islamophobia. That date was chosen in memory of the Christchurch mosque attacks. This annual observance reminds us that anti-Muslim hatred is not an isolated or foreign problem; it is a lived reality here in New South Wales and across Australia.

The recently released *Islamophobia in Australia* report, published by the Islamophobia Register of Australia and Monash University, makes that clear. The comprehensive report details over 300 verified in-person incidents and 366 online incidents of Islamophobia between 2023 and 2024. It revealed a disturbing trend: Islamophobic incidents in Australia have nearly doubled over the past two years. The report lays bare the harsh truth that Muslim women are the primary targets, accounting for almost three-quarters of in-person abuse, often because they wear the hijab.

These women are harassed in shopping centres, on transport and when they are out and about with their children. These are our fellow Australians simply trying to live their lives in peace. Equally troubling is that New South Wales accounts for nearly half of all in-person Islamophobic incidents nationwide. Over 60 per cent of attacks were cases of verbal intimidation and harassment, 9.4 per cent were discriminatory incidents, 9.1 per cent involved physical assaults, 8.1 per cent caused damage to property, and 5.5 per cent were written threats. The report also highlights a psychological toll on victims, including feelings of trauma, isolation and fear.

Islamophobia is not just about individual acts of bigotry. It is a systematic issue driven by misinformation, dehumanisation and silence. It flourishes when good people look away or fail to call it out. I know countless members of the Muslim community in my electorate and beyond. They are hardworking, kind and proud Australians. They want what we all want: safety, opportunity and a good future for their families. That is why this report matters. It gives us data. It gives us insight. More importantly, it gives us a mandate for action. The recent legislative changes to the Crimes Act, which criminalise acts of vilification and hatred against ethno-religious groups, leave groups such as Muslim Australians exposed to hate without protection. As someone who was the subject of vilification by political opponents during the last State election campaign, I know how many in our communities feel.

What members of the community want and rightly deserve is to feel that their Government sees them, hears them and stands with them. I am not sure whether that is the case. To those who have been targeted, harassed or made to feel like they do not belong, know this: You do belong, you are valued and your presence and contributions make New South Wales stronger. To all those observing Ramadan, I say, from the bottom of my heart, Ramadan Mubarak. May this month bring your families grace, peace and strength. And for the Eid in the coming days, marking the end of Ramadan, I wish you many happy returns. I thank the House.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (15:51): I thank the member for Holsworthy for raising this important issue in this place. Everybody in New South Wales deserves to be safe. People live in this country because they feel that it should be a safe place. They come here because they view it as a safe place. We all need to do everything in our power as individuals, and in this place as a Parliament, to ensure that our community is united and that people feel that they belong. I thank the member.

SPRING FARM PARKWAY

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (15:52): Today I talk about a very important issue in my community. Anyone who has driven from Sydney down to Canberra, the snow or Melbourne would have taken the Hume Highway, which is a major road that leads straight down the side of our State. A comment often made as people come down towards Camden and Campbelltown is that there is one exit joining the Hume Highway with the people of Camden. The Narellan Road exit is a huge, fantastic exit, but it frequently gets blocked because little mishaps can occur there. The problem is that if a driver does not get off at Narellan Road, they have no alternative route to Camden except to go via Picton, which adds another hour to their trip.

So it was decided a link road would be constructed between the suburb of Spring Farm and the Hume Highway called Spring Farm Parkway. This road, a very important piece of infrastructure for the growth area of Camden, joins onto a road named after one of my esteemed predecessors as member for Camden, Liz Kernohan.

It is very easy for people to remember the road. It is Liz Kernohan Drive, and it links that road to the Hume Highway. That will alleviate so much of the pressure on Narellan Road, a road that is bursting at the seams because it has all the traffic from the entire south-west growth precinct. All of the people who need to use the Hume Highway must do so via Narellan Road.

The building of Spring Farm Parkway will also alleviate Camden Valley Way because that road is often people's plan B for driving north into the city or to Liverpool and Parramatta. However, in its infinite wisdom, the previous Liberal-Nationals Government decided to build what it deemed stage one of Spring Farm Parkway first. Spring Farm Parkway stage one is a fantastic—but tiny—bit of road that links the suburbs of Menangle to the Hume Highway. But it is Campbelltown's fourth exit off that highway. If someone misses the first three exits to Campbelltown, they can now get a fourth, which is very exciting. We do not begrudge the people of Campbelltown their exits. But I would argue that our second exit needed to be the priority in building the parkway. Spring Farm Parkway stage two is an incredibly important piece of infrastructure. It was promised by the previous Government about every six months. We have done an audit of the announcements. Every six months since 2019, Spring Farm Parkway stage two was announced to the people of Camden as "coming."

I was extremely proud to include in my election commitments in 2023 the first actual funds—\$15 million—to go towards planning how to build that road. No-one had even looked at that. Now it is time for the people of Camden to have a second entryway onto the Hume Highway to alleviate the unbelievable amounts of growth. We are quite open, out our way. We broke planning systems. Nothing coped with the growth that we experienced. The parkway is an example of how the former Government worked with active members of Parliament, like the member for Campbelltown, who did an amazing job for his electorate and continues to do so. He was able to get Spring Farm Parkway stage one built. Now it is time for stage two to be built for the people of Camden for their access.

RYDE ELECTORATE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (15:57): Infrastructure delayed is housing denied. The latest revelation regarding the 2040 blowout of the Sydney Metro extension timeline will go down as one of the greatest failures in tackling the complex puzzle of housing supply and affordability. It is yet another example of poor planning, misplaced priorities and a government that cannot be trusted to deliver for the people of New South Wales. For the people of Ryde, that delay is not just an inconvenience but also a failure that will leave the community stuck in worsening congestion with no relief in sight.

The Government has made a habit of grand announcements with no substance behind them, and nowhere is that clearer than in its approach to Sydney Metro. The Minns Government has decided that vital metro extensions—the projects connecting communities, supporting growth and providing much-needed public transport relief—can wait. There is no business case, no funding strategy and no firm commitments—just another deferral. Meanwhile, the housing crisis deepens, congestion worsens and the people of this State are left wondering whether anything this Government promises will ever be delivered. There is no credible plan to fund those extensions. That much is clear.

After inheriting a metro system that was well underway, the Government has since spent the last year walking backwards, making excuse after excuse—

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Point of order—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The Clerk will stop the clock. I will hear the point of order.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: This is a private member's statement. I ask that the member bring the scope of the statement back to his electorate.

Mr JORDAN LANE: To the point of order: In the second line of my contribution, I referenced that it was an inconvenience to my electorate. I am providing some context to that.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): I do not uphold the point of order. The member for Ryde is referring to his electorate.

Mr JORDAN LANE: Thank you, Temporary Speaker. As I was saying, after inheriting a metro system that was well underway, the Government has since spent the past year walking backwards, making excuse after excuse and now, effectively, abandoning the long-term vision for a truly connected Sydney. The reality is that metro expansion is essential. Without it, my electorate and our city will grind to a halt. Yet, instead of ensuring that these projects proceed quickly, the Government has kicked them into the long grass. This is not just a matter of transport policy; it is an economic issue, a productivity issue and a significant failing of public administration. The Government has no clear answer on how it will deliver the metro west extension beyond Parramatta or the

metro to the Western Sydney airport. It has pushed the timeline out so far that it hopes people will just forget and stop asking questions. Well, we will not stop asking.

The deferral lays bare the hypocrisy of the Government's so-called housing strategy. The Government claims it is committed to housing density, to transport-oriented development and to unlocking housing supply. The only way to make such a plan viable through investment in public transport infrastructure. Without metro extensions, where will this capacity come from? How can we justify cramming tens of thousands of new residents into areas that are already suffering from congestion and inadequate transport links? This housing strategy cannot work without metro investment, and my electorate is an example of this on display. The Government is trying to play a game of smoke and mirrors, promising growth whilst simultaneously pulling the rug out from under the very infrastructure that would allow for that growth to be sustainable.

For the people of Ryde, the consequences of this delay are dire. Ryde is already home to a growing population, and, without significant transport investment, the daily commute for thousands of residents will only get worse. The extension of the Sydney Metro was meant to provide relief, reduce reliance on already over-capacity roads and offer a fast, reliable alternative to sitting in endless traffic. But instead of providing certainty, the Government has given Ryde residents more uncertainty, more congestion and more frustration. The decision to delay these projects is happening in a vacuum. It is part of a broader pattern of financial mismanagement and poor priorities. We have seen billions of dollars squandered on bloated government spending, on projects that do not deliver and on patchwork solutions that fail to address the long-term needs of the State.

The truth is that the Government is making deliberate choices. It has chosen not to prioritise transport infrastructure that would benefit millions of people. It has chosen not to invest to futureproof Sydney. Instead, the Government has decided to focus on short-term fixes and political convenience. The people in this State are tired of delays, tired of excuses and tired of governments that do not deliver on their promises. The Sydney Metro expansion was meant to be a legacy project, one that would transform the way that people move across our city. Now it is yet another casualty of this Government, which is incapable of seeing beyond the next electoral cycle. This is a failure of vision, a failure of governance and a failure of leadership. The people of New South Wales, particularly the people of Ryde, deserve much better. They deserve a government that does not make promises that it has no intention of keeping. I call on this House and this Parliament to deliver Sydney Metro.

SOUTH COAST ELECTORATE

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (16:03): This week marks two years since I was elected to represent the good people of the South Coast, and what an honour it was, and continues to be, to serve the community and work hard every day to support people who call that beautiful place home. It is important that we look back and see how far we have come. During my campaign, constituents told me that they felt like the South Coast had been forgotten; we were taken for granted. Schools were overcrowded, TAFE had been decimated, the Milton-Ulladulla bypass was a debacle and the highway needed upgrading. The Milton-Ulladulla hospital was in urgent need of an upgrade, and the community had waited for over seven years for any action to return birthing services. Businesses in Nowra advocated for the planning of the East Nowra Sub Arterial Road [ENSA], and Shoalhaven council needed help with the Nowra Riverfront Precinct. On the housing front, social and affordable essential working housing was not only neglected but much had been sold off, and the lack of housing was at a crisis point.

It was obvious that the previous Government had forgotten about people. It was all about infrastructure. Infrastructure is important, but without looking after our people, infrastructure is useless. We had new police and ambulance stations that had no staff in them. Teachers were leaving in droves and classes were being cancelled every day. In the past two years, the Minns Government has worked hard. We have addressed, and continue to address, those issues. We have committed to delivering 500 additional paramedics to regional New South Wales. We are delivering much-needed upgrades to our overcrowded schools, with work soon to start on high schools in Ulladulla, Vincentia and Bomaderry, as well as Milton and Ulladulla primary schools. We are building a brand-new primary school to address the growth around Worrigee. We are also building three new preschools in the region. Most importantly, we have listened to our teachers. We have reduced the workload in schools and are updating the syllabus. We have made New South Wales teachers the highest paid in Australia.

In 2023, to address the declining number of police, we made the historic announcement that we will pay recruits at the Goulburn Police Academy. Since we announced that plan, we have received 3,667 applications to join the NSW Police Force. We have announced the first build-to-rent development in New South Wales, with the construction of 60 new homes, which will provide a mix of apartment sizes to suit the needs, lifestyles and budgets of the local community. We have also prioritised two major housing precincts in Nowra, which will deliver up to 650 homes. This development supports the goals set out in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan 2041 to stimulate the area's reactivation and economic growth and revitalise the CBD.

The Minns Government has allocated \$21 million for key worker accommodation in and around Nowra to support workers and the broader Shoalhaven region, especially as the \$438 million Shoalhaven Hospital Redevelopment moves closer to completion. Work to upgrade Milton Ulladulla Hospital has begun, and the inclusion of a new CT scanner has been welcomed. We are working to return birthing services to the Milton Ulladulla area. In my first 18 months, we introduced a midwifery group practice to Milton Hospital and will extend this model, which may support homebirths for eligible women. There is more work to be done, but this is a huge first step and one taken only because of the Minns Government and the support of health Minister Ryan Park.

One of the greatest honours I have as the member for South Coast is to assist the people who live there. My staff and I have assisted over 12,000 people since I came to office. We all go above and beyond to help people, sometimes with very complex issues. I have loved meeting new people, making friends and flipping hundreds of Thai chicken burgers to raise funds at community events. We have delivered funding to grassroots organisations, including to the Lady Denman Maritime Museum, the Huskisson Vincentia Soccer Club, surf clubs, rugby league clubs, men's sheds and many more. We have supported events, including the Viking Festival Sussex Inlet, the Shoalhaven Food Network, the Blessing of the Fleet and StoryFest; and provided much-needed funding for emergency service organisations, including Marine Rescue, the SES and the RFS.

Finally, I thank the people of the South Coast. Community is important to me, and I will continue to work hard every day to support each and every one of them to ensure that the South Coast is a thriving, connected and compassionate place to live where every person feels supported and is proud to call it home.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): I welcome guests in the gallery to the New South Wales Parliament.

NORTHERN BEACHES HOSPITAL

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (16:08): Yesterday was a very moving day in the New South Wales Parliament. I was pleased to stand with the Premier and the Minister for Health as they announced the Health Services Amendment (PPP Prohibition) Bill 2025. But the most important people at the press conference yesterday were Elouise and Danny Massa, whose two-year-old son, Joe Massa, died at the Northern Beaches Hospital. Over the past five weeks, Elouise and Danny have shown extraordinary courage and conviction in speaking publicly about their experience at the hospital. In the face of devastating, deeply personal and individual loss, Elouise and Danny, and other brave families, are raising very legitimate questions and concerns about systemic issues at the Northern Beaches Hospital and the need to return the hospital to public hands.

They also recognise that this is not just about our hospital; it is about preventing this model of care being replicated across the State. It should not take high-profile tragedies to get proper scrutiny of the Northern Beaches Hospital. But the reality is that is what it has taken. The Massa family has really brought this issue to public prominence.

They have done a service to our whole northern beaches community, and I do thank them for that. I thank the Premier and Minister Park for being so responsive and, importantly, compassionate to the Massa family. You have shown us all what authentic and compassionate leadership looks like.

I welcome the New South Wales Government's legislation to stop the Northern Beaches Hospital model being rolled out in other parts of the State, but the reality is the northern beaches community is still stuck with the public-private pariah as our local public hospital. Now, more than ever, we need more scrutiny of the private operator, Healthscope, more scrutiny of the contract with the New South Wales Government, more scrutiny of individuals' experiences and more scrutiny of structural problems they expose. That is what we are seeing. Alongside the public-private partnership prohibition bill, a parliamentary inquiry is now underway. The extensive terms of reference for the parliamentary inquiry cover the financial, operational and clinical performance of the hospital as well as the implementation of recommendations from a 2019 parliamentary inquiry which also examined this controversial hospital.

The inquiry will also take into account the Auditor-General's performance audit of the hospital, which is expected to be released very soon. The commencement of the parliamentary inquiry is a significant moment for our community on the northern beaches. This inquiry provides the profile and resources for the accountability our community is seeking. This inquiry will help to keep the performance of the private Northern Beaches Hospital in the spotlight, where it belongs. Submissions to the inquiry are open until 20 May. I encourage northern beaches residents and all relevant stakeholders to make submissions. Of course the ultimate goal is for the hospital to be brought back into public hands. The northern beaches community deserves access to a truly public hospital. We cannot change decisions of the past Government, but we can influence what happens next.

I was very encouraged that, when asked about bringing the hospital back into public hands, the Premier said yesterday that nothing is off the table. But in no circumstances do we want to let Healthscope off the hook. It signed up to this contract. It has serious legal and moral obligations to our community, not just to deliver profits for its shareholders. With Healthscope's financial situation deteriorating, my concern—as always—is how huge cost-cutting pressure impacts staff, in particular, and the patients at Northern Beaches Hospital. We know Healthscope is looking for savings high and low, across staffing, equipment and more. Something has got to give, and too often it is staff welfare and patient care.

It is completely unacceptable for this private operator's financial woes to compromise outcomes for public patients and private patients in our community. To keep their social licence in our northern beaches community, Healthscope must prioritise investing in its people and facilities to meet legitimate expectations of standards of care. Importantly, that includes coming to the table in its negotiations with nurses and midwives right now. It means a pay rise of 15 per cent and safe staffing levels equivalent to those being rolled out in the public system. I was pleased to join the nurses and midwives on strike at the hospital again on Monday this week. Their message is clear: Healthscope, step up. But I add that the same company runs hospitals in Queensland. Those same nurses and staff are paid 16 per cent more, and their staff to patient ratios are what they are in the New South Wales public system. Why is New South Wales any different? It is the same company, some qualifications, but different scales of pay. It is not acceptable. We do not accept that.

NORTH SOUTH RAIL LINE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (16:12): I call on the New South Wales Government to commit to the construction of stage two of the North South Rail Line, connecting Bradfield to Macarthur, including a station in the growing suburb of Oran Park. To continue the delivery of this public transport renaissance for Western Sydney, a funding partnership is necessary with the Federal Government. I call on the Federal Government to partner with the New South Wales Government to deliver this crucial project. It is imperative that, to progress this project, the New South Wales State Government commits to this second stage of the north-south rail project, including stations and a delivery time frame, so that we can seek funding commitments from the Federal Government.

Camden is the fastest growing local government area in Australia. It is predicted that more than 257,000 people will reside in the local government area of Camden by 2046. A substantial part of this ongoing growth is, and will continue to be, based in and around Oran Park in my electorate. To harness the opportunities arising from the Western Sydney International Airport—and the surrounding aerotropolis—being built in the middle of my electorate is just as important as interconnecting the communities of western and south-western Sydney with each other. Our communities need this rail link now. Any delay in its delivery is only exacerbating inequality between the east and west of Sydney. New South Wales has an average of one train station for every 20,000 residents, yet the Camden local government area has one train station, despite having a population of approximately 140,000 residents.

This disparity is likely to grow as the density in my region continues to increase.

The economic opportunities are endless, as a rail link will attract businesses to establish themselves along the rail corridor and around the train station precincts and the wider region. That will increase local employment opportunities and provide consumers in the region access to greater quality goods and services. The increased competition and access to goods and services in closer proximity are crucial benefits with respect to the cost of living. It would be detrimental for our region if businesses that would otherwise consider establishing a presence close to the Western Sydney international airport decided not to because the absence of a sufficient rail network makes it less economically and commercially viable to do so.

I remind the New South Wales Government of the consensus across all major parties and levels of governments that we need a greater supply of housing, with the only points of difference being how we achieve that. I am sure we can all agree that creating a rail corridor connecting the fastest-growing areas will enable an increase in high-density housing along the corridor and surrounding the respective train station precincts. The accessible infrastructure would also service an increase in density and population in the broader and wider areas surrounding the rail corridor and precincts. A well-connected rail link and sustainable public transport network would also reduce the pressure on our road network, which is already under strain and which will be required to handle the increased density and visitor population that will accompany the new Western Sydney international airport.

Greater availability of rail can alleviate the need for more private vehicles per household. For example, 70 per cent of households in the local government area own two or more vehicles, compared to only 46 per cent in Greater Sydney, which is serviced by better public transport modes and frequencies. In terms of fairness, Oran Park, the Camden local government area and the wider region deserve greater rail infrastructure as a matter

of equity. The desire for a connected north-south rail line has consensus among the local government councils in the region, who have formed their own group called The Parks. I understand they have been advocating to the Federal and State governments to commit to the urgent delivery of the project and for the train link to be delivered in a way that maximises the opportunities and meets the challenges for the entire region.

I call on the New South Wales Government to ensure that it has available funds that are required to purchase private citizens' land, including for citizens who have lodged hardship acquisition claims. I say that not just for the proposed rail link but for all New South Wales government projects that require the acquisition of private land, as I have had distraught constituents approach me about the disastrous impacts that the New South Wales Government's handling of infrastructure plans has had on them and the value of their property. They have been told that the relevant government agencies do not have the required funds to acquire the property. The next stage of the north-south rail link corridor is absolutely imperative. I urge the New South Wales Government to work with whoever will be the incoming Federal government to secure the necessary funds to continue the rail infrastructure and deliver stage two of that important connection.

LIVERPOOL ELECTORATE AND FEDERAL ELECTION

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (16:17): Today Prime Minister Albanese announced that the nation would go to the polls on 3 May. For the Liverpool electorate, the election presents a stark choice between a government that is investing in south-west Sydney and a political party that has ignored my community at every turn. The State electorate of Liverpool spans two Federal electorates, Fowler in the east and Werriwa in the west. Our community has made it clear what they want their elected representatives to deliver. Cost-of-living relief is number one on that list. The Albanese Government has made good on that front, delivering a tax cut for every taxpayer, lowering the cost of prescription medication, lowering the cost of child care and delivering energy bill relief for every single Australian. The Federal Government has done all of that in a responsible manner, balancing global economic pressures and ensuring inflation comes down.

Our current world outlook is increasingly uncertain. With the Trump administration taking a more adversarial approach, Australia faces a crossroads. Trump's success has set off a wave of right-wing populism, and we have seen that in Dutton's Liberal Party as well. Dutton's budget reply speech reinforced that he does not have the interests of south-west Sydney in mind. The 2022 election ended nine years of Liberal rule and brought Labor back to government. However, Labor lost Fowler to a Liberal turned Independent.

At the time, I stressed the need for our party to do better by preselecting local candidates who reflect our community. We have learned our lesson by endorsing Tu Le, a community lawyer raising her young family in Mount Pritchard. She is a true local. As such, she will act constructively on important issues and make tough decisions rather than sit on the fence and throw stones at the Government from the luxury of a television segment.

Importantly, she will actually turn up to vote—the fundamental responsibility of every member of any Parliament—and make the electorate of Fowler her sole focus and priority. As Malcolm Turnbull once said, history is made by those who turn up. Fowler deserves a member who turns up and offers original solutions to the many challenges facing us. Fowler deserves a representative who will advocate within the Albanese Labor Government and deliver tangible, meaningful wins for our community. Let me be clear: It was Labor that delivered urgent care clinics in Liverpool and Fairfield. It was Labor that reduced students' HECS-HELP debt. It was Labor that delivered a tax cut for every taxpayer in this country.

Liverpool also deserves better than a representative who treats our end of the electorate as an afterthought. Take the intersection of Governor Macquarie Drive and the Hume Highway in Warwick Farm—a major route with severe traffic congestion. In 2019 and 2022 Liverpool City Council received funding to upgrade that intersection. After digging a ditch 18 months ago, no progress has been made. I have learned that council applied to narrow the scope of works or shift funds to different projects, and I am unaware of any efforts by the current member for Fowler to ensure completion and proper expenditure of Federal funds. Instead, residents will notice her election signs plastered on the construction fences. Liverpool deserves better.

At the western end of Liverpool, Werriwa is an electorate with immense need for critical infrastructure, like an upgrade to Fifteenth Avenue. It is why my colleague the member for Leppington is in this place. It is Labor that can be trusted with that project. For our shared community, Anne Stanley has secured funding for a new Medicare urgent care clinic in Green Valley. For communities in the 2168 experiencing a shortage of bulk-billing GPs, that is a welcome commitment that will improve health services locally after our area was uniformly ignored when the Liberals were in charge. I am very proud to have delivered several projects in the 2168, including the new Busby Fire Station, the CORE Community Services mobile food pantry, and three new public preschools to be built by 2027.

To keep delivering for the 2168, I need a governing partner who genuinely cares about our community. Anne Stanley is that person. In contrast, the only major commitments the Liberals have been able to make for Werriwa are carbon copies of commitments Anne has already secured. There is not a single original idea for Werriwa. I guess that is to be expected from a candidate who only joined the Liberal Party so that he could be preselected for political office. We need a representative who cares more for our community than his political aspirations. Liverpool has not had a Labor government at State and Federal levels for over a decade. In a short time, we have begun repairing the damage left by the Liberals and The Nationals. We cannot afford to go backwards under Peter Dutton.

RENTAL LAWS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (16:22): Prior to the 2023 election, NSW Labor made a clear and unequivocal promise that it would tackle rent bidding in my electorate of Heffron—an electorate with one of the highest populations of renters—and the unchecked rental price hikes that put housing further out of reach for the everyday people living there. For too long, renting in my electorate has felt like running on a treadmill that only gets faster. A prospective tenant would find a suitable home, only to be told that others had already offered more than the advertised price. The implication was clear: Pay up or miss out. Listings advertised with "offers over" or price ranges created a feeding frenzy where those with the deepest pockets—not necessarily the best tenants—secured a home. It was not competition; it was an unregulated auction where the highest bidder set the rules and renters in my electorate paid the price.

That is why the Minns Labor Government took decisive action. It established the Rental Taskforce, investing \$8.4 million into a dedicated enforcement team cracking down on dodgy rental practices. With the NSW Rental Commissioner at the helm, inspectors are auditing agents, monitoring listings and ensuring compliance with rental laws. It is not just policy on paper; it is boots on the ground making a real difference to millions of people in the State, including the more than half of residents who rent in my electorate. The results speak for themselves. The first-ever *Bidding in the NSW Rental Market—Analysis and Regulatory Insights* report confirms what renters already knew: Before our reforms, 17 per cent of rental listings lacked a fixed price, forcing tenants into costly bidding wars. Today, 99 per cent of listings comply with the law, and rent bidding via online platforms has been virtually eliminated.

No longer can agents stand at an open home and casually suggest that tenants "make their best offer" on a rental price that should never have been negotiable in the first place. No longer can someone find a property within their budget, only to be blindsided when the advertised price turns out to be nothing more than the starting point for a bidding war. We did not stop there. The Minns Government has delivered a suite of rental reforms designed to give renters greater stability and security. We have banned no-grounds evictions so that renters can no longer be thrown out of their homes without reason; limited rent increases to once per year, stopping the exploitative cycle of unchecked price hikes; and introduced the Portable Rental Bonds Scheme, set to go live later this year, to ease the financial burden on renters moving between homes. They are the most substantial reforms to State tenancy laws in two generations.

Renting should not feel like a game of musical chairs where tenants are constantly scrambling for a stable home while landlords and agents move the goalposts. It should be a system that offers fairness, transparency and security for all who rely on renting in an ever-challenging housing market. The previous Government stood by as rent bidding flourished, allowing the rental crisis to deepen. That is why the Labor Government has stepped up, delivering on our promises and restoring fairness to the rental market. Renting in New South Wales is changing—not by chance, but by careful and deliberate choice.

With the NSW Rental Commissioner at the helm, inspectors are auditing agents, monitoring listings and ensuring compliance with rental laws. This is not just policy on paper; it is boots on the ground making a real difference to millions of people in this State, including more than half the residents in my electorate who rent.

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MEDICARE

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (16:27): "The basic principle behind Medicare is that the health of a citizen should not depend on their wealth." Bob Hawke said that in 1984. It was a simple sentence that reshaped this country. Before Medicare, a person's bank account decided whether they got to see a doctor. If they were sick and did not have the money, they went without or racked up debt. Prior to the introduction of Medicare, medical costs were the leading cause of bankruptcy. My mum still talks about it. She remembers borrowing money from friends and family just to take us to the GP. No-one should have to make a choice between groceries and medicine, rent and a diagnosis, or one child's treatment over another.

Medicare was introduced by a Labor government with the simple belief that health care should be universal. Being able to see a doctor or get treatment in a hospital should not depend on a person's income, their postcode, or their private insurance status. Healthcare should not be a privilege; it should be a right. It is hard to overstate what a difference Medicare has made. People got the care they needed, when they needed it. For the first time in our country's history, health became something the system helped with, not something it punished people for needing. However, Medicare did not survive this long by accident. Every step forward has come from Labor governments, and every attack—every freeze and every cut—has come from the other side.

The Leppington electorate is seeing the difference that can be made by a government that genuinely believes in public health. Labor has introduced Urgent Care Clinics, which open seven days a week, operate with extended hours and are fully bulk-billed. People do not need to wait hours in an emergency department for a minor fracture, an infection or a sick child. They definitely do not need to pull out their wallets. In my region, three of those clinics are already up and running in Liverpool, Fairfield and Campbelltown.

They are giving people faster care, easing pressure on our hospitals, reducing wait times and helping emergency departments focus on life-threatening cases.

I have seen the difference firsthand. Just last month, my mother-in-law had a heart issue. My wife took her to the Fairfield Medicare Urgent Care Clinic, where she was seen immediately and got the treatment she needed and deserved. Then, the weekend before last, my daughter injured her ankle. We took her to the Liverpool Medicare Urgent Care Clinic. In the past that would have meant a long wait at the Liverpool Hospital emergency department, one of the busiest in the country. Those clinics are making a real difference, not just for my family but for millions of families across Australia. There are more on the way, with a new clinic planned for the Green Valley area.

This is the work of a government that believes in public health, not just in words but in funding, access and outcomes. The Government is strengthening Medicare, lowering out-of-pocket costs and building services close to where people actually live. The alternative is funding freezes, slashed bulk-billing incentives, co-payments and user-pays, shifting more of the burden onto hardworking families. We have seen it before. Every time it takes us further away from the Medicare that Australians rely on and closer to an American-style healthcare system, a system where your ability to get care depends on your insurance card, where one accident can mean hundreds thousands of dollars in debt, and where health is a product and not a right.

We cannot let that happen in Australia. We cannot go back to a time when people delayed going to the doctor because they simply could not afford it and when people were forced to choose between their health and their bills. Medicare did not just happen. It was built, piece by piece, clinic by clinic, reform by reform, by the Australian Labor Party. Labor made Medicare. Labor strengthened it. Labor will keep fighting for it, because the job is not done. The question in the upcoming Federal election is simple: Do we want a healthcare system that treats us when we are sick or one that asks if we can afford it first? I know where I stand.

The House adjourned, pursuant to resolution, at 16:31 until 6 May 2025 at 12:00.

Written Community Recognition Statements

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

NARDIA GUILLAUMIER

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Kiama's champion indoor rower, Nardia Guillaumier. Nardia has done it again – winning her second consecutive gold medal at the 2025 World Rowing Indoor Championships. The Indoor Rowing Championships are held virtually, allowing participants from around the world to compete simultaneously. However, because the event is scheduled on European time, it meant that at 2:38 AM on Monday, 24th February, while most were asleep, Nardia was on her rower at her home in Kiama Downs, securing her second gold medal. Nardia clinched the world gold medal in the 2000m row for the open weight division for 45-49 year-olds. Even more impressively, she achieved a personal best time of 7 minutes and 16 seconds, which was her true goal. In addition to her gold in the 2000m, Nardia also earned a bronze medal in the 500m row, which took place a week earlier. She was just 0.1 seconds shy of her personal best, finishing in 1 minute and 33 seconds. Nardia credits much of her success to her trainer, Alan Swan of Swan Athletics, who designed her rigorous training program and supported her. A huge congratulations and well done to Nardia Guillaumier.

ORRY KELLY

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises one of Kiama's most famous exports, Orry Kelly, who has been recognised as one of 16 new blue plaque recipients as part of highlighting people and events that have shaped our history. Born Orry George Kelly in Kiama in 1897, he was known as Hollywood's designer to the stars and he led the costume design on over 300 films. Known as Orry-Kelly, he won three Academy Awards and was the most prolific Australian-born Oscar winner for over 50 years until fellow costume designer Catherine Martin. His father, William, was a tailor and opened his shop, W Kelly & Co. Men's Mercers and General Outfitters, on Terralong Street, in 1888. Orry went to school at Kiama Public School then Wollongong High School before moving to Sydney to live with his aunt to pursue a career in banking. Orry won three Academy Awards for Best Costume Designs. I also acknowledge Kiama and District Historical Society President Sue Eggins. Sue is not only a local historian but a true custodian of Kiama's heritage, ensuring that the stories of the past are never forgotten.

KIAMA KNIGHTS RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales recognises Kiama Knights Rugby League Club which are starting the season afresh with a new coach and some fresh new recruits to the side. New coach Matt O'Brien is optimistic about their prospects for the season ahead. The local boys are back – Brad Kilmore, Cameron Vazzoler, Dylan Morris and Callum Roberts are all returning to the team. O'Brien coached the Knights' first-grade team from 2014-2017 and he returns as head coach alongside Steve Ross. While the first-grade team is the primary focus, the rest of the sides will meet the club's high standards. I acknowledge Matt Gladman who is captaining and coaching Kiama's reserve-grade team and the Under 18s. For the Kiama Knights junior club, new President Lachlan Payne is excited that the club has achieved its goal of fielding a team in every division. With 37 teams, the Knights have managed to cover all age groups. The 2025 South Coast Group Seven season officially kicks off on Saturday 5th April.

ELLA CAMERON AND LUKE GRECH

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr Speaker, the hunting fraternity is often misrepresented but the overwhelming majority of its members care deeply about the environment and are proactive in protecting it. These members include Ella Cameron and Luke Grech, who took part in Cleanup Australia Day this year, not in their home region of Sydney, but in Orange's Canobolas State Forest. Their three-hour-plus trip west to do the volunteer clean-up has an amazing spirit of community behind it. Through a social media group Ella shares with a handful of other hunters, crews were organised for three forests. Ella acted as a site foreman for the Canobolas crew, which overflowed a skip bin provided by State Forests. In fact, Ella reckons she could have furnished a small house with the refuse collected. Ella describes her group as 'grass roots' and said she saw an opportunity to give back to the district which supports her hunting fraternity. They were more than happy to swap rifles and bows for garbage bags and gloves, and clear illegally-dumped rubbish, instead of ferals. The group's work was powerful statement of stewardship from the hunting fraternity and I commend Ella for coordinating it and thank her.

AUNTY RHONDA TOWNEY

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr Speaker, Peak Hill's Aunty Rhonda Towney is an amazing woman who has conquered her own adversity to help others in the small rural township and further afield. After an accident in 2012, Aunty Rhonda, a Wiradjuri elder, was bedridden and in aged care for three years. During this time, she decided to change her life and devote herself to helping people. She learned to walk again and started Yindyamarra Aboriginal Services. Despite being well into her 70s, Aunty Rhonda has delivered over 3000 hampers to 31 NSW communities each year – from Walgett to Broken Hill and Queanbeyan – distributing

them to elders and community members in need, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. She communicated with the Army, supermarkets and charities and raised funding for all food and products herself. She also paid her own fuel bill. In Peak Hill, Auntie Rhonda provided a drop-in service offering donated food and goods, and referrals to other services. For this work Auntie Rhonda was named a finalist in the NSW Aboriginal of the Year Award and I congratulate her on that recognition. I also thank this wonderful elder for her work with her community.

THE PULP ORANGE

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Mr Speaker, I would like to congratulate The Pulp Orange for its contribution to the local community through independent journalism. Orange, known for its vibrant food and wine culture, stunning landscapes, and strong community spirit, is fortunate to have such a dedicated and importantly, free, news outlet. Since its recent establishment, The Pulp has shone a light on local issues and celebrated the region's successes. In today's fast paced media landscape, The Pulp Orange stands out by focusing on transparency, providing community centred journalism, and empowering residents with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions. The service covers a wide range of topics, from local government developments to environmental concerns, while also showcasing the talents and achievements of individuals in the region. By ensuring the voices of the community are heard, The Pulp plays an essential role in keeping residents engaged and connected. It is committed to strengthening the bond of the community and encouraging civic engagement. I congratulate The Pulp Orange for its dedication to serving the community and for being a trusted and free source of information for the people of Orange and the surrounding areas.

WOLLONDILLY WOMEN IN BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EVENT

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Congratulations to the Wollondilly Women in Business [WWIB] Board and everyone who contributed to the outstanding International Women's Day 2025 event at the Performing Arts Centre in Picton. From the inspiring theme and engaging speakers to the delicious food and vibrant entertainment, the event was a true celebration of community, resilience, and empowerment. The event shone a spotlight on the challenges faced by women in various industries, as well as the remarkable successes and achievements of those who have overcome barriers. Guest speakers shared powerful stories of perseverance, leadership, and innovation, inspiring all in attendance. The WWIB network continues to grow, bringing together business professionals, essential workers, and entrepreneurs who embody Wollondilly's strength and spirit. Their commitment to fostering connections, advocating for women, and uplifting the local community is truly commendable. Well done to everyone involved in making this event such a success.

WINGECARRIBEE SHIRE COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY BREAKFAST

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Wingecarribee Shire Council hosted a memorable International Women's Day breakfast at Park Proxi in Bowral, celebrating this year's theme, "For All Women and Girls." The morning featured two incredible speakers, Sarah Mangelsdorf and Sarah Steele, who shared their experiences and insights. Sarah Mangelsdorf, General Manager of Pop In, a local nonprofit supporting families affected by domestic violence, family, and sexual abuse, also works with The Youth Impact Foundation, promoting wellbeing in schools across the region. With over 25 years in education and community service worldwide, she inspired guests with her knowledge and passion for connection, compassion, and courage. Sarah Steele, a Registered Nurse with a background in Emergency Nursing, and is a mother of four and volunteer breastfeeding counsellor Sarah is a strong advocate for women and girls in sport. She serves as coach, manager, Chair of the Women and Girls in Sport Committee, and Vice President of the Bundanoon Rebels Football Club. The morning also featured a panel of students from local high schools, and attendees were encouraged to donate professional clothing on the day to Dress for Success supporting women on their path to economic independence.

JILL PATTERSON'S SENIORS AWARD

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—Congratulations to Jill Patterson on her Seniors Award. Jill, along with her proud family and friends joined other Seniors Award winners on Friday 14th March for afternoon tea. Jill was nominated for in recognition of her selflessness with her many volunteer roles. Jill has only just retired but has a long history of involvement with different organisations. Jill is a long term volunteer on the Bargo Public School P&C Committee, and regularly volunteers to coordinate school events. Jill was the registrar and coach for Bargo Netball. She is also a member of the Picton District CWA where she also served as treasurer. Her volunteer roles extend to teaching children with special needs to dance at Everyone Can Dance at Camden, where her organisation skills help make the end of year performance a success each year. Jill volunteers with Neighbourhood Aid Picton, helping take clients shopping and to appointments. Jill has also helped with the Step Up for Down's Syndrome Fundraiser. We are so fortunate to have people like Jill in our community, and I am honoured to count her among the awardees of this year's Seniors Awards. Thank you Jill, for everything that you do.

JP - USAMA YOUNES

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Usama Younes who was recently appointed a Justice of the Peace in my electorate of Ryde! JPs play such an important role and reflect the community face of our justice system. At its core, the appointment of a person to Justice of the Peace is all about service. I thank Usama for this service. As a JP, you are responsible for upholding the values of honesty and impartiality as you execute your official duties for the benefit of our local community. In a fast growing community like Ryde, the demand for JP services is growing exponentially, and I feel fortunate as the local Member of Parliament to see so many high-quality individuals willing to raise their hands. Your appointment as a JP underscores your character, integrity, and dedication to public service. Congratulations once again on this well-deserved appointment and thank you for the difference I know you will make in the lives of those you serve.

ORDER OF AUSTRALIA AWARD - MS CARMEN PLATT [OAM]

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Ms Carmen Platt [OAM] on receiving an Order of Australia Award in the General Division as part of the Australia Day 2025 Honours List. Ms Platt has been recognised for her outstanding service to the community through charitable organisations. Her dedication and commitment to supporting those in need have made a tangible difference in the lives of many. Through her leadership and advocacy, she has demonstrated the power of compassion and the importance of community-driven initiatives. Her efforts inspire us all, highlighting the value of giving back and the role each of us can play in creating a more inclusive and supportive society. This award is a fitting acknowledgment of her tireless work, and I know that our community is incredibly proud of her achievements. Once again, I extend my sincere congratulations to Ms Platt (OAM) on this well-deserved recognition. Her contributions will leave a lasting impact, and we are grateful for her dedication to making a difference.

WORK EXPERIENCE - EVE EMELEUS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in thanking Eve Emeleus, a Year 10 student, for her contribution to the Ryde Electorate Office during her work experience placement. Eve approached her time with enthusiasm, curiosity, and a keen interest in public service. She quickly became a valued part of the team during her time with us - demonstrating great initiative and professionalism. Reflecting on her experience, Eve shared, "I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to have my Year 10 Work Experience in Jordan Lane's electorate office. I have learnt so much, not just about the electorate office and how it is run but about what local politics is all about and what goes on behind the scenes. I have been able to accompany Jordan to the Parliament House and see what events are involved in being Ryde's Member." Eve's engagement with the office and community highlights the value of work experience in fostering an understanding of civic responsibility and government. I thank her for her dedication and wish her every success in her future endeavours. Thank you, Eve!

BUDDY SCHUBERT

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to acknowledge 15 year old Buddy Schubert from Forster, a talented high jumper who has been selected to compete in two events in Canada as part of a North American tour with Sports Travel Australia. Buddy discovered his passion for high jump in primary school. Without access to regular training facilities, he practiced at home using a curtain rod and old mattresses. Buddy has now represented at a state level every year since. His recent first-place finish at the NSW Country Championships, with a personal best of 1.70 metres, shows just how far he has come. Now, with international competition ahead, Buddy and his family are fundraising to cover the costs of his trip. Buddy's self-driven approach to his sport is inspiring. I wish him every success in Canada and beyond.

JESS HORNEMAN

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to acknowledge Jess Horneman, Retail Manager at Old Bar Pharmacy, for receiving the Making a Difference award at the Independent Pharmacies of Australia Retail Excellence Conference in Melbourne. For nine years, Jess has travelled 45 minutes from Wingham to Old Bar each day because she loves her job and the connections she builds with customers and colleagues. Nominated by pharmacist Akash Mehta, Jess was genuinely surprised to win but sees the award as validation of her work. She believes in making every interaction meaningful, reminding her team that customers aren't just passing through - they are part of the community. Her recognition reflects the positive impact she has on those around her. I congratulate Jess on this well-deserved award and thank her for the role she plays in making Old Bar Pharmacy such a welcoming place.

SASHA BELIC AND ALFIE MARSHALL

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I would like to acknowledge the 2024-25 Lower North Coast Surf Life Saving Branch Junior Lifesavers of the Year, Sasha Belic from Forster Surf Life Saving Club and

Alfie Marshall from Black Head. This award recognises outstanding under-14 members who contribute to surf lifesaving and their communities. Sasha and Alfie were selected from a strong group of nominees, including Kaylee Rands, Lilliana Somers, and Neil Uprety. As winners, Sasha and Alfie will now attend the SLSNSW development camp at The Collaroy Centre, where they will take part in leadership and teamwork activities alongside other junior surf lifesavers from across the state. I congratulate Sasha and Alfie on this achievement and thank all junior surf lifesavers for their role in keeping our beaches safe.

AUSTRALIAN INDEPENDENT RURAL RETAILERS RECOGNISE LOCAL COOLAC STORE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—Peter Pitcher and the Team at the Coolac Store have been recognised nationally for winning the Australian Independent Rural Retailers [AIRR] award for Member of the Year. Peter, who is to retire next year has managed the Coolac Store for 15 years. The store outperformed over 350 other retail stores to win the Peter Law National AIRR Member of the Year Award for 2024 which was presented at a conference earlier this month. The AIRR is a national member-based buying group whose sole focus is to make independence rewarding. James Waugh is stepping into the role of manager following Peter's retirement. James noted that DH Roberts Pty Ltd trading as Coolac Store is a long-established business with its origins dating back to the late 1860's. The award is not simply drawn from a hat, it is based on several criteria including, market growth, payment of accounts, customer service and satisfaction. The Store services the livestock industry, pasture and cropping sectors and James is returning to the district after 29 years away. He has big shoes to fill and is looking forward to managing the Coolac Store.

AUSTRALIA DAY AT THE YABBY RACES IN GRONG GRONG

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I had the pleasure of attending Grong Grong on Australia Day for the main event, the annual Yabby Races. Our yabbies were provided by Adam Ferguson and Andrew Johnston and the Royal Hotel sponsored the event which was enjoyed by all. Yabbies are purchased for fundraising and tips from the locals say you should choose the smaller one – they carry less weight and are intimidated by the larger ones so their race to the outer circle is usually faster. Winner of the coveted event was Brian Evans. However, the day was not finished, Trims Collective sponsored the Best Aussie Theme dresser with Sheryl Connolly taking the winning prize and Best Aussie Themed Vehicle was sponsored by MJC Auto with Nathan Bensch taking first prize. It was a great visit to Grong Grong with much banter and laughter as everyone joined in the festivities – truly a highlight on my Australia Day journey through the villages of the Cootamundra Electorate.

TEMORA TRIO SHOWCASING THEIR SKILL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—It is with great pride that I recognise the outstanding achievements of three talented young rugby league players from Temora, who are making waves in the sport and representing the town on the national stage. Jed Reardon, part of the Bulldogs' NRL pre-season challenge squad, is following in his father Steve's footsteps, a former Bulldogs player with an impressive 163 appearances. Jed played a key role in his team's 20-14 victory over the West Tigers, demonstrating both skill and determination. His commitment to putting in the hard work to forge his own path in rugby league is truly inspiring. In addition, two rising stars, Nate Breust and Josh Haisell, are proudly representing Temora in the Under 16 Andrew Johns Cup with the Riverina Bulls. While the team has faced tough competition, Nate's try in their opening match was a highlight, and both Nate and Josh continue to show immense potential. These young athletes are a credit to their families, their community, and the future of rugby league. Temora stands behind them as they continue to strive for excellence, and we eagerly anticipate the success that lies ahead for Jed, Nate, and Josh.

MOUNTAIN BIKERS EXCITING WEEKEND

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Around 250 mountain bikers and their families gathered at the Kalateenee State Forest for an exciting weekend of competitive riding. Hosted by the Macleay Valley Mountainbikers Club, the event kicked off with round one of the NSW Schools Mountain Bike Series, followed by the launch of the Macleay Valley Coast funduro and cross-country series. What stood out to me was the incredible impact this event had on our local community. With riders and their families from across the state, businesses in our region, from accommodation providers to local cafés, saw a real boost. Beyond the economic benefits, it was great to see so many people getting out, getting active, and enjoying everything our beautiful region has to offer. The schools event featured 40 primary schools and 25 high schools, competing in both cross-country and funduro races. Local riders shone brightly, with standout performances from students from St Paul's, St Joseph's, Crescent Head Public School and Kempsey Adventist School. Many local riders earned top spots in both cross-country and funduro events. Well done to all!

SENIORS SPECIAL LUNCHEON

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—In celebration of the NSW Seniors Festival, the Stuarts Point and District Community Organisation [SPaDCO] hosted a heartwarming senior's luncheon at the village's Community Hall. The event, which saw an amazing turnout of approximately 70 local and visiting seniors, was a shining example of community spirit and the importance of coming together to celebrate our elders. The dedicated volunteers from SPaDCO truly made the event special. Their tireless efforts in offering table service ensured that every guest felt valued and pampered as they enjoyed a delicious homecooked meal prepared by the SPaDCO "Chefs." The day was made even more meaningful by the overwhelming support from the wider community. Local businesses and individuals contributed hampers and vouchers filled with local produce, further demonstrating the deep sense of generosity that exists in Stuarts Point. This event was not only a celebration of the seniors who are the heart of the community but also a heartfelt thank you to the volunteers. Their efforts went beyond just organising a luncheon, as they made every senior feel special, ensuring that they knew how much they are appreciated.

ROBYN FULLER

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—I would like to acknowledge and celebrate the extraordinary contributions of Robyn Fuller to the Macleay community. A longstanding member of the Kempsey Crescent Head Surf Lifesaving Club, Robyn has dedicated over a decade as Treasurer and also volunteered as Registrar for several years. Her exceptional leadership and financial expertise were pivotal when she took on the role of financial administrator for the club's new clubhouse project, following a Federal Government grant. Beyond her work with the surf lifesaving club, Robyn, alongside her late husband Maurie, was a founding member of the Macleay District Motorcycle Club in 1965 and the Kempsey Macleay Off Road Club in 1985. She continues to assist with event management and entry coordination for these clubs. A key figure in local fitness, Robyn has been in the industry for 40 years, teaching Aqua Fitness and Hydrotherapy, while also conducting Tai Chi for seniors and those with disabilities. Her selflessness and tireless volunteerism have touched countless lives in the Macleay community, and we are grateful for her enduring dedication and service. Robyn Fuller is a true community champion, and her remarkable contributions deserve our deepest recognition.

HAPPY HEARTS CRONULLA 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Happy Hearts Cronulla members who celebrated the walking group's 20th anniversary this month. A familiar sight in their bright red shirts for early risers in Cronulla, the Happy Hearts are on The Esplanade at 7am on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Their walks of 30 minutes each way have seen the group evolve into a mini community that combines physical exercise in the name of health with an enjoyable social time. The group is part of Australia's largest free walking network coordinated by the Heart Foundation that over two decades has helped over 100,000 Australians start walking and stay walking to help lower the risk of heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes. Sandra Hudson has been the driving force behind the group and recently has handed over its running to Marilyn Urch, Marilyn Jones and Chris Marshall. Marilyn Urch said "Sandra's vision, wisdom and leadership has left a legacy of mentally and physically healthy and very grateful walkers". Members have spoken of how they value the walks and coffee gatherings that follow and I send the group good wishes for many more years of enjoyable times together.

MARINE RESCUE NSW SHIRE TEAM TROPICAL CYCLONE ALFRED RESPONSE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I acknowledge the contribution of our Shire based Marine Rescue NSW [MRNSW] to helping communities in the north of our state recover from the impacts of Tropical Cyclone Alfred earlier this month. MRNSW deployed personnel, vessels, and resources to assist flood-affected communities across northern NSW, including areas such as MacLean, Grafton, Lismore, and Urunga. MRNSW had 61 of its people involved in the response, 25 of those from the headquarters and the volunteer Botany Port Hacking unit that are based at Hungry Point. These personnel played a vital role in the response, contributing to vessel assists, incident coordination, and inter-agency liaison duties. Cronulla also served as a central hub for coordination and operational support as the base for the MRNSW incident management team. Four Cronulla-based personnel, Courtney Greenslade, Kelvin Parkin, Matt Sims and Brad Whittaker left home to join the effort in northern NSW, while vessels and vehicles were also deployed from our local base. This operation marked the first coordinated deployment of MRNSW's State Operations Group on-water flood rescue and support capability and I recognise the role of our local team in a successful response to support communities in need.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE SES TROPICAL CYCLONE ALFRED RESPONSE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I'm pleased to recognise four Sutherland Shire State Emergency Service [SES] volunteers who left their families and homes to help communities confronting the impacts of Tropical Cyclone Alfred. Having seen first-hand the impacts of flooding of the Northern Rivers region in 2022,

I am aware of how communities in trouble are thankful when they see the orange SES uniforms arrive. With floodwaters isolating people and properties damaged after the cyclone's powerful winds and heavy rainfall, four Shire SES personnel took their range of skills to provide support in the north of the state earlier this month. I ran into Tracey Jinkinson in Port Macquarie where she was serving as assistant air base manager at the airport. Further north Alan Wing and Shane Alfred were in action as flood rescue operators in the hard-hit areas of Lismore and Tweed Heads, with Lynda Burrow also on the front line at Tweed Heads as a community field liaison representative. Emergencies always bring out the best in our volunteers and again our four Shire reps did us proud as part of the outstanding response to Tropical Cyclone Alfred with their SES colleagues.

STRONGER TOGETHER FOUNDATION

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I congratulate the Stronger Together Foundation on hosting its First Annual School Options Workshop on 26 March 2025 at Castle Hill RSL. This informative and empowering event provided essential guidance to families of children with additional support needs as they prepare for schooling. The workshop featured representatives from a range of educational providers, including the Department of Education, Aspect Hills Shire School, St Gabriel's School, Warrah Specialist School, New Hope Christian School, and Ngarra Christian College. Each school shared valuable insights into their programs and support services, helping parents make informed decisions tailored to their children's needs. A standout feature of the event was the Q&A Panel, which addressed important topics, such as school readiness and provided thoughtful responses to help families feel confident and supported. The panel included Vanessa Dixon (Department of Education), Tahlia Pandazopoulos (St Gabriel's School), Shane Morris (Aspect Hills Shire School), Michelle Wilson (Ngarra Christian College), Dawn Grant-Skiba (Warrah Specialist School), and Dianne Dowson (New Hope Christian School). I especially acknowledge CEO Ellen Witzlsberger, an incredible force whose phenomenal work ensures families are supported during this vital transition. Her leadership and compassion continue to make a lasting impact in our community.

OPENING OF SOUTH MOSMAN WHARF

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I am proud to acknowledge the opening of the newly upgraded South Mosman Wharf. The extensive upgrades are the legacy of the former Liberal Government's vision, planning, and funding. The upgraded floating pontoon, complete with a covered waiting area, seating, and weather protective glass screens, ensures a safer and more comfortable experience for passengers. With the addition of a new lift, the wharf is now fully accessible for everyone, regardless of their mobility level. This project is a testament to the commitment of the former Liberal Government, who allocated the budget to improve infrastructure, ensuring safe and accessible public transport for those in my community, and those visiting. The South Mosman Wharf is not just a transport stop, it is a valued local asset that supports our daily needs. I want to thank the 223 workers who dedicated over 20,000 hours to deliver this impressive upgrade. Finally, I thank the residents of Musgrave Street for their endless patience as I know this work was ongoing and at times loud and disruptive. The final product is so impressive, and I know my community truly appreciates such an investment in their access to transport.

HARMONY DAY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Harmony Day was celebrated last week, and I recognise the many cultures, traditions, and languages that enrich the North Shore. My community shares a commitment to inclusivity and mutual respect. Harmony Day serves as a reminder of the importance of acceptance and respect. In my community, we have more than 50 different cultural groups that reside in our community, speaking 33 different languages other than English. Schools across my electorate celebrated Harmony Day through an array of cultural events, encouraging students to dress in their traditional dress from their heritage, or to wear a splash of orange to celebrate. Some schools also raised funds for relevant charities through gold coin donations, including the Australian Anti-Racism Charity. I commend all the schools in my community who put effort into ensuring a fun and vibrant Harmony Day for the students of the lower north shore. I acknowledge the importance of Harmony Day – in teaching and promoting acceptance, and in making all members of our community feel valued. I want to thank everyone in my electorate who promotes the values of harmony and inclusion.

ST ALOYSIUS EXTRA-CURRICULAR

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I want to recognise the outstanding extra-curricular achievements of students at St Aloysius College across a variety of disciplines. The college's basketball teams showed great resilience in their final game against Trinity Grammar. I congratulate the Second V and First V teams for their outstanding efforts. In cricket, the First XI secured a thrilling three-wicket win over Trinity. Special mention to the Year 12 students who played their last game for the College. I congratulate Year 12 students Brian, Lucas, Cameron, and Year 11 student Matthew, for being selected for the CAS Representative First IV Tennis Team. The St Aloysius College Swim Team excelled at the CAS Swimming Championships, with standout

performances by Jayden Doo, Harrison Reid, and Harry Black, among others. I also acknowledge the St Aloysius Debating team who have had strong victories in the Independent Schools' Debating Association and Friday Evening Debating competition. Congratulations to the teams on your strong performances. I extend my congratulations to all other athletes who represented the College with pride in swimming, tennis, touch football, volleyball, golf, and water polo. I am sure the St Aloysius community is very proud of you.

RAMSGATE RSL SUPERTEE

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, Minister for Sport, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism)—I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ramsgate RSL in Sans Souci for their ongoing support for Supertee. Supertee was founded in 2018 by Jason Sotiris, and aims to help children in hospital by providing superhero and space explorer themed medical garments, inspiring inspiration and resilience among sick children while also providing parents and hospital staff with an easy way to change children's garments. Supertee garments are also MRI and PET scan friendly and have underarm openings for temperature access, fulfilling all the necessary functions of medical garments while also comforting children and their families when they need it most. Ramsgate's RSL's donation helped ensure over 200 medical Supertee medical garments could be supplied to sick children in St George Hospital and Sydney Childrens Hospital Randwick. 15 Ramsgate RSL members also volunteered to individually pack the garments along with a personalised note for the children and families, ready to be handed out in hospital. I am grateful to Ramsgate RSL and its members for coming together and working with Supertee to support some of the sickest and bravest kids in our community and congratulate them on the fantastic results their donation to Supertee has achieved.

SOTIRKA JOVANOSKI

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, Minister for Sport, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism)—I rise today to honour and celebrate the life of Mrs Sotirka Jovanovski who turned 100 years old on the 5th of March 2025. Sotirka was born on the 25th of March, 1925, in the village of Ljubojno, within the municipality of Prespa, Macedonia. Her journey to Australia began on the 22nd of April 1966, when she arrived in Sydney with her two sons, Goce and Dragi, to reunite with her husband, who had settled here earlier. Together, they built a new life, purchasing their first home in Erskineville the same year of their arrival. Sotirka's strong work ethic saw her employed as a process worker at the Schweppes/Pepsi soft drink factory in Alexandria. Sotirka has throughout her life been a proud supporter of Macedonian culture. She has imparted her love of traditions, cooking, and gardening to her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, enriching their lives with a truly multicultural experience. In 1974, the family moved to Arncliffe, where Sotirka still resides independently at her home on Terry Street at age 100. With five grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and another on the way, Sotirka's remarkable resilience and devotion to her loved ones greatly inspires. Happy 100th birthday, Sotirka Jovanovski.

ST GEORGE FC CRS

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, Minister for Sport, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism)—I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge St George Football Club, who recently collaborated with the Australian Embassy in Budapest, Hungary, to host an Australia day event highlighting the contribution of Hungarian immigrants to sport in Australia. The Club provided the Embassy with memorabilia from the early days of St George FC, which used to be known as St George Budapest due to it having been originally founded by Hungarian Immigrants in the 1950s. Over the last 70 years, St George FC has become a staple of NSW football, winning several championships, and in 2024 was promoted to the NSW National Premier League, the highest level of professional football in the state. I would also like to thank Australia's Ambassador to Hungary, Mr Ian Briggs, for organising this event recognising the fantastic history of the club and the long connection between Australian football and Hungary. I would like to once again express my admiration towards St George Football Club on their celebrated history and contributions to Australian football and wish them the best of luck with this year's NSW Premier League Season.

JOE ALVES

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces)—What started as a bit of peer pressure over a beer with mates, has led to a lifelong commitment to helping people with blood cancer. On Sunday, 23 March 2025, Berkeley resident Joe Alves shaved his head for the 27th time, in support of the Leukaemia Foundation. He is currently one of Australia's highest individual fundraisers for the Leukaemia Foundation and hosts an event to coincide with the shave every year in March, to raise money and awareness for this important cause. His events are largely supported by the Illawarra's Portuguese community who rally in support of Joe and his mission to help the over 150,000 Australians living with blood cancer. Despite his own ill health, Joe remains incredibly invested in this cause and I congratulate him on his tremendous fundraising efforts

to date. The funds he has helped to raise will go towards fuelling life-changing research projects and support services for patients and their families. At last count Joe had raised a little over \$15,000 this year to add to the more than \$300,000 he has raised over the past two decades. Joe is a true inspiration and a local legend here in the Illawarra.

NICOLA OLYSLAGERS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—It is with immense pride and admiration that we congratulate Nicola Olyslagers on winning the High Jump World Indoor Championship for the second year in a row! Clearing an incredible 1.97m in Nanjing, China, Nicola has once again proven she is a force to be reckoned with. As a reigning champion and dual Olympic silver medallist, Nicola continues to push boundaries and inspire us all. Defending a world title is no easy feat, but as she put it herself, this challenge presented a new opportunity—to learn, grow, and reach even greater heights. What makes this victory even more special is Nicola's unwavering faith and courage in stepping onto the world stage to open her 2025 season in China. Her commitment to embracing new challenges and pushing herself beyond limits is truly inspiring. Nicola, your dedication, perseverance, and belief set an extraordinary example for athletes everywhere. We are so proud of you, and we can't wait to see what's next on your journey. Congratulations once again—you continue to set the bar higher, both on and off the field!

MACMASTERS BEACH SLSC 80TH BIRTHDAY

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I want to take this opportunity to congratulate MacMasters Beach SLSC on 80 incredible years of saving lives and serving the community. This milestone is a testament to the dedication of all members, past and present. Although I couldn't be there in person, the club recently held a fantastic celebration day which included 80 lifesavers on patrol for 80 minutes, and the entire club coming together to sing 'Happy Birthday'. From the junior presentation and dunk tank (I hope the Age Managers dried off quickly!) to the Belle Property bake-off, live music, great food, and a fantastic atmosphere, this celebration truly reflected the club's strong community spirit. The day was also an opportunity to reflect and remember those who have played a vital role in shaping the club. The minute of silence in honour of Life Member Mick Morrison was a touching tribute to a man who gave so much to the club and the community. His legacy will always be a part of MacMasters Beach SLSC. Congratulations to Club President Alison McNeill and to all involved, your ongoing hard work ensures MacMasters SLSC remains a vital part of our community.

EVE LATIMER

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Eve Latimer from Kincumber High School on her incredible act of bravery and kindness. Eve recently shaved her head as part of the World's Greatest Shave, showing true courage in support of those affected by blood cancer. Not only did Eve take this bold step, but she also raised over \$2,500, far exceeding her initial goal of \$1,000. This is an amazing achievement and a testament to her dedication to making a difference. Right now, more than 150,000 Australians are living with blood cancer, and 17 lives are lost every day. That's why efforts like Eve's are so important. The funds she has raised will go towards life-changing research, support services for patients and families, and the fight to find a cure. Eve, your selflessness, and commitment to this cause are truly inspiring. You have shown what it means to stand up for others, and your community is incredibly proud of you. Congratulations, and thank you for making a real difference!

BERNADETTE RYAN – TOURISM TRAINING AUSTRALIA AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—Congratulations to Bernadette Ryan from Harwood for receiving the Tourism Training Australia Award of Excellence. Ms Ryan is a Commercial Cookery Teacher with TAFE NSW and received the award in recognition of her dedication and motivational influences. Ms Ryan believed she was travelling to Sydney to see her student Scott Wright receive the prestigious William R Galvin Memorial Scholarship and was shocked to hear her own name called out for an award. Scott was the third recipient of the William R Galvin Memorial Scholarship that Ms Ryan has taught in the past four years. Ms Ryan worked as a professional chef until she found her passion for teaching eight years ago. Her transition from kitchen to classroom has enabled her to share her love of cooking with the next generation of aspiring chefs. Ms Ryan has a knack for nurturing her student's talents while encouraging development to reach their full potential within the fast-paced environment of the hospitality industry. Ms Ryan's inspiration came from her Grandma Edith, a passionate home cook. Growing up in a rural setting also gave her the paddock to plate experience, greatly shaping her culinary philosophy. Congratulations again.

EVANS HEAD MARINE RESCUE VOLUNTEERS AWARDS

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—A warm congratulations goes to three Evans Head Marine Rescue volunteers who have had the honour of being presented with Life Membership in recognition of their outstanding service, totalling 58 years combined. Unit Life Membership recipients Karin Brown, Heather Stacey

and Nev Hamilton were presented with their awards at an evening ceremony at the Evans Head Bowling Club. Karin Brown, a former Unit Commander, joined the team in 2010 when radio operators were in need. Nev Hamilton served as Deputy Unit Commander and joined the celebration through video call. Long serving administrator Heather Stacey was recognised for almost 30 years as Treasurer at the unit since joining the Coast Guard in 1995. Marine Rescue NSW Northern Rivers Regional Director Darcy Henriksen and Deputy Commissioner Darren Schott also attended the ceremony. Mr Schott presented coxswain Tony McNally with a National Medal for 15 years of service, recognising his ongoing commitment to the team. Unit Commander Greg Blackburn highlighted that a total of 18 awards were presented at the event, recognising various volunteer roles. Congratulations to all award recipients and I thank you for dedicating your time to the Evans Head Marine Rescue.

INFOCUS WINNERS 2025

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—My congratulations go to the five winners of the Clarence Valley Council's 2025 InFocus photography competition. In the Plunge category, Misty Fisher took out the award for her photo titled "Jacaranda Sky". A contemporary composition of Jacaranda blossoms, "Jacaranda Sky" will feature on the cover of the Plunge Arts & Culture Festival Program for 2025. In the Community category, Abigail Smith had success with her photo titled "Woodford Island Crew", a joyful image celebrating some of the communities' canines. In the Landscape category, Kathy Brown had a win with her photo of "Little Dandahra Creek", a great representation of the word plunge. In the environment category, Mitchell Forrester took out the award for his photo titled "Milky Way, Cane Fire and McFarlane Bridge", a well-executed scenic photo. In the People category, Paisley Faith Padayachee's quirky self-captured photo titled "In the Spotlight" was a winner. The InFocus competition has been running since 2013 and aims to encourage local photographers to capture the Clarence Valley's culture. Photographs are displayed at the Grafton Regional Gallery and other venues across the Clarence Valley and are used to promote the Plunge Arts & Culture festival. Congratulations and well done to the winners.

IFTAR WITH THE AUSTRALIAN MALAYALEE ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On the 16th of March I had the pleasure of attending the Australian Malayalee Islamic Association of NSW's annual Iftar and the Annual General Meeting. AMIA is the largest organisation for Malayalee Muslims in Australia. The community traces its heritage to the Southern Indian state of Kerala with Malayalam as the native dialect. They engage in a variety of not-for-profit activities to support families, students and new migrants, helping them adapt to life in Australia. Myself and my parliamentary colleagues Jason Clare and Lynda Voltz were so happy to witness firsthand the care and effort that AMIA has put into fostering a thriving community with over 600 people in attendance at the Granville Centre to break their fast. This huge event served as an opportunity to recognise the incredible work members of the association have put into bettering their communities. Great work Australian Malayalee Islamic Association!

IFTAR WELCOMING PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On Monday the 17th of March I had the humbling honour to attend The United Palestinian Workers annual Iftar at the Australian Palestinian Club in Guildford. This Iftar served as a special occasion to welcome Palestinian families who have recently arrived in Australia, fleeing horrific devastation. United Australian Palestinian Workers alongside Palestine Australian Relief and Action has served the Palestinian community as an invaluable advocacy body as well as aiding in the accommodation of Gazan refugees. This evening it was incredible to meet with those who have just arrived from Gaza and witness firsthand the incredible resilience of the Palestinian community. I would like to provide those in attendance a warm welcome as they begin their new journey in Sydney. I extend my sincerest gratitude to be able to attend this wonderful evening of faith, solidarity and resilience.

OAKHILL COLLEGE, SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM, 2025

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I congratulate the 2025 student leadership group of Oakhill College, Castle Hill. The exceptional leadership group will play a vital role in guiding and inspiring their peers throughout the year. The leadership group will be led by the College Captains, Christian Attard and Nicky Williams. The remaining members of the leadership group include Vice Captains: Flynn Farrell and Bernadette Laird; Lasallian Captains: Nathan Colaco and Andre Dabit; Sport Captains: Samuel Kable and Mollie Faehrmann; Drama Captain, Joshua Vaz; Music Captain: Jack Tyzack; House Captains: Connor Calleja, Eva Cooper, Aimon Fitzimons, Oliver Kerr, Taran Puri, Hamish Zlotkowski, Ned Cane, Cooper Rawhiti, Samuel Baker, Imogen Harding, Lachlan Abdallah and Jacob Tamaro. I extend my best wishes to the entire leadership team. The unique opportunity afforded to the leadership group affords them the opportunity to engage with community leaders, gain insights into parliamentary processes, and to develop their leadership skills. Oakhill College has a history of developing future leaders of our society. I have no doubt that the student leaders will make a lasting impact. I look forward to seeing all that they achieve this year.

BAULKHAM HILL HIGH SCHOOL, LEADERSHIP GROUP, 2025

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I congratulate the 2025 student leadership group of Baulkham Hills High School. Baulkham Hills High School is one of our states leading academic selective secondary schools. The exceptional leadership group will play a vital role in guiding and inspiring their peers this year. The leadership group will be led by the School Captains, Benjamin Nguyen and Mikayla Young. The remaining members of the leadership group include Vice Captains: George Mathew and Chelsea Tran; Sports Captains: Tao Lai, Chloe Djajkusli and Amelia Kim; Secretaries: Geraldine Khuu and Aashka Bhatt; Treasurer's: Eric Tian and Mohijit Singh; Support Ambassadors: Tao Li and Liam Balintec; Create Tech: Rivithu De Silva, Oliver Tranlam, Mihcelle Nguyen and Antonia Chen; Education Officers: Adhya Nayak and Yiwei Huang; and Communications: Kanuja Sritharan and Abiram Parthheepan. The unique opportunity afforded to the leadership group affords them the opportunity to engage with community leaders, gain insights into parliamentary processes, and develop their leadership skills. Baulkham Hills High School has a history of developing future leaders of our society. I have no doubt the student leaders' group will make a lasting impact. I look forward to seeing all that they achieve this year.

FREE YOGA FOR FRONTLINE WORKERS IN MURWILLUMBAH

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Recovery, and Minister for the North Coast)—I commend and thank yoga teacher Rob Bending who has been offering free yoga classes for our frontline workers at the Murwillumbah Community Centre since late 2023. Rob holds Tuesday classes for all current police, fire, ambulance, military, healthcare and volunteer emergency workers. Journalist Sonia Caeiro Alvarez told his story in The Times News Group of local papers. Rob's Frontline Yoga classes are trauma-aware and culturally informed and assist participants in maintaining personal resilience, strength and connection. Rob told The Times News that he found healing and a deep purpose in yoga after three decades of hard physical work in the building industry and believes a similar connection exists with emergency personnel who deal with people in distress on a regular basis. "While Frontline Yoga is an established organisation, I have recently started this class and hope to grow the community so frontline workers can take advantage of this free offering," Rob said. Frontline Yoga was founded in 2016 by veterans Chris Thompson-Lang and Brad Williamson and veteran spouse Kate O'Donoghue. The simple idea of supporting the people who put their lives on the line daily in emergencies grew to a wide network.

LISMORE HIGH CAMPUS STUDENTS BUILD A TINY HOME

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Recovery, and Minister for the North Coast)—Congratulations to Rivers Secondary College Lismore High Campus students who have built their first tiny home under the Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP) program. The Lismore App reported that this one-of-a-kind tiny home is testament to the talent and hard work of the Lismore High Campus students, who were guided by Northern Rivers industry professionals. The home will be auctioned on 3 April with proceeds going back into the Tiny Homes at Lismore High Project. As the project heads into its second year, it needs to be self-funded. Thirteen Year 9 and 10 students have been working on the project for the past seven months. Principal Chris Williams last year said: "It's given the students something to look forward to, that they've got ownership of, and they can see a tangible result at the end of each week, and they're really proud of what they're doing." Students completed a white card course, had site visits to trade businesses, and worked on the build to decide if a career in the construction industry was for them. The home is six metres long and 2.5 metres wide. The roof peak is three metres high.

NORTHERN RIVERS ATHLETES TO COMPETE ON NATIONAL STAGE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Recovery, and Minister for the North Coast)—I Congratulate nine young athletes from the Northern Rivers region who have qualified to compete at the Australian Athletics Juniors U20 National Championships and Para-Athletics Championships in Perth from April 4-13. This is an unprecedented achievement for the Ballina Allstars Athletics Club and Lismore Track & Field Incorporated, and a credit to the individual athletes, their coaches Zenon Kowalczyk, Don McNamara and Caroline Bailey, and supportive families. The athletes and their upcoming events: Malachi Canning (Lismore) – Men's U20 AMB Discus, Shot Put, Javelin & Long Jump Skye Dogan (Ballina) – Women's U17 3000m & 2000m Steeple Chase; Connor Legzdins (Ballina)– Men's U17 High Jump & Long Jump; Aaliyah Garang-Hall (Ballina)– Girls U15 Shot Put & Discus; Alexandra Dogan (Ballina) – Girls U15 3000m & 2000m Steeple Chase; Ayla Kowalczyk (Ballina)– Girls U15 AMB 100m, 200m & Long Jump; Cooper Dendle (Lismore)– Boys U15 Shot Put; Oscar Levack (Ballina) – Boys U14 200m & 400m; Lexi Brown (Ballina) – Women's AMB 200m. Coach Kowalczyk said: "It is not easy for these athletes to regularly participate in training and competition which is predominantly in Sydney, but they consistently show up. This is a major factor in their success."

DEMI MICALLEF

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Demi Micallef, from Shellharbour, who has been selected in the Australian Wakeboarding team. Fifteen-year-old Demi has been selected to compete in the Junior category of the Oceania Combined Waterski Championships in New Zealand. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Demi and wish her all the best in his future sporting endeavours.

RILEY O'CONNOR

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Riley O'Connor, from Shellharbour, who has been selected in the Australian Wakeboarding team. Fifteen-year-old Riley has been selected to compete in the Junior category of the Oceania Combined Waterski Championships in New Zealand. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Riley and wish him all the best in his future sporting endeavours.

WADE CAWLEY

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the achievement of Wade Cawley, from Rekindle Me, a business in Oak Flats that gives electronics destined for land fill a second chance. The Rekindle Me model works by the public donating anything from old laptops, computers, phones coffee machines etc. These products are sorted into two piles, one pile being all vintage electronics or items that can be rehomed. Anything left over, is stripped apart and they recycle circuit boards for the gold and silver, metals, glass and cables and batteries. This saves the entire device from ending up in landfill. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I would like to congratulate Wade for this wonderful environmental initiative.

NEDJELKO MARUNCIC

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—Nedjelko Maruncic, born in Croatia in 1946, has had a distinguished career dedicated to fostering strong ties between Australia and Croatia. From 1990 to 1995, he worked closely with the Australian government to help recognize Croatia's independence, playing a pivotal role in this historic moment. His efforts were later recognized when, in 1995, he was awarded a medal by the Croatian President for his invaluable work in strengthening relations between the two countries. Between 1997 and 2009, Nedjelko served on the Board of the Community Relations Commission, contributing significantly to community cohesion and the promotion of multiculturalism in Australia. In 2003, he was honoured with the Order of Australia Medal [OAM] by Prime Minister John Howard, recognizing his outstanding service to the Croatian community in Australia. In 2009, Nedjelko received another significant honour, a medal from the Minister for Citizenship, for his exemplary role on the Board of the Community Relations Commission. His tireless dedication to fostering cultural understanding, community development, and the well-being of the Croatian community in Australia has left a lasting legacy. I thank Nedjelko for his work, service and commitment to our local community.

VIEN GIAC TEMPLE VISIT

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—On Sunday 23 March 2025, I had the pleasure of visiting Vien Giac Temple in my Cabramatta Electorate. Vien Giac Temple has been an integral part of the community for many years, serving as both a place of worship and a community space for local Buddhist followers. It was an insightful Sunday morning engaging in meaningful conversations with Abbess Thich An Thien and several members of the Temple. It was heartening to learn about Abbess Thich An Thien's lifelong passion for spreading the seeds of love, compassion, and Buddhist teachings through education. Her 15-year project of publishing bilingual Buddhist books for families and children is a testament to her dedication to nurturing the next generation. I am thrilled to see her efforts come to fruition and look forward to the official book launch event in the coming weeks. It was also delightful to witness two major projects funded through the Community Building Partnership and Multicultural NSW grants reach completion. I congratulate Abbess Thich An Thien and the Vien Giac Temple community on these milestones and wish them continued success in their future endeavours.

MR. YOEUNG SREY

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—Mr. Yoeung Srey, a revered Master of Cambodian Traditional Music, is an iconic figure in the Cambodian and Khmer Krom Art Network [CAKKAN]. He was born in Traditional Vinh, South Vietnam and fled to Cambodia to escape the communist takeover in 1975. He is known for his mastery of traditional instruments like the "Khim," drum, and "Roneat-ek,". Mr. Srey has dedicated his life to preserving and promoting Cambodian cultural heritage. Now in his early 80s, Mr. Srey has been a prominent figure in Australia's multicultural landscape. His performances at prestigious venues, including the Sydney Opera House and Parliament House, have showcased Cambodian music and fostered intercultural dialogue. His talent and dedication have made him a respected and celebrated person for Cambodian culture. For over 40 years, Mr. Srey

has contributed to the community through performances and by training younger generations in traditional music. In 2023, he was appointed President of CAKKAN. His mentorship and involvement have significantly enhanced CAKKAN's visibility and impact, earning recognition from government departments and NGOs.

MARINE RESCUE EX CYCLONE ALFRED

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—Mr. SPEAKER: I extend my deepest gratitude to the Marine Rescue volunteers who assisted communities impacted by Ex Cyclone Alfred. Their dedication and resilience in an emergency reflect the true spirit of service. Despite extreme conditions, they worked tirelessly to ensure safety, provide aid, and support those affected. Their commitment highlights the vital role of Marine Rescue volunteers in protecting communities. The South Coast was represented by 3 Marine Rescue NSW members - Brett Eurell (Sussex Inlet), Leigh Urquhart (Sussex Inlet) & Mark Schwegler (Shoalhaven) who were deployed to the North Coast on Thursday 8th March and took with them vehicle MR59 and vessel MR27. The crew was stationed in Urunga where they worked alongside other emergency services. Basing themselves out of the SES unit, the crew were involved in daily briefings & reconnaissance runs. During their deployment, the South Coast Crew were involved in multiple rescues, evacuations & resupplies of isolated communities. On behalf of the South Coast, I sincerely thank them for their dedication and for making a real difference when it mattered most.

SES ULLADULLA EX CYCLONE ALFRED

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast)—I wish to thank the many incredible SES volunteers from across the South Coast Electorate for their outstanding efforts in responding to the devastation caused by Ex Cyclone Alfred. These dedicated individuals travelled over nine hours to an unfamiliar region, leaving behind their families and commitments to assist communities in desperate need. Under challenging and dangerous conditions, they worked tirelessly clearing debris, securing homes, assisting residents, and ensuring the safety of those affected. Their selflessness and unwavering dedication to protecting lives and property exemplify the very best of community service. Special recognition goes to Tracey Provost, Ulladulla Unit – Division Commander Coffs Harbour; Rod Felton, Ulladulla Unit – Airbase Manager; Aaron Carter, Nowra Unit – Storm and Water Damage Operator; Helen Sargent-Clarke, Nowra Unit – Aviation Radio Operator; Joel Spurway, Nowra Unit – HCV Operational Driver; Maddie Stone, Nowra Unit – Flood Rescue Cell Coordination; Bill Frazer and Michael Germech, Ulladulla Unit – Flood Rescue Operators. Another fifteen other volunteers put their hands up to help with the declared disaster, however were stood down before departing. On behalf of the residents of the South Coast, I extend my deepest gratitude to these extraordinary individuals. Their efforts will not be forgotten.

KATHY NICHELE LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—I would like to celebrate the Campbelltown Woman of the Year for 2025, Kathy Nichele. A true icon of our community, Kathy has been the friendly face behind the counter at Blairmount Public School's Canteen for more than 18 years. She has dedicated herself to supporting the staff, students and families of the school however she can. She provides affordable, healthy meals to help students learn about healthy eating habits without causing more distress to families who are feeling the cost-of-living pinch. Just one look at the community response to Kathy's announcement as Woman of the Year, tells you all you need to know about how loved she is across Campbelltown. A legend, the best, beautiful human, a wonderful woman, these are all terms that were used to describe Kathy, and every one of them rings true. Now we can add one more title, Campbelltown's Local Woman of the Year 2025. Congratulations Kathy on this well-deserved achievement.

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITY HOSPITALITY CART

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—I would like to acknowledge the wonderful work of the Ronald McDonald House Charity in my community of Campbelltown, in particular with their Hospitality Cart at Campbelltown Hospital. A visit to hospital is often a stressful time, both as a patient or as the family of a patient. RMHC has recognised this and established their Hospitality Cart to provide support to those currently in hospital. Stocked with all the essentials, toys, snacks and waters, the volunteers drive the cart around the hospital providing support to all those who need it. In partnership with the staff of Campbelltown Hospital, the team aim to make time spent at hospital just that little bit easier. Thank you to the team, Claire, Mez, Sue, Nermeen, and everyone else involved in this wonderful project.

SDA AND SIL HOMES

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—I would like to acknowledge the wonderful efforts of support organisations across my Campbelltown community in rising to meet the need of specialist accommodation for people with high physical needs in my community. I have recently visited several Specialist Disability Accommodation sites across Campbelltown, which are run by a number of different support agencies. These properties allow those in my community who have high physical needs to live independently in a property that is fit for purpose and does not require any major modifications. Those living with a disability are often one of the

most marginalised and forgotten, and I am so thrilled to see these important developments occurring in the Campbelltown area. My thanks go to Care 2 Care, Dream Maker Community services, and all other organisations who are doing their best to provide the care that our community needs and deserves.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – TARRAWANNA VALE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)—I would like to acknowledge Lilly-Jane, Skye, Dora-Rose, Lailah, Zaylen, Lara, Sophie, Karissa, Diane, Oli, Pax, Cheyenne, Addi, Brendan, Finely, Hugo, Genivieve, Flynn, Asmaa and Will who have been named as the 2025 Tarrawanna Public School leadership team. Through hard work and dedication, they have earned their leadership positions. These students have consistently demonstrated exceptional commitment and involvement within their school community and should feel very proud of themselves for having the opportunity to represent the student body. Their efforts have not only set an example but have inspired others to strive for excellence. I am confident that they will do great things throughout their school years, excelling in both their studies and extracurricular activities. Each will spend 2025 acting as role models for their peers, and I have full confidence that they will carry out their new leadership roles exceptionally. I congratulate them on their achievement and wish them all the best for their final year at primary school.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – WOONONA EAST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)—I would like to acknowledge Annabelle O'Keefe, Evie Whiteman, Harley Marks and Oliver Dorge who have been named as the 2025 Woonona East Public School leadership team. Through hard work and dedication, they have earned their leadership positions. These students have consistently demonstrated exceptional commitment and involvement within their school community and should feel very proud of themselves for having the opportunity to represent the student body. Their efforts have not only set an example but have inspired others to strive for excellence. I am confident that they will do great things throughout their school years, excelling in both their studies and extracurricular activities. Each will spend 2025 acting as role models for their peers, and I have full confidence that they will carry out their new leadership roles exceptionally. I congratulate them on their achievement and wish them all the best for their final year at primary school.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – FARMBOROUGH ROAD PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast)—I would like to acknowledge Laila Beljan, Kalyah Leaupepe, Xavier Smith-Jaregui and Melanie Zhupanowska who have been named as the 2025 Farmborough Road Public School leadership team. Through hard work and dedication, they have earned their leadership positions. These students have consistently demonstrated exceptional commitment and involvement within their school community and should feel very proud of themselves for having the opportunity to represent the student body. Their efforts have not only set an example but have inspired others to strive for excellence. I am confident that they will do great things throughout their school years, excelling in both their studies and extracurricular activities. Each will spend 2025 acting as role models for their peers, and I have full confidence that they will carry out their new leadership roles exceptionally. I congratulate them on their achievement and wish them all the best for their final year at primary school.

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY - CHARLES & ELVA ALMA

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I acknowledge Charles and Elva Alma for their dedication to Clean Up Australia Day and their ongoing commitment to preserving Clive Park in Northbridge. For the 30th year they led Friends of Clive Park as a site for this important community initiative on 2 March 2025. What an initiative! Their leadership has fostered strong community engagement, with the event drawing many volunteers, including local Cubs and Scouts, school community participants, local councillors and members of the Northbridge Rotary Club. This year, they again encouraged participation, recognising the connection between Bushcare efforts and environmental conservation. For over 30 years, Charles has contributed to the Northbridge Rotary Club, where he remains an Honorary Life Member. Both he and Elva have played a vital role in maintaining Clive Park as a valued natural space for the local community. I thank Charles and Elva Alma for their continued leadership and commitment to environmental stewardship. Their efforts in Clean Up Australia Day set a great example for our community.

PHIL JONES

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I acknowledge Phil Jones, a Northbridge resident and distinguished leader in Australian sport. Phil has served as CEO of three national sporting bodies—Australian Sailing, Athletics Australia, and Paddle Australia. His career began in the UK, where he became the nation's first windsurfing coach

and worked with the International Sailing Federation. He later moved to Australia to lead the Australian Yachting Federation, playing a key role in shaping the sport, including during the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race inquiry. During his tenure, Australian sailing excelled, particularly at the 2012 London Olympics, where the nation secured three gold and one silver medal. He later guided Athletics Australia through the Rio Olympics before leading Paddle Australia. In recognition of his contributions, Phil was recently awarded an inaugural Service to Sport Award by the Australian Institute of Sport. Now retired, he continues mentoring future sports leaders. I congratulate Phil on his outstanding contributions to Australian sport and thank him for his dedication to excellence and leadership.

CASTLECRAIG PHARMACY – MARY BOGNAR

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I acknowledge Mary Bognar, the owner and heart of Castlecrag Pharmacy, who has dedicated more than four decades to serving our community. Mary's pharmacy has been a cornerstone of Castlecrag since 1984, offering not just medicines but care, advice and a friendly face to generations of locals. Her commitment to personal service and community well-being is a testament to the role independent pharmacies play in keeping our neighbourhoods connected. Her journey is remarkable, arriving in Australia as a refugee, building a career in pharmacy and working tirelessly to support her customers. Even after relocating the pharmacy to Edinburgh Road, Mary's passion for helping others remains unchanged. She has always put her customers first, believing that if they leave with a smile, she has done her job. Mary's contribution to Castlecrag extends far beyond her business. She is a local icon, a dedicated professional and a true community champion. I thank her for her decades of service and wish her many more years of success.

CHARLIE'S RUN 4 KIDS 2025

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—On Sunday 16 March, the amazing charity initiative, Charlie's Run 4 Kids, passed through the Charlestown electorate on its quest to raise funds to provide financial and emotional support for families battling childhood cancer. Although I was unable to join the crew on their run this year, it has been my pleasure to join those running in the past as they finished up their 150 kilometre journey down the NSW coast from Seals Rocks to Lake Macquarie. Now in its twelfth year, the event celebrates the extraordinary life of Charlie Carr, who lost her battle with neuroblastoma in April 2015 at the age of seven. While undergoing cancer treatment in 2012, young Charlie thought that the children in the paediatric oncology ward at the John Hunter Children's Hospital needed more arts and crafts to brighten their days. Charlestown local Cheyne Waddingham committed to making the first Seals Rocks to Lake Mac run to help Charlie achieve her goal, and together they raised more than \$39,000. Charlie's Run 4 Kids is such an inspiring organisation and a fitting, lasting tribute to a wonderful young woman. Here's to the 2026 run!

NORTHERN NSW FOOTBALL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—Northern NSW Football celebrated its annual Mental Health Week from Monday 17 March to Sunday 23 March, with round five of the NPL Men's NNSW, round six of NPL Women's NNSW and round two of the Northern League One designated "Mental Health Rounds". A number of Charlestown electorate-based clubs were involved in the Mental Health Rounds, with clubs encouraged to create safe and supportive environments for players. As part of their commitment to the issue, Northern NSW Football is continuing their partnership with Talk2MeBro, which has created mental health programs that they will deliver to premier and community clubs across northern NSW again this season. It is great to see Northern NSW Football championing the cause, and I am so proud of the local clubs who got involved—mental health can be a difficult topic to broach, particularly in competitive environments, and it's important to see leadership in this space. My thanks to Northern NSW Football, and my congratulations to NPL teams Charlestown Azzuri FC, New Lambton FC and Adamstown Rosebud FC and Northern League sides Kahibah FC and Dudley Redhead United SFC for their involvement.

BUS DRIVER APPRECIATION DAY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—Tuesday 18 March was Bus Driver Appreciation Day, and I want to take this opportunity to add my voice to the chorus of support for our fantastic local bus drivers. These drivers play an important role in keep our communities connected, and our public transport system wouldn't be possible with the drivers—rain or shine, in the early mornings and late at night, our drivers are out on their routes, doing their best to get their passengers safely where they need to go. I recognise that is not an easy job, and that drivers can face significant challenges. Especially in light of this, the commitment, patience and professionalism shown by drivers is truly commendable. To all those drivers who live in and service the Charlestown electorate, thank you for the work you do. The international day, held commemoration of when bus

services started in Paris back in 1662, was started in Seattle in 2009. Over the last sixteen years, millions of bus drivers all over the world have been recognised for their important contributions to our communities. Once again, thank you to all the drivers who keep Newcastle and Lake Macquarie moving.

ORAN PARK HIGH SCHOOL – HEADSPACE ORAN PARK

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I commend Oran Park High School students and staff and the Headspace Oran Park organisation for an initiative that saw Oran Park High School's Wellbeing Ambassadors and Boys Club partner with Headspace Oran Park to explore how to support a friend in need. The event involved students working in groups to tackle various real-life scenarios that they might encounter on the playground. I'm pleased that the students did an incredible job and gained valuable insights and added practical strategies to their personal knowledge. The students are further empowered with the knowledge to make a difference in others' lives and I have no doubt they will put this knowledge to good use. On behalf of my electorate of Badgerys Creek, I thank and commend Oran Park High School and Headspace Oran Park for this important learning event.

ST CLAIR HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I congratulate and commend the St Clair High School Senior Boys Basketball Team for their comprehensive 70-33 victory against Cambridge Park High School. That is an exceptional scoreline and a testament to the effort and quality of the team. Special mention to Ethan who led the scoring for St Clair High School with 28 points. The St Clair High School team are also to be commended on an amazing defensive effort to only concede 33 points. I look forward to many victories ahead for this talented team. On behalf of my electorate of Badgerys Creek, I congratulate the St Clair High School Senior Boys Basketball Team and wish them the very best as they continue to represent their school.

ORAN PARK HIGH SCHOOL – EASTER EGG DRIVE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I thank and commend Oran Park High School students, staff and the school community for supporting the Uniting Burnside Brighter Futures organisation in helping families in need during the Easter season. The support is provided through participation in the school's Easter Egg Drive, in which students are asked to bring in one Easter item for collection at the school between 24 March 2025 and 28 March 2025. The Easter items include chocolate Easter bunnies, chocolate hunting eggs and stuffed Easter toys. These items will be sure to brighten the Easter of families in need. On behalf of my electorate of Badgerys Creek, I thank and commend the Oran Park High School students and school community for their outstanding support of this initiative.

THE CHAMPAGNE LOUNGE

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker..... I would like to acknowledge Rebecca Saunders of the Champagne Lounge in Mudgee for her recent demonstration that even a cyclone can't inhibit the determination and resilience of passionate community minded women! Rebecca had planned a fabulous long lunch to be held at Blue Wren Winery to celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March 2025, featuring renowned and inspirational keynote speakers Lisa Cox OAM and Shelly Horton. The event had sold out, promising to be a memorable occasion of empowerment and connection. Unfortunately, Cyclone Albert had other plans, preventing the keynote speakers from reaching Mudgee. Faced with the tough decision to cancel or carry on, Rebecca chose to focus on what she could control, her response and communication with ticket holders. With an overwhelming response to keep the event going, the women came together, braving the unexpected with no script or set agenda. They embraced the opportunity for connection, conversation, and formation of new friendships. Their resilience and openness turned the day into a memorable celebration of community and empowerment. Congratulations on the success of your event Rebecca, your unwavering commitment and perseverance in the face of challenges is admirable!

RHONDA LANG

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker..... I would like to acknowledge Rhonda Lang who has been invited to join the Auroras Pan Dragon crew for the World Dragon Boat Championships at Brandenburg in Germany. The Auroras are Australia's national team, and this invitation is well deserved for Rhonda who is highly respected in the dragon boat community. As a long serving and talented voice of the local club, she has played a crucial role in supporting both the Orana and Western Outback crews in numerous regattas. Rhonda will be part of the Auroras para-dragon team, consisting of paddlers with a disability and able bodied. Countries from all over the world will compete during the weeklong competition, racing in teams of twenty paddlers over five hundred metres, one kilometre and two-kilometre courses. With the championships taking place in July 2025, Rhonda is already dedicated to her intense training schedule to prepare. She is undertaking strength and aerobic training most days, in addition to monthly camps focused on technique, fitness, and teamwork. Congratulations Rhonda on this incredible achievement, I look forward following your journey to the podium!

WELLINGTON WEDGETAILS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker..... I would like to acknowledge the Wellington Wedgetails who recently participated in the Vegas 9's. With the backing and support of numerous businesses, including the Wellington Soldiers Memorial Club, their dream became a reality, from a small country town to the bright lights of Vegas, the Wedgetails did their community, heritage, and families proud. Adding to the significance of the trip, the Wedgetails jerseys carried deep sentimental value, honouring Shane and Sheldon Shorey. Shane and Sheldon tragically passed away four years ago, and this heartfelt tribute recognised their passion for football and their strong connection to the Wellington community. The boys played against sides from North America and around the world, holding their own by winning five out of six games. Despite losing players to injury along the way, they showed incredible resilience, stood strong, and fought hard to earn their place in the finals. Whilst overseas, the Wedgetails had the opportunity to attend the NRL double header at Allegiant Stadium as well as a Los Angeles Lakers NBA match. More than just a football tournament, this experience provided an opportunity that will create lasting positive impacts beyond rugby league. Well done to all involved!

GUYRA FLEECE AND FIBRE FROLIC

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the Guyra community on staging their inaugural Fleece and Fibre Frolic event recently, which offered spinners, weavers, retailers, producers and the public an opportunity to come together to share and celebrate Fibre Arts. I congratulate all involved in staging this event, with this initiative founded by two local groups, being Spin Different and the New England Spinning and Weaving collectives. Thank you to members for sharing their skills, talent and knowledge with one another and to the public and in doing so, raising awareness of fibre arts within the community. Special thanks to the Black and Coloured Sheep Breeders Association for assisting in promoting this event, along with the Guyra Neighbourhood Centre for their support with printing and likewise promoting this occasion. I commend all involved on their hard work, selflessly giving of their time to ensure the success of Fleece and Fibre Frolic and that it remains an annual event for the whole community to enjoy.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the University of New England Museum of Antiquities [UNEMA] on their reopening celebrations held recently. UNEMA was founded in 1959 and today handles 5000 year old artefacts from around the world, including collections consisting of Classical Antiquities from Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, pre-Roman Italy, The Ancient Near East, Rome, along with Ethnographic Material Culture from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania. I congratulate UNEMA's Curator, Dr Bronwyn Hopwood, team members and volunteers who work tirelessly to support teaching and research and promoting the history of peoples through the ages. With 3000 items on display, each artefact is now accompanied by interactive digital experiences, accessed through touchscreens, audio guides, virtual and augmented reality, to provide further information and enrich the experiences of those visiting the Museum. I commend all involved in the longevity of UNEMA both past and present, for sharing of their expertise, knowledge and time, whilst importantly, preserving history for the future generations to enjoy.

RUGBY LEAGUE ABCARE WESTERN CHALLENGE

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the achievements of Moree Boars Rugby League Football Club for staging the annual Rugby League ABCARE Western Challenge, held at Moree recently. This 30 game knock-out carnival included men's and women's teams from across NSW, ACT and from over the QLD border. I congratulate past and present organisers of this event, under the guiding hand of Todd Mitchell. Thank you to the many volunteers for their hard effort in the lead up, during and post the challenge. Special thanks to helpers: Mark McGrady, Tileah McGrady, Ben Taylor, Paul Rollinson, Antoinette McNamara, Codie Ryan, Lippy O'Connor, Red Lloyd and Garry Bartlett. Thank you to major sponsor ABCARE, stall holders, food vendors, the PCYC for providing a Kids Corner, along with the Moree Junior Rugby League for providing canteens, using this initiative as an opportunity to fundraise for their club. I commend all involved for their hard work and commitment to staging this very successful event. The challenge brings the community together through sport, as well as economically benefiting local businesses and the Moree township.

ST JOSEPH'S MOOREBANK

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—Congratulations to St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Moorebank as they celebrate their 50th anniversary! With the parish established in 1973 to serve the growing Moorebank community, then-parish priest, Father Terence Duggan, along with Archdiocesan authorities decided that a parish school was warranted. Helped by a funding grant from the Commonwealth Government, the primary school was opened on 13 April 1975 by then-Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, with a blessing by Cardinal James Freeman. What began as a school of just 27 students has now evolved into a community of over 400 students and

30 members of staff. St Joseph's school motto "Charity and Love" has been borne out by the school's active approach in encouraging in students a social conscience of the need to care for others and a culture of environmental stewardship where students take an active role both at school and at home to reduce their use of the earth's resources. Congratulations to the entire school community at St Joseph's, led by Principal Christine Bitar-Claxton, as you mark this auspicious milestone. I look forward to seeing the school's positive impact on our broader community for the years to come.

DR ANNE JOHNSTONE: PRINCIPAL OF RAVENSWOOD 2016 - 2025

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—I recognise the leadership of Dr Anne Johnstone as Principal of Ravenswood School for Girls from 2016 to 2025. I have visited Ravenswood several times and seen firsthand the supportive environment Dr Johnstone has fostered. Students speak highly of her dedication to their wellbeing, whether through innovative programs or welcoming them at the gates every morning. Her commitment to ensuring every student feels valued has been a defining feature of her leadership. In 2024, Dr Johnstone was deservedly awarded Australian School Principal of the Year and School Principal of the Year (Non-Government). Under her leadership, the school has been recognised as The Educator Innovative School of the Year in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022, and 2023 and received the Best Student Wellbeing Program award in 2021, 2022, and 2024. I am proud to recognise exemplary leaders like Dr Johnstone who inspire the future of education, and I wish her every success for the future.

GALSTAUN COLLEGE YEAR 12 LEADERS 2025

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Wednesday 2 April 2025, I visited Galstaun College with the Hon. Mark Speakman, SC, MP, to meet their year 12 leaders for 2025. Galstaun College is the only bi-lingual Armenian Christian pre-kindergarten to Year 12 co-educational college in Australia. I spoke with the student leaders about the importance of exercising leadership. I am always impressed when I visit Galstaun College, and I share their motto, "Belong, Believe, Become". I recognise the Year 12 school captains Bianca Bozoghlian and Panos Krdanian, vice-captains Awadis Shegoian and Lela Tchamitchian, Head of SRC Alique Manjikian, prefects Asbed Anoushian, Daron Ekmekjian, Taveet Ekmekjian, Bianka Matta, Nelly Meridjanian, Careen Nadjarian, Arminka Simonian, Emma Taberdian and Garren Zarigian, and house captains Marita Kouyoumjian, Samuel Flores Torres, Alyssa Pailagian and Charlie Tchopourian. They show remarkable resilience and strength, qualities that will undoubtedly serve them well. I recognise Principal Mr. Edward Demirdjian, who leads a dedicated team of educators who foster a supportive learning environment. I look forward to supporting Galstaun College for many years into the future.

DR CATHY FOLEY AO PSM

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Tuesday 25 February 2025, Dr Cathy Foley AO PSM was awarded the 2025 national Australian Award for Excellence in Women's Leadership. The Australian Awards for Excellence in Women's Leadership, organised by Women and Leadership Australia, recognise individuals who have made significant contributions to advancing equity and better outcomes for women and girls. Dr Foley served as Australia's Chief Scientist from 2021 to 2024. She has a distinguished career as an award-winning physicist, culminating in her groundbreaking work at the CSIRO and her advocacy for women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics [STEM]. Dr Foley has been a tireless advocate for gender equality in science, inspiring future generations and breaking down barriers for women in the physical sciences. I recognise Dr Foley's leadership, vision, and commitment to creating a more inclusive scientific community.

BRONTE HOUSE OPEN DAYS

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—We would like to acknowledge the re-opening of one of Waverly's oldest and most treasured historic sites, the Bronte House for 2025. Open just four times a year, the historic Gothic style cottage boasts two acres of lush subtropical gardens with various native flowers and plants. Bronte House, valued for its historical importance, was listed on the Australian Heritage Commission Register of the National Estate in 1978 and granted State Heritage status in 1999 under the Heritage Act 1977. I commend those in charge of the opening of Bronte House and thank them for allowing residents to explore our local history.

THE WOMEN'S WELL

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—We would like to acknowledge the transformative work of the Women's Well Eastern Suburbs, a group created for women to come together and enjoy community. The Women's Well hosts free events for women that empower and support women in our community. The women's well hosts community events that bring women together to build empowering relationships. Accessibility is a priority, which is why all events are free and held locally, ensuring that women can easily participate in a safe and welcoming environment. Led by community leaders who address the specific challenges women face, these events foster

connection, support, and meaningful conversations. As an active participant in this program, I am continually inspired by the incredible work The Women's Well does and the profound impact it has on our community.

VALE DAVID POLSON

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—The Coogee electorate would like to acknowledge the life and contributions of David Polson, a leader of HIV/AIDS advocacy in Australia. David Polson, a devoted advocate for the LGBTQIA+ community, died on February 10th at the age of 70. As one of the first 400 men diagnosed with HIV in Australia in the 1980s, he bravely participated in countless drug trials over four decades, contributing to critical advancements in prevention, detection, and treatment. Despite facing numerous health challenges, including a rare brain disease, hearing problems, and kidney disease, he remained steadfast in his mission to support research and advocate for those affected by HIV/AIDS. His life was honoured at a State Memorial Service on March 12th, where his contributions were recognized. He will be deeply missed, but his impact will live on. May he rest in peace.

HUNTER MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE CARDIO-ONCOLOGY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Roads, and Minister for Regional Transport)—I was honoured to recently attend and speak at the Hunter Medical Research Institute's inaugural Cardio-Oncology Q&A session in partnership with the Hunter Cancer Hub. The groups inspiring leaders Dr Aaron Sverdllov and Dr Doan Ngo, Co-Directors of the Newcastle Centre of Excellence in Cardio-Oncology, are pioneers in the integration of heart and cancer care. Despite significant medical advances, heart disease and cancer remain the two greatest causes of death and disability in Australia and the Western world. People living with and beyond cancer bear a disproportionate burden of heart disease, making prevention critical for everyone, especially those with a cancer history. It is essential to maintain heart health during cancer treatment and throughout survivorship to secure long-term quality of life. Yet regional and rural communities face poorer outcomes due to limited access to specialist services and the absence of dedicated cancer survivorship programs outside metropolitan Sydney. I am proud that the Newcastle Centre of Excellence in Cardio-Oncology is the first internationally accredited programme in the Southern Hemisphere. With initiatives in Newcastle and expansions into Maitland and Tamworth, we are forging a path toward holistic, accessible care for all Australians.

KING STREET COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Roads, and Minister for Regional Transport)—Congratulations to King Street Community Preschool on achieving national certification through Little Scientists Australia's prestigious Little Scientists House program, a milestone that recognises excellence in inquiry-based STEM education for young children. This certification reflects the preschool's commitment to providing best practice early learning that fosters essential skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity—vital tools for success in today's modern world. As part of this certification, the dedicated team at King Street Community Preschool developed an innovative inquiry-based STEM project, "What is it like to be an Astronaut?" Engaging children aged 3-5 years, the project allowed them to explore the wonders of space and the exciting world of astronaut life. Through hands-on experiments, investigations into the aerodynamics of space travel, live streams of space craft launches, and creative research on the planets, the children actively brought the universe closer to home. Their drawings and interpretations encapsulated a fresh perspective on space exploration, sparking curiosity and a love for learning. This achievement not only highlights the transformative power of early STEM education but also sets a high standard for learning in our community. Congratulations to King Street Community Preschool on this well-deserved recognition.

WORLD AUTISM WEEK

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Roads, and Minister for Regional Transport)—Thank you to all who have supported World Autism Understanding Week. This week is a vital opportunity to celebrate the strengths, talents, and contributions of autistic individuals while advocating for a more inclusive society. It is estimated that 1 in 40 Australians are on the autism spectrum. It is important that we support and understand autistic individuals and their families. Autism is a lifelong developmental condition, influencing how individuals interact with their environment and those around them. World Autism Understanding Week is an annual event dedicated to increasing public understanding of autism, promoting acceptance, removing barriers, and fostering a more inclusive society. The 'Brilliant Brunch for Aspect' Morning Tea held at NSW Parliament House this week highlighted the need for understanding, acceptance, and meaningful change in how we support autistic individuals and their families. I commend Aspect for its unwavering commitment to empowering autistic people through education, advocacy, and community engagement especially at their school in Thornton. Their work is instrumental in creating a society that values neurodiversity and ensures equal opportunities for all. Together, we can foster a community where every autistic person is recognised, supported, and empowered to thrive.

EMMA HASSARATI ST CHARBEL'S COLLEGE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I wish to congratulate Emma Hassarati, a bright Year 10 student at St Charbel's College in Punchbowl, for receiving the prestigious Year 10 Academic Excellence Award from the University of Sydney. This award recognises and promotes academic excellence among students, while inspiring them to consider Sydney University for their future studies. Emma's achievement is a testament to her hard work, dedication, and outstanding academic performance. I also commend St Charbel's College for recognising Emma's achievements and nominating her for this award. St Charbel's College plays a vital role in our community, fostering academic excellence and strong values in its students. This accomplishment also reflects the incredible support system around Emma, her family, teachers, and school community, who have nurtured and encouraged her to excel. As a former teacher, I take great pride in seeing students challenge themselves, strive for excellence, and be rewarded. Once again, I extend my warmest congratulations to Emma, her family, and St Charbel's College for this well-deserved recognition. I have no doubt that Emma will continue to achieve great things, and I look forward to seeing her thrive as a future leader in our community.

RURAL FIRE BRIGADE RFS IFTAR

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I was honoured to attend the Casula Rural Fire Brigade's annual Iftar dinner, a special event that celebrated the spirit of Ramadan and the diversity within our emergency services. The Casula RFS Brigade, founded in 1990 and led by Captain Ben Graham, has a long-standing tradition of service and commitment to the community. This Iftar, now in its third year, was first initiated by brigade member Richard Tabbah to foster connection and unity. Ramadan is a time of generosity, gratitude, and giving back, values that perfectly align with the spirit of the RFS, where volunteers dedicate their time and effort to protecting others. The event brought together brigade members, community leaders, special guests and other distinguished RFS officials. More than just a meal, this Iftar was a testament to the sense of multiculturalism and shared purpose that strengthens our emergency services and broader society. Regardless of faith or background, we stand together in service to the community. I extend my gratitude to Captain Ben Graham, Richard Tabbah, and all those who made this evening possible. It was a privilege to share in this meaningful tradition.

PUNCHBOWL BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL'S COMMUNITY IFTAR

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—The Islamic holy month of Ramadan is a time in which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. It is a month of spiritual reflection, empathy with those less fortunate and togetherness as family and friends. The community gather to break their fast at what is known as iftar. On Friday 14 March, I joined our community at Punchbowl Boys' High School's Iftar, breaking my fast with hundreds of community members. Thank you to my dear friend Robert Patruno for welcoming me and many others at the iftar. The food was amazing, the sweets divine and the company even better. I have the pleasure of attending several iftars that celebrate our unity as a community as well as our shared humanity. Regardless of a person's religious background, the coming together of people, rekindling old friendships and making new ones whilst breaking bread, is something that we can all appreciate. We are better as a society when we are together and respect and value our differences. May the blessings of Ramadan bring peace, good health, and kindness to all. The thing that makes our community so amazing is nights like this. Ramadan Mubarak.

MANLY CROQUET CLUB

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the Manly Croquet Club for successfully hosting the NSW Women's Golf Croquet Open Championships last weekend. This highly competitive tournament brought together top croquet players from across Australia, all vying for the prestigious title. It was a wonderful display of skill and sportsmanship, right in the heart of Manly. I extend my sincere gratitude to the Manly Croquet Club for their warm hospitality and for inviting me to witness such an outstanding event. A special congratulations to Rosie on her championship-winning performance - an incredible achievement! Events like these highlight the dedication of local clubs, which serve as the bedrock of our community. The Manly Croquet Club continues to foster a love for the sport while bringing people together. Once again, congratulations to the club for organising such a remarkable tournament, and I look forward to seeing its continued success.

BUNNINGS BALGOWLAH

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, today I acknowledge Bunnings Balgowlah for their community involvement and their ongoing support of local organisations, charities, and other important causes in the Manly area. Bunnings Balgowlah's value to the community extends far beyond the goods and services they

offer. Their active and generous support of local community initiatives should be commended. These range from offering DIY workshops, organising fundraising events like sausage sizzles, and partnering with local organisations including the Lifeline Northern Beaches and the Northern Beaches Women's Shelter. In particular, I wish to acknowledge Bunnings Balgowlah for their continued support of the Manly Adolescent and Young Adult Hospice [AYAH] – a cause which many in this Chamber would know is incredibly close to my heart. In the past, Bunnings Balgowlah has donated items to support gardening projects taking place at the Hospice and has provided a space for volunteers and staff to run cake stalls to raise awareness and funds to support the Australia-first services the AYAH delivers. Bunnings Balgowlah's commitment to supporting local causes show the true power of businesses giving back to ensure services like the AYAH can continue their vital work. I extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to Bunnings Balgowlah.

CHEF PHIL

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, today I rise to recognise an unsung hero in our community - Chef Phil from the Manly Adolescent and Young Adult Hospice. In his role as in-house chef at AYAH, Chef Phil ensures that every meal meets the nutritional and texture needs of patients while still honouring their personal preferences and those of their families and carers. Whether it's a favourite dish, a special request, or a lovingly prepared meal shared with loved ones, Chef Phil understands that food is more than sustenance - it's about comfort, memories, and ensuring patients and their families feel at home. Mr Speaker, Chef Phil does far more than just cook; he creates moments of joy, comfort, and connection for young patients and their families. His fresh-cook menu isn't just about nourishment - it's about care, flexibility, and dignity. To Chef Phil, I say a huge thank you. Your dedication, kindness, and culinary skill make an immeasurable difference to those facing the toughest of times. We are incredibly fortunate to have you and I know that the AYAH community is truly grateful for all that you do.

MARIA CATERINA LOSINNO

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to warmly congratulate my local constituent Mrs Maria Caterina Losinno of Concord West who is celebrating her 105th Birthday on 9 April 2025. I sincerely wish Caterina all the very best on this very special occasion. I hope that she has a lovely time celebrating this special milestone with her family and loved ones. I am sure it will be a joyous day remembering all the memories she has made. I sincerely wish Caterina a very Happy 105th Birthday and congratulate her on this significant milestone. On behalf of our local community, I extend my best wishes to Caterina and her family. Auguri!

CHRIS CASTLE

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge the contributions of Chris Castledine who was recently recognised with a NSW Community Service Award. This Award, signed by the Premier of NSW, recognises individuals who have made significant contributions to their local community through service, leadership, and a commitment to creating a lasting and meaningful impact on the lives of others. Chris has dedicated countless years entertaining our community as a singer and entertainer, he is a community volunteer, and a longstanding MC of the Ferragosto Street Fair on Great North Road which welcomes over 100,000 visitors to Five Dock each year. Chris has MC'd the event consistently since it first began. Everyone that has had the pleasure of knowing Chris or seeing him perform knows of his incredible passion and talent for entertaining. In 2015, Chris was named Arts and Culture Citizen of the Year by the City of Canada Bay Council for his continued service to the community. I sincerely congratulate Chris on this well-deserved recognition. His dedication to the community and service is to be commended. I wish him all the very best.

TROVATINO CAFE

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge Trovatino Café, a beloved local coffee spot in Wareemba that is renowned for its beautiful food, delicious desserts, fresh gelato, and outstanding coffee. Trovatino was first opened by Sebastian & his wife Teresa Trovato over 50 years ago. The business has transformed over the years first as a fruit shop, then transforming as one of the first fruit-shop cafes, to then become the café it is today. Sebastian and Teresa raised their children while running the business and now their son Joe operates the café and their grandchildren have started working in the business. At the heart of Trovatino's is a dedication to providing the highest quality customer service and outstanding food each and every visit. Behind every successful business is a hardworking family. The story of the Trovato family is one of the great Italian migration stories of our community. Trovatino is an institution in our area, employing local people and supporting our local economy. On behalf of our community, I sincerely acknowledge Sebastian, Teresa, and Joe Trovato, the entire extended family and the hardworking staff for making Trovatino what it is today. I wish them all the very best.

AQUABLISS SEVEN HILLS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Aquabliss Swim School, Seven Hills, on being successfully appointed as a Learn to Swim provider by the NSW Government, to deliver free learn to swim and water safety lessons for residents in the Prospect Electorate. Swimming is an historic national pastime and part of our sporting tradition. With over 1.1 million participants, it's a great way to stay healthy. Whether a beach trip or dip at the pool, swimming is truly part of Australian culture. Unfortunately, many in our Western Sydney community haven't had the opportunity to learn to swim. In the last decade, 57% of drownings in Western Sydney impacted migrant communities. People born overseas are among those at the highest risk of drowning. This program will enable fifteen local swim schools, like Aquabliss to provide water safety skills, vital for our diverse community. Aquabliss offers a versatile learn to swim curriculum, delivered by highly experienced, nationally-accredited instructors. Tailored lessons help students progress, enabling swimmers all of ages and abilities to stay safe in the water. Thank you to Jessica Toomey, Area Manager the dedicated coaches, instructors and staff at Aquabliss for your commitment to improving aquatic literacy in our community.

AQUA KIDS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to AquaKIDS Swim School, Smithfield, on being successfully appointed as a Learn to Swim provider by the NSW Government, to deliver free learn to swim and water safety lessons for residents in the Prospect Electorate. Swimming is an historic national pastime and part of our sporting tradition. A great way to stay healthy, it has over 1.1 million participants. Whether a beach trip or dip at the pool, swimming is truly part of Australian culture. Unfortunately, many people in our Western Sydney community haven't had the opportunity to learn to swim. In the last decade, 57% of drownings in Western Sydney impacted migrant communities. People born overseas are among those at the highest risk of drowning. This program will enable fifteen local swim schools, like AquaKIDS to provide water safety skills, vital for our diverse community. AquaKIDS offers a high-calibre learn to swim curriculum. Delivered by experienced instructors, they're helping swimmers all of ages and abilities to stay safe in the water. Thank you to Steve Kamper MP, Minister for Sport for driving this initiative. I also thank Angela Rothwell, Founder, and the dedicated AquaKIDS team for your commitment to improving aquatic literacy in our community.

HOLI IN THE HOUSE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Thursday 20th March, I was delighted to join leaders, volunteers and representatives from our Indian-Australian community to celebrate Holi in the House at the Rooftop Garden, Parliament of New South Wales. Jointly hosted by the NSW Parliamentary Friends of India, the Australia India Business Council and the Consulate General of India in Sydney, the event was a wonderful celebration of Holi, the Hindu festival of colours. A major festival observed by Indian-Australians and Hindus in the Prospect Electorate, Holi signifies the eternal love of deities Radha and Krishna, celebrated annually at the beginning of the Spring season in the northern hemisphere. This year, I was pleased to join my Parliamentary colleagues to acknowledge the wonderful Indian-Australian professional and business community, who have contributed much, especially to Western Sydney and our local Prospect Electorate. The event was highlighted by addresses from Warren Kirby MP as Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of India, and Dr Janakiraman Sarvesvaran, Consul General of India in Sydney. I extend my congratulations to Irfan Malik, President, Australia India Business Council and all our amazing Indian-Australian community on a wonderful celebration of our modern, vibrant and harmonious community in NSW.

ANGELA TAKO

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith)—Congratulations to Penrith Basketball Association Junior Angela Tako who has been chosen for the 2025 U18 Basketball Championships. Angela will join the 2025 NSW U18 women's team, after last year being chosen in the interim Australian U15 women's team for the Oceania Championships, together with the U16 women's team. Angela is certainly a rising star in women's basketball her stated goal is 'to become one of the best WNBA players like Lauren Jackson' and all of Penrith are cheering her on.

REDLINE GAMES RETURN TO PENRITH

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith)—We welcome Fisiocrem's Redline Games back to Penrith from 28 March to 30 March 2025, with more than 10 events and disciplines running over the four days. These games will be held at the Sydney International Regatta Centre Olympic venue and feature a combination of water and land-based sports including dragon boating. YOKHA, sunrise yoga by the lake, break dancing and cycling. There is something for everyone even if you're not competing, spectators are welcome. The Nepean Triathlon will again be a feature of this year's games it is now in its 42nd year and is Australia's oldest triathlon. The Australian Super Sprint Triathlon Championships are also happening on Saturday 29th March. The Redline games will certainly be

a test of fitness and endurance for both elite athletes and those who are entering for the first time. I look forward to welcoming visitors, athletes and their families to Penrith and congratulate Destination NSW and Penrith City Council for their support.

HARMONY DAY 2025

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills)—I would like to acknowledge the recent Harmony Day for 2025, which took place last week. Harmony Day is an opportunity to embrace the wonderfully diverse community in which we live. The Winston Hills electorate is one of the most culturally rich areas, with over forty per cent of residents born overseas. I particularly commend our local schools for their enthusiastic participation in Harmony Day. I particularly note Toongabbie West Public School, Caddies Creek Public School, and Lynwood Park Public School for doing a fantastic job of celebrating multiculturalism and showcasing a vibrant array of cultural festivities. By embracing a wide range of customs and celebrations, these schools are actively promoting respect, inclusion, and unity among students. It is through such initiatives that we strengthen the bonds within our community and help shape the understanding of future generations. I recognise all of the students, teachers, and families who are involved, and I commend them for their commitment to celebrating the diversity of Winston Hills.

TOONGABBIE PUBLIC SCHOOL PARLIAMENTARY VISIT

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills)—I acknowledge the student leaders from Toongabbie Public School who recently visited NSW Parliament. The students took a trip into Parliament to learn about the Parliamentary system and legislative process. It was an honour to speak with the students and answer their questions. They had the opportunity to view Question Time and have their visit recognised in Hansard by the Speaker. I also would like to thank the Toongabbie Public School staff who accompanied the students on the day, including Michael and Freya. The students then took off to visit the ANZAC memorial in Hyde Park before having a treasured McDonald's lunch. I thank the students for their engagement, their enthusiasm, and the respectful way they represented their school. I trust the experience was both enjoyable and inspiring, and I look forward to catching up with the student leaders from Toongabbie Public School again later this year.

2ND NORTHMEAD SCOUT GROUP

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills)—I acknowledge the 2nd Northmead Scout Group on their recent Annual Report Presentation, held at Third Settlement Reserve. It was a great occasion to reflect on the group's achievements and the vital role it plays in our local community. Scout groups like 2nd Northmead provide young people with much more than just outdoor experiences. They foster leadership, teamwork, resilience, and a strong sense of civic responsibility — values that help shape the next generation of community-minded Australians. I would especially like to recognise Group Leader Louise Gale for her outstanding dedication and leadership. Louise, along with the group's volunteers and leaders, ensures that each scout has the opportunity to learn, grow, and feel supported in their journey. The 2nd Northmead Scout Group continues to be a pillar of our community, encouraging young people to challenge themselves, care for others, and contribute positively to society. I commend the entire group on a successful year and look forward to seeing their continued impact in the years ahead.

JEWISH VOICES OF INNER SYDNEY

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I would like to acknowledge the advocacy of Jewish Voices for Inner Sydney, a local community group that I was honoured to meet with recently and who wished to discuss the politicisation of antisemitism in our community. Jewish Voices of Inner Sydney calls on all of us to commit ourselves to the eradication of all forms of racial and religious prejudice within our society, and to do so in a way that strengthens our democracy rather than diminishes it. They urge us all to resist using this issue, one which causes real community pain, for political point scoring. I commend the members of this group for their courage and their action to realise a more just society for all. I would like to give thanks to the members of Jewish Voices of Inner Sydney for the time and insight they provided in our discussions on this issue. Each of you are great advocates for peace and for democracy and I thank you for your contributions.

ST SCHOLASTICA'S GLEBE STUDENT'S VISIT

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I would like to acknowledge two student leaders from St Scholastica's College, Hannah and Maddie, who I was honoured to welcome to NSW Parliament recently as part of the Secondary Student Leadership Program. Programs like these give us the opportunity to meet face to face with the leaders of tomorrow, and I was so glad to be able to use this time to discuss their plans for the future. I am very grateful for the chance to talk to two engaged and intelligent young leaders about the issues that matter to young people in our community more broadly. I would like to give thanks to Hannah and Maddie and wish

them the very best in their studies and all their future endeavours. I have no doubt that they will go on to achieve great things. Thank you also to the staff at St Scholastica's for facilitating this opportunity.

HUNTERS HILL MEDICAL PRACTICE

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—Mr Speaker - I congratulate Hunters Hill Medical Practice which recently won the prestigious title of Practice of the Year in New South Wales from the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, which is the peak body in the general practice and primary healthcare space. This recognition is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the entire team at Hunters Hill Medical Practice and highlights the Practice's commitment to excellence in healthcare in and beyond the Hunters Hill local community.

ST IGNATIUS COLLEGE, RIVERVIEW ROWING COACHES AND VOLUNTEERS

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—Mr Speaker - I want to acknowledge the tireless work of the St Ignatius College, Riverview Rowing Coaches and Volunteers and congratulate them on such a successful season. Master in Charge, Dan Noonan. The Senior Coaches, Jim Busteed, Matthew Curtin, Hugo Courts, Simon Kenderes, Sarah Dieu, and David Hogan. The dedicated volunteers Paul Brogan, Phil Elbourne, Bob Marsh and Chris O'Brien alongside mums Emma Burton and Rachel Kelly.

DR ALASTAIR LONSDALE

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—Mr Speaker - I wish Dr Alastair Lonsdale all the very best on his retirement from dentistry after over 35 years of service in the Gladesville area, having succeeded his father in the profession. Dr Lonsdale was known to many in the Gladesville area and beyond, and specialised in dentistry for the elderly, training patients in dental hygiene, and in teething, which commendably included after hours service. On behalf of the Gladesville Community, I would like to wish the good doctor a relaxed and merited retirement.

HAPPY EID AL-FITR AND EASTER 2025

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—On Monday 31 March, Muslims around the world will mark the end of Ramadan with the Eid al-Fitr. Traditionally held at dawn Eid is celebrated at the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan, the traditional month of fasting. Parramatta is home to approximately 9,000 residents of the Muslim faith who contribute to making Parramatta an incredibly diverse multifaith community. Muslims will gather at prayer halls throughout the electorate while the Parramatta Mosque will be hosting Eid al-Fitr prayers at Prince Alfred Park. This year Good Friday falls on 18 April. It is a time of reflection and in Parramatta congregations will gather across the Easter period to give thanks and celebrate noting that Easter Sunday symbolises new life. I wish everyone celebrating a Holy Easter. In testament to the vibrant multifaith communities of the Parramatta electorate, there will be many celebrations of faith across the electorate in the coming weeks. The coming together of faithful and non-faithful speaks to the inclusiveness of Easter and Eid and the beautiful multicultural mosaic that we call Parramatta.

ANZAC DAY 2025

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—'Shrapnel poured on us like rain. I will not attempt to describe the horrors of the landing..... Had we hesitated or even wavered for a second on getting a footing, not one of us would have lived' Those were the words Ernest Edward Herrod wrote to his wife Kathleen who lived in Wentworth Street, Parramatta while Ernest served in Gallipoli. Many from Parramatta have fought on foreign soils in wars throughout Australia's history. ANZAC Day is the time of year when we acknowledge their sacrifices and strength, the sheer hard work and risks they took in service of our country. I particularly want to highlight the work of the City of Parramatta RSL sub-Branch ably led by President Simon Lovell and the Parramatta War Widows who do so much to support veterans in our area. It is important that we acknowledge the challenges faced by veterans living in our communities whose numbers continue to grow and that we ensure they and their families are well supported. As we mark 110 years since the Gallipoli Landing the Dawn Service will commence at 4.30am on 25 April at the cenotaph in Parramatta's Prince Alfred Square.

AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—The 2nd April is World Autism Understanding Day and the month of April is Autism Awareness Month. It's an important opportunity to reflect on the contributions of autistic individuals and consider how society can continue to become more accepting and inclusive of neurodivergence. Organisations such as the Lizard Centre, Frangipani House operated by One Door Mental Health, Avenue Parramatta, Achieve Australia, Step2Life, KEADS, ASPECT and Parramatta Autism Carers Support Group provide wonderful support and encouragement to support those with autism and their families. It is so important that we remember to be kind and mindful of the challenges faced by autistic individuals. Communication can be

particularly challenging on the autism spectrum, understanding social cues and forming social relationships is often difficult. This unfortunately has implications for professional, social and educational opportunities. That's why April is a special time of year to not only be aware, but to be accepting. Having had close personal and professional relationships with people with autism, I know that autism should not be a barrier, but a superpower.

DAVID LYE

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater)—It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge the long-term contributions of Newport resident David Lye to both his local community of Pittwater and the greater Northern Beaches. David began volunteering with not-for-profit One Meal in 2023 and he quickly became involved with various aspects of the operation. David went on to build the framework for sustainable food-waste management at One Meal which has helped reduce waste significantly. David has built a community network across the Northern beaches, including partnering with Fisher Road School in Dee Why to build a composting network that includes worm farms, compost bins and chicken coops. He also raises funds for tools and supplies for the program. The compost produce is distributed along the Northern Beaches and as far as the Royal Botanical Gardens, helping to nurture community gardens across the region with sustainably sourced fertiliser. David has also volunteered with Newport Surf Life Saving Club on patrol since 2013, a commitment of over a decade to helping keep our waters safe. I commend David on his dedication to the Northern Beaches community and sustainability.

WARRIEWOOD HUMMINGSONG CHOIRS

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater)—It is with great pleasure that I recognise the incredible contributions of the Hummingsong Choirs, a remarkable network of women's community choirs founded by Anna Humberstone. In 2013, the Warriewood Choir was established under the leadership of conductor Kylie Tyson. It has since flourished and grown to 80 dedicated members. The choir offers women a welcoming space to sing for fun and helps to foster a strong sense of purpose. It brings joy to the community through music and creates a sense of mentorship for its members. The Choir perform regularly at community events including local venues, festivals and care homes. Their annual concert is a true spectacle where all Hummingsong Choirs come together to celebrate their passion for music. What makes their work even more inspiring is their commitment to raising awareness and significant funds to support women and children escaping domestic violence. Collectively the Hummingsong Choirs have over 1300 women singing and have raised over \$500,000. Thank you to all the members of the Warriewood Hummingsong Choir for their tireless dedication and the positive impact they make on our community, your contributions are truly appreciated.

BUCKETTES SWIMMING GROUP

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater)—I'd like to acknowledge the long-standing commitment demonstrated by members of the Buckettes Swimming Group to each other and their community. Running for nearly fifteen years, the Buckettes Group garnered their eponymous title from the warm buckets of water they'd pour on themselves for reprieve after a chilly morning swim. The group is primarily made up of women that prioritise connection through their shared love of our waters. The Buckettes Swimming Group meet each morning at Mona Vale Beach to join together for a swim and a quick chat which helps to foster a sense of connection between members. The bond between its members runs deep, demonstrated by the commemoration of one of the group's oldest members, Gloria, who, at ninety-years-young, sadly passed away. Gloria was fondly remembered in the ocean pool where she'd spent so many of her mornings with the Buckettes Swimming Group. I commend the Buckettes Swimming Group for their commitment to our community and their dedication to connection with one and other.

PANANIA PARK RUN 9TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills)—Congratulations to Panania parkrun on its 9th anniversary last month. Panania parkrun brings together people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities each Saturday morning at the Field of Dreams Reserve in Panania. It's a free community 5km event where participants can walk, jog, run, volunteer, or just go to watch. But parkrun is about more than just exercise - it's a welcoming community where new members are embraced, and everyone is acknowledged and cheered on. I would like to thank the hardworking volunteers, organisers, and participants who make Panania parkrun such a success. A special thanks to Directors Bree McGraw, Kathy Crispin, Brett Crispin, Stewart Watters, and Sharon Liang, along with the many volunteers who have made the last nine years such a joy for the community. Importantly, thank you to everyone who has participated over the years. Whether you've been walking, jogging, running, or volunteering, Panania parkrun wouldn't be possible without you. Congratulations, Panania parkrun, on nine fantastic years and here's to many more!

60 YEARS OF THE BEECROFT CHELTENHAM CIVIC TRUST

Ms MONICA TUDEHOPE (Epping)—The Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust [BCCT] has played a vital role in the community, and as its 60th anniversary approaches, I look forward to joining locals in celebrating this significant milestone. The BCCT is renowned for its dedication to preserving and enhancing the area's heritage, environment, and public spaces. Since its founding, the Trust has actively engaged residents, advocated for responsible development, and worked to protect the unique character of Beecroft and Cheltenham. Through community involvement and working with local authorities, the BCCT has helped shape a sustainable and vibrant environment that reflects the values and needs of its residents. Its ongoing efforts to preserve green spaces, promote local heritage, and ensure responsible development have been key to making the institution a voice for the community. As the BCCT marks this important anniversary, we recognize its commitment and the positive impact it has had on the community. I congratulate the BCCT and President Roderick Best for 60 years of service and look forward to their continued contributions.

EPHING FUTURE LEADERS - OATLANDS PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPTAINS

Ms MONICA TUDEHOPE (Epping)—I would like to recognise future leaders within the Epping electorate, particularly Aiden Amoroso and Phoebe Yeow from Oatlands Public School, who were recently elected as School Prime Ministers for 2025 – the highest student privilege at their school. Being a School Prime Minister and leader requires responsibility. As representatives of Oatlands Public School, both Aiden and Phoebe through their words and actions are asked to reflect the values of their school – Respect, Effort, Kindness, Resilience, and Creativity. Aiden and Phoebe now represent a school that is rich in heritage making it one of New South Wales' leading public schools. I commend Oatlands Public School's School Prime Ministers Aiden Amoroso and Phoebe Yeow for their commitment to their school community and wish them success in the future. I also commend the entire Oatlands Public School and Principal Kim Gould for fostering such opportunities.

EPHING FUTURE LEADERS - EPPING PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPTAINS

Ms MONICA TUDEHOPE (Epping)—I proudly acknowledge future leaders within the Epping electorate, particularly Lyndon Wang and Rabaani Chadha from Epping Public School, who were recently elected as School Captains for 2025 - the highest student privilege at their school. Lyndon and Rabaani represent a school that equips students to face the next step in their academic journeys and the challenges of a changing world. Through their leadership, they reflect the core values of their school – Opportunity, Excellence and Success. I commend Epping Public School's School Captains Lyndon Wang and Rabaani Chadha for their commitment to their school community and wish them success in the future. I also commend the entire Epping Public School and Principal Sarah Semler for fostering such opportunities.

DARBY MAGUIRE

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge inspiring fundraising efforts of Darby Maguire of Jannali who recently ran 900km to raise funds for mental health charity, Find Ya Feet. Darby left Coolangatta on 27 December, running 60km a day in over 40 degree temperatures and pushing through injuries, fatigue and mental strain to arrive in Cronulla, 15 days later on 10 January. Through these efforts he was able to raise over \$40,000 for Find Ya Feet – a charity close to his heart. Find Ya Feet provides school, sports and community-based workshops to give young people a platform to share their stories. Through the workshops participants develop the skills and tools to engage in conversations beyond 'how are you?' by championing vulnerability, speaking up and showing its okay to ask for help. This was not Darby's first charity run. In April 2024, Darby completed 7 half marathons in 7 days to raise \$5,000 for the Chumpy Pullin Foundation. It was this experience which became the spark and lit the flame of Darby's love for fundraising and pushing his limits. I commend Darby's incredible efforts in raising funds for Find Ya Feet and wish him well for the future.

EDNA CHUNG

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government)—I rise to acknowledge Edna Chung, a dedicated volunteer whose commitment to the Mascot Seniors Centre brings energy and vitality to its weekly table tennis sessions. Each Thursday, Edna takes it upon herself to set up, coordinate, and pack away the equipment—ensuring this valued activity runs smoothly and remains accessible to members of all abilities. Her efforts, in tandem with fellow volunteer Hung Leung, lighten the load for committee members and foster an environment where seniors are encouraged to stay active, engaged and connected. Table tennis is a low-impact sport that promotes coordination, fitness and fun—and thanks to Edna's initiative, many have taken up the paddle for the first time. I have had the pleasure of joining a game or two myself and can attest to her sharp reflexes and sharper sense of community. I sincerely thank Edna for her dedication, enthusiasm and service to the Mascot community.

HUNG LEUNG

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government)—I rise to recognise Hung Leung, a committed volunteer whose quiet leadership ensures the smooth delivery of weekly table tennis sessions at the Mascot Seniors Centre. Together with Edna Chung, Hung takes on the task of setting up, coordinating and packing away the activity each Thursday. Their initiative and reliability ensure that seniors can enjoy a healthy and social outlet in a welcoming environment, while also relieving the workload on committee members. Table tennis offers enormous benefits—physical, mental and social—and it is through the tireless efforts of individuals like Hung that such opportunities remain available and vibrant. I have, on occasion, joined a set or two myself, and can attest to both the competitive spirit and the goodwill that define these sessions. I thank Hung Leung for his invaluable contribution to community life and for his continued commitment to keeping Mascot active and engaged.

SERGEANT JED CROUCH ANDERSON

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government)—I rise to commend Sergeant Jed Crouch Anderson, a constituent of my electorate and one of six officers awarded the Police Area Commander's Unit Citation for their collective response to a violent robbery in Redfern on 7 September 2024. These citations were among several presented at the South Sydney Police Medals and Awards Ceremony held on 5 March 2025, recognising outstanding service across a range of incidents. Sergeant Anderson and his colleagues were acknowledged for their swift and professional handling of a deeply confronting situation wherein an elderly man was assaulted outside the Commonwealth Bank in Redfern, sustaining a head injury in the course of being robbed. Sergeant Anderson and his colleagues were among the first on scene, administering first-aid to the victim, securing the area and laying the groundwork for a dynamic and ultimately successful investigation. This commendation is a timely reminder that a day on the job can turn dangerous in an instant—and that our community is fortunate to have officers like Sergeant Anderson, who stand up and even place themselves in harm's way so that others can feel safe.

VALE PETER DE MEUR

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I was saddened to learn of the recent passing of a really great friend of mine Peter De Meur. Peter was a dedicated volunteer in our local community, committing much of his life to serving others. Peter was a member of the Lions Club for over 24 years, holding the positions of President and Treasurer at the St George Lions Club and, more recently, volunteering alongside the Oatley Lions team. During his time with the club, he made many significant contributions, including organising the Oatley Village Community Festival, the Annual Lions Charity Golf Day, and raising funds for various local organisations and charities. Peter also regularly volunteered with 'Gabbies Sewing Angels', knitting clothes for Australians escaping domestic violence and natural disasters. He certainly had a heart for helping others. I am honoured to have presented Peter with an Individual Volunteer Achievement Award at my 2024 St George Community Awards, recognising his outstanding service to the Oatley Lions. Peter will be deeply missed, and I extend my sincerest condolences to his wife Beverly, his family and friends.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JAMES!

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I rise today to wish my son, James, a very happy 11th birthday! It was wonderful to spend this past weekend celebrating his special day with my family. He is very smart, a loyal friend to his mates, incredibly kind and also, very cheeky. James has a huge passion for soccer and has been lucky enough to play games all across New South Wales this year. He is a very talented player, and who knows—maybe one day, we will see him running out for Sydney FC. Outside of soccer, James loves gaming with his mates and is quickly becoming a bit of a foodie—he has officially graduated from kids' meals to ordering steak and seafood when we go out for dinner! James, I am so proud of the man that you are becoming and the way you have continued to care for your mum and brother. I look forward to watching you grow, especially as you go off to high school next year. Happy Birthday James – we love you mate!

NSW STATE REPRESENTATIVE AWARD - ISABELLA VAINGALO

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—Talent, dedication, and sheer determination—Isabella Vaingalo from Austral Public School in my electorate has shown all of this and more at just 10 years old. On the 29th of November, Isabella competed in the 2024 School Sport Australia Track & Field, where she represented NSW in shot put for the NSWPSA Athletics Team. She delivered an outstanding performance, achieving a top throw of 11.85m in the 2kg shot put event. Her hard work and skill led her to an incredible first-place finish, securing gold for the 10-year-old girls representing NSW in the competition—a remarkable achievement. On the 10th of March, I had the honour of attending a school assembly at Austral Public School to present Isabella with the NSW State Representative Award. This is just the beginning for an athlete of her calibre, and I have no doubt we will see even greater accomplishments from her in the future. Congratulations, Isabella!

BUDDHIST BLESSING CEREMONY - LUNAR NEW YEAR 2025

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—On the 16th of February, I had the privilege of attending the annual Buddhist Blessing Ceremony to mark the 2025 Lunar New Year, hosted by the Chinese Associations of Greater Western Sydney. Held at the defining landmark of Cabramatta, the Friendship Arch at Freedom Plaza, Buddhist monks from various temples led prayers for good fortune within the community, making it a truly special occasion. The Friendship Arch stands as a symbol of resilience, honouring the migrants who found refuge in Australia and the local community that supported them. It is a tribute to the hard work and determination of those who helped shape Cabramatta—the Indo-Chinese shopkeepers, the bakers, the butchers, and seamstresses. This annual event, supported by the Fairfield City Council, the Mingyue Lay Temple, Timor Chinese Association NSW, and Phuoc Hue Temple was a beautiful reflection of the area's rich multicultural heritage. I am deeply grateful to all who made this celebration possible, and I look forward to next year's event to mark the year of the Horse!

TRANSURBAN GRANT PRESENTATION

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—On the 24th of February, I met with Transurban to congratulate Nurture National Animal Sanctuary on receiving a \$10,000 grant to support their animal safety initiative. This program focuses on educating the community about securely transporting livestock and horses on busy roads, reducing risks for both animals and drivers. It covers essential skills such as properly attaching trailers and floats, securing animals to prevent injury, and raising awareness through printed materials, an online resource hub, and community outreach. Nurture National Animal Sanctuary started off as a small Leppington farm in 2019, and has expanded to 30 acres, providing refuge for farm animals and Maremma sheepdogs. Their volunteers across Camden, Liverpool, Blacktown, and Campbelltown work diligently to improve animal welfare. This grant will help them continue their mission of education and advocacy, ensuring safer transport and better care for displaced animals across NSW.

ARCHIE MCDONALD JINDERA – MOTORCYCLE RACING

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge the achievements of Archie McDonald, a talented young individual from Jindera, NSW, who has achieved multiple titles in motorcycle racing. Archie's journey, which began in dirt track racing, has evolved into a successful career in the competitive world of road racing. His exceptional skills and determination have been shaped by the strong support of his family and our community. Archie's accomplishments are truly inspiring, highlighted by his impressive top 10 finish in the European R3 Cup and his remarkable ability to balance ambitions in both the Australian Supersport [ASBK] and FIM Junior GP Superstock 600 championships in Europe. Achieving success on an international level is a dream for many riders, yet Archie has already made it a reality. This year Archie was nominated as a finalist in the 2025 Joss Young Achiever Awards, he was unable to attend due to interstate commitments with his sport. Here's to you, Archie—your bright future is something we're all excited to cheer for, and I look forward to hearing more about your journey on the world stage!

MADDY O'BRIEN ALBURY HIGH SCHOOL – WOMEN IN STEM

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate Maddy O'Brien who's journey began at Albury High School, where she graduated in 2018. During her time in High School Maddy excelled in Design and Technology and Engineering studies and participated in the school's "Women in STEM" program. In 2024, Maddy graduated from University with First-Class Honours in Product Design Engineering, receiving the prestigious "Soullis Tavrou" Award for Excellence in Engineering, and topped her cohort with exceptional academic performance. Since graduation Maddy's skills and passion has led her to a thriving career at Invetech, a leading medical equipment manufacturer. Well done Maddy, on your accomplishments and thank you for being such an inspiring role model to others!

JARROD LYONS – LAVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate Jarrod Lyons, a dedicated teacher and cricket coach from Lavington Public School, who was recently honoured with the NSW Primary Schools Sports Association [PSSA] Service Award for Cricket. For over a decade, Mr Lyons' commitment has extended beyond the classroom, being an important part of Lavington Public School's sporting program. He has inspired many students to take up cricket and hone their skills. Jarrod selflessly volunteers his time to coach representative teams and organise local cricket events. Well done Jarrod, this is an outstanding achievement. Thank you for your dedication to youth development, and for promoting sport in our community.

MULWAREE HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise to recognise Mulwaree High School. I am incredibly proud of the work that MHS has done to cement the school as one of the most improved for HSC in 2024, achieving an extraordinary increase percentage points for Band 4, 5, and 6 results. I have personally witnessed the teacher's dedication at Mulwaree for many years. They are motivators, champions of their students and constantly working to unlock student's potential - ensuring that every student is given the tools to succeed in their own way. Under the leadership of Principal Sally Curry, Mulwaree High has fostered a community culture of excellence, resilience, and ambition. This commitment includes high standards, innovative teaching systems, and exceptional support from leadership, resulting in this phenomenal improvement for Mulwaree High School. This success is also a reflection of the broader school community, including students, parents, and non-teaching staff who, together, have created an environment where success flourishes. Mulwaree High School is proof that when dedicated educators are empowered with strong leadership and a shared vision, extraordinary results follow. Congratulations to Mulwaree High School on this well-deserved recognition. I am, alongside the wider Goulburn community, extremely proud.
