

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 19 November 2025

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[Notices of motions given.]

Bills

24-HOUR ECONOMY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (VIBRANCY REFORMS) BILL 2025

Second Reading Speech

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast) (10:18): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025 to this House. The Government is working to make New South Wales a world-class night-life destination for locals and visitors alike, with a vibrant, inclusive and lively 24-hour economy. This legislation builds on the Government's commitment to restoring vibrancy to the New South Wales night-time economy, building on our significant reforms from 2023 and 2024. The bill is about further bolstering the State's dynamic and vital night-time industry, supporting more live music across the State, improving patron and staff safety, and removing outdated conditions and red tape. Our reforms in 2023 and 2024 have unquestionably benefited the State. The Government has made it easier and cheaper for councils and businesses to establish vibrant precincts and support local events. Live music incentives have given participating venues licence fee reductions and additional trading hours, and encouraged venues across New South Wales to support local talent.

There are currently close to 500 registered live music venues across New South Wales. Our sensible sound management framework has removed red tape and reduced unreasonable noise complaints that prevented venues from putting on live music. The 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025 is the next step in restoring vibrancy to the New South Wales hospitality industry. These reforms that we have developed aim to improve patron and staff safety, with a commonsense approach to managing risk; increase flexibility and diversify business options; streamline processes to remove outdated licence conditions and red tape on businesses; further foster New South Wales as an environment where live music thrives; and enhance the benefits of celebrating significant events in regional areas.

Our night-time economy must be safe for all people, regardless of age, gender and cultural background. This bill includes initiatives focused on the safety and protection of staff and patrons alike. These initiatives aim to address harmful behaviour by strengthening regulatory powers at a venue level and an individual level. Strengthening powers to address harm at both levels is important, because creating a culture of safety first at venues across the State requires all individuals who work in the sector to understand what is acceptable—including, in serious cases, removing individuals from the environment if they are deemed a risk. The Government wants to ensure licensed venues are run responsibly and provide a safe environment for patrons.

The bill introduces new provisions creating additional standards to revoke an individual's responsible service of alcohol [RSA] competency card when a person's continued employment in a licensed setting would create a risk of harm to customers, colleagues and the community. These allowances ensure that individuals can be removed from the hospitality industry if they have committed a prescribed sexual offence, drink-spiking offence or other relevant offence that has the potential to create significant harm to another person on a licensed premises. These are important provisions that reflect the need for harm-minimisation measures within the hospitality industry.

The bill will also expand the grounds under which a disciplinary complaint can be made against a licensee. Under amendments to section 139 of the Liquor Act 2007, complaints can be made where a licensee has failed to prevent or address a significant risk to the safety of employees of a licensed premises. This reflects the licensee's responsibility to create a safe working environment for all employees. Through these initiatives, we are working

to foster a safe and open workplace culture across the State's hospitality and entertainment industry, ensuring individuals and businesses understand their shared responsibility to maintain an inclusive and safe environment. Under these proposed changes, more will be done to ensure patron safety within our night-time economy.

The bill amends section 73 of the Liquor Act to introduce an exemption for the licensee or their staff to allow an intoxicated person to remain at a licensed premises under limited and defined circumstances. Strict criteria will ensure that this provision may be used only where the licensee or staff reasonably believe that the person is intoxicated and requires medical assistance, and/or transport options are actively being sought for the patron away from the venue. These limited-circumstance exemptions will ensure that venues can fulfil their duty of care responsibilities to patrons without conflicting with their obligation to remove an intoxicated person immediately, ensuring patron welfare is prioritised.

Under these changes, if a licensee elects to keep the intoxicated person on their premises for safety reasons, the person must be actively monitored, must not be sold or allowed to consume any more liquor, and must not enter the gaming room if the venue has one. In addition, the change will be voluntary for premises. If a premises is not able or does not wish to keep an intoxicated person on their premises for safety reasons, they are not required to do so. Under the existing provisions of the Liquor Act, a licensee may choose to remove an intoxicated person from their premises at any time. This bill does not change that. Overall, the change is an important one that brings New South Wales in line with other jurisdictions and allows venues the discretion to prioritise patient safety and wellbeing while still meeting their obligations for the responsible service of alcohol.

Another key reform contained in the bill aims to further enhance the State's live music sector, particularly in regional and rural areas. Following the passage of the bill, an amending regulation will make amendments to the eligibility requirements to the live music venues incentives scheme to make it easier for venues in regional areas to meet the criteria and access the scheme's benefits. These changes will include removing the need for a regional live music venue to have a dedicated space for live music performances, and replacing it with a space that is predominantly or frequently used, clearing an unnecessary hurdle to smaller regional venues accessing these incentives.

An option for regional venues to satisfy extended trading eligibility on an annual basis, as opposed to weekly or monthly, will also be introduced. This change reflects the fact that some regional venues operate seasonally, with peaks in patronage during summer or winter months. Under other changes to be made, live music venues statewide will be able to start live music performances at 6.00 p.m. rather than 8.00 p.m. on weekdays and 12 noon on weekends. The Government recognises the differences in metropolitan and regional consumer habits, preferences and accessibility. These amendments reflect those differences and allow regional venues with early evening peak periods to participate in the incentives scheme, supporting local communities and venues to make decisions about how live music performance and entertainment works best for their regions.

Finally, in regard to live music, I am pleased that the crossbench successfully moved an amendment to the bill in the other place to clarify that switching off conditions of development consent that prohibit live entertainment in hotels, clubs and small bars will also extend to those venue types located within State significant developments. The bill includes an amendment to the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007 to expand the eligibility of members to the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority board, which will further the body's representation from the live music, night-time economy and hospitality industry. Under that enhanced criteria, the board will be better attuned to the issues facing those sectors and further able to meet the requirements set out in the objectives of the Liquor Act.

These changes will ensure the board contains expertise and experience in the responsible operation of licensed venues or music festivals; law enforcement, including financial crime; harm minimisation; and accounting or corporate governance. All strict probity and conflict of interest processes are retained, while increasing the board's industry knowledge and understanding of key challenges facing the sector—in particular, the need to ensure harm minimisation in liquor and gaming licensing decisions. In addition to our support of live music, this bill seeks to streamline the process for removing outdated licence conditions on venues that have an adverse impact on late-night trading activities and live music. A complicated system can mean many licensees do not seek a review of their licence conditions, even when these conditions were applied under previous management or still exist after issues have been addressed.

The bill establishes a process for the automatic removal of noise and amenity conditions imposed more than three years ago. These conditions include those that prohibit or restrict live music or impose a sound limit. Importantly, a new streamlined power will be created for Liquor and Gaming NSW to reimpose a noise or amenity condition should there be a need to do so. Liquor and Gaming NSW will have up to three years from the date of a condition's removal to reimpose it. This time frame allows sufficient opportunity to monitor any emerging impacts and conduct a full compliance assessment. After this period, noise conditions may only be imposed by Liquor and Gaming NSW via the existing mechanisms in the Liquor Act.

The bill also establishes a process to allow Liquor and Gaming NSW to proactively review conditions that restrict the use of glassware after a certain time. Under the proposal, Liquor and Gaming NSW may remove or vary a condition where it is determined it would not lead to an increased risk of alcohol-related harm after consultation with New South Wales police. For certain other conditions impacting night-time business activity, the reforms will establish a streamlined application pathway for licensees to have an existing condition revoked or varied, at no cost to the applicant. These conditions include conditions that restrict the type of drinks that can be sold or supplied on the premises, and that mandate the presence of security personnel in the venue.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): It being 10.30 a.m., in accordance with the resolution of the House of 15 October 2025, debate is interrupted to allow the House to proceed with the deferred division on the question that the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025 be considered an urgent bill. I set down the resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour.

LAW ENFORCEMENT (POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES) AMENDMENT (PLACES OF WORSHIP) BILL 2025

Second Reading Speech

Debate resumed from 18 November 2025.

[Deferred division]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Order! The House will now proceed with the deferred division on the question: That this bill be considered an urgent bill. There being fewer than five members against the question, the question is resolved in the affirmative. I direct that the names of those members be recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

Noes, 3

Ms J. Leong

Ms K. Shetty

Ms T. Smith

Declaration of urgency agreed to.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (10:37): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide that:

- (1) On Thursday 20 November 2025, in the time immediately following the giving of general business notices of motions up to the commencement of question time and its associated routine of business and from 1.30 p.m. until 2.30 p.m., precedence be given to the introduction of the following private members' bills:
 - (a) Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment (Public Assemblies) Bill 2025, in the carriage of the member for Wahroonga;
 - (b) Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Bushfire Protection) Bill 2025, in the carriage of the member for Wakehurst;
 - (c) Summary Offences Amendment (Police Memorial Offences) Bill 2025, in the carriage of the member for Barwon; and
 - (d) Road Transport Amendment (Medicinal Cannabis) Bill 2025, in the carriage of the member for Sydney.
- (2) The lapsing dates of the following private members' bills be extended to 26 March 2026:
 - (a) Road Legislation Amendment (E-Bike Regulation) Bill 2025, in the carriage of the member for Pittwater;
 - (b) Water Management Amendment (Register of State and Commonwealth Water Access Licences) Bill 2025, in the carriage of the member for Murray; and
 - (c) Human Rights Bill 2025, in the carriage of the member for Newtown.

As members know, the crossbench is made up of busy legislators. The motion facilitates us to be able to introduce our bills this week and debate them next year. It also allows for the Manager of Opposition Business to continue the introduction of his bill.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (10:38): The Government agrees with the proposal of the member for Sydney. I indicate that tomorrow the second reading speech from the member for Wahroonga has priority. If there is any time between then and question time, that time can be utilised. The luncheon adjournment can be utilised for second reading speeches, which is in the middle of Christmas

felicitations. That is the only period that is available tomorrow. The member for Sydney anticipates that those second reading speeches will be short and will be completed in that limited period. On that basis, the Government concurs with the motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Bills

24-HOUR ECONOMY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (VIBRANCY REFORMS) BILL 2025

Second Reading Speech

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast) (10:40): Older conditions such as those are not always a current reflection of the venue's operation or risk profile and, when unduly imposed, limit the late-night trading capabilities of licensed venues. Applying a streamlined approach to the removal of outdated conditions will allow us to apply a commonsense approach to building a vibrant, safe and inclusive night-time economy, and recognises that venues and communities can change over time. Pleasingly, amendments in the other place remedy minor drafting errors that unintentionally narrowed the scope of the secretary's existing powers to vary or revoke certain licence conditions imposed by the authority. The amendments, which were supported by the Government, address that issue by ensuring the secretary's powers are retained.

The bill also seeks to allow expiry dates to be attached to future conditions imposed on liquor licences, as well as eligibility criteria that must be met for the condition to expire. Under the current framework, licence conditions generally remain in force until the licensee seeks to have them removed, even if the condition was imposed on a previous licensee or the venue has worked to resolve the issues that led to the condition's imposition. The changes introduce a commonsense regulatory approach, ensuring that licence conditions remain in place only where circumstances warrant them. At the same time, venues will know exactly what specific improvements are required to be made to have a condition removed from their licence. Expiry dates will remove red-tape burdens for venues and provide a clear pathway for improvement. This approach not only supports venues in understanding exactly what is required of them but also helps ensure they are operated to a consistently high standard, balancing regulatory flexibility with community expectations.

Administrative amendments will also be made to the Liquor Act to increase operating and trading hour flexibility for venues. The bill amends the Liquor Act to allow restaurants and small bars to sell takeaway liquor in unsealed containers, where they are already authorised to sell takeaway liquor. The change will support outdoor dining and encourage alfresco activation in legally permissible areas—for example, in outdoor public dining spaces such as plazas or alfresco areas shared by restaurants and businesses. No change is proposed to the existing settings around legally permissible areas for the consumption of alcohol.

In addition, the temporary boundary change framework will be updated to allow for temporary indoor boundary changes with NSW Police Force consultation. This will support venues seeking to extend their indoor footprint for an event, and neighbouring venues that wish to hold joint events under one licence. The bill will enable greater flexibility for venues to participate in late-night events by removing the statutory midnight restriction for footpaths and roads, with trading hours instead determined by local councils. It will also remove the application fee to convert a temporary boundary change approval to a permanent one.

More broadly, the bill seeks to further modernise the Liquor Act so that it better reflects contemporary consumer habits and expectations, supporting a more vibrant and accessible hospitality sector. The bill removes the exclusion that restricts venues offering entertainment primarily through amusement machines like pinball, pool tables and poker games from holding an on-premises licence. The restriction on venues from holding such a licence is outdated and unduly restrictive. Removing it will reduce unnecessary barriers and support a more diverse range of entertainment options across our State's night-time economy. Finally, the bill strengthens our approach to supporting events of regional, State and national significance in New South Wales. It amends section 13 of the Liquor Act to allow for extended trading to be granted the day prior to a special event. The change will be particularly significant for multi-day regional events, ensuring regions can more fully benefit from the tourism, vibrancy and additional revenue those events can attract.

The Government has made a commitment to restoring our night-life across New South Wales and supporting a flourishing 24-hour economy. The bill furthers that commitment to vibrancy with reforms focused on increasing flexibility and diversifying business options for venues, streamlining the process to remove outdated

restrictions and red tape on businesses, further supporting our live music industry and improving patron and staff safety. The Government will continue to work with peak bodies including Local Government NSW, the Australian Hotels Association NSW, ClubsNSW and the Night Time Industries Association, as well as licensees and across key agencies, to help support both take-up of the opportunities and understanding of what they mean for councils, businesses and the general community.

I acknowledge the large amount of work that has gone on across the many agencies that have collaborated to make the bill possible. I thank the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport, particularly the Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner, Sound NSW, and Liquor and Gaming NSW; the Cabinet Office; the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure; the Environment Protection Authority; the Office of Local Government; the NSW Police Force; NSW Health; Transport for NSW; and the Department of Customer Service.

Additionally, I thank the Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, Minister Graham, and my ministerial colleagues across the various agencies who have worked very hard to make this complex reform package happen. Furthermore, I thank the various industry bodies, health groups, local councils and venues who have been part of the consultation process to ensure we have a regulatory framework and reform package that works best for all. I recognise the reforms have had supporters from across the Chamber and I acknowledge the shadow Minister. They are complex reforms but I am very hopeful that they will get the support of the Parliament. It would be a fantastic sign to give our venues and sector a kickstart as we head into the summer and holiday season. I commend the bill to the House.

Second Reading Debate

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (10:47): I contribute to debate on the Government's 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025. In keeping with the Opposition's longstanding bipartisan support of the night-time economy, I affirm its support of the bill. It is the third tranche of vibrancy reforms that have come before Parliament. The Coalition has supported each tranche, recognising the economic and cultural importance of the New South Wales night-time economy. The measures include providing for patron and staff safety by permitting an intoxicated person to remain on licensed premises in limited and defined circumstances, such as a patron needing medical assistance or awaiting transport options home, which means venues are not forced to choose between keeping patrons safe and avoiding legal issues; applying an automatic removal of noise and amenity conditions imposed more than three years ago; increasing operating and trading hour flexibility by allowing extended trading not only for the day of the event but also for up to 24 hours prior; and supporting live music by allowing live music venues to start live music earlier.

The former Coalition Government worked hard to turn the tide of the State's night-time economy, working closely with industry representatives like the Australian Hotels Association, ClubsNSW and Leagues Clubs Australia, as well as restaurant and catering businesses, local councils and other night-time organisations to support them through the COVID pandemic towards a new era of success. The Opposition is proud to have instituted reforms such as the 24-hour Economy Commissioner and special activation precincts, reforms that the Labor Government's vibrancy reforms build on. I thank the Hon. John Graham in the upper House for continuing to pursue those reforms, as well as the Minister in the lower House, who is in the Chamber.

The bipartisan approach to these reforms has led to good outcomes for the State's night-time economy. Again, I recognise the Minister and his staff for their consultative approach to these reforms. I also acknowledge the Hon. Jacqui Munro in the other place, whose passion and history as an advocate for the night-time economy has been valuable in strengthening these reforms. The Opposition has been committed to ensuring that the benefits of vibrancy are shared among all New South Wales communities, and not held behind the sandstone curtain in Sydney. Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong do not stand for New South Wales—it is much broader than that. Previously, the Opposition moved amendments to tranches of vibrancy reforms to ensure that regional New South Wales is not forgotten. I am pleased to note that this bill recognises the unique and individual settings of the hospitality sector in regional New South Wales.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): It being 10.50 a.m., debate is interrupted for question time and the routine of business. I set down resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour. I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 11.00 a.m.

Members

MEMBER FOR CANTERBURY

The SPEAKER: On an important matter for the House, I understand that it is the birthday of the member for Canterbury. Happy birthday, member for Canterbury—who is also known as Sophie. Welcome, old mate.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: Before I acknowledge a significant number of guests specifically, I generally acknowledge all the guests who have joined us in the Speaker's gallery and the Cooper gallery for question time in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. I hope that you find it a beneficial experience. I extend a very warm welcome to the Italian nonnas and nonnos from the Wellbeing Group in Warrawong, guests of the member for Wollongong. I also welcome Michael Griffin, AM, Brigadier Retired, father of the member for Manly. I welcome to the Chamber Grace Kennedy, who recently won a bronze medal at the International Surfing Association Para Surfing World Championships; and her trainer, James Gissing; along with Nikki Kennedy and Keira Buckpitt, guests of the member for South Coast. Grace is sitting behind the Speaker's chair to my left. Grace, welcome to the Legislative Assembly.

Ms Liesl Tesch: We're going to fix the Chamber eventually, don't you worry.

The SPEAKER: The member for Gosford will come to order until she has a solution to put forward. I welcome students from Barker College, Tangara School for Girls, Asquith Girls High School, Asquith Boys High School, Galston High School, Cherrybrook Technology High School, Pacific Hills Christian School, Northholm Grammar School and Redfield College, guests of the member for Hornsby. I think I saw them in the Chamber earlier for the opening of the day's proceedings. I acknowledge students from Euabalong West Public School, guests of the member for Barwon. I also acknowledge Odette Murry, a student from Hunter Valley Grammar School, guest of the member for Maitland. I welcome members of the Liverpool Youth Action Group, guests of the member for Liverpool, whom I had the pleasure of meeting earlier today.

I acknowledge students and teachers from Malek Fahd Islamic School Beaumont Hills Campus. I also acknowledge students from Kingswood High School, guests of the member for Penrith. I welcome Jan Mapledoram, Eva Marks, and Luke and Angus Braund, guests of the member for Lane Cove. I also welcome Curl Curl North Public School senior leadership team candidates Leo, Patrick and Sam, guests of the member for Wakehurst. I acknowledge David Griez, guest of the member for Davidson. Lastly, I welcome to the Chamber the captain and members of the Morisset brigade 383 of Fire and Rescue NSW, along with their family members, guests of the member for Lake Macquarie.

*Announcements***UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE**

The SPEAKER (11:08): I inform the House that the University of Newcastle is celebrating its sixtieth anniversary in Parliament today. The university will provide a light lunch in the Fountain Court after question time. The event will showcase a small exhibition of programs and projects driving innovation in health, education, science and technology. I encourage members to attend, if possible, to meet and greet university staff and students and enjoy some light refreshments.

RESERVE SITTING DAY

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the resolution of the House on 18 November 2025, I inform members that the committee reports take-note debate will proceed today. If the House has not completed consideration of Government business today, the House will sit on Friday 21 November 2025 to consider Government business only.

*Question Time***PARLIAMENT HOUSE DEMONSTRATION**

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (11:12): My question is directed to the Attorney General. Has the Attorney General requested the Director of Public Prosecutions to consult with him on whether any prosecutions could or should be laid arising out of the 8 November neo-Nazi rally outside Parliament House?

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (11:12): The direct answer is that I have not consulted with the Director of Public Prosecutions directly, and I am not sure it would be appropriate for me to do so. In the first instance, we have all universally condemned the conduct that was displayed outside Parliament House on that day. I think there has been an acknowledgment by the police, who would prosecute those matters in the first instance, that they were in some doubt about whether the existing laws adequately covered the behaviour that we saw.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I could hardly be more relevant.

The SPEAKER: That is my call. I will hear the point of order from the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Mark Speakman: The Attorney General said that he was not sure whether it was appropriate. He apparently is not aware that he has the power under section 25 to consult the DPP.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will resume seat. There is no point of order. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time. The Attorney General has been completely relevant. He will continue his answer.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: The question was whether I have consulted with the DPP. Have I? No. So I answered that directly. These types of matters are investigated at first instance by the police. They are, I remind the former Attorney General, summary offences so the prosecutions lie with the police unless and until there is some opportunity for something to be tried as an indictable offence. As we know in relation to matters such as these, the police do not always lay charges on the day. There are occasions when they garner the necessary evidence, investigate, get legal advice and then work out whether they wish to prosecute at a later time. I have not had briefings from the police about whether they are going to do that. It is not appropriate for Attorneys General of the day to poke their noses into either police investigations or DPP investigations.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: The Leader of the Opposition should know that better than anyone. I have concluded my answer.

The SPEAKER: The Attorney General has concluded his answer. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat.

Mr Mark Speakman: He doesn't know what powers he has.

The SPEAKER: I give the Leader of the Opposition a lot of leeway, but that is going too far.

ENERGY POLICY

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (11:15): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the importance of the energy road map towards net zero?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:15): I thank the member for Coogee for her question. I report to the House that in the 18 months before March 2023 just 19 renewable energy projects were approved. Since coming to office post-March 2023, the Government has given approval for 40 generation and storage projects, eight onshore wind farms, 14 large-scale solar farms and 16 energy security systems. The statistics are important. These projects will get us two-thirds of the way to our 2030 renewable energy generation goal and 40 per cent of the way to our 2030 long-duration storage goal. Since the election, New South Wales has increased the amount of renewable energy capacity in operation—so not just approved but built and in operation—by almost 70 per cent. That is the equivalent of the entire coal-fired power that Eraring Power Station generates. That is the equivalent of Eraring in just the past two years, with so much more to go.

The reality of energy transition is that we do not have a minute to lose. We know that Eraring, Bayswater and Vales Point power stations will close down by 2032 and 2033, and we need to replace that electricity generation in the east coast energy grid for the sake of jobs and to put downward pressure on prices so that scarcity does not drive power prices up for consumers. That is particularly important in a big industrial State like New South Wales. I put those points in contrast to the comments of leading members of the National Party, who variously called for us to slow down the transition in no uncertain terms. Yesterday in debate the member for Upper Hunter said, "We need to slow down the rollout of renewable energy projects and get it right. We need to learn how to fix this so we can take stock." In February 2024—a long time ago and not even part of the recent debate—he said, "The Federal and State governments are talking about speeding up renewable energy projects. That is something I will be fighting all the way, because the last thing I want to see is these projects sped up."

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. I call the member for Upper Hunter to order for the first time.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The member for Upper Hunter went on to say in August 2025, "Too many of them are speculative, coming through the system too fast." The member for Tamworth said, "I have called for a moratorium on new renewable energy projects." He said a number of times, "Slow it down."

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: In February 2025 the member for Bathurst joined in, saying, "These projects are destroying lifestyles in regional communities. This industrial monstrosity needs to slow down." They are telling us to slow down.

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

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: I seek further information about the energy road map.

The SPEAKER: An additional two minutes is granted.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: This is in contrast to the member for Manly. Not that long ago, in September last year, he said, "The planning approvals framework for new renewable energy projects is notoriously slow. It is having a big impact on the ability to get power into the grid. We need to make it faster." Members opposite are variously saying "too slow", "slow it down" and "not fast enough"! Similarly, the member for North Shore said in a motion yesterday that we were behind our targets and need to speed up. The Liberal Party speeds up renewable energy projects but the National Party slows down renewable energy projects. Luckily, we have the member for Coffs Harbour as the new Leader of The Nationals to sort all of this out. He was asked by a journalist about net zero just yesterday, "Are you going to split, between now and the election, between the Liberals and The Nationals?"

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The member for Coffs Harbour said, "Net zero is obviously a very small part of the energy mix. It's a very small part of the conversation. Most people on the street would not even know what you're talking about." Someone had better tell Greta Thunberg or Andrew Hastie or Barnaby Joyce or anyone else who is talking about energy in New South Wales. The public might be tired of this, but they are not stupid, and the first decision of the Leader of the National Party was to split the Coalition. So the warning goes out to the voters of New South Wales: If you elect this lot in March 2027, you will have a party that is both for and against net zero. It is a recipe for chaos.

The SPEAKER: We will make that the hot mess question for the day. No more.

REGIONAL YOUTH CRIME

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands) (11:20): My question is directed to the Attorney General. On doli incapax, his legislation implements a panel recommendation to reflect the current case law. With youth crime rampant in many parts of regional New South Wales, can he point to a single case where his legislation would produce a different outcome?

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (11:20): If the member for Northern Tablelands wants to make that contribution during debate, he is welcome to do so. We have consulted far and wide. Youth crime is incredibly complex. We are dealing not only with people who infuriate the community and engage in dangerous behaviour but also a wide range of young people from varied backgrounds—

Mr Paul Toole: With machetes and knives.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Yes, some of them do have them.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: You were the former Minister who ran down the Police Force—

The SPEAKER: The Attorney General will direct his remarks through the Chair. I call the member for Bathurst to order for the first time.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I note the interjection of the member for Bathurst. Nothing encourages, permits, allows or facilitates crime more than running the Police Force down, and that is what happened on his watch. The police were leaving in droves, they were underpaid and overworked, their morale was shattered, and it has taken this Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism and this Premier to rebuild it.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129, direct relevance. The Attorney General was asked about examples. If he does not have any examples where it makes any difference, he should sit down.

The SPEAKER: The Attorney General is not being directly relevant. I ask him to be directly relevant.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I will tell you what I do not have any examples of, Mr Speaker, and that is legislative efforts by the mob opposite when they were in government to drive crime down. There was hardly a comment in this place about youth crime from a National Party member when they were in government because

they chose to stay schtum about it. Then, all of a sudden, the Government flips and overnight they would have us believe youth crime in the regions is a new phenomenon. I stood in a hallway in Moree—

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

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

Mr Mark Speakman: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. Mr Speaker, the Attorney General is flouting your ruling. He was asked for one example, and he has not been able to give a single example of where his legislation makes a difference.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition is correct. The Attorney General has not been directly relevant. He will assist the Chair by being directly relevant.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I will be directly relevant now. The question asked by the former Attorney General is nonsensical, and he knows it. I stood in a hallway in Moree about six weeks ago and listened to the chief executive—

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order—

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

Mr Mark Speakman: The Attorney General obviously does not intend to answer this question. He is now referring to a previous question. Therefore, he is not being directly relevant.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition can draw his inference from the answer. The time for the answer has expired.

DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (11:23): My question is addressed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. Will the Minister please update the House on work being undertaken by the NSW Police Force to address domestic and family violence in New South Wales?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (11:24): I thank the member for Granville for her question. Domestic and family violence is a scourge on our society—a silent epidemic that reaches into every single community. Last year police responded to more than 150,000 domestic and family violence related calls for assistance. That is one every three minutes. We understand the gravity of the situation and the urgency with which we must address this challenge. This Government and the NSW Police Force are up to the challenge. Police recently completed Amarok XII, an operation that I know this House is intimately familiar with. It is the flagship domestic and family violence operation targeting the State's most dangerous offenders.

Police arrested and charged more than 750 people, executed more than 270 arrest warrants and laid over 1,600 charges. There were over 13,000 apprehended domestic violence order compliance checks and over 1,400 bail compliance checks. Very worryingly, 390 breaches were identified. Police seized more than 80 firearms and 30 other weapons, significantly disrupting these high-risk domestic violence offenders—all within just four days. Over the course of the year, Amarok XII has arrested more than 2,800 people, laid more than 6,100 charges and seized over 430 weapons. These latest results show that the New South Wales police are committed to pursuing the State's worst domestic violence offenders. It sends a powerful message that violence will not be tolerated.

Police will not rest when it comes to domestic and family violence. Domestic violence is not just a private tragedy; it is a social issue. Just like youth crime and organised crime, it tragically reaches into every corner of our community. Once again, it is our police who stand on the front line of that reality. This is not a job where you simply turn up, sit at a desk, tap away at a keyboard and clock off at five. No, this is work that demands vigilance around the clock—and people's lives depend on it. You do not have to look much further than the numbers from the weekend to see the diligent work that police are doing. But if you did look further, you would find a million other ways they are addressing domestic violence. [*Extension of time*]

Police know this, which is why, as of June, tens of thousands of police officers have completed mandatory domestic and family violence coercive control training. Recent Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research statistics into coercive control show that this training is starting to take effect. Police are sharper, more alert to the signs and better equipped to step in. Police are not just turning up, ticking a box and moving on. They are showing up with sensitivity, and it is making a difference. In 2023 the New South Wales police launched the Empower You

app, and it has been downloaded more than 34,000 times. This is not just about putting perpetrators behind bars; it is about ensuring that victims have the power to work with police to bring these violent, disgusting perpetrators to justice.

We know that domestic violence has to be tackled using every tool imaginable. This includes the work of my colleague the member for Charlestown, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. The Government recently announced an additional \$245.6 million investment in domestic and family violence services, including \$48 million to expand the Staying Home Leaving Violence program and \$48.1 million for specialist workers for children in refuges. We know there is more to do in this space, and we are committed to doing it. We are giving police the resources they need to tackle this. I am sure the House will agree that the weekend's numbers show they will stop at nothing to achieve this. I say to the NSW Police Force, thank you.

PORTSIDE SKATE PARK

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater) (11:29): My question is directed to the Minister for Lands and Property. Portside DIY is a hidden subcultural icon loved by local skaters, Pittwater locals and the wider, even international, skateboarding community. It has been frequented and invested in by skaters for over 20 years. Earlier this year it was locked up, and there are fears it will be demolished. Will the Minister commit that it will not be, and will he consider a Crown Lands manager so that it can continue as a critically significant skateboarding venue?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, Minister for Sport, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism) (11:29): I thank the member for Pittwater for her question. I acknowledge that the member for Pittwater and the member for Wakehurst keep my office busy with requests about local matters. They are the two greatest advocates for the northern beaches.

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

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I thank the member for bringing the issue of the unofficial Portside skate park at Newport to my attention. I can confirm that the Portside skate park is located on Crown land, and the much-loved and much-used facility has been operating for approximately 15 years. In March 2025 Northern Beaches Council informed the department of unauthorised works occurring at the site. As due diligence, Crown Lands began investigations on the site. I can confirm to the member that no demolition, removal or construction works will be undertaken at Portside until further management options for the site are confirmed.

I can confirm also that Crown Lands is currently procuring a condition assessment report. A condition assessment, quantity survey and assessment against skatepark design and standards will be undertaken to determine whether the skateboarding infrastructure is safe and can be retained, as well as any associated costs with bringing it up to a safe standard. The department will consult with Northern Beaches Council as part of that assessment process, with further options for the management of the site to be informed by the condition assessment. I thank the member for Pittwater for her advocacy for her community. My priority remains getting greater utilisation of Crown land and supporting recreation where it can be responsibly managed. I encourage the skating community to engage with its fantastic local member so that we can work together on future options for this site.

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

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (11:32): My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Will the Minister update the House on the Minns Labor Government's Renewable Energy Planning Framework and the local benefits that it has secured for regional communities?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (11:32): I thank the member for South Coast for her question. There is a great rezoning proposal for the Nowra CBD and the riverfront today. She has done excellent work in advocating for that. But today she is concentrating on renewable energy and the benefits to regional communities. Across this State, a once-in-a-generation transformation of the energy system is underway. When we came to government in 2023, we inherited a fleet of ageing coal-fired power stations and a privatised transmission network. Energy infrastructure built by forward-looking governments of the past was only sold off by members opposite when they were in power.

But, in fairness to all members opposite, they did have the concepts of a plan in 2020 when they passed and kicked off the Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act. That forward-looking, multi-partisan legislation proposed five renewable energy zones across regional New South Wales. Originally it was three. The Minister for the Hunter and I convinced the government of the day, the members opposite, renewable energy supporters

one and all, that the Illawarra and the Hunter should be included because they are the powerhouses of our industrial infrastructure. We also knew how important it was that every part of our State play its role in delivering that renewable energy future.

That is why it was so important that the whole Parliament, including The Greens, Labor, Liberals and The Nationals, came together to support the Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act. That is quite a unity ticket. The Liberals and The Nationals were voting together on renewable energy. Newer members of this House would not have thought it was possible. They have seen only the exact opposite. But there was a day when it was true. There was a time of unity in the Coalition.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for North Shore rises on a point of order.

Ms Felicity Wilson: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. I query whether the Minister is aware that the Government has declared only two renewable energy zones and has had a lack of new projects.

The SPEAKER: The member knows that is not a point of order. She will resume her seat. I call the member for North Shore to order for the first time.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: I welcome the time-wasting point of order. It pointed to that division we are talking about here. In fact, member for North Shore, you declared all five renewable energy zones.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will direct his remarks through the Chair.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: One was done just before the last election. The best efforts of the Coalition Government of that time to vote together and be on that unity ticket lasted right up until the public interest debate yesterday. Despite the best efforts of members opposite to undo years of policy certainty, we are getting on with the job of delivering that renewable energy plan for the future. But before we introduced the Renewable Energy Planning Framework last year, there were no clear guidelines for how any benefits would be directed to the regional communities hosting the infrastructure. Regional communities under members opposite were missing out. We have fixed that. We have addressed that problem. [*Extension of time*]

A year after we introduced the Renewable Energy Planning Framework, more than \$133 million worth of community benefits have been secured for regional New South Wales, off the back of renewable energy projects. That is in only the first 12 months. What sorts of benefits are these projects delivering? The owners of Yanco Delta Windfarm, which is in the Murrumbidgee Council area, will pay a levy of \$5 million to the council for the construction of a much-needed medical facility in Jerilderie. Oxley Solar Farm in Armidale will leverage its access to corporate rates to buy steel components and solar panels on behalf of the local council to help to deliver electric vehicle charging stations.

Silver City Energy Storage System in Broken Hill is funding the restoration of important heritage projects and delivering vital telecommunications projects. These are practical investments in regional communities, which were overlooked and ignored by members opposite when those communities were asking for them. But now, as a result of that renewable energy infrastructure and the changes we have introduced in the planning system, those benefits are being delivered and shared. After the Coalition split on net zero yesterday, the Opposition needs to explain to the people of New South Wales, the students in the gallery who are worried about their future and the nonnas from Warrawong who are worried about their grandchildren's future exactly where it stands when it comes to renewable energy.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, direct relevance. The question was about the Government's framework. The Minister should address why the Government is not meeting its own targets.

The SPEAKER: The Minister is being directly relevant. It took him a while to get there, but he certainly has been. The Minister will continue his answer.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: While members opposite are trying to have it both ways on net zero, being for it and against it at the same time, it is time they explained to the people of New South Wales exactly what they stand for. The Liberals sided with Labor yesterday to support net zero, while The Nationals voted to scrap the targets and slow down renewable energy projects and called for a moratorium on renewable energy projects. We are putting a renewable energy zone in Wollongong. We are proud of it.

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga calling out "time" does not assist proceedings in the House. I call the member for Wahroonga to order for the first time.

RISING TIDE PEOPLE'S BLOCKADE

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (11:38): My question is directed to the Minister for the Hunter. In 2023 the Minister applauded people for joining the Rising Tide protest at the Newcastle port. Yet Rising Tide's actions caused two cruise ships to cancel their visits to Newcastle, costing the region's economy \$750,000. Will her Government compensate the Hunter region's small and family businesses that have missed out?

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

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter) (11:39): I thank the member for Upper Hunter for his question. It is his first one—just saying. Rising Tide has proven time and time again to be a bad faith actor, and no-one has been more vocal in calling out Rising Tide's reckless stupidity than me. Police and I met with Rising Tide last month at the group's request. One of its ringleaders, Zack Schofield, did not even bother to turn up—which was rather interesting. Let me be clear, the Newcastle port will be open. The harbour master is keeping shipping lanes open. If any protestors enter that lane, I assure members that the police will execute arrests. Viking Cruises has made a commercial decision not to visit Newcastle and the Hunter Valley. There is no doubt in my mind that is due to this group's blatant disregard for our working harbour and the city. But Rising Tide is not the only group with blatant disregard for our community. While the Government is working to secure the State's clean energy future, those opposite are having a public identity crisis on net zero.

Mr David Layzell: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume her seat. The member for Upper Hunter rises on a point of order. What is the point of order?

Mr David Layzell: Mr Speaker, will you direct the Minister for the Hunter to be more relevant to the people of the Hunter? I do not think she is.

The SPEAKER: The member for Upper Hunter will resume his seat. The Minister has a great opportunity to be more directly relevant to the question. I would appreciate it if she did that.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I advise the House that the member for Upper Hunter—

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

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: —just yesterday voted against net zero by 2050, putting himself at odds with our community.

Mr Kevin Anderson: Point of order: It is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister is way off the mark, drawing a long bow. The question was about the Port of Newcastle.

The SPEAKER: The Minister will assist—

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I have made it very clear—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will please assist the Speaker. She is in defiance of my ruling. It places us both in a difficult position if she continues down that path. The Minister will be more directly relevant.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: The harbour of Newcastle is the busiest global port when it comes to renewable infrastructure. We are talking about the port, and I think I am being very relevant. The *Newcastle Herald* reported this morning that 72 per cent of people surveyed in the Hunter want investment in renewable energy.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (11:42): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health. Will the Minister please update the House on the Minns Labor Government's plans to support people in need of ambulance care across metropolitan Sydney?

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

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (11:42): Just relax. There is plenty of time for divisions. We have plenty of time left in the week. I thank the member for Camden. She is an incredible advocate for health services, particularly emergency services and palliative care. She has been leading the charge for the upgrade of the palliative care facility in her electorate. Construction will begin next year on a new ambulance station in Oran Park, which is a big part of her electorate. Camden is one of the fastest growing electorates in the country. The Government is also constructing ambulance stations in North Sydney—the member for North Shore will be happy; just say thank you—and in South Windsor.

Those important investments are part of the Government's \$615.5 million investment in 30 new stations across New South Wales. It is about making sure that our world-leading paramedics have world-class facilities to be based at and tasked from to attend some of the most difficult situations they find themselves in when people call 000. In addition to that investment in those stations, the Government is also investing heavily in the workforce. The Government is recruiting 2,500 paramedics, 500 of whom are targeted directly for regional, rural and remote New South Wales. Already, 250 of those regional and rural paramedics are in place in towns, suburbs and villages across rural, regional and remote New South Wales.

As the party of the bush, that was an important investment for us to prioritise the health needs of regional, rural and remote New South Wales. The investment is important. I acknowledge the work of the Health Services Union, which has been a long-term advocate for better paramedics and better paramedic facilities. It has been a strong advocate, alongside NSW Ambulance, to make sure that our growing communities have access to growing healthcare facilities. The new ambulance stations are very different from the old houses, building blocks or community centres that paramedics had been based out of for some time.

Mrs Sally Quinnell: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. Members will come to order. I call the member for Camden.

Mrs Sally Quinnell: I seek further information.

The SPEAKER: An additional two minutes is granted. The Minister will be heard in silence.

Mr RYAN PARK: In addition to new ambulance stations, the Government is also investing in eight new purpose-built vessels designed to assist people in devastating floods. They will be in places such as Cowra, Wagga Wagga, Rutherford, Central Coast, the city and Bomaderry. When people need medical help, the vessels are designed to either go to them and bring them back or to take medication and paramedics to them to provide treatment on site. The member for Lismore, and Minister for Recovery will know far better than I that during big flooding events the maintenance of health services is absolutely critical to the community. That is a big challenge. The Government is making sure that the eight vessels can be positioned to respond quickly and effectively to ensure that people continue to get the health care they need and deserve during a flood event.

The Government is having significant discussions and frustrations with the Commonwealth about health services in New South Wales. I assure the House that the Premier, the Treasurer and I will continue to put New South Wales first when it comes to the delivery of health services. We will not be signing a bad deal for New South Wales. We do not care who is in power in Canberra; we care about delivering for the people of New South Wales. The Government is determined to make sure that the State does its bit, but we need a Commonwealth Government that is prepared to invest in aged care and the NDIS so that 1,100 people are not languishing in our State's hospitals after they have been treated. That is not good for them, our staff and health services in New South Wales.

MINISTERIAL DISCLOSURES

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (11:48): My question is directed to the Premier. His brother, Jim, is a Public Service Association lawyer, and the Premier has said, "Around the Christmas table and around the family table, he tells me exactly what's going on."

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: Mr Speaker, would you like me to continue or start again?

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

Ms FELICITY WILSON: It seems like members of the Government are concerned about what the Premier said on the public record.

The SPEAKER: The member for North Shore will continue with the question.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: The Premier's brother, Jim, is a Public Service Association lawyer, and the Premier has said, "Around the Christmas table and around the family table, he tells me exactly what's going on." Apart from any declarations of interest, how else has the Premier managed any perceived or actual conflict?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:49): There has generally been a high bar before members of this place mention family members.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Ordinarily, decent members of this House resist mentioning family members at question time without any substance, accusation or suggestion of wrongdoing, which I do not believe there is regarding my brother. It says a lot about the member for North Shore that she is prepared to do it. We would never do it, and we did not do it.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Point of order: The Premier is trying to turn this into a criticism of me.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. I cannot hear the member for North Shore.

Ms Yasmin Catley: She has not stated her point of order, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The member does not have to say "point of order". I have called her on a point of order.

Ms Felicity Wilson: The Premier is making imputations about me, which he should do by way of substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: The member for North Shore will resume her seat. I do not uphold the point of order.

[Interruption]

The member for North Shore will resume her seat or she will be removed from the Chamber. The nature of the question means that the Premier is given a substantial amount of leeway in his answer.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: I do not need a substantial amount of leeway. My brother is a dedicated unionist. He has every right to participate in that role. He was serving in that position long before I became Premier of New South Wales. Why he deserves to have his name dragged through the mud is up to those opposite.

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. I direct the member for North Shore to remove herself from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A for two hours.

[Interruption]

I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for North Shore from the precinct under Standing Order 249.

[The member for North Shore left the Chamber at 11:51 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

RENEWABLE ENERGY WORKFORCE

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (11:51): My question is addressed to the Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education. Will the Minister update the House on how the Minns Labor Government is making New South Wales net zero ready with skills that work?

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education) (11:52): I thank the member for her question. Like all of us on this side of the House, she is a strong proponent of the transition to net zero. It is important that we get skills and training development across New South Wales right if we are going to deliver the speed of transition that the member for Manly wants and that the member for Upper Hunter, the member for Cootamundra and the member for Bathurst wanted before the election. Net zero is in our Skills Plan as one of six critical skills areas that we are focusing on to make sure New South Wales has the skills it needs to get the most out of the thousands of local jobs that will be created by the energy transition.

Earlier this month I was pleased to go to Wollongong to join Federal Minister Andrew Giles and our local members in that area to roll out new mobile renewable energy training units, which are essentially TAFE classrooms on wheels. We have been developing them in partnership with the University of Wollongong. They take training to the regions to make sure that we are going to areas like the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone [REZ]. In fact, one of them will be based in Tamworth, where it will be able to service that REZ. That is not all. We are also investing in the \$25 million Hydrogen Centre of Excellence in Glenwood, which is being developed by the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre. Last night I listened to the excellent contribution of the member for Newcastle to the public interest debate, which highlighted the work that is being done with the Net Zero Manufacturing TAFE Centre of Excellence in the Hunter.

There is important work happening in TAFEs across New South Wales, and rolling out from those centres of excellence, in courses that can be delivered so that we get the jobs in the communities where renewable energy zones are being developed. Training is the foundation for a successful energy transition and will give New South Wales businesses confidence to invest and grow. As we have already heard, both sides of politics made public commitments to a shared direction and transition objective in New South Wales. Training providers and investors put their faith in that bipartisan approach. It has been sad to see the way that bipartisanship, in the midst of politics, has diminished over the past few days. I suspect that Nationals members in this place do not listen to much more than Facebook when they make decisions on these things.

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

Mr STEVE WHAN: Recent polling suggests that 58 per cent of people in the New England REZ support the transition and support renewables coming into their area. Just 23 per cent oppose it. In the Central-West Orana REZ, just 16 per cent of people oppose it. [*Extension of time*]

In the Hunter, just 16 per cent of people oppose the renewable transition. It is interesting that the majority of people in those areas thought that other people opposed the REZ. They supported it but thought that others opposed it. It seems to me that comes from the same source of information that National Party members are reading, which is social media. It is no wonder that farmers for renewables are saying, "Listen to farmers, not Facebook." They know that The Nationals are out of touch. Liberal Party members voted with the Government on an important motion last night, prompting *The Daily Telegraph* to write, "New image shows Coalition divided on Net Zero". There is an image showing that lonely group on the other side, opposing net zero.

It is a complete contradiction from The Nationals. At a Federal level, they have quoted research from the National Party's think tank, which I would have thought is an oxymoron, that says that coal is as cheap as other forms of energy. In fact, at \$5,757 per kilowatt-hour, coal is far more expensive than wind and solar. The only form of energy that is more expensive is nuclear power. The Nationals are not satisfied with having their lowest numbers in 100 years. They are telling their coastal electorates that they do not care about renewable energy and climate change. Yesterday the member for Upper Hunter said, "As soon as we talk about the climate, it is all about bushfires and floods." Well, der. That is what is affecting farmers. That is why there is a likely run-off of 20 per cent in the Murray-Darling Basin and a lot of impacts for farmers right around New South Wales.

WORKERS COMPENSATION

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (11:57): My question is directed to the Minister for Industrial Relations. If the Minister is serious about supporting small businesses on workers compensation premiums, will she commit to support the call from the Liberals and The Nationals to direct icare to cap premium increases to be no higher than inflation?

The SPEAKER: The Premier will come to order. The Minister does not require any assistance.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (11:58): The reason that icare is such a mess and why I have been doing my best to fix it over the past couple of years is because those opposite left us with a huge mess. There was a Republican in the previous Minister's office who was being paid \$700,000 by icare. Let us not leave out the facts. Members opposite know how premiums settings are worked out. We have been through the debate. We are not going to operate how they did. They deliberately kept premiums low. They did not look at returning people to work. They did not resolve claims management issues. They had many scandals. Members opposite just think, "Yes, use the credit card. Somebody else is going to pay for it." What they do not get is that what they have done means that small businesses in their electorates will cop 17 per cent increases, and that is if a small business has not had a claim.

Ms Eleni Petinos: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question was about whether the Minister will direct icare to cap premium increases.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: We will not direct the board; the board does its job. The State Insurance Regulatory Authority does its job. The reality is that those opposite are coming into the House and clutching at straws. They are running around in a circle saying, "What are we going to do?"

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Terrigal to order for the second time. I call the member for Epping to order for the first time. I remind the member for Wollongong that he is on one call to order.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: A couple of members on the other side of the Chamber were contacting the business chambers and saying, "I'm really sorry, I don't know what to do. It's not my fault; it's the other person's fault." But they have to take responsibility.

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

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: Premiums will go up because of Coalition members. Premiums for small businesses in their electorates will go up because of them. They know that; they are feeling that. They have an opportunity to make change, but they are refusing. They are like stubborn children, unfortunately. They have made a very bad decision for mum-and-dad operators, who want to invest in their business but will have to let go of staff before Christmas.

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

RESILIENT HOMES PROGRAM

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (12:01): My question is addressed to the Minister for Recovery. Will the Minister update the House on the innovative housing initiatives developed by the New South Wales Government as part of the Resilient Homes Program in northern New South Wales?

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Recovery, and Minister for the North Coast) (12:01): I thank the member for Cessnock for his question. One of the housing initiatives is a partnership with local real estate agencies to make houses that have been bought back available through auction. It is a wonderful, opportunistic program. The houses are typically historic and full of character. They sustained damage during the floods, but they are assessed to see if they are structurally sound and suitable for relocation. The houses are sold or auctioned without a reserve price. That means they can be sold for as little as a dollar, and one has been. In a recent auction, one went for a dollar, four went for \$5, one for \$50 and one for \$320. Basically, people can get a house for less than a cup of coffee. Some of them cost more than that, and of course the houses need a bit of work. A lot of them are weatherboards built in the 1940s and 1950s, including classic Queenslanders with wraparound verandahs.

While they might have a bit of damage, they have huge potential, which is part of the appeal for some. For the right buyer, it is a chance to restore a home with character and history. It is heartening to see a lot of young families getting a foot into the housing market and giving the homes a second lease of life. Of course, the houses need to be moved to a flood-free area, so they need to be relocated and people need to have some land to move them to. But I have spoken to people who have bought them, and all of them have said that it is much cheaper than buying in the regular way. In addition to the house, they cover the costs of moving and the land it will be moved to. But many people who have bought a house have said that doing it up still comes to a lower price than if they had built it. It is an exciting alternative for those who want a bit of a challenge, and I know that the Northern Rivers can rise to that challenge.

All new home owners have until 30 November 2026 to relocate their property. We had to weigh up the desire to have the houses moved quickly. Recovery anywhere can be slow and people want it sped up, so we had to weigh that up in deciding what was best. The decision was that it was better to sell the houses so that some people could get a home and would have 12 months to move it. If they can do it in six months, we encourage them to do so. The initiative has been very popular. I asked the Reconstruction Authority to steamroll the sale of the houses, and I am pleased to see that that is happening. Over 100 homes have already gone under the hammer, with prices ranging from \$1. I think the most expensive so far is about \$225,000. [*Extension of time*]

Eight auctions have been held so far this year, and three more are slated for dates before Christmas at locations in Lismore and Casino. I have been lucky enough to meet some of the buyers, including a lovely couple, Jackie and Luke Edwards, who process honey in the Northern Rivers. They had the land with sheds for their honey business, but no house. They wanted to build on the land and received estimates starting at \$450,000. When they heard about the initiative, they proceeded to buy not one but two houses—one house for them and one for family and guests. Jackie said that she is in love with the house and even reached out to the previous owners to learn more about its history so she can write a book on it. Jackie and Luke purchased their house for \$35,000 under the program. They are very excited and are saving money.

I know another heartening story about a couple in Murwillumbah who rented a house before the flood. The house was flooded. Some work was done on the house and they moved back in. The house was then bought in a buyback. They went to the auction out of sentiment and bought it for \$200. They do not have land, but they said they will get it together. There was also a Gold Coast couple, and the husband said that his wife was from Grafton. They got their house for \$50 and are looking forward to moving back to Waterview Heights in Grafton. The member for Clarence will have two more constituents—but they have seven kids, so he will get a few! He had better welcome them. The program is good. Disaster recovery is challenging and difficult. This is the first big adaptation program done, and it is a good way to deal with some of the houses so that they do not have to be demolished.

ABORIGINAL DEATHS IN CUSTODY

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (12:06): My question is directed to the Attorney General. Given the recent finding of the NSW State Coroner, Teresa O'Sullivan, that 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people died in custody this year—marking "a profoundly distressing milestone", in her words—what is the Attorney General doing to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody?

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (12:07): I thank the member for Ballina for her question and her care regarding this issue. We all care deeply about this issue because each one of those deaths is an absolute tragedy. The Government takes it very seriously. I acknowledge that my ministerial colleague the

Minister for Corrections is looking closely at deaths in custody, particularly the deaths of Aboriginal people, who we know are particularly vulnerable in custodial settings. An inquest must be held when a person dies in Corrections or police custody, or because of a police operation. Police are also required to conduct a critical incident investigation, overseen by the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission, when a person dies or is seriously injured in police custody.

I assure the member for Ballina that the Government is working hard to reduce all preventable deaths in custody. That includes work to improve design and safety across correctional centres. To that end, the Government has invested \$16 million to make our prisons safer by removing hanging points. There is also a thematic review of Aboriginal deaths in custody, which is due to report back next year. That review is looking at recurring and emerging themes arising from coronial findings, as well as from investigations into Aboriginal deaths in custody by Corrective Services and the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network. The Government will consider any recommendations arising from the review carefully and seriously.

The Government does not want to see Aboriginal people disproportionately imprisoned. That is why we are partnering with local communities to address crime and its causes. Data from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR] demonstrates clearly that rising remand rates are largely behind the increasing number of Aboriginal people in custody. It is worth taking a minute to step through why that is happening. To be clear, the rising remand rates are a direct result of increased targeting of the scourge of domestic violence, making it harder for those accused of serious domestic violence offences to get bail.

Domestic violence offenders are among the most dangerous criminals in our society, and this Government makes no apologies for putting community safety first. We have also introduced and extended a strict bail test for young people accused of serious break and enter and car theft offences. That kind of offending is unacceptable and cannot and will not be allowed to continue. I make clear, however, that no government can arrest its way out of these issues. That is why we are working with communities to reduce crime and its underlying causes. Yesterday we announced that we are reforming the Young Offenders Act to make it easier for young people to access diversionary measures. Rather than locking up young people, we are trying to stop them from going down a criminal pathway in the first place. These changes complement \$23 million of investment in targeted funding to address youth crime and improve community safety. [*Extension of time*]

They bolster support for high-priority regional communities and for young people to comply with their bail conditions. Other key projects that are being undertaken to further the Government's aims include expanding the successful Magistrates Early Referral Into Treatment [MERIT] program to reach more than 90 per cent of eligible defendants across New South Wales. The MERIT program provides a range of drug and alcohol treatment services for 12 weeks while a person's court matter is adjourned. At the same time, we are ensuring the ongoing delivery of the Drug Court of New South Wales, which has been an outstanding success. We have also funded the Aboriginal Legal Service to deliver the Bail Advocacy Program, which provides holistic and culturally appropriate support to young people.

The Government has expanded access to alternative sentencing for Aboriginal offenders through Circle Sentencing courts. Circle Sentencing is available to eligible defendants who plead guilty to or are found guilty of criminal offences in a local court. Rather than being sentenced by a magistrate alone, defendants are sentenced by a magistrate alongside representatives from the local Aboriginal community, such as Elders. The court has the full sentencing power of a traditional court for offenders who meet the criteria and are assessed as suitable. A 2020 BOCSAR study found that Aboriginal people who participated in Circle Sentencing were almost 10 per cent less likely to offend compared with those sentenced to a non-custodial sentence in a traditional way.

These are some of the ways we are supporting the welfare of vulnerable populations in our criminal justice correctional settings. We are continuing to work towards our Closing the Gap targets to ensure the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal communities. Once again, all members in this place feel that every single one of those deaths is a tragedy. The Minns Labor Government and, in fact, all members take this issue very seriously. There is more work to do, but we remain focused on this significant and difficult body of work. We will have more to say about that when we reconvene next year.

SUMMER CULTURAL AND SPORTING EVENTS

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (12:12): My question is addressed to the Minister for Jobs and Tourism. Will the Minister please update the House on what locals and visitors alike can look forward to with an action-packed calendar of cultural and sporting events over the upcoming summer?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, Minister for Sport, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism) (12:12): I thank the fabulous member for Penrith for her question. It was fantastic to join her to pour the concrete at the new Penrith Stadium.

That will soon join our fantastic Venues NSW network, which is hosting one of the best summers of content in living memory. When we announced our new NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2035, we set ambitious goals for growth. We want visitor expenditure to grow from \$52 billion to \$91 billion over 10 years. That requires 4.9 per cent growth year on year. After one year we smashed that, with 5.7 per cent. A key part of our strategy is ensuring we have a calendar of events that will attract both interstate and international visitors. I am happy to say we are already delivering on that strategy. For those who do not believe me, the proof is in the pudding.

For music fans, we have already had Metallica and Oasis, but we still have AC/DC, Kendrick Lamar, Lady Gaga and Ed Sheeran to come. That is timely listening for those opposite—the member for Wahroonga might enjoy *It's a Long Way to the Top*. There is also something for sports fans. We have the AFC Women's Asian Cup, the Sydney to Hobart, the United Cup and the A-League. We also have the New Year's test match. Contrary to popular belief, it looks like Speako might just make it. For arts lovers, we have *The Book of Mormon* and the Sydney International Arts Series. While the Archibald is not until the middle of the year, the painters have already begun. I hear that the person painting the leader of the Coalition had some trouble identifying the right person—ultimately, they settled on the Hon. Mark Latham.

There is also something for our Christmas enthusiasts. Recently we announced the largest Christmas celebrations yet. The harbour city is set to launch a range of new and expanded events, cementing Sydney as the ultimate summer, Christmas and new year destination. The inaugural Cockle Bay Christmas Spectacular will be bigger and better. The Christmas at the Cathedral has expanded markets, and there will be an expanded Christmas festival at Tumbalong Park. I am pleased to announce that we have locked in our third Ultimate Fighting Championship [UFC] event of the year early. [*Extension of time*]

Sadly, punters will not get to see champions like Alex Volkanovski or Tai Tuivasa—or Bam Bam, as he is known—but I promise our fight card will be just as vicious. For the first time, we are going to have a three-way fight for the title. Of course, one of the best things about the UFC is the unique fighting styles, and these competitors could not be more different. The member for Cronulla is steady and orthodox. He does not show off, but will he show up? The member for Vacluse is known to hang back and hug the ring, waiting for her opponents to tire themselves out. No fight card would be complete without the member for Wahroonga. All he does is throw haymakers—but it is a shame he cannot land a single blow. If that is not enough to keep us entertained, I am told there is an undercard. We cannot forget about the member for Manly, who hopes to finally get some recognition in the ultra-lightweight division. With our fantastic new venue at Penrith and the UFC for fans of combat sports, New South Wales has something to keep everybody entertained.

Documents

INTEGRATED FORESTRY OPERATIONS APPROVALS

Amendments

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the Forestry Act 2012, I table the following:

- (1) *Amendment No. 3 to the Integrated Forestry Operations Approval for South-Western Cypress Region*, dated 20 November 2025, together with a statement of reasons.
- (2) *Amendment No. 4 to the Integrated Forestry Operations Approval for Brigalow-Nandewar Region*, dated 12 November 2025, together with a statement of reasons.

I order that the documents be printed.

Committees

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT, INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Inquiry

Mr ROY BUTLER: As Chair: In accordance with Standing Order 299 (1), I inform the House that the Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development has resolved to conduct an inquiry into government service delivery standards in regional New South Wales, the full details of which are available on the committee's home page.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: BILLS

Mr RON HOENIG: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide that, upon the conclusion of the Attorney General's second reading speech, the Crimes and Summary Offences Amendment Bill 2025 stand referred forthwith to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety for inquiry and report.

Motion agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: REFERRAL TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:19): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to enable the referral of the following motion to the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics for examination and report back to the House by Friday 28 November 2025:

That the family name and names of individual family members contained in the contribution of the member for Heathcote to the second reading debate on the Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill 2024, made on 23 November 2024, be expunged from the *Hansard* record and minor amendments made to refer to the family in general terms and remove identifying particulars.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (12:20): We agree to the suspension, but it is unusual to propose to expunge matters from *Hansard* from over 12 months ago. That should not be done lightly. During discussions between the Leader of the House and I, we agreed that it should go to a committee for consideration. As I raised with the Leader of the House, unless there is good cause, this could potentially become an undesirable and unnecessary burden on the House if it occurs on a large number of occasions. Some care needs to be exercised when dealing with this matter and the precedent it could set.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (12:21): In reply: I welcome the input from the Manager of Opposition Business. Whatever previous circumstances occurred, I had not considered the issue that he raised with me this morning. I am told there are precedents. I am now told that there are other circumstances. It is second and third hand. When I spoke to the Manager of Opposition Business, I did not even remotely consider that. It was not at the level that he could chance his view or mine, for that matter. I welcome him raising that issue and the concern expressed. I anticipate that the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics will get back to us with a recommendation one way or the other as to what we should do. Either that committee or the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee should indicate some way in which these matters should be dealt with in the future. Otherwise, as the Manager of Opposition Business rightly identified, we will end up opening the floodgates in that area.

The SPEAKER: The referral in the motion is to the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics, not the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee. I hope that resolves the matter. The Manager of Opposition Business is in agreement.

The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Petitions

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

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

The Hon. Stephen Kamper—Carnarvon Golf Course—lodged 14 October 2025 (Ms Lynda Voltz)

Bills

LAW ENFORCEMENT (POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES) AMENDMENT (PLACES OF WORSHIP) BILL 2025

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 18 November 2025.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (12:23): I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025. From the outset, I say to the Attorney General that imitation is the greatest form of flattery. Almost all of the bill accords with schedule 2 [2] to the bill that I introduced last week, being the Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment (Public Assemblies) Bill 2025. As I indicated to the House last Tuesday when I saw expedition of that bill, one of the components of it was to deal with the judgement of the Supreme Court in *Lees v State of New South Wales* [2025] NSWSC 1209. That corrects a drafting error within the original legislation, which was supported by the Coalition, with regard to protests outside places of worship that could block the entry and exit of places of worship or harass people who would enter or exit places of worship.

The bill seeks to fix the drafting of the original legislation, which gave police powers to move on people intentionally blocking, impeding or hindering a person accessing or leaving, or attempting to access or leave, a place of worship or harassing, intimidating or threatening a person accessing or leaving, or attempting to access or leave, a place of worship. Those terms are too broad. The bill now limits it purely to police powers to allow move on orders in those specific respects. That was in schedule 2 [2] of the Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment (Public Assemblies) Bill 2025. It is completely in accordance with my private member's bill. On that basis, I indicate that the Coalition will support the bill. It is important that the intent of Parliament when the original legislation was passed is upheld. The Crimes Amendment (Places of worship) Act 2025 had a great deal of support in this place. It is important that the ruling of the court identifying that the bill was not drafted in a fashion as elegantly as it should have been in order to address constitutional matters be limited in the way the bill proposes. The bill is supported by the Coalition.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:27): I am pleased to contribute to debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025. The object of the bill is:

... to amend the *Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002* in response to the decision of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in *Lees v State of New South Wales* [2025] NSWSC 1209 by limiting the circumstances in which a police officer may give a move on direction to a person in or near a place of worship.

As noted, the purpose of the bill is to amend the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 [LEPRA] to authorise police to give a move on direction to a person participating in apparently genuine demonstrations, protests, processions or organised assemblies occurring in or near places of worship where that person is impacting another person accessing the place of worship. There is a clear need for New South Wales laws to ensure that people of all beliefs can practise their religion safely and without fear of harassment or intimidation. It is unacceptable that members of our community feel fearful when accessing or leaving places of worship. It should not be controversial to prohibit intentionally hindering or blocking faith adherents from accessing places of worship, or subjecting them to intimidation, harassment or threats when they are trying to access or leave places of worship. That conduct has no place in a democratic society and would result in very real harm to members of our community.

Earlier this year Parliament passed the Crimes Amendment (Places of Worship) Act 2025. The Act commenced on 3 June 2025 and did two things. It introduced section 214B into the Crimes Act, which created offences to prohibit intentionally blocking, impeding or hindering a person accessing or leaving, or attempting to access or leave, a place of worship without a reasonable excuse; and harassing, intimidating or threatening a person accessing or leaving, or attempting to access or leave, a place of worship. It also amended the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 to introduce section 200 (5), which expanded the power of the police to give a move on direction under section 197 of LEPRA to a person participating in a genuine demonstration, protest, procession or assembly occurring in or near a place of worship. It is a matter of public record that those matters were subject to procedures before the Supreme Court and elements of the Act were found wanting. The bill before the House addresses those. I am pleased that the Opposition has endorsed it. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (12:31): In reply: I thank the member for Wahroonga and the member for The Entrance for their contributions to debate on the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025. The Government makes no apologies for its continued efforts to protect people who are accessing or trying to access their places of worship to express their faith from intimidation, harassment and threats. It is not, nor has it ever been, our intention to prohibit or restrict lawful and peaceful protest. But, as the Supreme Court recognised in the decision of *Lees v State of New South Wales*, it is a legitimate aim to seek to protect the rights and interests of persons who are trying to attend places of worship in order to express their faith. That is the aim of the bill and it is the aim of the Government. 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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

CRIMES AND SUMMARY OFFENCES AMENDMENT BILL 2025**First Reading**

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (12:34): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Crimes and Summary Offences Amendment Bill 2025. The bill responds to the recent neo-Nazi activity that took place outside New South Wales Parliament on 8 November this year. The abhorrent conduct highlighted the need to give police and courts greater powers to hold extremists who publicly express Nazi ideology to account. What we saw outside Parliament on 8 November was absolutely unacceptable. Around 60 protesters assembled outside Parliament House in military formation, dressed in black uniforms, and displayed banners bearing anti-Jewish messages while chanting slogans linked to the Hitler Youth. It is clear that Nazi references and imagery were being used to convey messages of antisemitism, hatred and intimidation.

The New South Wales Government condemns this behaviour in the strongest possible terms. Freedom of speech does not extend to hate speech or incitement. This kind of activity undermines the values that hold our State together, including decency, tolerance, trust and mutual respect. With the bill, the Government is giving police and the courts additional tools to hold Nazi extremists to account for promoting their abhorrent and unacceptable views. The Crimes Act 1900 will be amended to ban conduct that indicates support for Nazi ideology by invoking imagery or characteristics associated with Nazi ideology, without reasonable excuse and in public. This includes imagery, gestures or speech such as chants or slogans. Police will also have new powers to order the removal of suspected Nazi symbols from public display. Refusing to comply with such a direction will be an offence.

The tough new laws complement the suite of legislation the Government has already put in place to protect against racial vilification and hatred. A package of reforms passed earlier this year introduced offences of intentionally inciting hatred by a public act on the grounds of race; displaying a Nazi symbol on or near a synagogue, Jewish school or the Sydney Jewish Museum; and harassing, intimidating, blocking or hindering someone entering or leaving a place of worship. The existing aggravating factor that applies on sentence where an offence was motivated by hatred or prejudice was also expanded by the Government to capture where the offence was partially motivated by such hatred. The bill builds on those previous reforms and demonstrates the Government's continued commitment to address antisemitic and other unacceptable conduct and provide a safe community for all people in New South Wales.

I now turn to the detail of the bill. Schedule 1 [2] to the bill will omit current section 93ZA of the Crimes Act and replace it with a new section 93ZA. Currently, section 93ZA contains the offence of knowingly displaying a Nazi symbol by a public act and without reasonable excuse, and an aggravated version of that offence applying when a Nazi symbol is displayed on or near a synagogue, a Jewish school or the Sydney Jewish Museum. The bill will introduce a new section 93ZA that retains the existing Nazi symbol offences and also introduces new Nazi conduct offences.

New South Wales law has prohibited the display of Nazi symbols since 2022, as those symbols are the most widely recognised emblem of the Nazi regime. The display of the symbols in any form causes significant harm and offence, especially to our Jewish community. As the current form of section 93ZA does not define "Nazi symbol" and the term is given its ordinary meaning, the existing offences are capable of encompassing a broad range of conduct. That includes publicly performing Nazi salutes, which is conduct that has been successfully prosecuted under section 93ZA. However, the events outside Parliament on 8 November demonstrate the need to expand the provision to capture additional conduct that seeks to circumvent the law while still invoking Nazi ideology.

The bill introduces a new section 93ZA into the Crimes Act, which includes Nazi conduct offences in addition to the existing Nazi symbol offences. Consistent with the approach under existing section 93ZA, a maximum penalty of 12 months imprisonment will apply to the base Nazi conduct offence. The aggravated version of the offence, applying where the conduct occurs near a synagogue, a Jewish school or the Sydney Jewish Museum, has a higher maximum penalty of two years imprisonment. Proposed section 93ZA (7) provides that the maximum penalty for Nazi symbol or Nazi conduct offences dealt with summarily is not limited by section 268 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. This is important because schedule 2.1 to the bill also amends the Criminal Procedure Act to classify all of the new offences in the new section 93ZA as indictable offences triable summarily,

and section 268 of that Act would otherwise reduce the maximum fine available for matters heard summarily. I will return to schedule 2.1 in due course.

The elements of the new Nazi conduct offences are as follows. First, the person must knowingly engage in the conduct by a public act and without reasonable excuse. These requirements are consistent with the existing Nazi symbol offences and safeguard against an offence being committed innocently or unintentionally, or capturing private acts. Next, the person's conduct must knowingly indicate support for Nazi ideology by invoking imagery or characteristics that a reasonable person would consider to be associated with Nazi ideology. This approach ensures that the offences are broad enough to capture conduct indicating support for Nazi ideology that goes beyond the display of Nazi symbols, while also being sufficiently targeted to conduct that has a clear or recognisable link with that ideology.

There is a further requirement that the accused person's conduct would cause a reasonable person to fear harassment, intimidation or violence, or fear for the reasonable person's safety. This requirement reflects the protective purpose of the new offences, which extends beyond the mere prevention of conduct promoting Nazi ideology by invoking Nazi imagery or references. It also confines the scope of the offences to conduct likely to engender fear of harassment, intimidation or violence, or fear for safety. This ensures the law targets harmful and threatening conduct, while avoiding overreach. It is likely that this offence will be utilised by police after a thorough investigation of the conduct. This is appropriate, noting the delicate balance between freedom of speech and unlawful conduct. However, we have also seen that police need further tools to deal with this conduct on the ground. Accordingly, this bill also introduces new powers for police.

I turn to the amendments introducing new police powers in relation to the existing Nazi symbol offences in section 93ZA. Under proposed new section 93ZA (8), a police officer will have the power to direct a person to remove a suspected Nazi symbol from display if a police officer reasonably suspects a Nazi symbol offence is being committed. Similar provisions exist in other Australian jurisdictions. Some symbols, like the Hakenkreuz or a Nazi salute, are immediately recognised as Nazi symbols, but there are also less widely recognised Nazi symbols that may be publicly displayed. Frontline police officers may be reasonably suspicious that particular symbols are associated with Nazi ideology but unable to take action, such as arrest. This may mean the symbol remains on display, causing harm or offence to the community.

The new power introduced by the bill ensures police have the tools they need to take immediate action to remove suspected Nazi symbols from public display and to minimise the harm that the public display of such symbols may cause. The new power under this bill could be exercised where, for example, an officer reasonably suspects the symbol being displayed is Nazi related, but further investigation—such as reviewing body-worn video footage or seeking expert analysis—is required before a charge can be laid. Under the measures in this bill, police would be empowered to seek immediate removal of the suspected Nazi symbol, preventing the continuation of harm or distress to the community, while the investigation is conducted.

New section 93ZA (9) provides that a removal direction may be given orally or in writing, must specify the period within which the direction must be complied with, and may be withdrawn by the police officer in the same way the direction was given. Such requirements make clear that removal directions are intended as a temporary de-escalation measure, enabling immediate action while investigations into the suspected Nazi symbol offence continue. New section 93ZA (10) provides that breach of a removal direction without reasonable excuse would constitute an offence. The maximum penalty for noncompliance is 20 penalty units, three months imprisonment, or both.

Compliance with a removal direction does not provide immunity from prosecution under section 93ZA, if the original act constitutes a Nazi symbol offence. But in a case where, for example, a person complied with a removal direction and they genuinely did not know that the symbol displayed was Nazi related, they would not be in contravention of an offence under section 93ZA. This is because the knowledge element of the offence would not be established. Proposed new section 93ZA (11) provides that, to avoid doubt, the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 [LEPRA] does not apply in relation to the power to give, and a direction given, under 93ZA (8). This clarifies that the removal power in relation to suspected Nazi symbols is distinct from move on powers in LEPRA, and it is not subject to the limitations imposed under that Act.

As mentioned, schedule 2.1 to the bill amends the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 to classify offences under the new section 93ZA—that is, the existing Nazi symbol offences and the new Nazi conduct offences—as indictable offences triable summarily. Importantly, this classification will enable police to use powers under section 11 of the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 to require disclosure of a person's identity where the officer reasonably suspects that the person may be able to assist in the investigation of an alleged section 93ZA offence because they were at or near the location before, during or shortly after the incident. This reform reflects operational realities. Due to the complexities associated with identifying conduct that supports Nazi ideologies, police may investigate Nazi symbol or Nazi conduct offences after the conduct ceases. Knowing

the identity of the individual is essential for further investigation or later action if an offence is confirmed. We are not expecting that every general duties police officer will be an expert in Nazi ideology. These reforms are about giving our specialist police the tools they need to properly investigate and appropriately charge this unacceptable behaviour.

I now turn to schedule 1 [1] to the bill, which omits section 93ZAC from the Crimes Act. This provision requires repeal of the offence of inciting racial hatred contained in section 93ZAA three years after the offence commenced. This inciting racial hatred offence was introduced in response to a wave of antisemitic incidents in late 2024 and early 2025. The offence commenced by proclamation on 15 August 2025, and the New South Wales Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No. 5 - Justice and Communities is required to undertake a statutory review 12 months after the offence commenced.

Automatic repeal of the offence after three years of operation undermines its protective rationale. It implies that antisemitism and other forms of racial hatred are a temporary concern that will pass in time, rather than a serious threat to social cohesion and public order in New South Wales. The events of 8 November show that antisemitic conduct remains an ongoing and serious issue in New South Wales and, indeed, right across the nation. The sunset provision should be repealed so the offence can continue to operate and protect beyond three years and have a real prospect of meaningful impact. Repealing the sunset provision would not impact the statutory review provision.

I turn now to the proposed amendments to the Summary Offences Act 1988 at schedule 2.1 to the bill in relation to public assemblies. Part 4 of the Summary Offences Act regulates and facilitates the conduct of public assemblies in New South Wales. It establishes a voluntary notification and authorisation scheme which encourages cooperation between the NSW Police Force and assembly organisers. We have seen that cooperation in effect on many occasions this year, thankfully. Under the scheme, organisers can apply to have their public assembly authorised by the Commissioner of Police. This is done by giving notice in writing of an intent to hold a public assembly, with details including the number of expected participants and the proposed route of any procession. This documentation is referred to as a form 1.

Under section 24 of the Act, a person who participates in an authorised public assembly, held in accordance with the details provided in a form 1, is not guilty of any offence relating to participating in an unlawful assembly or the obstruction of any person, vehicle or vessel in a public place. There may be an erroneous public perception that an authorised public assembly is effectively endorsed by police, and that participation provides broad immunity from being charged with any offence, such as the inciting racial hatred offence under section 93ZAA. The bill proposes amendments to section 24 that provide that, to avoid doubt, a person participating in an authorised assembly that is held in accordance with the particulars in a form 1 may still be guilty of another offence, including an offence related to the purpose of the assembly. A legislative note provides an example of such other offences under section 93ZAA and 93ZA of the Crimes Act.

The aim of this reform is to dispel any public misconception that authorised assemblies provide immunity from hate speech laws. The police are fully conversant with the operations of the Summary Offences Act, but given the public commentary about what that Act provides for, the Government thought that it would be a useful exercise for the public at large, but also for applicants, to spell it out very clearly. This maintains the integrity of laws designed to protect against hateful and extremist conduct. In conclusion, the amendments introduced in the bill are a clear and decisive response to the recent incident of neo-Nazi activity in our State. These reforms are necessary to close legislative gaps and provide police and the courts with the tools to respond swiftly and effectively to such conduct. The amendments introduced by the bill build on previous measures undertaken by this Government to help prevent the promotion of Nazi ideology and promote tolerance and inclusion across the community. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): In accordance with the resolution of the House this day, the bill stands referred to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety for inquiry and report.

24-HOUR ECONOMY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (VIBRANCY REFORMS) BILL 2025

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (12:52): I will continue the Opposition's response to the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025. New part 7B of the bill about consolidated provisions for live music and performance venues is a recognition that has been a long time coming. It also recognises that regional venues do not operate like Sydney venues, regional events do not follow metropolitan patterns, and regional communities deserve regulations that reflect their reality. Under the bill, live music venues

can access two-hour trading extensions if they regularly host live music performances or other arts and cultural events.

That is a significant incentive for venues to invest in live entertainment, hire musicians and create the kind of vibrant night-time atmosphere that makes a town worth visiting and staying in. It also boosts the economy of that particular location. The threshold in the bill for accessing those extensions recognises the difference in regional realities. For venues in metropolitan Sydney, the requirement is to host relevant events at least 10 times per month. But for venues in regional New South Wales—in places like Tamworth, Parkes, Armidale, Dubbo and Albury-Wodonga—the requirement is just two events per week. That is a significant change for regional venues. It would mean that pubs right across regional New South Wales that host events on Friday and Saturday nights could access extended trading hours; RSL clubs can bring in tribute bands, for example, on weekends and they do not need to manufacture midweek events just to tick a bureaucratic box; and regional venues can build sustainable live music programs that reflect how regional communities actually engage with entertainment.

I welcome the boost to the night-time economy in areas of regional New South Wales such as Tamworth. I have been working on a special entertainment precinct for Tamworth for some time, in both government and opposition, and I am pleased to update the House that this process is well underway. I thank the Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy in the other place, the Hon. John Graham, for pursuing the special entertainment precinct project in regional New South Wales, in particular in Tamworth. The Tamworth special entertainment precinct has widespread support amongst venues and from Tamworth Regional Council, which recently won a \$200,000 Special Entertainment Precinct Kickstart Grant Program grant. This funding will allow the council to undertake the necessary sound studies to enable a trial of the special entertainment precinct over the next year.

Tamworth being designated as a special entertainment precinct is more than a bureaucratic listing; it is a recognition of what Tamworth already is: Australia's country music capital, home of the largest music festival in the Southern Hemisphere and a place where music is not just entertainment, it is the town's economic lifeblood and cultural identity. During the Tamworth Country Music Festival, the town transforms. Over 10 days each January, Tamworth welcomes more than 300,000 visitors. Each venue—every pub, every club—and every street corner becomes a stage, with local musicians performing alongside international stars. Yesterday, the nominations for the 2026 Golden Guitar Awards were announced. They included a number of familiar faces, as well as some exciting new talent who hope to become household names in the future. I have been working on this special entertainment precinct for Tamworth for some time, and I am pleased to say that the work continues.

My experience assisting the organisation of the Tamworth Country Music Festival in 2008 and 2009 gave me great respect for the effort that goes into running a major festival. It is an incredibly complex and administratively burdensome task, and the reforms in this bill recognise that reality. The night-time economy in regional New South Wales must continue throughout the year. The bill recognises that by protecting venues and giving them greater confidence to host live music and entertainment. Tamworth Regional Council is one of 20 regional councils that have shown interest in the special entertainment precinct concept, proving that the lights burn bright in regional New South Wales. Those communities deserve to share the benefits of the vibrancy agenda.

The bill makes another change that will directly benefit regional events in New South Wales. Currently, the Minister can declare extended trading periods for licensed venues on the day of a special event and the day after. This is common practice when it comes to regional events, bringing in large crowds and enabling later trading hours at venues. The bill adds the day before the special event as well. For example, for events like the Tamworth Country Music Festival, the Parkes festival, Bluesfest Byron Bay and Splendour in the Grass, visitors do not all arrive on opening night; they start arriving days beforehand.

Campgrounds fill up and hotels book out, and those early arrivals spend money in local venues, restaurants and shops. Previously, venues in Tamworth could not extend their trading hours until the country music festival officially started. Under this bill, they can apply for extended trading hours for the lead-in day, recognising the economic reality of how major events work. This is particularly important for regional events. It is important that venues are provided an easier pathway to special event extended trading, and venues such as cafes and restaurants are afforded the opportunity to also take advantage of these festivals. This is sensible, practical, business-friendly reform that comes from listening to the venue operators and event organisers who understand their local context.

I highlight provisions in the bill that will particularly benefit clubs and hotels in regional communities. New section 18A allows club licensees to sell liquor held on other premises with authority authorisation. That is significant for regional clubs that regularly support community events—fundraisers at showgrounds, sporting events at ovals and festivals in parks. Currently, those clubs face complex licensing agreements and arrangements. The bill streamlines the process for clubs that want to provide hospitality services at offsite community functions, making it easier for them to support their communities while generating revenue that sustains their operations. Similarly, the bill extends the short distance removal provisions to hotels. Previously, only clubs could temporarily

move to nearby premises without changing trading hours. Now hotels can do the same. Those practical reforms reflect how venues operate.

Supporting live music means jobs for musicians, sound engineers, security guards, hospitality workers and emergency workers. It also means cultural vibrancy and enriched communities. Every venue that hosts live music is making a commercial decision. Is the investment in sound equipment, artists' fees and promotions worth it? Are the potential noise complaints and regulatory obligations manageable? The insertion into the Liquor Act of part 7B, which consolidates live music and performance venue provisions, sends a clear message that the State values live music. New South Wales will support venues that host live music and will provide regulatory frameworks that make hosting it commercially viable.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): It being 1.00 p.m., pursuant to standing and sessional orders, debate is interrupted for the committees take-note debate. I set down resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour.

Committees

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE VALUER GENERAL

Reports

Debate resumed from 12 November 2025.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (13:01): As Chair: I continue my contribution to the take-note debate on the report entitled *Seventeenth General Meeting with the Valuer General*. Another area that the committee was pleased to hear had continued to improve was the workplace culture of Value NSW, with its female representation exceeding the industry average. The committee recommended that reporting on the cultural diversity of staff be improved. We look forward to seeing how that is addressed in future annual reports. Finally, the committee noted the decision of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal to set a single maximum price that the Valuer General can charge for valuations across all councils, which came into effect in July this year. It is too soon to assess if that will have any impact on the operations of Value NSW, but the committee will monitor it moving forward. The committee thanks the Valuer General and the staff from Value NSW for their participation in the public hearing and for their hard work over the review period. I also thank my fellow committee members for their collegial approach to the work of the committee. I especially acknowledge the hard work of the committee staff, particularly Madeleine. I commend the report to the House.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (13:02): I contribute to the take-note debate on the report entitled *Seventeenth General Meeting with the Valuer General*. I endorse the contribution of the chair of the committee and commend her for the way she chaired the meeting. I acknowledge the work of the Valuer General in addressing the concerns raised by the committee in our meetings with her. I congratulate the staff of Value NSW on the work that they do for our community. I thank my fellow committee members for the collegial way they conducted deliberations in the best interests of our constituents and all of the people of New South Wales. Finally, I thank the secretariat for supporting the work of the committee. We would not be able to perform our duties as efficiently without their important professional support. I commend the report to the House.

Report noted.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (13:04): As Chair: It gives me great pleasure to contribute to the take-note debate on the report entitled *Health Services Amendment (Splitting of the Hunter New England Health District) Bill 2025*. It was an interesting and engaging report. The committee had the opportunity to travel to regional New South Wales. In addition, we held hearings in Sydney to hear from witnesses from some of the major government departments, as well as from some of the regional councils whose representatives were unable to attend our regional hearings.

We received in excess of 100 submissions. Interestingly, almost half were about one particular medical facility in the Hunter New England Local Health District, which probably highlights a problem in that area that needs to be addressed by the Minister and the department. I know that they have been working on that. More broadly, the lack of submissions from many of the other facilities might suggest that they either are content or are not upset enough to make submissions. They might be extremely pleased with the services they receive. We can never know for sure when we do not have their submissions, but I think sometimes the absence of submissions tells its own story.

The truth is the Hunter New England Local Health District covers a large area geographically. While not the largest in the State, it is probably the third largest. The Hunter New England Local Health District also services quite a large regional population, though it is certainly not the largest when compared with metropolitan local health districts. I make that comparison between regional and metropolitan because roughly 90 per cent of the Hunter New England Local Health District is in an area we would call regional New South Wales. At the pointy end of the district is the Newcastle local government area, which is where the largest hospital in the district, the John Hunter Hospital, is located. Newcastle is also where the executives of the Hunter New England Local Health District almost entirely reside, meet and work. So this interesting local health district has both an expansive regional base and a metropolitan base at one pointy end. If members were to imagine an ice cream cone, the majority of the population would be located at the pointy end, with the remainder located in the broader Hunter and New England areas.

Those areas used to have separate local health districts. About 25 years ago a decision was made to combine them for efficiency purposes and for the financial dollar to spread further and more effectively. It also meant that decision-making was taken away from regional Tamworth, which used to be the executive centre for the New England local health district, and moved to metropolitan Newcastle. Almost since its inception, many questions have been raised about whether the Hunter New England Local Health District should separate. I hope that the inquiry goes part of the way to exploring those questions, although I note that this House needs to fully deliberate on the private member's bill before a full answer can be provided. The uncertainty and the constant "will we or won't we separate and divorce" causes significant unrest for the workforce and for the certainty of services and the way that they are rolled out across the area. That is an unfortunate unintended consequence when we start having those conversations. We heard clearly from those on the front line that they feel we need to move past it once and for all. I hope that debating the private member's bill will allow us to do that.

On the ground, we heard from regional community members in the wider area about their firm belief they used to experience a better level of health service. They also believe they could go back to that if decision-making was located closer to them in the regions, as opposed to at the pointy end. In contrast to that, we heard from the medical fraternity and the people who work inside the system that they have significant concerns about the flow of patients and the referral process. At the moment, some specialist services flow outward from the metropolitan centre into the regions, and that could be impacted if there was a separation into two health districts. If that happened, the metropolitan area would have no responsibility to service that area.

The other thing that was made abundantly clear to us was that the new health district would have to set up its own executive. The estimated cost was about \$111 million per year. The committee had no way to measure that, but that \$111 million per year to set up the executive would be money taken away from frontline services. I thank all committee staff who worked with us on this journey, as well as the Hansard and the AV teams. Committee members were absolutely brilliant to work with. I also thank the community at large for participating in the process. I commend the report to the House.

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (13:10): I take note of the report entitled *Health Services Amendment (Splitting of the Hunter New England Health District) Bill 2025*. I do not pretend to be an expert on the health needs of the Hunter Valley—although I have learned a lot—but that is the whole point. I assume that no-one understands the health needs of the people in the Hunter Valley better than the doctors and nurses who live in the Hunter Valley. They have local knowledge and they should not be ignored. The same is true for my electorate of Murray. We have a bill in Parliament, which has been referred to committee. We are experts when it comes to the benefits and the deficiencies of health care in Murray, because our lives literally depend on it.

The best possible health care can never be achieved remotely, especially when it comes to understanding the needs of a region. Data is great, but we need conversations, too. We need real-world, on-the-ground experience. In regional areas particularly, we should not expect or trust a Sydney-based bureaucrat to understand the particular health needs that arise for those who live in a rural or remote area. As I said, I currently have a bill that would create the Western Riverina local health district, which will properly service the health needs of the people living in my electorate of Murray and surrounding areas. Currently our health services are being run from Wagga. They may as well be being run from the moon. That is how far away Wagga is to us when it comes to key decision-making.

The Murray electorate is not that small. I have said it before and I will say it again—it is the size of Scotland. The last time I checked, Scotland ran its own health services, because the people of Scotland understand their health needs better than anyone who might be living in London. I wish the people of the Hunter well in their quest to have better, more localised healthcare decision-making. I remind the Premier and his Government that, ultimately, saying no to local health districts will not be a political option. A number of communities like mine desperately need and deserve a local health district of their own. It will improve lives. It will save lives. It has to happen.

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes) (13:12): I take note of the report entitled *Health Services Amendment (Splitting of the Hunter New England Health District) Bill 2025*. As the member for Myall Lakes, a community fully within the Hunter New England Local Health District, this inquiry is of direct and significant relevance to my constituents. The Hunter New England Local Health District is one of the largest and most diverse health districts in the State. It stretches from the coast to the New England tablelands, encompassing major centres, rural towns, remote communities and everything in between. Myall Lakes is very much part of this landscape. Our residents rely on the Hunter New England health network for emergency care, specialist referrals, community health, mental health services, public health work and hospital operations.

The report makes clear that the district faces enduring challenges that cannot be ignored. Communities across the entire local health district, including my own, experience poorer health outcomes than the New South Wales average. Rates of chronic disease are higher, cancer incidence and mortality are higher, and life expectancy in several regional areas lags behind metropolitan outcomes. These are not abstract statistics—they are realities that shape everyday life in Manning, Great Lakes and every corner of the electorate I represent. Throughout the inquiry, strong concerns were raised about whether splitting the district would actually improve these outcomes. Many stakeholders argued that fragmentation could weaken vital clinical networks, fracture specialist pathways and disrupt coordination across the system. As the chair noted, \$111 million would be spent on duplicating the administration rather than being directed to frontline patient care. That would certainly be a negative outcome.

That is a critical point for Myall Lakes, which already struggles with workforce shortages, limited specialist availability and pressure on emergency departments. Our community simply cannot afford a reform that dilutes resources or isolates smaller hospitals. We rely heavily on the integrated referral pathways that connect Manning Base Hospital to John Hunter and across the district. Any change that weakens those connections puts patients at risk, particularly in time-critical cases like stroke, heart conditions, trauma and mental health crises. The report also acknowledges the genuine frustration felt by many regional communities across the district who believe their needs are overshadowed by larger population centres. That sentiment is real in Myall Lakes, too. We know what it feels like when decision-making seems distant, slow or unresponsive to local pressures. We know the challenges of advocating for upgrades, workforce recruitment and better access to services.

However, this inquiry shows us that structural change alone is not the answer. Simply drawing a new boundary does not magically fix decades-old issues. We need investment in health care and a workforce. We also need targeted action to improve outcomes in rural and coastal communities right across the State. The message was clear in all of the hearings: reform must be driven by evidence and not geography. It must strengthen clinical services and not divide them. I welcome this report for exposing what we already know—that is, we have a health system under strain; communities are crying out for equitable care; and we need to recognise that a poorly designed reform could set us back rather than move us forward. I hope that the Parliament will give this report the full consideration that is needed. We deserve a health system that is coordinated, collaborative and properly resourced, no matter which side of a district boundary we live on.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (13:16): I am pleased to contribute to the take-note debate on the report entitled *Health Services Amendment (Splitting of the Hunter New England Health District) Bill 2025*. I commend my electoral neighbour and chair of the committee, the member for Cessnock. He cares a lot about regional health. I note that his hospital is currently undergoing an upgrade which will benefit a number of people in our region. Some good investment has been in hospitals, but there is a lot more to do. Muswellbrook Hospital is undertaking a redevelopment at the moment. While we are quite a long way down the track on that, many challenges still exist in that redevelopment. The amount of money which was not given to finalise the redevelopment is still a source of great pain for me and the community. We are waiting for that final package of money to finish the maternity ward, which was taken out of the current stage. I would like to see that go forward.

Regional health is certainly under pressure. Across the board, it is probably the number one issue for a lot of people. For an area like the Hunter, it produces a huge amount of wealth for the State. There is a lot of frustration about getting the right health care for those who live there. While Scone hospital certainly needs an upgrade, it is a great hospital that deals with all the commonplace injuries that come from farming and equestrian activities. At the other end of my electorate, Singleton Hospital is dealing with quite a lot of serious injuries from vehicle accidents and the like. But it does still have a maternity ward and still manages to deliver babies. If there is one source of frustration for people of the Hunter, it is about having babies close to home. Indigenous people feel strongly about having babies on country. It is something we must keep working to achieve. That being said, our reliance is more on the large tertiary hospitals such as Tamworth Hospital, John Hunter Hospital and Maitland Hospital. They are where much of the great health care is being provided. The challenge is that people need to travel to those hospitals.

Having a better healthcare system that allows travel throughout the system is something we can do in the short term. I have spoken to the Minister about it. Transporting non-urgent patients could relieve some of the

pressure. Many of the calls for splitting the district come from frustration at the lack of appropriate regional health care. That frustration is brewing. From a purely parochial point of view, I believe that it is better to maintain the bigger Hunter New England Local Health District and those specialists can be cycled in and out, because they do not exist on the ground. By having the bigger district, we can source better expertise in regional areas.

Report noted.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (13:21): As Chair: It is with great pleasure that I address the House today about *Legislation Review Digest No. 39/58*, tabled yesterday. In the digest, the committee examined eight bills that were introduced during the previous sitting week. The committee also reviewed 17 regulations and statutory instruments that did not reach the reporting threshold under section 19 of the Legislation Review Act. Those are found at part two of the digest. I start by noting that it is the thirty-ninth digest this committee has reported to the Fifty-Eighth Parliament. While I note that some of the other committees are doing interesting inquiries, our committee staff would have to be the most hardworking in the Parliament. On behalf of all members, I thank them. I hope they have a good break and work out how to do a long bell that will take 21 November to 28 November, in terms of committee reports. We will come to that next week.

I draw members' attention to some of the key issues raised in the digest, beginning with a Government bill, the Public Health (Tobacco) Amendment (Landlord Offences) Bill 2025. The bill seeks to amend the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008 to make it an offence for a commercial lessor to knowingly permit a person to use a premises to sell illicit tobacco or vaping goods. It would also broaden the circumstances in which a lessor or licensor may terminate a lease or licence, where a closure order is in effect. In its report, the committee commented on three issues, all of which it referred to Parliament for consideration. Firstly, it commented on the retrospective nature of the bill, which would allow landlords or licensors of wholesale premises to terminate leases entered into before the commencement of the Act. The committee noted that this may override existing and agreed contractual terms regarding the termination or breach of a retail lease, which may impact a person's right to freedom of contract.

Secondly, the committee commented on the defence provided for in the bill, which would require a commercial lessor to satisfy the court that they had a reasonable excuse to permit a person to use a premises for the sale of illicit tobacco or vaping goods. The committee noted that, to avoid a custodial penalty, the accused would bear the onus of having to prove that they had a reasonable excuse and that the reversal of the onus of proof may undermine the accused's right to the presumption of innocence. Finally, the committee commented on the bill's proposed commencement by proclamation, noting that the new offence would carry a custodial penalty and that legislation should commence on a fixed date to provide certainty for those affected.

Turning to a private member's bill, the committee commented on the Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment (Public Assemblies) Bill 2025, which proposes to strengthen the framework governing public assemblies. In its report, the committee commented on four issues and referred two of these to Parliament for consideration. Firstly, the committee found that the bill may impact on the implied freedom of political communication by empowering the police to issue a move on direction to a person in relation to a protest in or near a place of worship, when that person is intentionally obstructing, harassing, intimidating or threatening a person accessing or leaving or attempting to access or leave the place of worship.

The committee noted that the proposed amendments to section 200 (5) would address the recent decision of the Supreme Court in *Lees v State of New South Wales*. In that case, the court held that section 200 (5) was not reasonably appropriate and adapted to its legitimate purpose and therefore declared that it was invalid. However, in this case, the committee noted that the proposed amendments would limit the circumstances in which police directions could be given, in line with statements made by the Supreme Court in *Lees*. Therefore the committee made no further comment. The committee also commented on the proposed introduction of mandatory considerations in relation to decisions about public assemblies, noting that all of the mandatory considerations were weighted towards prohibiting or opposing a public assembly. However, the committee acknowledged that the provision itself would not prohibit public assemblies and that the police commissioner or court would ultimately retain discretion. For these reasons, the committee made no further comment.

I turn now to the issues that the committee referred to Parliament for consideration. The committee commented on the bill's proposal to prohibit a person participating in a public assembly from hiding their identity or disguising their appearance. The bill would also give police a range of powers to enforce the prohibition, including directing a person to leave, removing a person from the vicinity or detaining a person until the end of the assembly. The committee considered that this may infringe on a person's right to liberty and freedom from

arbitrary detention. The committee also noted that the bill would allow the police commissioner or court to require the organiser of a repeat public assembly to contribute to the cost of policing the assembly.

The power to require individuals to pay for the cost of policing may deter impacted individuals from exercising their right to peaceful assembly. Further, the discretionary nature of the power, without clear criteria or limits on how the costs are determined or imposed, may lead to arbitrary decision-making that impacts particular groups disproportionately. For these reasons, the committee referred both issues to Parliament for consideration. That concludes my remarks on the Legislation Review Committee's thirty-ninth digest. I thank everybody. On behalf of the committee, I wish everybody a happy Christmas. I commend the digest to the House.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (13:27): I take note of the report entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 39/58*. I echo the great words of our chair about the amount of fabulous and absolutely brilliant work the secretariat does as it continues to pump out all these reports. I thank the chair for her leadership of the hardworking committee. It may disappoint the member for Cessnock to hear that there are no Henry VIII issues in the legislation reviewed in this digest. I myself was a bit surprised after the analysis, so I asked about it and said, "I think there may be an issue here," and got the response, "Alas, poor fool, they have confused thee."

The Legislation Review Committee looked at eight bills for consideration in this review period. Five bills were identified as having issues as set out in sections 8A and 9 of the Legislation Review Act. The Crimes Amendment (Defence of Dwellings and Other Premises) Bill 2025 was found to have an issue with the disproportionate use of force, impacting the right to security of the person and the right to life, and the committee referred that issue to the Parliament. The Evidence Based AVO Amendment Bill 2025 was found to have issues with limiting judicial discretion and the separation of powers, and the committee referred those issues to the Parliament.

The Public Health (Tobacco) Amendment (Landlord Offences) Bill 2025 was found to have issues with the retrospective application of laws, the reversal of the onus of proof and its commencement by proclamation. All three of those issues were referred to the Parliament. The Summary Offences and Other Legislation Amendment (Public Assemblies) Bill 2025 was found to have issues with the implied freedom of political communication, the power to issue move on directions, limiting judicial discretion, mandatory considerations, the power to remove or detain persons wearing a mask, freedom from arbitrary detention, and the discretionary power to require organisers of public assemblies to pay for policing. A number of those were referred to the Parliament.

The Fines Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 was found to have an issue with its commencement by proclamation, which the committee had no further comment on. The Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Firefighters) Bill 2025 was found to have issues with the significant matters deferred to the regulations, its commencement by proclamation and incorporating significant matters in external documents not subject to disallowance. That last issue was referred to the Parliament. That concludes my remarks on the thirty-ninth report of the Legislation Review Committee. I too wish everyone in the committee and the secretariat a wonderful break over Christmas. I look forward to the powerhouse committee working on into 2026.

Report noted.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.30 p.m.

Bills

FUTURE JOBS AND INVESTMENT BILL 2025

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Paul Scully, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (14:31): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

There is no doubt that the coal industry is an important part of our State's economy. For generations it has been the backbone of our energy supply and a strong employer across New South Wales. Ever since the first coal ship left these shores in 1799, coal has shaped the identity of many coal-producing regions, driving local economies, supporting small businesses, and sustaining generations of families and communities. Many of our towns and major regional centres were founded on the certainty of long-term jobs in our mines supplying coal to power our homes and our industry. Today coal remains a significant part of our economy, directly employing around 25,000 people across New South Wales and continuing to underpin regional communities.

Coal continues to be the largest export in New South Wales and has contributed 3 per cent of gross State product almost every year for the past decade. Over 30 countries around the world rely on New South Wales coal for power generation and steel production. While this reliance on New South Wales coal will continue for years to come, we must plan for a shift in demand that will impact on New South Wales coal. We have a responsibility to work with our coal-producing regions to capitalise on new economic opportunities in both existing and emerging industries.

We ask this Parliament to endorse this partnership and join us to shoulder the responsibility of planning for the challenges ahead. The scale of change for our coal communities will be unprecedented, but New South Wales must be ready for a change not seen since the industrial revolution. This change will be felt not overnight but over decades. To measure the magnitude of the task at hand, we must remember what has come before and improve upon those outcomes. The closure of the Newcastle Steelworks in 1999 is a case study that we can learn from and improve upon. It has been front of mind for the Government as it has worked through the consultation and drafting process.

While the closure of the steelworks impacted around 1,300 direct jobs, the early announcement, supports and continued engagement with the Newcastle community were cornerstones of the response. The 217-hectare site has undergone significant remediation and rehabilitation since the closure and now offers mixed-use land for jobs, wetlands, parklands and a memorial, which opened in May this year, to commemorate 84 years of steelworks operation. This time we are talking about our coal industry—an industry that today directly employs 15,000 people in the Hunter, almost 4,000 people in the Central West, 3,000 people in the Illawarra and 3,000 people in the North West of New South Wales. The scale of change and the number of communities that the shift in demand will touch is far greater.

To understand the challenge ahead, by way of comparison, Victoria has 3,000 people who directly work in the coal industry. In Western Australia, 1,100 people directly work in the coal industry. Previously, 6,600 people were employed in the Australian car manufacturing industry. The path we are charting is built on a strong evidence base, and this will inform when and where to direct investment and planning efforts. It is about collaborating across all levels of government, industry and community to unlock transformational opportunities, enable investment and create new jobs.

Delivering on one of our election commitments, the Future Jobs and Investment Bill 2025 establishes a dedicated statutory body—the Future Jobs and Investment Authority—to lead this important work. Through the Future Jobs and Investment Bill 2025, the authority will have the powers and functions to activate land and infrastructure, attract investment to create new jobs, lead genuine community engagement, and position workforce and supply chains to seize new, diversified opportunities. These functions will ensure that, as our economy evolves, New South Wales coal regions will continue to thrive.

To give members an insight into the path we must travel, current approvals for coalmining in New South Wales will be with us until 2050, and possibly longer. We understand that real partnerships with our coal-producing regions start with genuine consultation. The Minister for Natural Resources has been working closely with each of our coal-producing regions in the Hunter, Central West, Illawarra and the North West to build a model that meets community expectations, with over 200 attendees at round tables held in our coal-producing regions and 90 submissions to our Future Jobs and Investment Authority issues paper. The Minister and the department have been working with unions, mine operators, universities, peak bodies, local advocacy groups, local business groups, local members of Parliament, councillors and the community to deliver an authority that will allow our coal-producing regions to prepare for a shift in demand over the coming decades.

The Government extends its thanks to each and every person and organisation who worked with it on the journey to introducing this bill today. However, consultation does not end with this bill. Further targeted consultation and engagement will be conducted as we build the regulations to meet the bill's objectives. This has been a key consideration in the drafting of this bill and creates flexibility to meet the unique needs of each coal-producing region as needs shift. This will prove useful for the authority and coal-producing regions to respond quickly to future potential risks, incorporate innovations not yet realised and provide tailored requirements to ensure the success of the Future Jobs and Investment Authority. The Government looks forward to engaging in the targeted consultation process once the bill receives assent.

I now turn to the framework of the authority, which is shaped by action and being informed from a local level. As I expressed when outlining the consultation process, the framework of the authority has been subject to extensive feedback led by locals in coal-producing regions. The Future Jobs and Investment Authority will be overseen by a CEO, with an advisory board providing advice to both the Minister for Natural Resources and the CEO of the authority. Local divisions will be set up in the Hunter, Central West, Illawarra and the North West to ensure local input and action is coordinated across all coal regions of the State. The chairs of local divisions will be appointed to the board, again ensuring that action is informed at a regional level.

Local divisions will draw on the local expertise of individuals and organisations, including unions, and others within the division region to drive local initiatives and promote proposed projects for the board to review. The authority is supported by a dedicated team of agency staff selected from relevant New South Wales government departments to support the establishment and day-to-day running of the authority. Establishing this legislative and governance framework now provides certainty and ensures that local communities will have a strong voice in their future.

A strong future for coal regions requires a new approach to attract industries and stimulate investment. The authority will play a pivotal role in unlocking strategic sites for existing and new industries—whether that is advanced manufacturing, clean energy, agriculture, tourism or other emerging sectors. That will be backed by the creation of the Future Jobs and Investment Fund, which will prioritise more than \$110 million in dedicated funding already allocated for our coal regions. Through the budget, the Minns Labor Government has committed continued contributions of \$22½ million into the fund each year across the forward estimates. The authority will prioritise investment and land activation projects to stimulate local economic diversification, generate high-value jobs and grow sustainable industries.

In identifying and unlocking strategic sites, the authority will work closely with local government and other delivery partners to ensure alignment with regional planning instruments and infrastructure priorities. The authority will also utilise existing mechanisms and cross-agency coordination to ensure environmental outcomes are considered alongside economic and workforce priorities to minimise duplication and the delivery of key outcomes. Local divisions will have the ability to provide tailored considerations, including ecological rehabilitation, biodiversity and sustainability outcomes, through bespoke plans or proposals regarding their region.

Coalmine workers are central to the social and economic fabric of regional coal communities. The bill ensures that their needs are considered in the long-term economic realignment of coal-producing regions. We have been listening closely and, as a direct result of our consultation with coal-producing regions, coalmine leaseholders will be required to provide at least three years notice—or as soon as reasonably practicable—of planned mine closures and to share key workforce and supply chain information with the authority. Coalmine leaseholders will be required to prepare a workforce plan.

The bill also gives the Minister for Natural Resources the power to request a coalmine leaseholder to prepare and submit a workforce plan at any time. This is important to ensure that the current application of care and maintenance provisions does not give rise to any opportunity for mine operators to neglect their obligations created under the bill. It will give the authority an accurate view of mine closures to inform the timing of investment, support and certainty for the community. The Government will be including provisions in regulation to ensure that coalmine leaseholders develop workforce plans in consultation with unions, ensuring impacted workers are supported in the lead-up to, and following, a mine's closure.

Importantly, the bill defines "workforce" as persons employed at the coalmine by the holder of a coalmining lease under or in connection with which the coalmine is operated, and persons otherwise employed or engaged to carry out mining operations at the coalmine, and other persons prescribed by regulation. That means each worker at a coalmine site, whether a contractor or a direct employee, is covered by the provisions of the bill. The definition of "workforce" also extends to coal-fired power stations, including persons employed at the coal-fired power station by the coal-fired power station operator and other persons prescribed by the regulations. This is a positive obligation placed on the industry to ensure coalmining workers are at the centre of closure planning.

The authority will be equipped to align efforts across State and Commonwealth initiatives to direct investment where it is needed most. The authority will continue to work closely with the Commonwealth Net Zero Economy Authority to coordinate workforce support. It will also have dedicated functions to coordinate programs that provide support during large-scale closures, working alongside coalmines to manage the transition. We understand that no two regions are the same and no two mine sites are the same. Each has its own strengths, challenges, opportunities and aspirations.

The Hunter's coal industry, producing predominantly thermal coal, will face a different task from the Illawarra's, which predominantly produces metallurgical coal. The communities of the Central West differ from those of the North West. That is why bespoke solutions for our coal-producing regions, combined with deep engagement with local government and communities, will be a cornerstone of the authority's approach. Each local division will be the voice for their region and will be tasked with promoting opportunities to the Future Jobs and Investment Authority board to review. The membership of the local divisions will be set in regulation and will incorporate voices from communities, industry and unions. Setting up a comprehensive legislative and governance framework now provides certainty for communities. Short-term solutions will not work for a long-term task.

The bill sets out a scaled approach, focusing first on the regions that will feel the greatest impact in the short term, with local divisions initially being established in the Hunter and Central West regions, where we expect the shift in demand to occur first. The authority will be developing tailored plans for each region. Local input will be critical in getting the plans right. At every step, the reform is underpinned by a commitment to evidence, transparency and longevity. The authority will support our coal-producing regions every step of the way to collect and report on data about workforce trends, economic impacts and the progress of investment and land activation. Annual reporting to Parliament will provide broad oversight and public accountability in local structural adjustment plans, the work of the board, local divisions and the progress as we prepare with our coal-producing regions.

A review of the legislation will be conducted three years after assent to ensure that the objectives of the Future Jobs and Investment Authority are delivering for our communities. By building a strong evidence base, we will be able to prioritise action, ensure government support is targeted and effective, and give communities clarity about when and where interventions will occur. This is about a sustained, coordinated effort to support communities through long-term step change. The bill is about partnership, planning and respect for the generations of workers and communities who have mined the raw materials to power this State. It is about ensuring that our coal regions continue to support jobs and prosperity into the future.

We know this work will take time. The bill does not alter the commercial decisions or timelines of coal operations, but ensures that regions are equipped with the tools, data and frameworks they need to respond to change, whenever it occurs. Delivering on this vision will require coordination and strong partnerships across local, State and Commonwealth governments to drive economic realignment. This work must be underpinned by strong engagement with communities and industry, and a commitment to transparent, evidence-based action. The bill delivers on our election commitment and outlines this Government's plan to support coal communities into the future. I call on all members to shoulder this responsibility and join us in partnering with our coal-producing regions by supporting the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I welcome comrade Leigh Shears, the Secretary of Hunter Workers, to the public gallery.

STRATA SCHEMES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2025

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Anoulack Chanthivong, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields—Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections) (14:49): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Strata Schemes Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2025. Housing affordability and availability are among the most pressing challenges facing New South Wales today. The Minns Labor Government is committed to tackling these challenges head-on by driving meaningful reforms and delivering more homes in the places where people want to live. Strata schemes are playing an increasingly vital role in that solution. More than 1.2 million people now call strata home in over 87,000 schemes across New South Wales. Strata title is a cornerstone in our housing landscape. It is crucial that the rights and obligations in strata laws help boost confidence in strata living. Ensuring that strata is well functioning, transparent and fair is fundamental to supporting the Government's broader housing delivery strategy. That is why the Government is committed to strengthening the strata laws.

The proposed reforms in the bill will modernise laws, improve consumer protections and improve transparency and accountability. The changes will also reduce the regulatory burden for strata owners and strata managing agents. The bill implements 28 recommendations from the 2021 statutory review of the Strata Schemes Development Act 2015 and the Strata Schemes Management Act 2015. It represents the Government's third and final legislative response to the recommendations of the statutory review, which were ignored by the former Government. The bill also makes additional changes to improve strata laws and respond to stakeholder concerns raised since the statutory review concluded.

These important additional reforms include: delivering on the Government's commitment in the Consumer Energy Strategy to introduce a right for strata owners to install electric vehicle [EV] charging stations in strata schemes, reducing regulatory burden for two-lot strata schemes by introducing a simplified

decision-making process, improving consumer protections by stopping embedded network providers from inappropriately recouping infrastructure costs from owners' corporations, increasing transparency by allowing NSW Fair Trading to require managing agents to use a standard form for disclosures at annual general meetings, and allowing compliance action taken by NSW Fair Trading against an owners' corporation to be published so prospective buyers can know if there are any issues with repairs and maintenance in the building. Importantly, the reforms to strata laws are mirrored in the Community Land Management Act 2021 and the Conveyancing Act 1919, where applicable, to ensure consistency between the frameworks.

I turn to the major reforms in this bill. Owners' corporations place their trust in building managers to deliver critical safety and maintenance services, and expect them to act in the best interests of the scheme. Sadly, some building managers abuse that trust and act in their own self-interest. The statutory review considered how to improve the accountability of building managers, including a shorter term of appointment. Feedback from key stakeholders generally supported building managers' maximum terms of appointment matching those for managing agents. However, industry feedback has highlighted the unique case of building management and letting rights businesses in New South Wales.

These businesses usually have substantial up-front investment costs that require longer minimum terms to recoup. Without a longer term of appointment, there is evidence that these businesses may not be viable. The bill will impose maximum terms of appointment for building managers appointed by an owners' corporation that reflect those for managing agents. Building manager appointments entered before the first annual general meeting will continue to end at that meeting. However, if the building manager is appointed at the first annual general meeting, the appointment will now end at the next annual general meeting. In any other case, the appointment will end after three years.

The bill also allows the regulations to prescribe a different term of appointment for a specified class of building manager. Any exception will be targeted and narrow to strike the right balance between consumer protections and the needs of businesses. Finally, the bill will allow the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, or NCAT, to order termination of an agreement with a building manager if the manager has breached a duty prescribed by the regulations—for example, not notifying the owners' corporation if the building manager will receive a commission. For a regulatory framework to be effective and deliver intended outcomes, it must, first and foremost, be complied with. To encourage compliance, the bill increases existing penalties and introduces new ones. This sends a clear message that the Government is serious about safeguarding strata communities and that penalties should match the risk of harm.

I turn to the reforms that address recommendations to deliver clearer laws and promote consumer protections, good governance and safety in strata schemes. The statutory review highlighted that some owners' corporations are charging fees and bonds well beyond the level needed to recover their costs. The bill sets fair limits on when an owners' corporation can charge residents a bond or fee. Any such bond must be reasonable, while fees must not be more than the owners' corporation's reasonable costs to provide the goods or service. The statutory review also found there was a lack of clarity around the rules for renovation work in strata schemes. This often leads to conflicts between individual owners and the owners' corporation. Cosmetic work does not need any owners' corporation approval, while minor works need at least 50 per cent of owners at a general meeting to agree.

New definitions for "cosmetic work" and "minor work" will clarify which activities are included in each category. The bill will also allow regulations to specify the activities for each category, making the rules clearer and more adaptable to future developments. Window safety locks are needed to avoid the tragedy of people, particularly young children, falling out of windows. Recommendation No. 113 of the statutory review indicated there was some ambiguity about whether lot owners or owners' corporations were responsible for repairing and maintaining window safety devices. The bill will clarify it is the owners' corporation's role to maintain window safety devices, consistent with their broader duty to repair and maintain common property. Further, owners' corporations will have to regularly inspect window safety devices. The regulations will set out how frequently that must happen.

The management Act's meeting procedures for owners' corporations and strata committees will move to the regulations. These processes need to be flexible and easily updated so they can support owners to make good decisions and manage their schemes as seamlessly as possible. Similarly, the bill will support alternative ways for owners' corporations to execute documents rather than by affixing the common seal. The management Act already allows the regulations to set out alternative ways to execute documents. The bill will enable the regulations to require necessary records to be kept if such an alternative is used. These records will be available for inspection under the existing inspection regime. This ensures that any increased flexibility for owners comes with appropriate controls to ensure transparency and probity. The bill also makes it clear that the tribunal can award damages for breach of statutory duties under sections 26, 106 and 140 of the management Act, and may apportion monetary amounts for proceedings.

Another key clarification in the bill is to section 50 of the management Act, which sets out the term of appointment of managing agents and how these terms may be extended. In line with recommendation No. 64 of the statutory review, the bill amends section 50 so it more clearly sets out the process and ensures the timing of notices work. If the owners' corporation fails to give an agent written notice of their intention not to reappoint them at least two months before the end of the appointment, or does not extend the management agreement, then the agent will have the option to extend their term by three months. To do that, an agent must give the owners' corporation at least one month's notice of the extension before their term of appointment expires.

I now highlight additional critical reforms to the management Act that have been developed in consultation with stakeholders. The Government's reforms to the strata laws that commenced in October increase support for owners who struggle to pay their strata levies. The bill builds on those reforms by requiring owners' corporations to send out at least one reminder notice to an owner between seven and 10 days from when a levy becomes overdue. That notice will contain information such as the amount owing, interest charged and payment details. The bill also allows the regulations to prescribe when an owners' corporation may or may not take action to recover unpaid contributions. This will ensure that debt recovery action is not taken prematurely or inappropriately. The bill also makes two minor clarifications to the October 2025 reforms: first, that payment plans can apply to both current and future contributions; and, secondly, that the contribution of an owner in arrears must be used to repay all debts in a certain order, not only those subject to a tribunal or court order. Together, these reforms balance owners' need to have adequate opportunity to pay their debts, while minimising the administrative burden and costs for owners' corporations.

The Government is aware of instances where electricity embedded network providers provide embedded network infrastructure at a discounted price, or even free, to developers during a building's construction. Providers do that on the basis that they will make their money back through the supply contract with the owners' corporation. Since July this year, electricity supply agreements for embedded networks in strata schemes have a maximum term of three years, unless renewed. The bill builds on that protection and will ban network providers from recovering capital costs for embedded network infrastructure from owners' corporations. Such costs should have been paid as a part of the build and sale of the finished product.

These reforms encompass other services provided by embedded networks, called exclusive supply networks in the bill, such as for gas and water, to ensure that the same protections apply to all embedded networks. It is not the Government's intention to see embedded network providers unfairly out of pocket. I recognise a transitional arrangement may be needed where, before the proposed changes commence, network providers have installed embedded networks in new buildings thinking they can recoup their costs from the owners' corporation under a utility supply agreement, but have not yet done so. Network providers should be able to recoup infrastructure costs from the developer in those instances. These transitional arrangements will be set out in the regulations.

Electric vehicles are increasing in prevalence across New South Wales, creating a growing demand from strata to be able to charge their EVs on their own lot. The Government has committed under the Consumer Energy Strategy to introduce a right for owners to install EV charging stations in their buildings. The bill establishes a simplified process to allow an EV charging station to be installed on an owner's lot. Owners must give written notice to the strata committee of their intention to install an EV charger on their lot. The strata committee will have a set period to tell the owner in writing if they object or do not object. The strata committee will only be able to object to an installation if reasonable. The regulations will set out what is reasonable or unreasonable. If the strata committee does not provide the required response notice in the set time, the owners can proceed with their proposed installation.

This new right for owners comes with checks and balances to ensure that their strata buildings remain safe and that other owners are not unfairly impacted. For example, owners who want to install EV chargers will have to provide supporting information as required in the regulations. This information could include documents to show that the installation will be completed by an appropriately licensed electrician. Strata schemes take on many forms, ranging from two-lot duplexes and townhouses through to soaring modern apartment towers. Two-lot schemes make up more than 30 per cent of all strata schemes. While there is a need for consistent strata laws, it is important that the regulatory framework also recognises that some schemes are lower risk and less complex. That is why current strata laws recognise that smaller, two-lot schemes can opt out of some obligations, such as requiring combined insurances. Stakeholder feedback indicates that the Government should further reduce the regulatory burden on two-lot schemes.

The bill responds to this feedback by exempting two-lot schemes from requirements to hold meetings and pass resolutions, to establish a strata committee, to prepare a 10-year capital works plan and to report information on the Strata Hub. To replace the decisions that are normally made by owners at meetings, the bill introduces a simpler process. Owners of two-lot schemes will need to agree in writing on any decision or action that would

normally have been made by the owners' corporation at a meeting. For example, two-lot scheme owners will need to agree in writing to the estimated costs for maintenance and repairs for common areas and what they will each contribute. They will also need to complete a written resolution to agree to what they will pay for out of their administrative fund. Regulation-making powers are also provided to enable further exemptions or alternative arrangements where appropriate. These reforms will provide right-sized regulation for smaller strata schemes, ensuring that two-lot schemes remain attractive for home owners.

For all reforms where more details will be set out in the regulations, I make it clear that stakeholders will be consulted as a part of the process to develop the regulations to ensure that they are fit for purpose. Finally, in relation to management Act reforms, the bill will allow a special deposit account to be established to collect and retain fees that owners pay when they report information to the Strata Hub. The Strata Hub is a digital platform for centralising key information about the State's strata schemes. This change will ensure that the Strata Hub can be developed for the benefit of all owners in New South Wales well into the future, including to deliver education and training to owners. The bill introduces important reforms for part-strata buildings and mixed-use schemes under the Strata Schemes Development Act and the Conveyancing Act.

A part-strata scheme is one that divides only part of a building. A building can contain more than one strata scheme and can include areas that are separately owned, outside of any strata scheme. These schemes allow a mix of uses within the one building, combining residential, commercial and community spaces in one vibrant community. They are essential for meeting government housing goals and making efficient use of valuable land. For part-strata developments, the overall coordination between the strata schemes and the commercial owners is guided by a building management committee. The building management committee is the decision-making body for the shared components of the development. It brings together representatives from the different parts of the building—the strata schemes, commercial lots and retail sections—to make sure everyone has a say in how the building is run and maintained. This committee oversees day-to-day management, ensures that shared facilities are looked after and addresses issues that affect everyone in the building.

Alongside the committee, a registered management statement acts as the rulebook for the scheme. This statement sets out how shared facilities, like lifts, gardens or carparks, are to be used and maintained. It explains how costs are shared fairly between different owners. It is there to make sure that everyone knows their rights and responsibilities, and to help prevent disputes. The building management committee and management statement provide the structure that keeps part-strata buildings running smoothly and fairly. A central theme in the bill is fairness in the allocation of shared costs among stakeholders in part-strata schemes. Under the current law, management statements must already provide for the regular review of cost allocations every five years or whenever there is a change affecting the shared facilities and services.

The bill will strengthen that process by introducing a two-step review system that will make it easier to make changes where a cost allocation is found to be unfair. Where a reassessment recommends a change to the allocation of shared costs or responsibilities, the management statement will need to be updated to reflect the new arrangement. Ordinarily, all committee members must approve a change to the management statement. The bill removes the requirement for unanimous approval for changes of this kind, so that a single dissenting member can no longer hold up reasonable changes. Too often those who benefit from the existing arrangement have been able to block much-needed adjustments to shared costs.

Another important change the bill will make is to set a maximum five-year term for managing agents appointed by the building management committee, though agents can be reappointed. Building management committees will have the opportunity to regularly review arrangements and decide if their agent is still the right fit. Although the term of appointment differs from the limits established by the Management Act for managing agent and building manager appointments, this provision strikes a balance between the need for regular reviews of arrangements and the advantages of a longer term relationship within the complex part-strata ownership structure. To address issues with meeting procedures, the bill sets default quorum requirements and timelines for adjourned meetings, preventing extended delays to meetings of the building management committee. It also clarifies representation on building management committees, requiring owners' corporations to be represented by a member of the strata committee who must vote according to written directions.

Record keeping requirements are currently determined by individual part-strata schemes themselves, leading to a large variance between developments. The bill establishes clear baseline standards. Building management committees will have to maintain electronic records of key documents and keep them for at least seven years. In practice, this means that owners and other parties prescribed in the legislation will have reliable access to the vital information they need about the building's management and financial health. To ensure a smooth transition, committees will have six months after the commencement date to bring their record keeping up to standard. This is about lifting the bar for transparency and accountability. A new optional statutory novation process is introduced for building management committees, allowing for the transfer of contractual rights and

obligations through a prescribed form. This simplifies the process for new purchasers and ensures smoother ownership transitions.

In the current system, executing a deed of novation typically requires each party to the original contract to sign a formal legal document. This can cause significant delays, particularly where there are numerous parties involved or when parties are difficult to contact, which is often the case in large part-strata developments. By introducing a process that relies on a standardised form, the bill removes the administrative burden and potential bottlenecks associated with gathering multiple signatures for each transaction. This expedites the novation process and reduces legal costs. Ultimately, the reform provides greater certainty and efficiency while maintaining protections for the parties involved. The bill also clarifies the authority of the Supreme Court of New South Wales to amend management statements, empowering the court to direct amendments when necessary. This ensures a fair and efficient process for resolving disputes and prevents delays that could impact building governance.

Under the transitional provisions in the bill, building management committees are afforded a generous five-year period to thoroughly review and, where necessary, amend their management statements. We have designed this to give committees the time and flexibility needed to adapt to new standards without undue pressure. Importantly, the reforms do not just apply to new developments; they are extended to all existing part-strata schemes, including those established many years ago. The Government is committed to ensuring that older part-strata schemes do not fall through the cracks. By applying the standards universally, the bill ensures that every part-strata development, regardless of its age, has the opportunity to benefit from modern, robust governance practices.

The Government is delivering for the people of New South Wales. Members may recall that in November 2023 the Government delivered the Strata Legislation Amendment Act 2023, which implemented 31 review recommendations. The Government delivered again in February 2025 with the Strata Schemes Legislation Amendment Act 2025, which implemented a further 37 recommendations. Now with this bill implementing the outstanding 28 recommendations plus many other reforms, the Government has delivered yet again. The Government has delivered the most substantial and sweeping set of reforms to this State's strata laws in the past 10 years.

I take the opportunity to thank key strata sector stakeholders who have supported the development of the bill, including the Strata Community Association (NSW), the Owners Corporation Network, the Real Estate Institute of NSW, the Law Society of New South Wales, the Australian College of Strata Lawyers, Property Council Australia, the Financial Rights Legal Centre, the Marrickville Legal Centre, the Property Owners Association of NSW, the Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW, the Tenants' Union of NSW and the Australian Resident Accommodation Managers Association. I am proud that the future of strata and community land schemes in New South Wales is shining brightly. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY AMENDMENT (DIGITAL WORK SYSTEMS) BILL 2025

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Sophie Cotsis, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (15:12): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I introduce the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Digital Work Systems) Bill 2025. The bill makes amendments to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 to strengthen protections for workers and clarify duties of a person conducting a business or undertaking [PCBU] when using a digital work system. The pace and scale of technological changes in recent years have created new and amazing opportunities for innovation, jobs growth and prosperity. Our work health and safety laws need to adapt to reflect those changes to help us meet the needs of modern workplaces.

Businesses across New South Wales are rapidly adopting digital tools to drive efficiency and productivity. That comes with benefits, but use of those systems cannot be at the expense of the health and safety of workers. New South Wales has a strong, globally connected economy, and is creating jobs and driving growth. Flagship events like the Sydney Investment Summit showcase New South Wales to major international investors, while initiatives such as the new Investment Delivery Authority are cutting red tape and unlocking billions in potential projects across technology, renewable energy and hospitality. The Minns Government is also backing a 10-year trade and investment strategy, and is cementing New South Wales as a leader in future industries. I acknowledge

my colleague Minister Chanthivong, who has been leading this work in all the areas I have just outlined. Yesterday in question time he provided us with an incredible update on the potential investment through the expression of interest process and the appetite and enormous opportunity for New South Wales.

There has never been a better time to invest in our great State of New South Wales. In light of growing investment and technology, the bill is critical to ensuring that the health and safety of a worker is not put at risk by the use of digital work systems. Previous State and Federal parliamentary inquiries have found that there is a need for work health and safety reforms to address worker intensification, unfair or unsafe allocation of work, and the psychosocial risks associated with automated decision-making and the use of artificial intelligence. The International Labor Organization has put out a study recently that concluded that there needs to be a comprehensive approach to AI governance that extends beyond abstract ethical principles. It said:

Without linkage to established legal and institutional frameworks ... these principles risk being too abstract to influence real-world outcomes.

It then stated that as AI continues to reshape the organisation of work, the need for coherence between ethics, governance, and rights is likely to intensify in the coming years. The Federal inquiry into adopting artificial intelligence also concluded that Australia should introduce dedicated legislation to regulate high-risk AI uses, supported by clear definitions, strong guardrails and coordinated measures to protect workers, creators, privacy and national interests. My colleague the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government is also doing important work with respect to ethics and governance in New South Wales around AI.

The bill continues the New South Wales Government's commitment to improving both the physical and psychological safety of workers across our State while making requirements and duties for businesses clear under the legislation. Both businesses and enterprises—and, of course, workers as well—require clarity and certainty, and they want to understand where the Government is heading. That is exactly what the Government is providing. I also make clear that the Government is committed to continuing to work with other jurisdictions through the Safe Work Australia process on how digital systems can be kept safe at work. As I will explain, the bill provides for a review provision if model work health and safety laws are developed by Safe Work Australia which address the same subject matter as the bill. The bill also aims to respond to public feedback from businesses, unions, communities, experts and academics about a previous proposed Government amendment to the Work Health and Safety Act dealing with the same policy matter contained in schedule 4 to the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025.

I now turn to the content of the Work Health and Safety Amendment (Digital Work Systems) Bill 2025. Schedule 1 [1] to the bill inserts a definition of a "digital work system", meaning an algorithm, artificial intelligence, automation or online platform. The definition broadly covers types of digital work systems that a person conducting a business or undertaking may use that may pose potential risks to worker health and safety. There are examples highlighted in the parliamentary inquiries to which I referred, such as in warehouse and logistics workplaces, where that technology has been used to drive productivity to a point at which it creates risks and hazards to workers' mental and physical health and safety.

Schedule 1 [2] to the bill will add an element to section 19 (3) of the Act and require a PCBU to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of workers is not put at risk from the use of digital work systems by the PCBU. Section 19 (1) of the Act already imposes a broad and flexible duty on PCBUs to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers they engage, influence or direct while they are at work. The addition to section 19 (3) provides for specific areas in which PCBUs must ensure health and safety, without limiting the overarching obligation in 19 (1) and (2). By explicitly recognising digital work systems within section 19 (3), the bill ensures that PCBUs actively consider the risks of those systems in meeting their primary duty of care to workers. It makes clear that digital work systems must be treated as a specific area of focus within a PCBU's work health and safety responsibilities. While the existing primary duty already captures risks associated with digital technologies, this change removes any ambiguity and clarifies its scope.

Schedule 1 [3] will insert new section 21A, which will require a PCBU to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of a worker is not put at risk from the allocation of work by the digital work system. The section also requires PCBUs to consider whether the allocation of work by a digital work system creates or results in any of the following risks: excessive or unreasonable workloads for workers, excessive or unreasonable metrics to assess and track the performance of workers, excessive or unreasonable monitoring or surveillance of workers, or discriminatory practices or decision-making in the conduct of the business or undertaking. Well-recognised drivers of physical and psychological harm—such as stress, anxiety, depression and fatigue—can occur when risks of this nature are not properly identified and managed.

As digital systems increasingly shape how work is organised, these risks cannot be left unexamined or unmanaged. This proposed duty reflects the reality that harm does not arise from the technology itself but from

how digital work systems are designed, deployed and managed in practice. The amendment ensures that PCBU's take active steps to ensure that digital work systems are implemented safely and responsibly, with worker protection front of mind. This is not about stifling innovation. This does not limit or restrict the digital work systems that a PCBU can implement. This duty requires the PCBU to consider the potential impacts of the digital work system on its workers and ensure there is a proper risk assessment and appropriate controls in place to protect worker health and safety as far as is reasonably practicable.

Entry permit holders play an important role in ensuring workplace health and safety through their ability to inquire into and inspect work systems relevant to a suspected contravention of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. Item [4] will insert new section 118 (1) (a1), which provides that a WHS entry permit holder may require the relevant PCBU to provide the entry permit holder with reasonable assistance to access and inspect a digital work system relevant to a suspected contravention. This complements the existing right under section 118 (1) (a) for entry permit holders to inspect any work system while at a workplace when inquiring into a suspected contravention of the Act. In practice, reasonable assistance means allowing the permit holder to access and inspect the system, or providing an explanation of how the system functions so that the permit holder can meaningfully carry out the inspection.

This amendment is important because individual workers often do not have visibility of how digital work systems operate or the awareness or opportunity to identify risks embedded within them. Entry permit holders play a critical role in ensuring that these systems are transparent and accountable in terms of impacts on health and safety. The Government recognises that with expanded access comes responsibility. Existing safeguards remain in place. Under section 118 (2), a PCBU is not required to allow access and inspection where doing so would contravene another Commonwealth or State law. In addition, section 148 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 imposes penalties for the unauthorised use or disclosure of information obtained by entry permit holders during investigations.

Items [6] and [8] insert new sections 118 (2A) and 118A respectively after the section 118 guidelines about reasonable assistance to access or inspect digital work systems. The regulator must issue and publish on the regulator's website guidelines about the power of WHS entry permit holders to require PCBU's to provide reasonable assistance to access and inspect digital work systems relevant to suspected contraventions of this Act. These proposed entry permit holder rights will be subject to guidelines made by the regulator. This ensures entry permit holders and businesses have a shared understanding of obligations, and the consistent, responsible application of this new provision.

Item [5] makes clear that a right exercised under schedule 1 [4] is subject to the limitations set out in section 118 (2) of the Work Health and Safety Act. That is, a PCBU is not required to provide an entry permit holder with assistance to access and inspect a digital work system if to do so would contravene a law of the Commonwealth or a State. Item [7] clarifies the penalty for PCBU's who, without reasonable excuse, fail to provide reasonable assistance to a WHS entry permit holder to access and inspect a digital work system. This penalty is consistent with existing provisions in the Work Health and Safety Act.

Lastly, the bill introduces new section 276D regarding the review of provisions about digital work systems. New section 276D provides a mechanism for the Minister to review the provisions introduced in this bill if the Minister is satisfied that the model work health and safety laws developed by Safe Work Australia deal with substantially the same subject matter as the relevant provisions. Once the review is triggered, the Minister will be required to consider, as soon as reasonably practicable, whether the policy objectives of the provisions in this bill remain valid, whether the terms of the relevant provisions remain appropriate for achieving the objectives, whether the model laws provide an equivalent or higher standard of health and safety for workers, and whether the relevant provisions are appropriate having regard to the model laws. The review must be undertaken as soon as practicable after the Minister is satisfied the model WHS laws developed by Safe Work Australia deal with substantially the same subject matter as the relevant provisions.

The Government remains firmly committed to national harmonisation of WHS laws. This proposal will allow New South Wales to align with the national framework, where appropriate, while still acting proactively to protect workers in the interim. The provisions of the bill will commence on proclamation. This will ensure that a robust engagement, communication and education campaign is in place to support PCBU's and key stakeholders to prepare for these changes. This bill strikes an important balance between ensuring that technological growth and innovation continue in New South Wales.

In our great State, we are seeing a growth in jobs. We have an important and relevant Work Health and Safety Act that needs to be modern and reflective of new forms of work. I thank those who provided evidence to parliamentary inquiries and contacted or briefed us regarding their concerns. I acknowledge the industry organisations, unions, community organisations, experts and academics who expressed their perspectives to me and my office. More importantly, from the very outset of any new way of doing work, we have to think about the

way we treat workers. That is not new. The bill ensures that our laws are reflective of new and modern technology, which is very important. But we also need to make sure that workers are working in a safe environment. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

**MOTOR ACCIDENT INJURIES AMENDMENT (CLAIM FARMING PRACTICES PROHIBITION)
BILL 2025**

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Jihad Dib, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (15:31): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Motor Accident Injuries Amendment (Claim Farming Practices Prohibition) Bill 2025. The bill amends the Motor Accident Injuries Act 2017 and makes consequential amendments to the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014, the Claim Farming Practices Prohibition Act 2025 and the Motor Accident Injuries Regulation 2017. The bill prohibits a person from contacting another person to encourage them to make a relevant claim with the expectation of receiving a fee or other benefit, and buying or selling a relevant claim referral. The bill also makes miscellaneous amendments to preserve the process of insurer insolvency in the New South Wales compulsory third party [CTP] scheme and clarify the status of further medical assessment certificates.

Claim farming networks are commercial arrangements established for the sole or dominant purpose of providing pre-agreed financial incentives for soliciting and packaging claims. These packaged claims are then sold to other service providers acting within or adjacent to the New South Wales CTP scheme. These networks involve a range of exploitative conduct, including obtaining a person's private information without their informed consent, making unsolicited contact with a person for the purpose of pressuring or harassing the person to make a claim, presenting themselves as a claims management service only to package and sell the person's information to another service provider, and making promises about potential entitlements which may not be accurate or in a claimant's best interest.

An example of this occurring in New South Wales CTP scheme is providers who attend the scene of a crash taking the details of someone involved in that crash and then sending this on to other operators. That person may not be aware that their details are being disclosed. This can lead to unmeritorious claims, unwanted contact, delay in appropriate treatment and care, and confusion for someone seeking to access help. Other examples include websites advertising claims management services that are unregulated by the New South Wales CTP scheme and unnecessary to the progression of a claim, providers falsely advertising and purposefully misleading someone to believe they are an agent or insurer, and people with an injury being transferred amongst a network of providers for mutual benefit between providers. Those are some pretty terrible practices that do not do anything to support the victim.

Queensland regulators have successfully prosecuted claim farmers who have used threatening tactics to gather personal data from Queenslanders, which was then sold to personal injury firms. This resulted in a \$1 million fine to one such firm. With the amendments in the bill, New South Wales enforcement agencies will be empowered to take similar action, protecting the public from this type of contact, which could be very harmful. The bill follows on from the Claim Farming Practices Prohibition Act 2025, which was passed in April this year. The Government undertook extensive public consultation in the development of that Act. This bill is largely modelled on that Act, with some modifications tailored to respond to the specific provisions of the New South Wales CTP scheme. As such, the Government carried out a targeted consultation for this bill, with a focus on stakeholders who would be directly affected by the proposed changes.

I will turn to the specific claim farming amendments in the bill. The offence provisions in the bill are drafted broadly to apply to any person who contacts another person for the purpose of soliciting a potential CTP claimant to make a CTP claim. This includes, but is not limited to, medical, allied health, rehabilitation providers and legal practitioners. The term "any person" may include persons who are not directly providing services under the scheme. As an example, private companies that advertise claim management services but are not lawyers, insurers or other typical scheme providers may be captured if they contact another person for the purpose of soliciting a potential CTP claim or to make a CTP claim.

The bill makes it an offence to contact a potential claimant in circumstances where the contacting party has a financial motivation to do so. Importantly, the contact offences are not intended to prohibit good faith communication with a claimant. That is a key point, so I repeat: the contact offences are not intended to prohibit good faith communication with a claimant. As an example, a claimant who is informed by a friend that they may have a potential claim or suggests that they explore their legal rights will not fall within the scope of this offence provision if there is no consideration arising out of contact. What the bill means by consideration is an incentive or some sort of reward—in other words, a financial reward or some other benefit to them.

Under new section 6.46 (3), it will be an offence for a person to arrange for someone else to commit the contact offence. For instance, a person directs their colleague to contact a potential claimant and the colleague receives some consideration for making that contact. The contact offences carry a maximum penalty of 500 penalty units, currently the equivalent of \$55,000. New section 6.46 (4) contains several exemptions to the contact offences. These will safeguard access to justice and preserve the proper functioning of the legal services sector. The contact offences will not apply if contact is by way of notification of a class action; if a law practice contacts a potential claimant for whom they have previously acted, subject to a reasonable belief that the potential claimant will not object to the contact; if a law practice contacts a potential claimant because they have been asked by a community legal service or industrial organisation, and the law practice has confirmed reasonable belief that the potential claimant will not object to the contact.

New section 6.46 (5) places the evidential burden to prove that an exemption applies to the relevant contact on the person who has made or arranged the contact. The bill makes it an offence to provide or receive consideration for claim referrals. A relevant claim referral includes a referral arising from services already provided to a claimant and the disclosure of the claimant's personal details. A person will be in contravention of new section 6.47 even if a person arranges a third party to provide or receive consideration. This new section will not, however, limit the operation of legitimate and trusted referral systems and referrals made in good faith where no consideration is exchanged. For example, a medical provider may advise a potential claimant that they may have a CTP claim and recommend a name of a suitable lawyer to assist in the process. The referral offences will carry a maximum penalty of 500 units, which is currently equivalent to \$55,000.

Given the bill establishes new offences in the Motor Accident Injuries Act, the existing duty in clause 41 of the Motor Accident Injuries Regulation 2017 is omitted. Clause 41 placed a duty on legal practitioners to not give or receive consideration for referring their client to a person for the purpose of services being provided in connection with the claim. This clause is now captured within new section 6.47 but expanded. The bill introduces new section 6.47, which expands the prohibition to any persons, not just solicitors, acting within or adjacent to the CTP scheme in engaging in this behaviour. The purpose of this is to respond to the risks posed by all types of service providers engaging in prohibited referrals within the New South Wales CTP scheme. It also responds to networks of providers who engage in this behaviour that was not previously captured.

Earlier I tried to explain the meaning of "consideration" but the following is a better explanation. Consideration is defined to mean a fee or benefit. The exchange of consideration must flow from the relevant contact or referral for the offences to be established. The bill includes general exemptions for law practices under new section 6.48, being consideration that is provided or received for the purposes of advertising, marketing or promoting the law practice to the public that is not a prohibited contact or referral. The bill also expands the regulation-making power for advertising and other marketing services under section 11.11 of the Motor Accident Injuries Act. This means a regulation may be made to prohibit or limit marketing services by an agent in connection with claims. An "agent" includes a person offering services to refer, or act as an intermediary for, an injured person's claim.

Schedule 4 outlines that the new offences will only apply to conduct that occurs after the amending Act commences. A person does not commit an offence under new section 6.47 if consideration is given or received after the commencement of the amending Act if a written agreement relating to the referral occurred before the commencement and the referral was completed before the commencement. The bill also amends sections 61A and 165B of the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014. Section 61A prevents a law practice from recovering legal costs if it has been convicted of an offence under the Claim Farming Practices Prohibition Act. Section 165B outlines conduct capable of constituting unsatisfactory professional conduct or professional misconduct.

These sections have been amended to add references to the new division 6.7 of the Motor Accident Injuries Act. This will make clear that a law practice that contravenes the new claim farming provisions introduced by the bill will be considered as engaging in conduct capable of constituting unsatisfactory professional conduct or professional misconduct under the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act. The bill, if enacted, will protect claimants from exploitative behaviours without limiting their ability to seek appropriate support for the purposes of making a CTP claim.

I now turn to the miscellaneous amendments that the bill makes. The bill inserts a new subsection in section 7.24 to clarify that a certificate arising from a further medical assessment prevails, to the extent of an inconsistency, over a previous certificate issued on the matter. This has been added to avoid any uncertainty as to the status of medical assessment certificates where there is more than one on a single matter. The wording is the same as the equivalent provision in the previous scheme under the Motor Accidents Compensation Act 1999. The bill also inserts a corporations displacement provision at new section 9.32A. This is a requirement under section 5G of the Corporations Act 2001 of the Commonwealth where the law of a State would be otherwise inconsistent with the Commonwealth legislation.

This new section ensures that, in the event of inconsistency between the insolvency provisions under the Motor Accident Injuries Act and the Corporations Act, the provisions in the Motor Accident Injuries Act prevail. This is an important safeguard that will ensure that, in the event an insurer becomes insolvent within the New South Wales CTP scheme, appropriate procedures and processes are in place to make sure claimant recovery and entitlements under the Motor Accident Injuries Act are not impacted. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

24-HOUR ECONOMY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (VIBRANCY REFORMS) BILL 2025

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (15:45): I continue my contribution to debate on the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025, and I note that the Minister for Gaming and Racing is the Chamber. The two-hour trading extension for live music venues is a genuine incentive. Just as importantly, new section 47L automatically revokes outdated licence conditions that prohibit or restrict live music if those conditions were imposed more than three years ago. Many venues across New South Wales, particularly long-established venues in regional areas, have legacy conditions from an earlier regulatory era. Those are conditions that prohibit bands with more than three instruments, forbid amplification after 10.00 p.m. and make hosting contemporary live music impossible.

The bill seeks to amend the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 to address those overprescriptive conditions. It should not be the place of government to dictate to a venue the type of music, the number of instruments and the size of the bands that it is allowed to showcase. The booker, not the bureaucrat, should be creating the set list for the night's entertainment. The bill wipes the slate clean of those old restrictions. The secretary can reimpose conditions if necessary but must demonstrate current justification based on contemporary community standards, not like the regulatory decisions from decades ago. That is a sensible balance between removing unnecessary restrictions and maintaining appropriate regulatory oversight.

The bill makes significant changes as to how licence conditions are imposed, varied and revoked. Part 4, division 1A creates a new framework where the Secretary of the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport can exercise certain condition-setting powers, while the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority retains oversight of complex or contentious matters. This division of responsibilities streamlines decision-making for routine matters while maintaining robust regulatory oversight where it is needed. Importantly, the bill includes strong natural justice provisions. The secretary or authority cannot impose, vary or revoke conditions without giving the licensee a reasonable opportunity to make submissions.

The bill also introduces temporary conditions that can be set to expire on a specified date or when the licensee meets specified criteria. This provides flexibility for regulators to impose conditions for transitional periods without creating permanent restrictions that outlive their original justification. The Opposition consulted extensively with industry stakeholders on these provisions, including the Australian Hotels Association, ClubsNSW, the Night Time Industries Association and other associations relating to the night-time economy, and the feedback was positive. The bill has widespread industry support, and the Opposition is will move no amendments in recognition of that support.

I address the workplace safety provisions in new sections 137A and 139 of the Liquor Act 2007. Those provisions enable the secretary to approve codes of practice for ensuring safe environments on licensed premises and create new complaint grounds for licensees or managers who fail to prevent significant safety risks. Those changes were informed by the May 2025 round table on the safety of women and gender-diverse people in the hospitality workforce, co-chaired by the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner and the Women's Safety Commissioner. Supporting vibrancy does not mean ignoring safety. Every person who works in a licensed venue—every bartender, every security guard and every musician—deserves a safe workplace. Every patron deserves a safe environment.

While Opposition members support the bill, there remain areas that require careful monitoring during the implementation, not because we oppose the provisions but because we believe there could be unintended consequences of the reforms. Firstly, new section 47L of the Liquor Act automatically revokes all music and sound restrictions imposed more than three years ago. We support removing outdated barriers to live music, and the secretary must proceed with some caution regarding what conditions should be reimposed. But the Government must not risk losing the public's widespread support for vibrancy reforms should restrictions be inappropriately revoked at venues that impact certain neighbouring institutions, such as hospitals, schools or aged-care facilities. There should be a proactive attempt to identify particularly sensitive areas and ensure that any revocations do not adversely impact the most vulnerable in our communities.

I acknowledge there are some concerns from stakeholders and the community regarding the provision relating to intoxicated persons in a licensed venue. Upon learning of media reporting regarding the provision, I was contacted by a local publican concerned that it would require him to keep an intoxicated person on site, regardless of his or her behaviour towards staff or other patrons in the venue. I understand that is not the intention of the reform, and the provision requires venues to ensure that the intoxicated person does not cause a disturbance while waiting for medical help. It is incumbent upon the Government to provide appropriate communication to publicans regarding that provision to ensure that any confusion as to the venue's responsibilities under the legislation are appropriately explained.

The wording of the provision is vague, and there could be some concerns that well-managed staff at a venue could be penalised despite acting in good faith. The Opposition will be monitoring closely to ensure that those venues are not penalised for unavoidable patrol behaviour while waiting for medical help or transport. The Opposition supports those safety provisions because they have the general support of the industry. I encourage the Government to commit to frequently reviewing the provisions to ensure that they are working as intended and continue to be fit for purpose. I will continue the dialogue with the industry in that regard and will raise any issues directly with the Government.

I reiterate my concern from last year's debate about the interaction between vibrancy reforms and the Government's Transport Oriented Development [TOD] Program. The Government's planned transport oriented developments will be substantively co-located with entertainment precincts and existing venues. Building high-density residential apartments next to established live music venues is rarely a recipe for harmony. The special entertainment precinct notification provisions help address that concern. Property purchasers will be informed if they are buying in an entertainment precinct, but the Government must clarify how its TOD planning policies will interact with entertainment precincts and existing venues to ensure we do not undermine the vibrancy gains we have worked so hard to achieve.

Entertainment venues, publicans, musicians, workers and the hospitality industry generally want to cut red tape, and they want to do what they do best—to provide their services. I acknowledge my colleague the Hon. Jacqui Munro in the other place for her work on vibrancy and for her continued engagement on issues relating to the arts and the night-time economy. I acknowledge the stakeholders we have engaged with during the process and the organisations that continue to advocate on behalf of their members. I also acknowledge the Minister in the other place and his team, who remain open to feedback, particularly in relation to regional New South Wales. I note their presence in the gallery this afternoon and thank them for their continued engagement.

Most of all, I acknowledge the venue operators, musicians, hospitality workers and arts organisations that continue to advocate for the industry they love. The Coalition is proud to be an important part of the bipartisan effort to revitalise New South Wales' night-time economy. We have supported the vibrancy reforms and we will continue championing policies that support economic growth, cultural vibrancy and regional prosperity. Having thanked the Minister in the upper House, I also thank the Minister in the lower House, the Hon. David Harris, for his continued support and cooperation in developing policy. I look forward to working with industry to support them and ensure that New South Wales continues to have a bright future after dark.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (15:54): I speak in support of the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025, a forward-looking piece of legislation that continues the Government's commitment to revitalising night-life in New South Wales, boosting the cultural economy and creating safer, more dynamic communities across the State. The bill recognises that a strong, well-regulated night-time economy is essential to the social and cultural identity of our cities and regional towns. It builds on earlier reforms to deliver a more coordinated, inclusive and safe 24-hour economy.

The purpose of the bill is clear: to amend the Liquor Act 2007 and the Gaming and Liquor Administration Act 2007 to increase the vibrancy of the night-time economy and make consequential amendments to other legislation. Through those reforms, the Government is modernising the regulatory framework to balance public safety, liveability and opportunity. The bill enhances flexibility for licensed premises, supports live music and

performance venues, streamlines licensing powers, and introduces commonsense measures that remove outdated restrictions while maintaining robust oversight, as the member for Tamworth mentioned in his contribution.

The bill introduces sensible, evidence-based changes that empower venues to thrive responsibly. It allows the Minister to declare extended trading periods for the day before a major special event, provided that the event will attract visitors to the area. It gives the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority the ability to authorise club licensees to sell liquor at functions on other premises—a practical measure that supports community and sporting events while ensuring compliance and accountability. For small bars and restaurants, it removes unnecessary conditions requiring liquor sold for takeaway to be in sealed containers—a long-overdue adjustment that reflects contemporary consumer behaviour and supports small business innovation. A key feature of the bill is the creation of a new division in the Liquor Act that clearly outlines the powers of the authority and the Secretary of the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport in managing licence conditions. The secretary will now be empowered to impose, vary or revoke conditions—including those relating to trading hours, patron safety and harm minimisation—ensuring that decisions are timely and responsive to local circumstances.

Importantly, the bill embeds natural justice principles. No decision may be made without giving licensees an opportunity to make submissions. It also introduces the ability to impose temporary conditions, allowing for trial periods and responsive management, reflecting a smarter, more adaptive approach to regulation. At the heart of the reforms is a recognition that live music and performance are vital to the cultural fabric of New South Wales. The bill consolidates and enhances provisions for live music, live performance and special entertainment precinct venues under a new part 7B of the Liquor Act. It provides an automatic two-hour trading extension for live music and performance venues, and a one-hour extension for incentivised event and special entertainment precinct venues, subject to development consent and adherence to safety standards.

That is a deliberate investment in our creative industries. It allows musicians, performers and venue operators to plan confidently, knowing that the law supports cultural activity and economic participation. The bill even revokes outdated licence conditions that restrict live music or impose redundant sound limits, striking a balance between community amenity and artistic freedom. Vibrancy and safety must go hand in hand. The bill ensures that venues remain accountable and safe for patrons and workers alike. It empowers the secretary to issue codes of practice that set standards for maintaining safe environments and makes it clear that failure to address significant safety risks can trigger regulatory complaints. The inclusion of these provisions underscores this Government's commitment to a safe, inclusive nightlife where entertainment and responsibility coexist.

The bill also strengthens the governance of the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority by refining the appointment process for members. It ensures that members collectively bring expertise across key fields, including law enforcement, harm minimisation, venue operation, accounting and corporate governance, and introduces a transparent, staged replacement process to maintain continuity and accountability. These improvements align the authority's structure with modern governance standards and ensure that regulatory decisions are informed, fair and transparent. Importantly, the bill recognises that vibrancy is not confined to metropolitan areas. It distinguishes between metropolitan and non-metropolitan venues, ensuring equitable opportunities for regional towns to benefit from the 24-hour economy.

In the Illawarra this will be most welcome. From live music at country pubs to food festivals in regional centres, these reforms empower local operators to participate in the broader creative economy while respecting local planning and community needs. This bill reflects a government that listens to artists, small business owners, local councils and the community. It acknowledges that New South Wales' nightlife is about not only entertainment but also jobs, culture and a sense of belonging. The 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025 will make our cities and towns more dynamic, safer and more inclusive. It strikes the right balance between freedom and responsibility, progress and protection. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:01): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025, which we support. We are glad to see that the Labor Party is finally committed to keeping Sydney open for live music and late nights. It is important to remember that Barry O'Farrell, then Premier of the State, recalled Parliament during the summer months of 2014 to introduce what were and still are referred to colloquially as the lockout laws in Sydney, backed by the so-called Opposition, the Labor Party, which united with the Government to deliver a sledgehammer to the nightlife, venues, music industry and creative vibe of our beautiful, global, 24-hour city. In the process, some of Sydney's coolest, most longstanding and most enjoyed venues were lost. The impact of the loss of those spaces—and the loss of the vibe of so many of our inner-city areas—ricocheted across our creative communities.

I appreciate that, a decade on, Labor has recognised the error of its ways and the harm it caused by backing the conservatives and failing to keep Sydney open, thus destroying live music venues and some of our amazing 24-hour party places in the interests of political expediency. I appreciate that Labor has changed. That said, I think it is important to remember the role The Greens played. The Greens were the only political party that opposed the

lockout laws. We had a lovely little slogan, "We're the party that knows how to party." People like to call The Greens a political party, but we also do like a party. The other person who opposed those laws at the time was the member for Sydney. It is important for us to recognise, as we see in the current context of debates happening in this place, the role of crossbench members in holding major parties to account when they line up together, stop standing with the community and offering actual opposition, and make decisions in their own politically expedient interests, as opposed to the best interests of the people they serve. The Greens and the crossbench play a critical role in holding governments to account and pushing oppositions to actually oppose.

I was elected as the member for Newtown—off the back of a number of different campaigns, including for rental reform and to keep Sydney open—with a high level of enthusiasm. Soon after my election I was pleased to speak in debate on a 10,000-signature petition that was brought to this place on behalf of the many musicians and other creatives and organisations that were part of the Keep Sydney Open movement. The suburbs of Newtown and Enmore were seeing huge changes, in part as a result of people shifting there from the lockout law areas. I acknowledge and thank all of the people in our local community who came together to ensure that the lockout laws were not extended to Newtown and Enmore.

I acknowledge that our community is a hub and an incubator for the next big talents in music and live performance. Newtown hosts amazing festivals, including wonderful free community festivals such as the Stanmore Music Festival, which I visited the other day, and the beautiful King Street Crawl and the Fest by Inner West. I acknowledge also that part of what makes our beautiful Newtown-Enmore area so special is not policy and laws but the community's commitment to engage with these changes. One of the best things in our community is the informal presence of music, parties and different happenings on our streets, in our parks and at other local locations. We are pleased to see that the changes that have taken place within the Enmore special entertainment precinct, which include extended business trading hours, have caused the area to come even more alive.

But it is important to ensure that politicians in suits do not claim they are somehow, by introducing policies and legislation in this Chamber, the creators of the live vibes. Before the current Minister was in his role or the self-proclaimed master and saviour of everyone in the inner west, the Mayor of the Inner West, rocked up, Newtown and Enmore were already pumping and vibrant. Those communities were happening for many years. The new laws will allow live music venues to begin performances from six o'clock on weeknights and from midday on weekends. That means more music, more acts and more money in the pockets of musicians, other artists and producers. We hope that if venues stay open longer for more music then local councils and the State Government will provide additional grants and support for musicians and other creative people.

Fostering our music scene requires not only changes to regulations like this but also serious public investment in the arts—and a bit of respect as well. We want to see more live music but also live music and venues that do not require big commercial interests and players to fund them. Not-for-profit organisations, musicians, independent artists, and music and creative industries need to be supported in ways that do not have to connect to big hotels, pubs and clubs. They can be in other venues and spaces. We need to strengthen our laws to prevent artificial intelligence from scraping musicians' work illegally. We must encourage younger generations to engage with live bands, live music and artists within our communities.

The Greens welcome the changes that will allow patrons who are intoxicated to stay in the venue if they require medical assistance or are waiting for transport home. One of the biggest risks to people from violent or alcohol-fuelled behaviour is usually when a drunken idiot is shoved onto the street and then encouraged by their friends to go home or get into an Uber. Critically, the bill will make a difference to how that situation is handled, which will make our streets safe and welcoming for everyone. I challenge the Minns Labor Government and the Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy to do the one thing that would shift the vibe in Newtown, Enmore and the inner city, and that is to finally get rid of sniffer dogs. Nothing ruins a night out more than rocking up to King Street or a bar to the boys in blue, with some vicious looking dogs, attempting to stripsearch people. That is a downer on the best of nights, and Newtown and Enmore do not need that.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (16:10): I speak in support of the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025. It is the third tranche of vibrancy reforms that are reviving the Newcastle 24-hour economy. I am very proud to be part of the Government's renewal of the very important music industry. Before this Government was elected, the music industry was struggling, particularly after COVID-19. Since the Government was elected, and with the introduction of the Government's vibrancy reforms, live music and entertainment has sprung back to life and is now thriving. In the past six months, Newcastle has seen a massive boost to its night-time economy and live music scene, with great support from the Minns Labor Government. Three Newcastle-based night-time economy precincts, Midtown, East End precinct and the five villages of Throsby Creek, have been supported and funded as part of our Uptown Accelerator program.

Heaps of Newcastle artists have been supported with Sound NSW grants, including Vacations and The Quokkas, and the first NSW Music Prize launched this year, with Newcastle's Djanaba in the running for the

First Nations Music Prize. Newcastle has seen huge support and massive turnouts for its key cultural events. From SOAK: Live at the Baths setting up a stage at the Newcastle Ocean Baths to the 100 artists that played at West Best Bloc Fest, Newcastle is pushing the limits of what a live music gig can look like. My next gig will be on Friday when I see Teen Jesus and the Jean Teasers in Newcastle as part of the triple j 50-year celebrations. All of those events will be boosted by this bill, which will update the special event extended trading powers to allow for the granting of extended trading hours up to 24 hours before the event.

When tourists visit Newcastle—like Minister Harris when he comes to the triple j celebrations, or the Temporary Speaker—to attend one of the fantastic events in our cultural calendar, they can turn it into a weekender, and Newcastle venues will be open and welcoming. The reforms the Government has already introduced and implemented are having a flow-on effect throughout the industry. I acknowledge that Music NSW, an independent body supporting our State's many artists, has been empowered to establish a Newcastle-based coordinator. I acknowledge the great work of our first coordinator, Maeve Grant, over her tenure, and I congratulate our new coordinator, Joab Eastley of Raave Tapes fame, on his new position.

For the many reasons I have outlined, and more, I am proud to support the next tranche of reforms that will further allow our night-time economy to grow. The third tranche of reforms has a keen and necessary focus on improving patron and staff safety in venues. The current laws force venues to immediately remove intoxicated patrons from the venue. Those patrons then go on to act inappropriately on the streets, causing a nuisance to nearby residents or, in more serious cases, leading to violence and sexual assault. Under the current laws, an intoxicated young woman can be kicked out of a bar, left on the street on her own and vulnerable to any predators that may take advantage of her intoxication. The bill changes that. The bill will add an exemption to keep patrons on the premises while they await transport home or if they require medical attention. The bill also provides great support for regional New South Wales, which remains central to the success of the vibrancy agenda. Festivals and regional venues play a critical role in supporting local economies, tourism and employment.

The Government is continuously developing new ideas and innovative ways to support the industry to get back on its feet. The vibrancy reforms will further support live music, especially in regional areas. Following the passage of the bill, amendments will be made to the Liquor Regulation to encourage and assist more venues in regional areas to put on live music and performances by amending the requirement for regional live music venues to have a dedicated space or room for live music performances. Instead, all that is required for a regional venue to become a live music venue is to have a space that is predominantly or frequently used for live music performances. That will particularly benefit smaller regional venues that host live music on a regular basis but do not have the capacity to maintain a specific dedicated room.

To qualify for the incentives, venues in regional areas will need to maintain the requirement of holding two live performances per week but will now be able to satisfy the extended trading eligibility on an annual basis, as opposed to weekly or monthly. That will support venues in those areas that may have seasonal peaks, such as Jindabyne in the winter, and would previously have been ineligible for the incentive because they could not program two performances per week year-round. Now, as long as they program 104 performances per year, they will qualify.

Venues statewide will also have greater flexibility around scheduling performances by being able to commence their performances earlier: on weekdays at 6.00 p.m. and on weekends after 12 noon, rather than at 8.00 p.m. Those changes recognise the different seasonal trading patterns in regional and remote areas and allow venues with early evening peak periods or public transport limitations to participate in the incentive scheme while progressing the overarching aim to encourage more live music performances. Since the introduction of live music incentives, participation in regional areas has grown significantly. As of 26 September 2025, 211 venues across regional New South Wales claimed live music incentives, which represents 44 per cent of the total. I support the bill in its entirety. I commend it to the House. Labor loves live music.

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (16:17): I speak in support of the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025. The bill represents the next phase of the Government's program to revitalise the night-time economy of New South Wales. The legislation builds directly on the two tranches of reforms delivered by the Government in 2023 and 2024, which reduced red tape, incentivised live performance and encouraged more vibrancy throughout the State. Since those reforms commenced in 2023 and 2024, the results have been measurable. As of 26 September 2025, there are now 485 live music venues registered with Liquor and Gaming NSW, up from 133 in 2023. The increase demonstrates clear demand for live music and confirms that the regulatory reforms coupled with industry working to bring back night-time activation delivers results.

While the existing live music incentives made permanent by this Government have seen an increase in the number of live music venues across the State, there remain opportunities to improve the framework and encourage more live music. Accordingly, tranche 3 will make two key changes that I will highlight. Firstly, the bill allows live music venues to start their live music performance at 6.00 p.m. on weeknights and after 12.00 p.m. on

weekends, rather than after 8.00 p.m. Secondly, a regulation will be made to update the incentives further to increase the number of live music performances required to be eligible for metropolitan venues to be 10 per month, as opposed to two per week. That results in an increase of 16 performances per year for those venues in metropolitan areas. Venues in regional areas will continue to program two performances per week to qualify for the incentives; however, they can average that across a year. That is especially important for regional tourism.

The changes in the bill are significant. They will accommodate those venues that decide to put live music on a Friday night but that might want to have earlier performances on the weekend. That change, in particular, will allow more venues to take part in the incentives, especially those venues that are in locations with public transport limitations late at night, which might impact on their ability to participate in the incentives. The enhancements respond directly to feedback from venues, artists and councils since the implementation of tranche 2. They provide greater flexibility for venues to host live performances, while continuing to encourage more live music.

While major international touring acts bring economic benefit across the State, the true backbone of the live music sector remains the network of local artists performing in small and medium-sized venues across our cities, towns and regions. Milton Theatre on the South Coast is one of those venues, and it is renowned throughout Australia. Homegrown performers are often the first to bring life back to local areas, including to their local bars, pubs and clubs. They help rebuild a venue's offerings late at night and contribute directly to the vibrancy and culture of local areas. As a government, we have a responsibility to ensure that those artists have the opportunity to develop, perform and sustain careers in New South Wales.

By strengthening incentives for live music venues, the bill ensures that more spaces can support emerging artists, build loyal audiences and keep the pipeline of Australian talent strong. By removing unnecessary restrictions and aligning incentives eligibility with performance outcomes, the reforms will make it easier for Australian musicians, from emerging performers to established artists, to perform more frequently in their home country. Importantly, the live music and hospitality sectors continue to face economic pressures from rising costs of living and changing consumer behaviour.

The legislation forms part of the Government's broader strategy to support recovery through job creation, tourism and support for business. A thriving live music sector generates secondary economic benefits in accommodation, dining and transport. It also plays a key part in providing accessible and safe forms of entertainment. Since this Government was elected, there has been a marked improvement in vibrancy across New South Wales. Not only is there now more than triple the number of live music venues registered with Liquor and Gaming NSW across the State, but we are seeing the regions taking part in a whole of New South Wales uplift in vibrancy.

The 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025 continues the Government's commitment to making New South Wales Australia's premier live music State. It enhances live music incentives, encourages venues to put on performers and strengthens the partnership between industry, government and community. When it comes to supporting live music—in particular, Australian live music—this Government is committed to implementing reforms that make a difference. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (16:23): I speak in support of the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025. I am a strong supporter of the New South Wales Government's ongoing work to bring back vibrancy and live music to New South Wales and revitalise the night-time economy. The tranche 1 and tranche 2 vibrancy reforms in 2023 and 2024 helped to revitalise the New South Wales night-time economy in a significant way and have led to a big resurgence in live music being scheduled in pubs, clubs and other venues across the State. Although I would like to see a lot more than cover bands, unlike the member for Tamworth. I know that he likes cover bands, but I would like to see more new music, which is important as well. However, there is more work to do in the space.

Since the introduction of the tranche 1 and tranche 2 vibrancy reforms, this Government has identified further barriers that need to be addressed if we want to continue to build a stronger, safer and more vibrant 24-hour economy. Alfresco dining is one such area that has been completely transformed over the past few years and that has led to an increase in vibrancy. Currently, venues can apply to extend their venue boundaries onto footpaths, roads and other types of lands. Those quick and easy applications have led to venues across New South Wales being able to offer outdoor dining spaces adjacent to their premises for patrons to dine and listen to music. New South Wales is renowned for its outdoor-friendly climate, meaning it has perfect conditions for people to embrace alfresco dining, and they have done exactly that.

With alfresco dining being such a success, the Government is now making additional reforms to further encourage outdoor dining and temporary boundary changes. We are removing the midnight restriction for temporary approvals to offer a liquor service outdoors. Currently, a restaurant may have council approval to trade

outdoors until 2.00 a.m. but, ridiculously, they cannot serve alcohol past midnight. It is unnecessary red tape. If the council approves outdoor dining until 2.00 a.m., the State Government should not be unnecessarily restricting it. One approval is enough. In addition, restaurants and small bars with a takeaway sales authorisation will now be able to sell unsealed drinks, such as an open bottle of beer, to patrons when they order a meal at the venue. I can see that Temporary Speaker Barr thinks that is a great thing for his electorate of Cessnock. It will allow patrons to consume a drink in a legally permissible area, such as a plaza, food court or alfresco area shared by restaurants, small bars and other businesses.

In Parramatta, we have got Little India in Harris Park. People there move from one place to another, which is different to other parts of Sydney. It is not about having just one experience. A person might go to one outlet to get a snack and then go somewhere else to experience another type of food. There is a real sense of people moving about and having flexibility. Whether it is Little India or Eat Street Parramatta, that opportunity to provide different experiences to people is what we are all about. In New South Wales we have rejigged our tourism strategy so that it focuses on experiences, which could mean a whole lot of things. It could be visiting an iconic place like the Blue Mountains and experiencing that World Heritage area. It could be coming to Parramatta to experience the World Heritage park at Parramatta Park. It could also involve other types of experiences, small or large. Those small experiences are often the things that people take with them when they leave. They enjoy those experiences the most. Being able to open up our streets and venues so that they are more user friendly and there is less red tape means that people will have different vibrant experiences in different parts of Sydney. I particularly see that happening in Parramatta.

The reforms will allow licensed premises to apply to expand operations on a temporary basis into adjacent buildings, where appropriate consent and approval is obtained. It will create flexibility and new opportunities for venues and will allow them to temporarily extend their boundaries into adjacent structures, rooms and adjoining licensed premises. The Government is further reducing red tape for businesses and providing trading flexibility to licensed premises so that they are able to thrive and grow. Another reform enables clubs to host events in conjunction with local sporting organisations and other local groups at a location other than the club's premises, provided that the event is for club members and their guests.

Just last weekend Parramatta Leagues Club hosted the Maronite youth markets, which were held in the car park of the leagues club over two nights. It was a great, vibrant experience, with hundreds of people coming and going over those two nights to experience the food trucks and what was happening there. We want to open that up into more opportunities across our city. We are already seeing the desire from councils to do things differently, and the legislation will provide for that. Until now, local organisations had to apply for their own liquor licence to sell and supply liquor at those events. That can be costly and burdensome for those organisations. Allowing clubs to provide that service at local events will reduce the burden on local organisations and sporting clubs, which will not have to apply for liquor licences for events if they do not wish to do so.

The reforms will build on the success of the Government's previous legislative changes and further support vibrancy and the night-time economy in New South Wales. There is always more to do. When it comes to the 24-hour economy, one thing that I talk about with people in business in Parramatta is connection. Our Government is not just looking at things in isolation. We are looking at what we need to do to tweak legislation across a whole range of portfolios. If we do not make our transport more flexible, then the 24-hour economy cannot succeed. In Parramatta we are seeing the return of improved bus services and a focus on improved train services. We are reviewing what we can do to make those services more accessible for people so they can not only come to visit and enjoy these experiences, but also work, because the 24-hour economy does not survive and thrive unless we can get workers to and from venues at reasonable times of the night and into the early hours of the morning.

That has been a real pinch point for employers across Greater Sydney. We are making sure that we tweak various legislation and put the funding in our budget to improve transport services and ensure workers' rights and safety so employees can be at these places in the early hours of the morning. We are increasing police numbers so that people feel safe when they come into our city centres and travel around. It is all part of the experience and we want to make sure that we get it right. As the mother of two sons who are in a band and writing their own songs—not singing covers—I know how important it is for us to provide environments for people to be able to succeed. They are just one example of so many who want to be part of the new 24-hour environment. Whether they are working in the spaces providing food and drink or they are the entertainment, we want to ensure that we have the right setting to support new and flourishing creative industries into the future.

I know the Minister, too, supports that for his family and others. I meet so many young people with so many great ideas. Just last week young buskers in Sydney told government at both levels, "Hey, we want the opportunities." All those different aspects are part of a thriving 24-hour economy. In conclusion, the reforms build on the success of the Government's previous legislative changes. I am excited to take advantage of the new provisions that support alfresco engagement as our summer months get closer. We are already working in the

transport space and I am keen to see how we can do more in that area. I thank the Minister, the ministerial staff and the departments involved in putting together the research and ideas needed to bring the bill forward. I commend the bill to the House

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater) (16:33): I support the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025. As others have mentioned, this is the third tranche in a number of reforms introduced—even prior to my time in this place—to ensure that we have a vibrant night-time economy. Particularly as a result of the lockdown laws introduced many years ago, we have seen Sydney's night-time economy diminish. In my electorate of Pittwater noise complaints by one or two people can shut down restaurants and live music venues. Like other members, I speak in support of the reforms and a few specific measures contained in the legislation. The changes will continue to incentivise live music venues and extended trading hours, particularly having more flexibility around what defines a live music venue.

In metropolitan areas the requirement for performances twice a week has been changed to 10 per month. I acknowledge that that is slightly more and it also allows venue owners to manage their performance schedule with a bit more flexibility. That will be welcomed. I acknowledge Ben, who owns the Mona Vale Hotel in my electorate and who is doing incredible work to bring more vitality and more bands to the northern beaches and to other venues like the Mona Vale Hotel. I also point to the safety aspect of giving the venue licensee the discretion to determine how best to deal with an intoxicated patron without requiring them to be thrown out. I acknowledge, as others have, the considerable safety concerns for females, in particular, who may be in a vulnerable position. Relaxing the rules around the provision of alcohol, particularly relating to eating and drinking outside, is also welcomed.

I reflect also on the amazing contribution that bands from Pittwater have made in Australia. So many bands come from the northern beaches. I have spoken with some of them, particularly my friends in Lime Cordiale, about how their path to becoming a famous international band started. Yes, it was all about the local garage band, as other members have spoken about their children having. But it was also about being able to perform at venues in their local area, perhaps even when they were under-age. Then, when they turned 18, they performed at other venues. We need a variety of supportive venues in every part of New South Wales, particularly metropolitan areas and areas like mine on the edge of Greater Sydney. We still need vibrancy, even though we are a somewhat quieter electorate than others in Sydney.

Lime Cordiale, Angus and Julia Stone, and the Rions are from the northern beaches, and Pittwater in particular. Probably as a result of the vibrancy laws—although I cannot say definitely—Club Palm Beach held a Clash of the Bands event over a number of weeks, which was all about supporting local talent and local bands. There was a huge \$10,000 prize, which really incentivised them. It was absolutely epic. I will not describe everything that went on at Club Palm Beach in case it breaks some law, but kids, teenagers and people of all ages had an absolutely amazing time. I call out Kieron Prenter for leading that. I know he is looking for a new venue to do similar things. It is important to support reforms that embrace live music. On the weekend, a surf lifesaving club hosted the Ghazza band—some members may have heard the e-bike song it is famous for. It is another young band coming up through the ranks. The reforms and the culture they are encouraging are bringing us back from lockdown laws and a few people making a single noise complaint that closes down venues, as has happened in my electorate.

I will highlight a few of the venues that have closed down and others that have struggled because one or two people made noise complaints. I particularly call out the Narrabeen RSL Club, which is no longer. It was demolished only a few weeks or months ago, which is very sad. It was known as the hub for live music. Back in the day, it was the place to go. I found an old newspaper article from 2019 that said it had been four years since the lockdown laws were introduced by the New South Wales Government and asked how this had affected Sydney's nightlife. It then launched into a local story from Pittwater that was first reported by the *Manly Daily*. It referred to the Narrabeen RSL Club and the sign that was put on the door, which became a bit Insta-famous. I will not read the whole sign, but in part it said:

Due to a single formal residential complaint and State Government regulations we are now forced to have all amplified music inside only.

This ruling has the potential to stop our patrons sitting outside and enjoying the space that has been Narrabeen RSL for almost 65 years. Narrabeen RSL will endeavour to fight with everything we have ...

We hope for a return to great tunes ...

Unfortunately, it did not return to great tunes. I cannot say why. Maybe the financial position of the RSL sub-branch required it to sell. But it was a huge thing at the time and the club never recovered. Claire Ginty, a bartender at the RSL, said:

Pay attention NSW. Your public spaces as well as venues that support art and culture are disappearing before your eyes. Stand up. Fight it.

I am pleased to say that Claire runs the live music at Avalon RSL and does a phenomenal job to get many great bands. Those words at that time were very poignant, because venues such as Narrabeen RSL have closed. Single noise complaints are not contained within this particular bill but are part of the broader reform. There are recent reports of single noise complaints in Palm Beach, including one against the Joey. When the council considered whether to extend its trading hours, 132 people supported it and seven did not. Subsequent noise complaints caused real issues. I believe the same person who complained about that place also complained about and was effective in closing down Cranky Fins, which was an awesome restaurant on the corner near the Palm Beach Golf Club. It said it would not renew its lease due to noise complaints.

The owner of Cranky Fins owns some great venues in Sydney and has moved on. That same venue became a restaurant called Casa—it is the restaurant, not the homeware shop—and it also received a noise complaint, which led to its decision to not renew the lease. People in the northern beaches and Pittwater are very supportive of these vibrancy reforms. I look forward to the next generation of bands, and people both young and old, coming together to enjoy the night-time economy. One business chamber in my area has received a grant under the Uptown Grant Program. The Deep North Festival will be held in December over three days. More talent will be on display there, and we will get to enjoy the night-time economy then too. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:41): The 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025 is about the future musicians of New South Wales. I pay a shout-out to Ninajirachi, who just won triple j Australian Album of the Year. She is a coastie, and I am sure she looks forward to playing at not only the big venues around the world but also our local venues thanks to changes in legislation like this. It is a great honour to say that both Gosford and Terrigal are starting to punch above their weight as our Government pushes to reopen the State's entertainment venues and populate our 24-hour economy. In August the Gosford strip was singled out as a special entertainment precinct in the Uptown Grant Program under the New South Wales Government's vibrancy reforms. It was granted \$175,000 in funding to support its ongoing night-time economy efforts.

Under these vibrancy reforms, councils are empowered to make outdoor dining, late trade and street activation easier, and create steps to grow thriving, unique local precincts. That is hugely important. I note also that the Esplanade in Terrigal has received a grant of \$180,000 to continue works to improve the area. The Gosford Strip Precinct Group, comprising over 30 local stakeholders, includes the University of Newcastle Gosford campus, whose members I note are in the Parliament today and will celebrate its 60-year anniversary at the Railway Hotel. I thank also John Singleton for his work to boost the local economy. The Fun Haus Factory is also a member of that group, as is Aland Development Group, which is opening a beautiful five-star hotel in Gosford as we speak. That is so exciting.

The precinct will have small shops, co-working spaces, food outlets and bars to unlock our transformative plans to activate our city's high street with food, bars, light entertainment, late-night trade, and community programs and employment pathways. As the old cliché goes, "It's all happening in the coast capital city," as it is across 37 other districts that are funded under the program. I was very lucky to go to Sydney to hear the pitch for funding from a number of incredibly vibrant locations across New South Wales. They promoted opportunities to make changes and get the night-time economy activated. I am very proud to be part of a government that has a live music Minister—the first in the world—and night-time economy commissioner. The Minister is making a difference. This work is part of the tranche of reforms that are ongoing and will continue.

As of 26 September this year, 485 licensed venues were claiming live music incentives from across New South Wales, up from 132 in March 2023. Importantly, 211 of those venues are located in regional areas. As of 8 August, 20 councils have passed resolutions to investigate or establish State environmental planning policies, and six of those councils are in regional areas. I note the Central Coast Council is on that journey as well. The vibrancy reforms have reduced regulatory barriers; delivered a fairer approach to noise control, with a single regulator and streamlined complaints framework; and added incentives for venue operators to provide more live music. This legislation sets out to improve patron safety, including by providing an exemption to the offence for permitting intoxication on a licensed premises in limited and defined circumstances, such as a patron needing medical assistance or awaiting transport options home.

Streamlined processes to remove outdated liquor licensing conditions and encourage more live entertainment are being worked on in the Terrigal area at the moment. The bill increases operating and trading-hour flexibility and implements other administrative measures. It supports live music by an amendment to the regulation that allows live music venues to start their live performances at 6.00 p.m. on weeknights and after 12 noon on weekends. While the State's 24-hour economy is benefiting from these reforms, more work is

needed to support live music, help businesses grow and diversify, improve patron and staff safety, and further enhance the SEPP framework to activate precincts and rebuild New South Wales' night-life.

I acknowledge the incredible work that is being done by the team at Central Coast Music and Arts. They have the bubbling framework to create the change we need. They have set up the *Good Times Gig Guide* for anything happening on the Central Coast. For those who do not live on the Central Coast, they can easily check out what is happening across the coast. We just finished the amazing Gossy Weekender, in which more than 20 venues had live music across Gosford over the weekend. Central Coast Music and Arts has also just launched the inaugural Echo Mentorship program. We have lots of amazing icons, including Kasey Chambers, Felicity Urquhart and Josh Cunningham. They live on the coast, and they are setting up an Echo Mentorship program for four months of mentorship for four local artists who are stepping into the industry.

Lots of people are crying out for that opportunity. There is the fantastic example of our gorgeous Arabella Romi, a local artist who performed at a concert called Light Up. That beautiful event was put together by the community to celebrate the life of Audrey Griffin. I thank everyone who was involved in organising that. I thank the Birds of Tokyo, who came to Gosford to play the last song, *Lanterns*. There is a growing space for live music in the community. The people are definitely celebrating that. I back the comment made by the member for Parramatta who said in her contribution that it is not only about the music but also the framework that supports the night-time economy.

I thank the Archibald team at the Voco hotel in Gosford for the work they have done to support their new employees, such as giving them fantastic training. As a government, we must provide wraparound support such as public transport and community safety for people who live, work and participate in the night-time economy. I thank the Brisbane Water Local Area Command for the visible presence of its officers. They do a lot of work, but our community appreciates the visible presence of those officers on the street as part of the night-time economy.

The people of the Central Coast are willing to come to the party. Anyone else who wants to spend money on the beautiful Central Coast is welcome to come, daytime or night-time. The New South Wales Government has shown the grit to push through the changes needed to make the night-time economy a part of our daily lives. I thank Support Act for its work to help people who work in the music or other creative industries. That work is very important for people's wellbeing. On behalf of the live music Minister, I remind members that tomorrow is AusMusic T-Shirt Day.

Mr Jihad Dib: Are we doing karaoke now?

Ms LIESL TESCH: No karaoke, thanks. This legislation provides the framework for a more vibrant and energetic State. I support the bill.

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (16:48): I speak in support of the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025. These reforms are driven by the New South Wales Government's ongoing commitment to revitalising and strengthening our night-time economy, ensuring that it is safe, inclusive and vibrant for everyone who participates in it. To achieve that, the bill introduces a comprehensive package of targeted amendments to the Liquor Act 2007. The reforms are designed to enhance safety, reduce unnecessary burden on licensed venues and foster a more modern regulatory environment that supports business activity, a safe nightlife and live music performance.

It is not news to any member in the Chamber that I am a massive fan of live music. In fact, I am also a massive fan of recorded music and digitised music. Music is part of what creates us and forms our souls as human beings. What is wonderful about the bill is the idea that we are allowing people to safely, and with all the supports in the world, enjoy night-life and live music in a way that has been missing for a while. First and foremost, the bill strengthens protections for patrons and staff. I emphasise that point because that gets to the crux of the matter: The bill strengthens protections for patrons and staff. In relation to staff safety, the bill and amendments that will be made to the Liquor Regulation 2018 seek to enhance the ability of the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority to remove individuals from the hospitality industry who have been found to have engaged in sexual misconduct, drink spiking or other harmful behaviour.

In light of recent media reports regarding incidents of sexual misconduct at certain venues, this reform sends a clear and strong message that such conduct will not be tolerated, and that those who have put others at risk have no place in the hospitality industry. I do not believe that, because I have children, the day I gave birth I suddenly received the full gamut of empathy. It does not work like that. We either have empathy or we do not. As someone who was once a young woman—

Mr David Harris: Still!

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL: I'm well aware. As the mother of two young women, I love the reassurance the bill gives that our young people can go out into the community and be safe at these venues. We are strengthening their confidence in the people who work in the hospitality industry. The bill also allows the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority to suspend or cancel a liquor licence where a licensee has failed to prevent or address a significant risk to the safety of employees. Let me be clear: We are hitting them where it hurts in the only type of currency that they truly respect, which is their liquor licence.

The bill also makes substantial changes to improve the management of intoxicated patrons on licensed premises. Under the reforms, an intoxicated person can remain on the premises if they are receiving medical care and awaiting transportation away from the venue. That change means that licensees and managers will not have to choose between their duty of care to patrons and following the law. It will ensure appropriate supervision and care for intoxicated patrons if the licensee or manager chooses to keep them on the premises. However, it is important to note that it is not mandatory to keep intoxicated patrons on the premises and that the licensee or manager still has the right to evict that person. This is particularly the case if the venues are not equipped to supervise the patron or if the patron is behaving in an unruly, disruptive manner.

Like many in this Chamber, I have spent an inordinate amount of time throughout my young life working in late-night hospitality. In fact, a large chunk of my university degree days was spent doing the 12.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. shift at a 24-hour premises. As a roughly five foot one and, at the time, smaller woman, I found it really hard to deal with intoxicated patrons. I love that the bill gives workers the capacity to help if patrons need medical help or if they are waiting for their taxi or an ambulance to come. If they do not need any of that, they can be removed. The reforms build on the safety initiatives implemented under tranches 1 and 2 of the vibrancy reforms. The changes being brought about by the bill address core elements of safety in venues, whether it be the conduct of staff, including management and bar staff, or how patrons are treated within the venue.

Those changes will be accompanied by a range of guidance to be produced by Liquor and Gaming NSW, including statutory guidelines and other information that will be developed for licensees and staff. Those changes are part of the Government's efforts to enact cultural change within the industry, which will not happen overnight. The bill is a great example of the Minns Labor Government having the hard conversations and balancing the safety of patrons and staff. The changes are part of efforts to ensure that anyone can go out at night knowing that, wherever they go, they will remain safe and supported.

While the bill makes night-life safer for the people of New South Wales, it also continues the work this Government has done to support the live music and performance industry and reduce unnecessary barriers on late-night business activity. I say from experience that this has made a huge difference to my electorate. Night-life now exists that—let's be honest—did not exist before. There are live music venues. There are venues that provide afternoon music so that people can go home to bed afterwards. I am a big fan of that one.

Mr Jihad Dib: Of going to bed?

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL: Yes. It is handy. It all finishes at 6.00 p.m. You get some dinner and you go home. It is important that live music and performance in this State is looked after and that performers, who spend hours practising and crafting their performances, are working and earning money. It is important that they have the same protections in a safe and well-managed environment, like any other worker in New South Wales. The bill introduces a streamlined process to vary or revoke outdated licence conditions. Certain conditions imposed more than three years ago that restrict live music and performance will be automatically removed. For three years after the condition removal, Liquor and Gaming NSW will be given the ability to reimpose a noise-related condition where it is required to ensure that the venue does not emit excessive noise in the neighbourhood.

A new pathway will also be established for licensees to request a review of other conditions that limit late-night business activity, at no cost to the licensee. Together those changes will reduce red tape, provide venues with greater flexibility and encourage venues to expand and diversify their offerings. In a State where we fight against online gambling and spend hours doomscrolling on social media, we must give people another option. We must give people something to do. In conclusion, the Government's reforms strike a careful balance between safety and vibrancy. I commend the bill to the House.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): It being 5.00 p.m., pursuant to standing and sessional orders, debate is interrupted for the public interest debate. I set down resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour.

Public Interest Debate

WORKERS COMPENSATION LEGISLATION

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (17:00): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that members of the Legislative Council from across the political divide all agreed the Minns Labor Government's attempts to deny long-term compensation to seriously injured workers were unreasonable.
- (2) Notes no Labor member of the Legislative Council could bring themselves to call a division on their betrayal of vulnerable injured workers in New South Wales.
- (3) Calls on the Minns Labor Government to stop putting politics ahead of necessary reform and to work with the Opposition to limit claims arising from reasonable management actions to drive down premiums while protecting seriously injured workers.

I am pleased to move this important motion in the Chamber today. I am not surprised that many Government members are not present in the Chamber, because the reality is they go missing every time we talk about workers compensation. They go missing during votes and in the media. They are all embarrassed about it. The reality is that every member of the Labor Party who signed the pledge is now simply lying—and there are plenty of them. In fact, 43 Labor MPs signed the pledge. They are all hypocrites. I am delighted that the member for Cessnock and the member for Auburn are quite proudly raising their hands right now, admitting that before the last election they signed a pledge to support injured workers. Yet in this place, when faced with legislation that could truly support injured workers in this State, what did those Government members do? They tried to prevent injured workers from accessing compensation that would support them at their most vulnerable. It is truly disgraceful.

I make it clear that the Opposition acknowledges that the New South Wales workers compensation scheme—including the Nominal Insurer, which covers 340,000 businesses, and the Treasury Managed Fund—needs reform. The Minns Labor Government, instead of doing the detailed work required to improve the way the scheme operates, has decided to save money by savagely axing any ongoing support for the small number of psychologically injured workers who are assessed by psychiatrists as having whole person impairment of between 21 per cent and 30 per cent. It is heartening to see more Government members coming into the Chamber. Dr Doug Andrews, the expert called by the Government to give evidence to the inquiry on the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, stated:

I cannot recall an injured worker who rated higher than 21% WPI who had also been determined by me or another assessor as fit to work in any capacity.

It is clear that the Opposition and many crossbench members do not support the Government's barbaric approach. That is exactly what happened in the other place, where a strong group of members from across the political divide came together to prevent the very harsh, savage and cruel reforms put forward by the Government. Thankfully for vulnerable workers across this State, those reforms were ended. It does not matter what narrative those opposite put forward; the truth is there was a broad coalition of members—I note the member for Newtown has entered the Chamber—ranging from The Greens all the way to very right-wing independent members of the upper House. That actually means that the Liberals and The Nationals are the sensible middle ground in this debate. Government members should take a minute to absorb that. So many political parties with different political views came together to stop the Government; it suggests that there is something seriously wrong about what it is trying to do to vulnerable workers in this State.

Every Government member in the Chamber right now has signed the pledge: the member for Heathcote, the member for Cessnock, the member for Leppington, the member for Auburn, the member for The Entrance, the member for Mount Druitt, the member for Shellharbour, the member for Gosford and the Minister for Emergency Services. What is the difference between those members and the member for Newtown? The member for Newtown signed the pledge and stuck to it. Government members should hang their heads in shame. The truth is that all they are interested in is playing politics. Minister after Minister has stood in this Chamber during question time and tried to shirk responsibility. But those opposite are in government. They should stand up for the injured workers in this State and do better.

Furthermore, every time those opposite talk about the impact they are having on small business, they fail to follow through on any of their words. They say they support small business, but when Minister Cotsis was asked in question time today about whether the Government would introduce caps on premiums to look after—and save—small businesses, what did she talk about? She talked about how the former Coalition Government kept premiums low. That is exactly what the Minister talked about during question time today, and it is now on the public record. Those opposite should have a look at it. Forty-three Labor MPs—including all the Labor members in the Chamber now—and nine Independents signed that pledge. There is an opportunity yet again for members to work together across the aisle on the new workers compensation bill that has been introduced by the Government.

The New South Wales injured workers resources group has posted a video this afternoon featuring the member for Sydney and the member for Wagga Wagga holding their pledges with the soundtrack of *Little Lies* in the background. That is the public perception—that people are shirking their duties to injured workers in this

State. Shame on those opposite for letting down businesses and injured workers in the State. Luckily both Chambers have many more sensible members—led by the Liberals and The Nationals—who have the interests of both at heart.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (17:07): I make a contribution to the workers compensation public interest debate. It is a good opportunity for me to talk about the journey I have been on with regard to workers compensation, having spent four years as the shadow Minister responsible for that portfolio between 2015 and 2019. During that time I met with countless injured workers who were about to be kicked off the scheme because of retrospective legislation introduced in 2012 by the then Liberal-Nationals Government. That legislation focused on workers who were already on the scheme, who had already had their matter heard by a court and who had already been guaranteed that they would receive lifetime support, both medical and financial. It stated, "Regardless of the legal status of your claim, regardless of the fact that you have been guaranteed support into your retirement age, regardless of the fact that the courts have ruled, regardless of the impacts on your life, we will retrospectively put a five-year end date on your claim."

The House should not lose sight of the fact that, interestingly, the letters advising those injured workers that their claims were terminated arrived the week before Christmas in 2018. To be fair and to give credit to Minister Dominello for doing one thing right, he put into place in his department a team of people who had the responsibility of measuring the number of self-harm incidents and suicides that came as a consequence of that. That letter arrived a week before Christmas. There is a lot of banter and debate about who agreed with whom and who took what position on workers compensation. I hope we can all agree on one thing: The financial position of the workers compensation scheme inherited by the now Labor Government was perilous. In fact, the Nominal Insurer is fundamentally insolvent.

Difficult conversations with the business sector needed to happen under the watch of the former Government. Conversations to ensure that premiums rose in accordance with the solvency need of the insurance fund were skipped. They did not have the conversations. They are proud of keeping premiums down at that time, but they lacked the courage for the conversation. They were fundamentally sending the Nominal Insurer into insolvency. The money held by and insured through the Nominal Insurer does not belong to the New South Wales Government. It belongs to the employers. It is not a toy for us to tinker with. It is an independent model, body and financial instrument that has to be solvent. With the flick of a pen, members opposite ignored that responsibility when they were in government.

Workers compensation is incredibly complicated and difficult, and it is never stagnant. Certainly, over recent decades, the Labor Party has had terrible, ferocious, necessary and unsatisfactory arguments with our workers. It is a difficult time at the moment because of the massive increase in mental health injury and damage. Paragraph (3) of the motion moved by the member for Miranda calls on the Labor Government to stop playing politics and work with the Opposition to limit claims arising from reasonable management. The Opposition amendments will make sure that a worker cannot claim against the scheme for sexist comment, racist comment, cultural comment or religious comment. Members opposite want to remove the opportunity for a worker exposed to such comments to make a claim. That is how they will limit frontline claims. The member who moved this motion doubled down by asking the same question in question time today. If that is what they stand for, Opposition members should put out a brochure and tell the entire community. I condemn this motion that the House is debating this afternoon.

Ms MONICA TUDEHOPE (Epping) (17:12): I quote words spoken in the other place in the second reading debate on the bill, "The measure of a government is not how it treats the strong but how it treats the broken." This Government could not have done a worse job of treating the broken. Today, Russell Crowe gave the eulogy at the funeral of John Laws. I was reminded of his most famous *Gladiator*. With apologies to Russell, I will bastardise a line from that script and ask those opposite, "Are you not embarrassed?" Are they not embarrassed to have sold out the most injured workers? Are they not embarrassed to have signed a pledge that supported injured workers that they now renege on? Are they not embarrassed to have put their word and name to a pledge that they now vote against in this place? If that does not corrode democracy and trust in our political system, I do not know what does.

Those opposite are so power hungry that they will do anything, including step over injured workers who have suffered such serious psychosocial injury that they cannot work. Government members do not care about these workers. They do not have integrity. They only care about one thing: power. How embarrassing for the Labor Party of New South Wales. If Government members want to pretend that they care about the financial sustainability of the scheme and supporting businesses, then they can get on board and support the bill we introduced in the upper House to reform the front end of the scheme. Why? Because every review into workers compensation has found the same thing: the real savings are found at the front end.

The Labor Government took the lazy policymaking approach and cut off workers from the back end. It has cut off workers with a lazy policy approach. The Treasurer needs budget savings, and the member for Cessnock pretends that the Nominal Insurer is not linked to the budget. But the Government is the biggest employer. It has to make contributions to the scheme. It also has to reform—

Ms Anna Watson: You have no idea.

Ms MONICA TUDEHOPE: No idea? I worked in the Treasurer's office. I worked at icare. I have more of an idea than you do. The Government has to reform the front end of the scheme that includes New South Wales workers. It is the biggest employer in the State. They cannot pretend that they have no responsibility to the Nominal Insurer because they can pay money into the scheme and keep premiums low. The Minister for Work Health and Safety has a statutory power to contain premiums. Today in question time, that same Minister acknowledged that was what we did. Governments of Liberal and Labor persuasions have kept premiums low for businesses. They have the ability to do that now while they work on sensible reforms that do not kick injured workers to the kerb.

The Government is taking an axe to injured workers and to a workers compensation scheme that needs reform. They do not care about people with mental health injuries or the seriously injured people who cannot work. They only care about the Treasurer's spreadsheets. It is embarrassing that those opposite allowed this to pass through the Cabinet and caucus. No-one will remember the Treasurer's numbers, but everyone will remember the suicidal workers who the Government wanted to kick off the scheme because it could not engage with sensible reforms that we put forward in the upper House. If members opposite care about workers and businesses, they should get on board with our sensible amendments to reform the front end of the scheme.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (17:17): That was extraordinary. For the benefit of the member for Epping, there is a Nominal Fund and a Treasury Managed Fund. Public servants can correct me if I am wrong, but Treasury does not manage the Nominal Fund. When the member is next at Treasury or icare, perhaps they can clear that up for her and explain how the system works. What is cruel? In 2012 I sat in this place when we had a workers compensation scheme under the Liberal Government that stopped supporting people after five years who had a leg amputated below the knee. The Liberal Government said, "We have to do cruel things to workers because the fund is in trouble. We have to ignore the global financial crisis." In the end, there was so much money in the scheme that it put those people back into the scheme in the 2015 reforms because its changes were so cruel and so harsh.

What did those opposite do after that? They decided to ignore accounting and economics and hold the premiums flat for eight years. At one stage, the break-even point on the premiums and actual premiums taken in had an 18 per cent gap. The Liberals say that the workers should put their hand in their pocket to fund the scheme that pays the workers whose scheme it is in the first place. That is the Liberal solution to how to fix the workers compensation scheme. They did not do the front-end things that they were advised to do. For a decade I sat on the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice, which had oversight of the State Insurance Regulatory Authority [SIRA] and icare. Time and again, workers would give evidence about the failures in the system and how after over a year with a psychological injury, they could not get their caseworkers—or anyone—to arrange an appointment for them. The committee's report of the 2023 Review of the Workers Compensation Scheme quoted the experience of injured workers. One stated:

The NSW workers compensation system has not only failed to support me in my recovery, but has in numerous ways exacerbated my existing psychological injury, and undoubtedly caused a secondary iatrogenic injury.

Another stated:

The biggest problem being that the system has become so dysfunctional that it is traumatising injured workers unnecessarily. So not only does this jeopardise recovery, it creates barriers to retraining or returning to work ...

That is what happened under the former Government's scheme.

Mr Clayton Barr: What year was that?

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ: That is evidence from 2023. The former Government was told time and again that it needed to make changes. The previous chief executive of SIRA emphasised that the majority of psychological injury claims within the public service were due to modifiable workplace factors. That is when 49 per cent of all psychological injury claims made under the Treasury Managed Fund were coming from teachers, health workers and justice workers. The former Government was told time and again to fix the system, add caseworkers and invest more money to help people get through the system. People were getting caught in the system; they could not get out and they could not get help. One thing that will absolutely happen under this Government's scheme is a wraparound psychological support service for injured workers trying to navigate the claims process.

This chart shows what the claims process for icare looked like under members opposite. The changes the now Opposition made in 2012 absolutely gutted the system. Those injured workers who had not taken a lump sum settlement expected to receive support for the rest of their lives because they were told that their condition would always be looked after, but they found themselves completely cut off. Regarding suicide rates, who checked in on the one in four injured workers who had secondary psychological injuries and wanted to commit suicide? That was the result of the Liberal Government's 2012 changes to the workers compensation system. Members opposite should not lecture me about cruelty. I have seen cruelty and its name is the Liberal Party.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (17:22): I contribute to this important public interest debate motion, moved by the member for Miranda. This issue is well and truly in the public interest. We are talking about seriously injured workers, businesses with premiums going through the roof, and people who have suffered greatly for doing nothing more than getting out of bed, packing their lunch and going to work. The Opposition believes the system needs reform, and we have been open about that. If the Minns Labor Government were serious about managing costs, it would start at the cause: claims management, ambiguous definitions and poor implementation of return to work programs.

Something about Labor's process is not right. Labor is trying to do something that is not right. That is evidenced by the Premier and the Treasurer, who have been desperate to pass these changes to the workers compensation legislation at all costs. Since Labor started tinkering with the system, any time its members are asked questions in both the lower House and the upper House, they blow up deluxe. The bill is not just about whole person impairment; it is about premiums and the significant and crippling costs to business. There is no modelling and no mechanism. Labor is not saying how businesses will benefit from this new scheme. There is smoke, and where there is smoke, there is fire. Labor is hiding behind a raft of complex measures. It should own up to the fact that the bill is about Treasury; it is about the Government's coffers. It is not about workers or business. Labor is using a sneaky, complex process to falsely claim that premiums will go down.

I have listened as a keen observer to this whole debate in the lower House because business owners in my electorate have come to me saying that premiums are crippling them. They are asking for relief and want to know how premiums will go down. But Labor is using sneaky, tricky pathways, complex language. There is smoke and mirrors from the Labor Government, but there is no modelling and no mechanism. Labor is not saying what the real benefit will be to businesses. The Government should own up and come clean about why its members blow up deluxe whenever they are asked about this policy.

Mr Nathan Hagarty: He has run out of pages.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I have got plenty of notes. Labor has been all politics and no policy for way too long. The people of New South Wales deserve better. The New South Wales Opposition remains committed to exploring a viable solution to this problem. Why has Labor not solved it yet? It cannot get members of Parliament to agree. If it were good policy, it would have gone through. Labor members are going down a dark hole and they know it. I call on the Government to work with the Opposition, put people ahead of politics, put businesses first by telling them what the problem is with their premiums, and then look after the most vulnerable in our community with a workers compensation scheme that is fit for purpose.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (17:26): I start by addressing a couple of the comments made by the member for Tamworth. This Government will work with any member in the best interests of workers in New South Wales. All members opposite had to do was come to us with the other seven or nine crossbenchers to work with the Government to get this bill through. Instead, they decided to play politics. The Government welcomes the opportunity to address the House on the workers compensation system in New South Wales and to outline the years of Liberal mismanagement that has led us to where we are today. We are debating this topic today because of the Liberal-Nationals Coalition's 2012 bastardisation of the workers compensation system. Labor watched from opposition as the former Government gutted the Workers Compensation Act like a bluefin tuna. It was completely decimated. The very next year those opposite went after, and wiped out, the police death and disability benefits. They were like the razor gang of New South Wales for 12 years. That is the kind of thing we saw from the former Government from the word go.

Now we are having this debate in 2025. As a result of Liberal Party policy in 2012, injured workers were committing suicide, becoming homeless and suffering from mental health issues. Their families were breaking down; there were divorces and kids were suffering. That is what we got under a Liberal-Nationals government. It is worth reminding the House that following last Thursday's 16-hour marathon debate in the Legislative Council, the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill was passed by this House yesterday. The bill must now be significantly modified because seven or nine constructive crossbench members worked with the Government to put forward a compromised package. Compromise and collaboration are key. As usual, the Liberals and The Nationals are not interested in compromise or collaboration. They are more interested in using mind-numbing names, like we heard from the member for Epping and, before that, the member for Miranda.

I want to be clear: These amendments were publicly tabled in the Legislative Council but never moved. The Opposition had an opportunity to call for a vote and they never did. Despite being available to every member, including those opposite, the amendments sat on the table for months. Those amendments included both the substantive improvements and necessary clarifications to address the concerns that were raised during the Legislative Council's inquiries, but those opposite never took the opportunity to call for a vote. They would rather play politics than get on with doing the job. That alone should put beyond any doubt that the Government is prepared to compromise. We are prepared to do what is necessary to avoid the steep and devastating premium increases that would otherwise hit small businesses, charities, disability providers, arts organisations and even our schools.

What have the Liberals done? They have spent their time blocking reform, aligning themselves with the likes of Mark Latham. It does not get any worse. He is at the bottom of the political barrel, and those opposite are more than happy to jump into bed with him. It is unbelievable. They are more interested in playing politics than protecting employers and workers. Thanks to Liberal Party tactics, premiums in New South Wales will become the worst in the country. Liberal members will wear this like an albatross around their necks forever if they do not start discussing compromises with the Government. Businesses, charities and the disability sector will pay more, as will arts and community organisations across the State.

This situation was avoidable, but those opposite did not want to avoid it because they were more interested in playing politics than getting the job done. The Government has made every effort to protect employers from the massive premium hikes that are now looming. We have negotiated, amended, compromised and engaged in good faith. The crossbench has done the same, and I thank them for that. But the Liberal-Nationals Coalition has shown more interest in political theatre than in the welfare of the 340,000 employees and employers who rely on a stable and sustainable workers compensation scheme. They will stand condemned.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (17:31): This matter is serious.

Ms Eleni Petinos: Point of order: Does the member for Sydney need to seek leave to make a contribution?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): No.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH: Opposition members did not want me to speak or to add some honesty to what is happening. They clearly still do not want me to speak because they want to talk over me during my entire contribution. If we do not act to reform the system and bring premiums down, businesses will close, services will stop and jobs will be lost. That is why I think we should amend the public interest debate motion with some honesty. I move:

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

- (1) Holds the Liberal-Nationals coalition responsible for the unfair insurance premium increases expected to hit not-for-profit organisations and small businesses across New South Wales, because of their current position on workers compensation reforms.
- (2) Notes that Business NSW and NCOSS have urged the Coalition to support the compromise solution for workers compensation put forward by Independent members of the Legislative Assembly.
- (3) Gives the Coalition till Friday 28 November to rethink its position, and work with the Government and Legislative Assembly Independents to prevent the job losses and service cuts that will result from the Coalition voting with The Greens and Mark Latham, MLC, to block meaningful reform that would reduce premiums.
- (4) Notes the Coalition voted with Mark Latham, MLC, to support their joint amendments to protect victims and workplace sexual harassers from being held accountable for their actions.
- (5) Notes that the current tool for assessing psychological injuries is not fit for purpose and calls for reform in the interests of injured workers and a sustainable workers compensation scheme for all.

What members of the Coalition have not told the House—but, fortunately, members of the Government have—is that their reform is to basically prevent any worker with a psychological injury arising from racism, sexual harassment or other forms of abuse from entering the scheme. The workers that the Coalition is not talking about are the small business owners—about 340,000 of them. I am a former small business owner.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): The Clerk will stop the clock. I generally allow a bit of robust debate and interjection for public interest debates because it adds to the spirit of the debate. However, that does not work when there are so many interjections that the member speaking cannot be heard. I remind all members to behave according to parliamentary etiquette.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH: Those small business owners, who are not covered by the workers compensation scheme in many cases, will have to cop the increases. When the Coalition tells members that they are concerned about injured workers, that is about as believable as Mark Latham's new hair colour. The Independents in this place put forward in good faith a compromised position that protects existing workers in the

scheme, that staggers the increase of whole person impairment to give this Parliament enough time to come up with a better tool that is fit for purpose. Up until last week, the Coalition has voted against a fairer system and against keeping premiums down. If we do not resolve this by next Friday, that leaves us with no option other than to send a strong message at the next election. As Craig Laundry said, every small business becomes a shopfront for a campaign against the Liberal Party.

I did a bit of workshopping and came up with some slogans. "Cut premiums, cut the Coalition out of the Legislative Council". The Hon. John Ruddick could use that one. "Put small businesses first, vote Liberals last". That could be a good one for a teal campaigning in Manly, Vaucluse, Willoughby or the North Shore. In the campaign fliers we could have on one side a closed shop and a worker who has lost their job, and on the other side we can have a picture of the Hon. Mark Latham and the Hon. Damien Tudehope smiling at one of their dinner dates. If Coalition members continue to want to wipe out small businesses, voters will wipe them out at the next election because their conduct in debate on the bill has been disgraceful, just as it has been during this debate.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I seek leave to make a contribution to the debate.

Leave not granted.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (17:37): In reply: I recognise the contributions of the member for Cessnock, the member for Epping, the member for Auburn, the member for Tamworth, the member for Shellharbour and member for Sydney on the public interest debate motion. I find it ironic that while those opposite are quite happy to make contributions on this motion today, they were nowhere to be seen in relation to the legislation. In fact, they were silent. That is because they are embarrassed. It does not matter how much they may want to, they cannot rewrite history.

The member for Shellharbour somehow had the audacity to stand in this place and talk about the importance of working with the Coalition and crossbenchers. The ridiculous thing about that is, in saying so, she is ignoring the members, including crossbenchers, who worked together in the upper House to pass the amendments that came back to this place that her Government accepted as changes to the legislation. That broad working group included members from the Liberals, The Nationals, The Greens, the Animal Justice Party, the Libertarian Party and Independents. I do not understand why those opposite have such disdain for democracy that they think working with the crossbench in one Chamber seems to supersede efforts of a working group that come together in another Chamber. That is absolutely woeful. I have heard nothing as disgraceful as the contribution from the member for Shellharbour.

As for member for Sydney's contribution, that motion is absolutely disgraceful. The idea that a member would come into this place and try to put an ultimatum into a motion is simply disgraceful. He is going to have his soapbox to talk on for the next couple of hours in relation to the bill and the 40 amendments he is moving, so who knows why he felt the need to do that? But it is quite clear that those opposite cannot do anything in this place without trying to buy off the member for Sydney and give him exactly what he wants—

Mr Alex Greenwich: Point of order—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): The member for Sydney rises on a point of order. The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Alex Greenwich: If the member for Miranda wants to make those kinds of personal comments, she must do so by way of substantive motion. Members should not be doing it in the context of the debate. It exposes the weakness of their arguments.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): I uphold the point of order.

Ms ELENi PETINOS: The truth is that those opposite have let down injured workers in this State. They failed to get the numbers in the upper House and it upset them so much that many of them have turned up here, yet they were silent on the matter when it came before this place previously. I hope to see each and every one of them get up to speak about workers compensation now, but they will be nowhere to be seen again, because they all know they have upset the union movement, they have upset injured workers across this State and they have absolutely nothing to take back to their communities to talk about. The truth is this bill was saved by the changes made in the other place, because, at the end of the day, those opposite have a lazy and cruel plan for workers compensation. All they did was take an axe to the people who need help the most.

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

The House divided.

Ayes51

Noes30
Majority.....21

AYES

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

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

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

NOES

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

Griffin, J
Henskens, A
Hodges, M
Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D
Moylan, B
Petinos, E
Preston, R
Provest, G

Singh, G
Sloane, K
Taylor, M
Thompson, T
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Tudehope, M
Wallace, J
Williams, R
Williamson, R (teller)

PAIRS

Car, P
Chanthivong, A

Speakman, M
James, T

Amendment agreed to.

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

The House divided.

Ayes51
Noes32
Majority.....19

AYES

Aitchison, J
Atalla, E
Bali, S
Barr, C
Butler, L
Butler, R
Catley, Y
Cotsis, S
Crakanthorp, T
Daley, M

Hagarty, N (teller)
Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Hoenig, R
Holland, M
Hornery, S
Kaliyanda, C
Kamper, S
Kirby, W

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

AYES

Dalton, H
Davis, D
Dib, J
Donato, P
Doyle, T
Finn, J
Greenwich, A

McDermott, H
McGirr, J
McInerney, K
McKeown, K
Mehan, D
Minns, C
O'Neill, M

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

NOES

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

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

Singh, G
Sloane, K
Taylor, M
Thompson, T
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Tudehope, M
Wallace, J
Williams, R
Williamson, R (teller)

PAIRS

Car, P
Chanthivong, A

Speakman, M
Saunders, D

Motion as amended agreed to.

Bills

**WORKERS COMPENSATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM AND MODERNISATION)
BILL 2025**

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 6 August 2025.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (17:54): I speak for the Opposition on the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025. It is not *deja vu* if you really have done the same thing before. This bill, apart from the bizarre inclusion of "reform and modernisation" in the title and two specific provisions which I will address shortly, is as identical to the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, which this House debated just three months ago, as Tweedledum was identical to Tweedledee. The evil at the heart of both bills is the same. The bills seek to demonise and disenfranchise those workers who have incurred serious and lasting psychological harm through a workplace injury, by lifting the degree of permanent impairment thresholds to 31 per cent both for ongoing financial support and medical treatment and for access to work injury damages claims for injuries caused by an employer's negligence.

These injured workers are to bear the brunt of the Treasurer's desperate attempt to save his out-of-control budget by cutting off financial and medical support from those with a serious psychological injury. The Labor Government blithely suggests that any needed supports will come instead from the NDIS, at the very time the Commonwealth is already making it harder for people with psychosocial disabilities to access it, and from the public health system, at a time when many psychiatrists have resigned from it because it is so badly under-resourced. Dr Doug Andrews, Senior Medical Assessor (Psychiatry) for the Personal Injury Commission, stated in evidence made public on 27 June 2025:

... I cannot recall an injured worker who rated higher than 21% WPI who had also been determined by me or another assessor as fit to work in any capacity.

But the Minister for Work Health and Safety brings this Tweedledum bill before us, claiming it would "reform" and "modernise" the workers compensation system. How? By cutting off support for psychologically injured workers who, because of the severity of their injury, are assessed as not "fit to work in any capacity" but who nonetheless fail to reach the new threshold of 31 per cent whole person impairment [WPI].

The Minister for Mental Health has referred to "evidence" provided by claims provider EML "of people with a whole person impairment of 21 to 30 per cent finding employment upon leaving the scheme". It is extraordinary that this is the sole source the Government can point to in its attempt to counter the evidence of experts with decades of experience. Despite the well-known risk that injured workers with serious psychological injuries may experience further harm from dealing with the workers compensation system, this survey was conducted without the required approval by an ethics committee.

EML reports that it called former claimants up to three times to try to make contact with them to engage them in this survey. The script provided by EML has the person conducting the survey tell the former claimant, "We're speaking with people who've finalised a worker's compensation claim to understand how we can improve support once the claim ends." This is bluntly misleading and deceptive, as EML has made clear that the only purpose of the survey was to attempt to gather evidence to challenge the claim that people with a psychological injury of between 21 per cent and 30 per cent are unfit for work.

Despite the full survey results, which were made public only in response to a question from the Opposition, showing that 72 per cent of former claimants thought that what would help most after their claim was finalised was "better mental health support", EML and the Minister for Mental Health have ignored this finding. The survey showed that one out of three of these former claimants has returned to work in some capacity, but there is no information on the number of hours or the nature of the work. It may just be occasional, poorly paid work. The provisions of this bill were referred for inquiry by the Legislative Council's Public Accountability and Works Committee. That inquiry found:

The claim by the Treasurer in relation to injured workers with a degree of permanent impairment of between 21 per cent and 30 per cent that "if they are under 30 per cent, by definition they have capacity to work" was shown to be demonstrably false. The evidence is that the majority—perhaps nearly all—those with this degree of permanent impairment are not "fit to work in any capacity".

The inquiry also found:

Cutting off compensation payments ... for needed medical and related treatment, hospital treatment, ambulance service, workplace rehabilitation service and domestic assistance for injured workers with a degree of permanent impairment between 21 per cent and 30 per cent will, notwithstanding possible supports from the NDIS and the community mental health services, leave many of these injured workers without access to needed treatments, services and assistance.

One of the proposed changes to whole person impairment thresholds in both bills would be to prevent the making of a work injury damages claim where the injury has resulted from employer negligence unless the new 31 per cent threshold is reached. For example, a victim of a workplace sexual assault where employer negligence was involved will no longer have the right to bring a work injury damages claim unless she has a whole person impairment assessed as 31 per cent or higher.

I highlight a real-life but anonymised case of a worker who sustained a psychological injury in the course of employment in a corporate environment that involved regular work in an office environment and at various other locations in Sydney. The worker could be described as commercially successful, with a thriving career. In the course of performing those duties, the worker was violently sexually assaulted. The worker reported that to the employer and the authorities, and attempted to continue in employment after a short period off work. The employer was unsupportive of the worker and, as a result of that and the trauma of the incident, the worker experienced a deterioration of her psychological condition.

The decline in the worker's psychological condition manifested in neglected personal hygiene, which included skipping meals, a lack of bathing, weight gain, social isolation, a fear of travelling to unfamiliar areas, strained relationships, poor concentration and memory, and a total destruction of working capacity. Despite the seriousness of the worker's condition, she was only assessed at 19 per cent WPI. Under the bill, that victim of a violent workplace sexual assault would not be entitled to bring a work injury damages claim, on the basis that the injury was caused by the negligence of the employee. What a betrayal by Labor of injured workers and victims of sexual assault.

I will make some comments on the two specific provisions that enable us to distinguish between this Tweedledum bill and the earlier Tweedledee bill. Firstly, there is the pressing matter of Tweedledum's new rattle, also known as the digital work system duty. The bill provides that a "digital work system means an algorithm, artificial intelligence, automation, online platform or software". It would create a new duty on persons conducting a business or undertaking to ensure that any "allocation of work by or using the digital work system is without risks to the health and safety of any person". Curiously, when a similar provision was proposed in the other place on 26 June 2025 during the Committee stage of the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment (Workplace Protections) Bill 2025, on behalf of the Minister for Industrial Relations, the Parliamentary Secretary for Work Health and Safety said:

... care should be exercised in responding to this issue with an additional, specific and complex new duty. It risks increasing complexity without adding benefit.

He added:

... the Government thinks—

we—

would be well served by more consultation before the introduction of a new duty. SafeWork NSW will work with stakeholders, including unions and businesses, to explore how such a duty could work ...

No such consultation with businesses took place between 26 June and 6 August 2025, when the Minister introduced a bill with a provision creating such an "additional, specific and complex new duty". The Australian Industry Group, blindsided by the Minister, responded swiftly, stating:

The proposed changes are entirely unnecessary and the unclear obligations they would impose on industry will undoubtedly be a catalyst for workplace disputation.

It comes at a time when Safe Work Australia has been tasked to undertake a best practice review with a focus on how we can ensure harmonisation of WHS laws into the future. These amendments would instead take NSW on a more divergent path than is already in place.

It also comes at a time when the Federal Government is convening a roundtable discussion over matters that will include whether there is a need to regulate employers' implementation of artificial intelligence at a national level.

The last thing industry needs is to be saddled with the patchwork of inconsistent state and federal legislation that this Bill would create.

The Bill will regulate various matters that are best dealt with through our comprehensive and carefully developed national workplace relations laws.

These changes will have significant impacts both now and in the future. If pressed, the changes must be carefully considered and not pushed through Parliament.

The Minister has now managed to introduce a bill that is hated by injured workers, unions, medical and legal experts, and the business lobby. The Public Accountability and Works Committee received submissions on the issue from many stakeholders but had to cut short its consideration of stakeholder feedback to facilitate a request from the Labor Government to return the first bill to the Legislative Council so it could be finalised before the end of the 2025 sittings. As members know, that bill has been passed with amendments by both Houses and could be proclaimed today. Instead, the Government continues its political stunts by bringing forward this redundant bill, which faces certain defeat in the other place.

The second change from the earlier bill is to drop a provision that would have applied the new test for the approval of compensation for the cost of medical or hospital treatment and rehabilitation, being "reasonable and necessary" rather than just "reasonably necessary", to the Workers' Compensation (Dust Diseases) Act 1942. That change has merit but is hardly sufficient to justify the introduction of a new, otherwise identical bill. Indeed, that has now been appropriately addressed by an amendment to the original bill. In the second reading speech delivered on 6 August 2025, the Minister thanked the New South Wales Bar Association for its contribution to the Public Accountability and Works Committee inquiry. However, on 8 August 2025 the Bar Association said:

This week the NSW Government introduced a second bill to Parliament which, if passed, would substantially reduce the rights and entitlements of injured workers, particularly those who have suffered psychological injuries.

The 'second bill' – titled the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025 – is substantially the same as the NSW Government's Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, which is currently under examination by a Parliamentary inquiry of the Public Accountability and Works Committee.

According to the Minister for Industrial Relations, the Hon. Sophie Cotsis MP, a second bill was required to be introduced as "the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill is currently stuck in committee in the other place [the Legislative Council], and there is no certainty of when the committee will allow the Legislative Council to vote on that bill."

The NSW Bar Association strongly rejects this characterisation.

A majority of members in the Legislative Council agreed that the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill should be referred to an inquiry of the Public Accountability and Works Committee. The bill is not "stuck in committee". It is being given appropriate scrutiny in accordance with a decision of the Legislative Council.

Many stakeholders, including this Association, have engaged with the important work of the Public Accountability and Works Committee. The Association thanks the Committee, and its Chair, for the opportunity to provide a written submission and to appear before a public hearing of its inquiry.

Introducing a second bill to Parliament – while the substance of these proposed reforms is still being considered by a Parliamentary committee – disregards the Parliament, members of the Committee and the many organisations and individuals who have engaged in good faith with this Committee.

The Committee should be given the opportunity to review the proposed workers compensation reforms – without the NSW Government attempting to interfere with and subvert the decisions of the Legislative Council. These tactics have the potential to undermine the Parliament's democratic processes and hamstring the Committee's ability to develop evidence-based findings and recommendations.

In the Association's view, examination by the Public Accountability and Works Committee is of particular importance, as the NSW Government's proposed reforms, under either bill, would have far-reaching impacts on the rights of injured workers.

I make it abundantly clear that the Opposition will vote against the bill at the second reading for three reasons: firstly, because of the overwhelming evidence of the harm it would do to real people, the injured workers with the most serious psychological injuries; secondly, because it is lazy legislation that takes an axe to a scheme that needs careful consideration and investigation to bring real reform and modernisation, especially at the front end, to how claims are managed; and, thirdly, because in introducing it, the Government is showing disdain for both Houses of this Parliament, which have agreed to pass the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. It should be abundantly clear to all members of this place that, for those obvious reasons, the Coalition opposes the bill.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (18:10): In speaking in debate on the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025, I provide context around the Government's approach to workers compensation reform as a consequence of the debate, which has been back and forward. Yesterday the Treasurer issued a press release that provided a good outline of the Government's position. Firstly, the Government is pleased to see the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 pass with amendment in the other place. However, that is only part of the reform that the Government would like to see in place. The Treasurer was interviewed on 2GB this morning and was quite clear about where he would like to see workers compensation reform go. He ultimately said that the best thing we can do to make the system sustainable is to stop people being injured in the first place, but also to get them back to work faster. That is fundamentally what we want to do. The Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 goes part of the way to doing that, but not far enough.

The second step is to bring back debate on the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025 to reflect on the compromises being offered by Independent members. The Government expects amendments to be moved. We welcome the opportunity for members to consider those amendments. We believe that if those amendments are properly considered by the House, they will deepen the reform that we seek to introduce in this State. Thirdly, the Government will commission the Chief Psychiatrist to devise a better system for psychiatric assessment in workers compensation claims. Fourthly, the Government will ask icare to provide the State's policyholders with early advice about their upcoming premium rises. Fifthly, the Government will ask icare to alert policyholders of existing hardship provisions.

In that context, the Government notes that workers compensation premiums in this State have a "2 plus" in front of them as a percentage of employees' wages. Compare that with Queensland and Victoria, where workers compensation premiums have a "1" in front of them in terms of the percentage of pay roll, and it underlines the need to make our system more sustainable. As well as that, as the Treasurer said this morning, we need to get people back to work sooner, particularly those subject to psychological injury. The bill incorporates the amendments to the other bill that were agreed to in this place. There are fixes to improve the drafting of that bill, but there are two new changes. The first of those is to revise the test for access to medical benefits from "reasonably necessary" to "reasonable and necessary". Secondly, and importantly, the bill also includes a new duty in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 for persons conducting a business or undertaking that uses a digital work system to allocate work. That provision will ensure that, as far as reasonably practicable, the allocation of work using a digital work system is without risk to the health and safety of any person.

That takes me back to the days with the old Storemen and Packers' Union and our fight against engineered standards, which was a time and motion computer system introduced by several of the bigger retail warehouses in the State. It was a pretty vicious fight. It was a digital system that was used to dictate to workers how quickly they should get around a warehouse to pick an order. It is great to see that provision being brought into the Work Health and Safety Act. It will give that group of workers, as well as all other workers subject to digital direction in the workplace, some recourse to have safety and health concerns addressed on the shop floor.

The Government understands that amendments will be moved that seek to modify the bill, primarily to bring forward amendments to the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill that were tabled but not moved in the other place last week. The Government's view is that that should put beyond any doubt the question as to whether or not we, in this place, are prepared to compromise to avoid what would otherwise be very steep rises in premiums hitting small businesses, the charitable sector, the arts industry, the disability sector, schools and, ultimately, the people who work for those businesses. It is worth reminding members that the Government has resumed the debate because it is imperative that the Legislative Assembly express its support for the

constructive compromise position that will be put forward by the crossbench, rather than accept what comes to us from the other place. We have an opportunity for reform.

In speaking to the Government's approach to reform, I speak to my brothers and sisters in the trade union movement and my colleagues in Labor branches who have been critical of what they have heard about what is happening to workers compensation. They have heard all the bad things, but they often forget the important changes that we have brought in and that we seek to bring in to improve the ability for workers to exercise their rights and return to work. I remind people about the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment (Workplace Protections) Bill 2025, which, for the first time, inserted a return to work provision in the Industrial Relations Act 1996 to enable workplace representatives and unions to raise a dispute about a worker returning to work from workers compensation. It is something we always struggled with when I was practising in that area, because we were not allowed to. It was not a provision of the Industrial Relations Act. It now is, enabling workplace representatives to get their fellow workers back to work sooner rather than later.

There is a package of things that the Government wants to do to make the system more sustainable and, fundamentally, get workers back to work. The bill widens the scope of work health and safety risks and consequences that workers will be able to claim against. To deal with that widening, we also have to deal with the issue of sustainability and making sure that workers get back to work sooner rather than later and that premiums do not go out of control. It is a Labor approach to workplace health and safety. The Opposition's position was put in black and white on paper tonight. Those opposite said that to bring the system under control is to limit claims arising from reasonable management action to drive down premiums. A provision such as that would cut out a whole swathe of things that workers would be able to claim are workplace actions that have resulted in some sort of injury to their person or their psyche. We cannot go down that path. We want to go down a path where workers are able to claim for a broader range of workplace injuries and empower them to get back to work sooner rather than later. I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (18:19): I speak to the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025, which promises efficiency but risks abandoning our most vulnerable workers—a very delicate balance of people grappling with psychological injuries and small business sustainability. I am grateful for the consultation offered by the Treasurer and the Government in briefings on the bill and the work of the Minister. I am grateful for their willingness to engage and commit to dialogue. However, I must respectfully oppose the bill as it is offered at this point in time.

I thank Karena Nicholls of Coutts legal firm for her assistance and information on what it is like on the ground for workers and for lawyers representing those most damaged. The advice comes from someone who represents 150 workers—60 with psychological claims. Karena Nicholls, a seasoned practitioner since 2004, warns that undefined terms create complexity, uncertainty and delay. We all want to help workers, some of whom are desperate to heal and return to work but their recovery is stalled by very poor communication and a worker-versus-insurer mentality. A huge worry for community workers is that raising the whole person impairment threshold could lock out hundreds of them from support. Karena describes the danger that those failings could lead to suicidal clients and also the long time frames of assessments, with at least a two-month waiting period for urgent help.

The Government's briefings highlighted some adjustments being made, such as removing the tribunal requirement, introducing merit reviews by expert panels and ensuring that workers do not repay 75 per cent pre-injury payments if found ineligible. Those are steps forward to encourage return to work stopping over prolonged disputes. The other side of the debate is that premiums are set to rise: some \$4.25 billion in 2026 climbing to \$5.34 billion by 2028. Businesses in Wollondilly are already stretched and face higher costs. I am not sure that there is clear evidence that the reforms will stabilise the scheme into the future. Also, past Government decisions to reduce premiums and divert Treasury Managed Fund surpluses should not now penalise injured workers.

The amendments that are about to be presented by my colleague the member for Sydney offer some hope. I hope they address the core issues and that a system will be developed that supports workers and does not obstruct their recovery. I urge the House to pause and think. I know it is hard to put aside politics and collaborate on a system that balances sustainability of business and also looks after injured workers. Both groups deserve a system that works for them—on the one hand, a system that heals, not one that hurries workers out the door, and, on the other hand, keeps the doors of businesses open.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (18:22): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025 and say at the outset that The Greens do not support the bill. It is the Labor Government's second attempt—desperate attempt—to sacrifice the State's injured workers in order to solve a budget crisis for icare that it has confected itself. Imagine being so determined to cause further harm and inflict further stress and uncertainty onto injured workers that you would

break your pre-election pledge to protect injured workers and go on a roadshow to whip up support for your heartless actions within the business community, and when you still do not convince the Opposition and The Greens to back your cruel legislation, you come back and have a second attempt.

Just yesterday, in this Chamber, we passed the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, which in its original form sought to more than double the whole person impairment threshold from 15 per cent to 31 per cent for workers seeking support for longer than 2½ years through the workers compensation scheme for a psychological injury. Thanks in no small part to the work of my Greens colleague in the other place, Ms Abigail Boyd, the provisions that would have enabled that increased threshold, which experts and unions agree would have disastrous effects on injured workers, were removed in the other place. The Labor Government failed to implement its desired reforms, so here we are back again.

The bill seeks to raise the whole person impairment threshold to 25 per cent from December 2025 and then increase it again to greater than 30 per cent just six months later on 1 July 2026. That is despite the overwhelming evidence heard throughout debate on the original workers compensation bill—and indeed during the Public Accountability and Works Committee [PAWC] inquiry into that bill and parts of the one we are debating today—that raising the current threshold of 15 per cent would have absolutely devastating impacts. Throughout the PAWC inquiry, chaired by my Greens colleague Ms Abigail Boyd, expert after expert lined up to agree with that assessment—which is also what we have been hearing from injured workers for a long time—and to provide evidence against raising the whole person impairment test.

Doug Andrews, a senior medical assessor at the Personal Injury Commission, told the inquiry that he could not recall anybody with more than 21 per cent impairment who was able to work. Unions NSW secretary Mark Morey warned that raising the threshold so steeply would disqualify the majority of workers with permanent psychological injuries from ongoing support. He said, "At 30 per cent, you're essentially catatonic." Multiple witnesses frankly acknowledged that, if the threshold for long-term support was increased to 31 per cent, it would result in self-harm and suicide for those who rely on support. That the Labor Government and members of this place knew all of this—heard all of this evidence—and nonetheless sought to raise the threshold is nothing short of appalling. That they introduced the bill we are debating today while that inquiry was ongoing and experts were providing evidence along the lines that I have just outlined is absolutely despicable.

The arrogance and lack of compassion during this debate towards the people we were elected to serve is truly disappointing. Even if we accept the premise that icare is in some sort of financial crisis and urgent reform is necessary to prevent its collapse, there are so many other options for how we can resolve it than putting additional stress and burden on injured workers. [*Quorum called for.*]

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

What just occurred demonstrates members' genuineness and willingness to engage with this debate rather than score political points. I sympathise with the point that injured workers, who are at the heart of this issue, continue to be used as a political football. The Labor Government's failure to stick to its pledge has created a political space for Liberal members to pretend that they care. The fact that the Labor Government knew all of that, and heard all of that evidence, and chose to do this is truly beyond belief. Even if we accept the premise that icare is in financial crisis and needs urgent reform to prevent its collapse, Labor had at least three clear options for how it could progress.

If icare was on the precipice of financial collapse, Labor could have forced businesses to pay up to cover the cost of bailing it out, grimaced and taken the hit to its own budget, or sold out injured workers—some of the people who have been doing it toughest in our community—in order to save some bucks. Unfortunately, Labor chose the third and worst option, just when we thought that it could not sink lower or be more confused about its values. Labor was once the party that stood up for, and was founded to support, vulnerable people. Labor members in this place remind us that, indeed, anything is possible. To be clear, there is very little evidence to support the claim that icare is in financial crisis at all.

The reforms before the House come at a time when icare's finances are on an upward trajectory, with the workers compensation scheme itself half a billion dollars richer today than it was when the reforms were announced back in May. The apparent financial precarity of icare is another convenient tool for the Government to shift the goalposts. First the issue was icare's bottom line, then it was business premiums, and then it was the State's workers compensation premiums. Now the Treasurer and Premier are travelling around the State talking about how charities and not-for-profits—the same organisations that this Government chronically underfunds—will be forced to close before Christmas because their premiums will be hiked.

As the Opposition has made very clear, the Government could choose to direct icare to limit premium increases, but that misses the core point in this debate. Members in this place who are connected with the many

charities, organisations and not-for-profit groups, including art organisations, know they are feeling the pressures of the cost-of-living crisis. They are living on shoestring budgets to survive, yet they provide essential community support services like legal support, food provision, creativity support and other aspects of service to our community. We know those organisations are doing it tough. That is not new news.

The NSW Council of Social Service announced a platform before the last election demonstrating what the Government needed to do to address the problem, but this reform was not part of it. Many of those organisations have to compete, year after year, for a shrinking pool of government funding that barely meets their overhead costs. Every year, all members' electorate offices are written to with requests for letters of support to properly fund local services that are struggling desperately to deliver community supports. They are trying to fill the gaps left behind by governments. They are essentially functioning off the smell of an oily rag, and they are begging for an increase to their core funding.

An increase in premiums will certainly add to that financial pressure—there is no denying that—but the solution is not to cherry-pick and steal money from injured workers to address that financial crisis in our not-for-profit sector. The solution is staring the Government in the face: Increase core funding to those charities, not-for-profits and arts organisations so they can cover their wage bills, pay their staff adequately and cover their administration and operational costs. Do not wrench away support from injured workers in order to help balance the books because governments have failed to fund those sectors properly. Of course, that is exactly what Labor has chosen to do, unfortunately. The cruel irony is, when injured workers are cut off from support, they will have fewer community support organisations to help them. The community organisations that support the most vulnerable in our society will have to seek further support to ensure that their funding is not lost.

Labor now claims to be the saviour of small businesses. Even the Council of Small Business Organisations Australia urged Labor in its submission to the inquiry to "only proceed with State-based reforms where there are clear evidence-based justifications and minimal alternatives". I end with comments made by Mark Morey, Secretary of Unions NSW. He said:

We know raising the whole person impairment ... threshold will deprive seriously injured workers of the long-term mental health support and care they need to recover.

The recent parliamentary inquiry was clear: Increasing the threshold will leave injured workers behind. It is the wrong reform, and it will cause real harm. Therefore, The Greens oppose the bill.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (18:34): It is our duty as legislators to resolve complex challenges, including delivering a workers compensation system that treats injured workers with dignity and support, helps them return to work if they can, and is financially sustainable. I support the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025, although with amendments that I will move at the consideration in detail stage to improve fairness for injured workers and ensure the viability of the scheme. I worked on a number of amendments with my crossbench colleagues in an attempt to achieve a compromise following a stalemate that saw the original legislation stuck in the other place for the better part of a year.

Some of our amendments to that workers compensation amendment bill successfully passed. They include the following: Lump-sum payments will continue to be available for workers with primary psychological injuries if their permanent impairment is 15 per cent of a whole person impairment [WPI]; insurers will not be able to pursue injured workers in court without evidence that their case has a reasonable prospect of success, and the cost of action is proportionate to the claim; and workers with dust diseases will retain the lower threshold for accessing medical treatment and care. But the workers compensation system will continue to fall into deficit, redirecting much-needed State funds from infrastructure and services, and requiring massive premium hikes for small businesses and not-for-profit service providers across New South Wales.

Frontline charities are cutting vital services because of escalating premiums. In response to the Independents' compromise, non-government peak organisations and not-for-profits, including the NSW Council of Social Service, National Disability Services, Domestic Violence NSW, Wesley Mission and AbSec, urged the Parliament to pass the reforms, with our amendments, to bring premiums down. Businesses in the State are being smashed. Business NSW has reported that one in five businesses will go broke if we do not slow premium rises. Business NSW also called for support for the amended package. When we talk about businesses, we are not just talking about a sign out front; we are talking about the people who run those businesses. They will have to cop premium increases, and their lives may be upended to pay for that.

Of course, it is not only premium holders who are suffering. The system fails to treat injured workers with dignity, particularly those with psychological injuries. They are trapped in a system that dominates their lives, causing them ongoing emotional distress, with little help to return to work. Workers with psychological injuries are not being serviced by a modern, objective tool for measuring permanent impairment. The psychological impairment rating scale [PIRS] was developed in the 1990s, adapted from tools to measure physical injuries, and

is widely criticised as outdated and no longer fit for purpose. The 2023 Standing Committee on Law and Justice review of the workers compensation scheme recommended a review to determine if it is still an effective tool. Unions have long criticised its use.

Other States have reformed the tool they use to assess psychological impairment to achieve better consistency, objectivity and protections. The Independents' package of reform includes a review into the PIRS by the Chief Psychiatrist, who will be required to recommend a new tool. The Chief Psychiatrist will provide a report to Parliament within 18 months. The expert panel will review the recommendations and report to Parliament by April 2028. The review will give us the information we need to determine the fairest way to measure impairment and compensate workers with psychological injuries, well before any worker is impacted by the whole person impairment changes.

While the Chief Psychiatrist review is aimed at delivering a better and fairer system for workers with psychological injuries, business needs the certainty of clear, predictable outcomes. The amendments will therefore support an increase in whole person impairment thresholds to access weekly payments after 130 weeks for workers with primary psychological injuries, and to sue for damages. Fundamental to the reform package put forward by Independent members of the Legislative Assembly was addressing the two problems we are dealing with. We have the wrong tool to measure psychological injuries, and premiums are increasing. Our suite of amendments seeks to replace that tool with a fairer system based on expert advice and to delay the increase in WPI to allow the Parliament to address that, bringing premiums down. We are trying to find a way forward that will prevent businesses closing their doors, people losing their jobs and services being cut.

In our proposal, the first increase to weekly payments would occur on 1 July 2026—at 25 per cent, in line with the bill—with the second and third increases set at 27 per cent on 1 July 2027 and 28 per cent on 1 July 2029. That is lower than the proposed 31 per cent but high enough to bring premiums down. It should be noted that those dates relate to when an injury is notified, not when the whole person impairment is assessed. Those proposed thresholds are fairer and will provide entitlements to more injured workers than the thresholds in the bill. Preserving the existing 15 per cent whole person impairment threshold for access to lump sums for non-economic compensation will provide an additional safeguard for injured workers should we fail to reform the whole person impairment for psychological injuries. Lump sum payments can be substantial, are tax free and are in addition to commutations. They could be enough to pay for a deposit on a home.

I will also move amendments to protect workers who experience psychological injury from the death of someone in their care, to allow the Industrial Relations Commission to hear return to work disputes and to entitle witnesses in the Industrial Relations Commission to apply for protection against self-incrimination. Those amendments will also remove clauses and sections that have already been passed by the previous workers compensation bill. We know that workers compensation is broken and the bill, with amendments, provides the Parliament with the best pathway to achieve a healthy, functional and sustainable safeguard for injured workers.

I acknowledge my crossbench colleagues who worked cooperatively and in good faith to get us here, including the member for Wollondilly, the member for Lake Macquarie, the member for Wagga Wagga, the member for Pittwater, the member for Murray, the member for Wakehurst, the member for Barwon and the member for Orange, as well as the Hon. Jeremy Buckingham, MLC. I acknowledge that the focus should be on all the injured workers, who have been subjected to a long and protracted debate. That cannot be good for their emotional wellbeing. I hope the Parliament can progress with reforms that provide injured workers with certainty into the future and a financially sustainable system.

I urge the Parliament to continue working to get this right. The Legislative Assembly is back this Friday. We can negotiate further and pass a reform that protects injured workers and keeps premiums down. We must do that not in the way that the Coalition is suggesting, which is to cut out injured workers from the scheme, and not in the way that others are suggesting, which is to freeze premiums and redirect funds from other services and infrastructure projects to pay for it, but with sensible amendments like those suggested by Independent members of the Legislative Assembly. For months they have worked on this closely and collegially with the Government and the Treasurer, whose office I commend. I commend the bill with amendments.

Ms Tamara Smith: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 154, the "same question" rule. I have sought advice from the Table Office, and it is a matter for the Speaker to rule on. The Greens argue that the bill needs to be disallowed. The same question is being put that has already been put. The bill is substantially the same bill that we have already passed but that has not been assented to by the Governor. We ask for a ruling under Standing Order 154. We argue that the circumstances over the past two days have certainly not changed.

Mr Jihad Dib: To the point of order: I note that the short and long titles of the bills are quite different. On that basis alone, it is not the same question before the House. There are sufficient differences between the two

bills. The foreshadowed amendments, to be debated shortly, mean that the bill currently before us will be significantly modified to bring forward the constructive compromise offered by seven members of the crossbench. They were not dealt with by the Legislative Council last week because they were not moved. Additionally, the Government notes that the sections that overlap with the previous bill will be omitted by the amendments lodged by the member for Sydney. All that will be left are a number of key provisions that should remove the substance of the member's point of order. The bill needs to be debated because the previous bill's provisions relating to the key question of whole person impairment [WPI] thresholds were completely gutted by the Legislative Council. A key subject matter for our consideration was not dealt with by the first bill.

The crucial question of financial sustainability in the workers compensation scheme as a whole hinges on whether the Parliament adjusts the whole person impairment thresholds used to determine access to work injury damages and weekly payments beyond the 130-week maximum. The current bill would set the threshold to 25 per cent and then to 31 per cent from 1 July 2026. The Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, as amended by the Opposition in the name of the shadow Treasurer, did not include any new thresholds. The Government maintains that that is the wrong position. The bill needs to be debated with the amendments foreshadowed by the member for Sydney because complacently leaving WPI thresholds untouched would have significant implications for the financial sustainability of the scheme and the premiums paid by 340,000 employees in New South Wales. We have made clear the case for changes to thresholds. Those matters have been well ventilated in two separate Legislative Council inquiries and in the 16-hour debate last Thursday.

Mr Alex Greenwich: To the point of order: I understand the point of order taken by the member for Ballina. While the bill gets close to the line, I argue that it does not cross the line. The bill we are debating has provisions that were not in the bill previously introduced to the House, including provisions about digital workspaces and a number of other clean-ups. It has a different title, and we are also dealing with a different suite of reforms that ultimately passed the Legislative Council. As I said, this bill comes close to the line but does not cross it. We have also clearly heard the Government indicate support for a series of amendments foreshadowed by me that also have the support of Independent members of the Legislative Assembly, which would change the bill substantially.

While I respect the ability of the member for Ballina to take the point of order, it is very much at the last minute. The bill has been on the table for quite some time and this issue has taken up quite a lot of the Parliament's resources. To come into the Chamber at the last minute and take this point of order without notice is not proper process. If this was a concern, it should have been raised much sooner. Both the Government's second reading speech and the Opposition's contribution to the second reading debate outlined the differences between this bill and the one previously introduced. Mr Speaker, I urge you to rule against the point of order. I acknowledge that the bill comes close to the line, but I do not believe that it crosses it.

Mr Alister Henskens: To the point of order: I support the point of order taken under Standing Order 154 by the member for Ballina. I will say a few things about the standing order. When the member for Miranda delivered her contribution to the second reading debate, she started by saying that the bill is basically the same as the bill that had already been brought before the House. So, while the member for Sydney said that this issue has not been previously raised, it was raised in the Opposition's contribution to the second reading debate. There is also nothing in Standing Order 154 about when the point of order needs to be taken, so the complaint by the member for Sydney that it was taken too late does not accord with the standing orders.

Standing Order 154 also does not require absolute correspondence and complete identity. It says that a motion or amendment needs to be "the same in substance". That is what the member for Miranda put in her second reading debate contribution—and it is, in fact, the case. Standing Order 154 also requires that the motion or amendment be the same in substance "as any question already determined in the affirmative or negative in the same session". It is the same session of Parliament. All of the components of Standing Order 154 have been satisfied in this case.

For the member for Sydney to say that it comes close to the line but does not go over does not match the test under the standing order, which is that it is the same in substance—not identical, but the same in substance. To use the words of the member for Miranda, the bills are Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Mr Speaker, you should uphold this point of order under Standing Order 154 and rule that the bill should not be allowed to proceed. I have moved amendments in the past that you have ruled out of order because they were contrary to the standing orders. This falls into exactly the same category. The standing orders are the standing orders, and they should be complied with. The Opposition supports the application of the standing orders and seeks that you disallow the bill.

Ms Jenny Leong: To the point of order: I back in the comments made by my Greens colleague the member for Ballina. I highlight the fact that Standing Order 154 does not put any time frame on rulings. It does not give any specifics about when the point of order can be taken. It does give you, Mr Speaker, the power to "disallow any motion or amendment which is the same in substance as any question already determined in the affirmative

or in the negative in the same session". I appreciate the comments from the member for Sydney that members had notice of the bill a while ago and had time to consider it before now. However, most of us in this Chamber would have reasonably assumed—obviously wrongly—that after the passage of the amended version of the other workers compensation bill, which was returned to us after a very long sitting in the other place, this almost identical bill would no longer proceed.

On a number of occasions a bill introduced by the Opposition or the crossbench has lapsed because the Government introduced a version of its own. It was only reasonable for members to assume that that would happen to this bill in light of the previous workers compensation bill. That bill had clear passage, albeit in an amended form, because that is what happens in a democracy. Indeed, it seems that the Government likes amendments and collaboration from the crossbench in the Legislative Assembly, but it is hugely problematic when amendments from and collaboration with the crossbench happen in the other place. Leaving that aside, I do not think anyone would have expected the introduction of this bill, given its substantial similarity to the previous one and given all of the public commentary about it suggesting that the Government was having a second bite because it was worried that the original bill would be caught up in a committee. Even the Government's own actions suggest it is the same bill.

I absolutely take the point made by both the Minister and the member for Sydney that the Government will support the foreshadowed amendments to the bill. That may or may not be the case. We could also argue that the appropriate place to deal with some of those amendments was when the previous amended bill was returned from the Legislative Council. We considered that bill yesterday and there was capacity for members—although it would have been rushed—to move amendments to amend the Legislative Council's amendments. The elements taken out of that bill were absolutely in scope. That process has happened before. Instead, we now have the same bill before us again.

If the Government had been open to the member for Sydney moving amendments to the original bill, they could have been considered when the bill was returned to us from the other place. The need to invoke Standing Order 154 is the result of the fact that, instead, we are considering a bill that has already been considered by this House. It is important to ensure that members do not have the ability to move motions already voted on. Standing Order 154 is there for a reason. Wiser heads than mine have put it into the standing orders and we should uphold it.

Mr Alex Greenwich: Further to the point of order: Mr Speaker, I acknowledge that you do not need any further assistance, but I would like to make a further contribution. I raise two points about what has been said. First, speakers have referenced the bill as being almost the same as the previous one, but they are not the same. As I said before, there are provisions in this bill that were not in the first bill. That is a critical element in determining the question. Second—and I acknowledge the point made by the member for Newtown—we are unable to amend anything in a bill returned from the Legislative Council beyond the amendments of the Legislative Council. A number of my amendments fall outside of that scope. Therefore, the process the member suggested would not have been possible.

Notwithstanding my prior arguments, which I still obviously put to you, Mr Speaker, I also note the spirit of Standing Order 154 and its reference to section 5B of the Constitution Act, which deals with disagreements of the House on questions for which there has been a three-month gap in resolution. This House dealt with the previous bill more than three months ago. A lot has changed since then. It is also clear that, in both this debate and the earlier debate, there is a disagreement of the House. The standing order makes it clear that nothing in it should impact on dealing with disagreements of the House. I believe that is the vibe of what we are dealing with here. Mr Speaker, I wish you well in your deliberations.

Ms Eleni Petinos: To the point of order: I elaborate on points made by the member for Wairoa. Mr Speaker, I know you were not in the chair during my contribution to this debate, but I did extensively outline the many ways in which this bill was exactly the same as the original workers compensation bill that was put to—

The SPEAKER: I was in the chair for most of the member's contribution.

Ms Eleni Petinos: What I wish to draw your attention to was that aside from the opinions of the members in this House, on 8 August this year I cited the New South Wales Bar Association, which stated:

The 'second bill' — titled the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025 — is substantially the same as the NSW Government's Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025, which is currently under examination by a Parliamentary inquiry ...

The Bar Association cannot even determine the difference between the two bills—it is saying they are substantially the same. Surely members of this place recognise that as a reputable authority to rely on. I note the contribution of the Minister, who effectively said that the titles of the bills were different. With respect, the insertion of two words, being "reform" and "modernisation", do not substantially alter the matter for debate before

the House. As for the contribution of the member for Sydney, I appreciate that he is referring substantially to the amendments that he wishes to make to the bill. However, I would submit that Standing Order 154 does not allow for the interpretation of the current bill based on foreshadowed amendments. The substance of the bill to be considered by you at this point is the original bill that was introduced in this place. As the member for Wahroonga, the member for Ballina and the member for Newtown have said, the bills are substantially the same and not materially different to warrant, in our assessment, consideration of different bills.

Mr Jihad Dib: Further to the point of order: I acknowledge the contribution from the member for Miranda, and thank the other members who made contributions. I believe the House wants a decision fairly soon, but I make it clear that the difference between the bills is more than two words. The debate has demonstrated the substantial changes that were made to the bill and those that are proposed to be made. The Government has indicated that it will support the amendments in terms of stating our position. I believe there is an important difference between the two bills. The debate has been ongoing, and the opportunity is to continue that debate to make a decision.

Ms Tamara Smith: Further to the point of order: Mr Speaker, we are asking you to disallow the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025 based on Standing Order 154, "Same question not to be put". The House is hearing arguments about something that may or may not happen. I am not an expert on this; the Speaker and the Clerks are the experts. The Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill that was heavily amended in the Legislative Council has not been assented to by the Governor. My understanding is that this bill has references to that bill. I do not understand how that can be procedurally kosher, for want of a better word. We have heard that it will be different but Standing Order 154 does not refer to intention. The Minister says that the Government intends to support the amendments but that presumes it has the numbers. That presumes a whole lot of things. That is not what is on the table. That is not the standing order.

My concern is that the new bill, which is substantially the same bill, refers to another bill that has not been assented to by the Governor. How can that be proper procedure? Let us be clear: We are discussing democratic, parliamentary procedures. It has nothing to do with how clever we are at arguing. The point of order relates to the same question rule. We put it very strongly that the circumstances have not changed since the time that the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill came to this House from the Legislative Council.

Mr David Harris: To the point of order: The Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment (Reform and Modernisation) Bill 2025 is a new bill, or at least a substantially updated version. It is not a pure repeat of an identical bill. According to the *Legislation Review Committee Digest No. 34/58*, the current bill "revises, updates and improves upon" an earlier version of a workers compensation bill. It is not simply the same question raised again. The bill introduces new definitions, new processes for psychological injuries, new thresholds and even work health and safety reforms. The question is, is the bill substantially different to, or at least sufficiently amended from, any earlier proposals so as not to be caught by a same question disallowance. This bill has been substantially changed. Whilst it is on the same theme, new provisions are included in this bill. There is a very strong argument that it is not raising the same questions.

Ms Tamara Smith: Further to the point of order: Regarding your ruling, much smarter lawyers in here will talk about the substance rule in common law. I am very interested to know what the substance rule is in terms of legislation. Similar in substance does not mean identical. We have heard others put that case. Amendments do not change the substance of a bill.

Mr David Harris: Further to the point of order: The same question concept is very narrow and procedural. It is not usually used to block major Government legislation, unless it is a replay of exactly the same text or an unchanged proposal that Parliament has already rejected. Even with similar bills—because of this reform and modernisation bill—it is not likely to be considered the same in substance. Therefore, my argument does not change. The bill is similar, but it is different in substance. Therefore, Standing Order 154 does not apply.

The SPEAKER (19:06): I make a number of observations. We have heard meritorious argument from members on both sides. The member for Ballina has raised some very significant points that I do not wholly reject. It is for the Presiding Officer—the Speaker—to make the determination. The standing order states, "The Speaker may disallow"; it does not say, "The Speaker must". That is because there must be a level of subjectivity in considering the matter. For the information of members, I am unmoved by issues relating to future amendments. I apologise to the member for Sydney. I understand that this is a vehicle for future amendments, but I apply a linear method to everything we do in this place. We proceed step by step. We cannot predetermine what might happen down the road. Therefore, I discount those issues.

A number of other matters were raised, but I will not go into them now. The member for Wahroonga is correct in saying that I have ruled against him a number of times, particularly in the consideration in detail stage. But those matters are not the same. One matter in particular related to the long title of the bill, and I do not think that decision impinges on any ruling I make now. The member for Ballina is correct to say that the time frame is

not relevant. The standing orders are silent on the matter, so the member is within her rights to bring that forward. I am of the view that this is an untidy process. It is not a course that I would counsel anybody to pursue, but I am asked to decide whether it is a competent process.

The question is fairly narrow around the issue of motion or amendment, which is the same in substance. There is not a clear, strict definition of what that might be. It is a determination for me to make as Speaker. While I would say that some of the differences are not particularly significant at face value, they may well be significant to other parties. I take that into consideration in determining what is substantial or significant. I am inclined to let the matter proceed and allow the House to make its determination. I make it clear to the House that if that occurs and a division is subsequently called, it will be deferred for determination at a later time in accordance with the standing orders. At this stage, while the arguments are very much lineball and while I appreciate the merits of those arguments, I do not uphold the motion of disallowance. The debate may continue.

Ms Jenny Leong: Point of order: Mr Speaker, given we are not in a position to divide now, given your deliberations as Speaker and given the short notice, as pointed out by the member for Sydney, I wonder whether you would consider providing further guidance in relation to your decision to the House tomorrow morning to give us time to consider it. Members are not in a position to divide on the matter now and we have heard that the decision has been rushed. I think the significance and the seriousness of the matter is such that, if you wished to take additional time to make your ruling, I hope the House would grant you that time.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Newtown. Like other Speakers, I have had the benefit of counsel from the Clerks this afternoon. Certainly, my thoughts are not derived only from the debate, although I was better informed by that debate. I appreciate the point made by the member for Newtown, but I do not think time would change my determination. I might be able to articulate it more clearly.

Ms Jenny Leong: I will leave it there, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: I have considered the matter at length—longer than the time frame of this debate—because I thought it could be a problem, and I wanted to hear members' views. I do not support a motion of disallowance as argued by the member for Ballina. I call the Minister in reply.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (19:12): On behalf of Ms Sophie Cotsis: In reply: At the outset, I acknowledge my ministerial colleague the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety, who jointly shares this legislation, and the Treasurer. I thank those members who contributed to the debate. In particular, I acknowledge and thank the member for Miranda, the member for The Entrance, the member for Wollondilly, the member for Newtown and the member for Sydney. Following last Thursday's 16-hour marathon debate in the Legislative Council, this House passed the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. The bill currently before the House was significantly modified to reflect the constructive compromises offered by seven members of the crossbench, and we will return that package to the Legislative Council.

I note that the amendments about to be moved will bring forward provisions that were tabled but not moved in the Legislative Council last week. The amendments to be moved by the member for Sydney include both substantive amendments and amendments to address minor concerns and clarifications that were identified in the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. This debate should put beyond any doubt the question of whether the Government is prepared to compromise to avoid what would otherwise be very steep rises in premiums hitting small businesses, the charitable sector, the arts sector, the disability sector and even schools. I acknowledge every member who spoke, regardless of the position they adopted about this legislation, accepted that the impact of a premium increase will hit pretty hard, particularly in the not-for-profit and charity sectors. That is why the Government needs to make changes. The potential increase is projected to be 17 per cent, which will have an impact on services.

The Government wants to commission the Chief Psychiatrist to devise a better system for psychiatric assessment in relation to workers compensation claims. After nine months of this workers compensation debate, including two Legislative Council inquiries and reports, it is clear that the scheme needs better tools, regardless of what happens with the bill. The Government wants the Chief Psychiatrist to work through all the complex issues of how we judge impairment and how we judge whether a person has capacity to work, and to give us better options in the future. At the same time, the Government needs to shift its attention to getting the wider community ready to deal with some very steep increases in premiums following the Liberal Party's enthusiastic tactic of blocking meaningful reform. I note, in particular, that Opposition members seem to be suffering a little memory loss. Listening to them, we are led to believe they had little to do with where we are right now.

Let us remember that we are in the current position because of policies and actions, or the lack of positive actions, of the previous Government. As the Treasurer has said on many occasions—and his comments are absolutely on the mark—we can have the world's best workers compensation system, but if it is not sustainable and affordable and it cannot work, then it is only the world's best on paper. We need to get beyond that. I acknowledge the member for Sydney and other members—whether they agree or disagree with the points I am making—who said we need to find a compromise. This legislation signals a willingness to compromise with those who are willing to compromise and who understand we must find that very fine balance between making sure we support the worker and ensuring the scheme is sustainable. We need to remember that this legislation must support the worker by giving dignity back to someone who wants to work and helping them with all the things they require.

How about we start by front-ending things? Minister Cotsis has announced a package. Rather than dealing with an injured person through the workers compensation scheme, how good would it be if we could stop the injury from occurring in the first place? The focus has to be on providing support as soon as somebody needs it. In the past nine months we have all spoken to people who have told us their stories. Each story will stay with us. Every one of those stories is valuable because it is about a human being and their dignity and self-worth. We must strike a balance. We must make sure people get the treatment and support they need—retrain them to get back into work, if that is required—while at the same time maintaining a sustainable system.

The flow-on effect of changing the workers compensation system is that premiums will increase by up to 17 per cent. This is not a scare campaign. That increase will affect those involved in the charity sector—good people who do good things for other people—and those in the not-for-profit sector. We must accept that reality and why it is so important to achieve compromise. This Government has been willing to find a compromise. But alas we have seen a bit of political grandstanding and, worse than that, a bit of memory loss. We would all like things to be different, but we must consider where we are at.

As legislators, we must ask how we can make the best of this situation while never forgetting that, in the end, the scheme is about people. A lot of people have worked on this legislation and a lot of people are relying on us to get it right. With a scheme that at the moment is being topped up by between \$5 million to \$6 million a day, where is that money coming from? Will it come from the premiums? What things are being cut? There is no budget magic pudding or money tree that we can just grab it from. We need to focus on preventative measures, support and sustainability, because that is what people expect and want from us.

Businesses and charities will be sluggish with the worst premiums in the country. The situation would clearly have been avoided if the Liberal Party had shown more interest in siding with small businesses and charities by spending more time working towards a solution and less time playing politics. This is where we are because of the game of politics, rather than a desire to make things better and find a solution. It is worth reminding the House that the Government has resumed this debate because it is imperative that the Legislative Assembly express its support for the constructive compromise position put forward by the crossbench. The bill will then go to the other place, but it will not become law unless it is clear that the Liberal Party has changed its position. We call upon those opposite to take up this chance, in this House, to show their support for the crossbench amendments.

I acknowledge in advance the efforts of the crossbench and the willingness to find a compromise and come up with amendments. Since the crossbench amendments surfaced on 6 November, the Leader of the Opposition has not had a press conference, so we do not even know what his views are. He and his Coalition colleagues will show their views by voting today or tomorrow. We implore the Liberal Party to show the 340,000 businesses, charities and disability service providers that it is genuinely interested in coming to a solution. Otherwise, it remains for the Government to get our community ready for what will be some pretty steep rises in premiums. Our Government supports the offer and the prospect of compromise. The upcoming amendments provide a good framework for resolution of the problems currently plaguing the workers compensation system. I commend the bill to the House.

The SPEAKER: Before I put the question, I have received further advice on the suspension of standing orders and the intention behind it. According to precedent, the consideration in detail stage may proceed but the bill cannot pass the third reading stage tonight.

The question is that this bill be now read a second time. A division has been called for. I remind members that, in accordance with the resolution of the House of 15 October 2025, the conduct of the division is deferred until 10.30 a.m. on Thursday 20 November 2025.

Consideration in detail requested by Mr Alex Greenwich.

Consideration in Detail

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): By leave: I will deal with the bill in groups of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 to 5 be agreed to.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (19:23): By leave: I move my amendments Nos 1 to 5, 7 to 9, 11 to 15, 28, 32 and 34 to 36 on sheet c2025-313G in globo:

No. 1 Commencement—whole person impairment for psychological injury

Page 2, clause 2, line 6. Omit all words on the line. Insert instead—

This Act commences as follows—

- (a) for Schedules 1.1[2], [6], [16] and [18] and 2[22]—on 1 July 2026,
- (b) for Schedules 1.1[3], [7], [17] and [19] and 2[23]—on 1 July 2027,
- (c) for Schedules 1.1[3A], [7A], [17A] and [19A] and 2[23A]—on 1 July 2029,
- (d) otherwise—on a day or days to be appointed by proclamation.

No. 2 Omission of Schedule 1.1[1]—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987

Page 3, Schedule 1.1[1], lines 4–7. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 3 Whole person impairment for psychological injury—at least 25%

Page 3, Schedule 1.1[3], line 17. Omit "25%". Insert instead "at least 25%".

No. 4 Whole person impairment for psychological injury—more than 26%

Page 3, Schedule 1.1[3], line 17. Omit "31%". Insert instead "more than 26%".

No. 5 Whole person impairment for psychological injury—at least 28%

Page 3, Schedule 1.1. Insert after line 17—

[3A] Section 38(9), as inserted by item [2] and amended by item [3]

Omit "more than 26%" wherever occurring. Insert instead "at least 28%".

No. 7 Whole person impairment for psychological injury—more than 26%

Page 4, Schedule 1.1[7], line 18. Omit "25%". Insert instead "at least 25%".

No. 8 Whole person impairment for psychological injury—more than 26%

Page 4, Schedule 1.1[7], line 18. Omit "31%". Insert instead "more than 26%".

No. 9 Whole person impairment for psychological injury—at least 28%

Page 4, Schedule 1.1. Insert after line 18—

[7A] Section 39A(2), as inserted by item [6] and amended by item [7]

Omit "more than 26%" wherever occurring. Insert instead "at least 28%".

No. 11 Omission of Schedule 1.1[11] and [12]—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987

Page 5, Schedule 1.1[11] and [12], lines 19–24. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 12 Whole person impairment for psychological injury—more than 26% and at least 28%

Page 6, Schedule 1.1[17], lines 1 and 2. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

[17] Section 151DA(1)(a)(i), as inserted by item [16]

Omit the subparagraph. Insert instead—

- (i) whether the degree of permanent impairment of the injured worker is—
 - (A) at least 15% for a physical injury, or
 - (B) more than 26% for a psychological injury,

[17A] Section 151DA(1)(a)(i)(B), as inserted by item [17]

Omit "more than 26%". Insert instead "at least 28%".

No. 13 Degree of permanent impairment/whole person impairment for psychological injury—at least 25%

Page 6, Schedule 1.1[19], line 29. Omit "25%". Insert instead "at least 25%".

No. 14 Degree of permanent impairment/whole person impairment for psychological injury—more than 26%

Page 6, Schedule 1.1[19], line 29. Omit "31%". Insert instead "more than 26%".

No. 15 Degree of permanent impairment/whole person impairment for psychological injury—at least 28%

Page 6, Schedule 1.1. Insert after line 29—

[19A] Section 151H(2)(b), as inserted by item [18] and amended by item [19]

Omit "more than 26%". Insert instead "at least 28%".

No. 28 Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987

Page 38, Schedule 1.10. Insert after line 4—

Whole person impairment—at least 25%

The amendment to section 38 made by the amendment Act, Schedule 1.1[2], and section 39A as inserted by Schedule 1.1[6], apply only to a notification or claim for a primary psychological injury made on or after 1 July 2026.

Whole person impairment—more than 26%

The amendments to sections 38 and 39A made by the amendment Act, Schedule 1.1[3] and [7] apply only to a notification or claim for a primary psychological injury made on or after 1 July 2027.

Whole person impairment—at least 28%

The amendments to sections 38 and 39A made by the amendment Act, Schedule 1.1[3A] and [7A] apply only to a notification or claim for a primary psychological injury made on or after 1 July 2029.

Weekly payments after second entitlement period (after week 130)

The amendment to section 38 made by the amendment Act, Schedule 1.1[2] applies only to a primary psychological injury for which a notification or claim is made on or after 1 January 2027.

No. 32 Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987

Pages 40–43, Schedule 1.10, proposed clauses 18–27, line 18 on page 40 to line 26 on page 43. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

Claims for work injury damages made before 1 January 2027

(1) This clause applies if, before 1 January 2027, an injured worker—

- (a) makes a claim for lump sum compensation for the injury, and
- (b) serves a pre-filing statement for the injury.

(2) Section 151H, as in force before the commencement of the amendment Act, Schedule 1.1[18], applies to the worker's injury.

Note— In the event of a dispute about a defective pre-filing statement served before 1 January 2027, if there is a finding in favour of the worker, the pre-filing statement is taken to have been served before 1 January 2027.

(3) In this clause—

claim for lump sum compensation means a claim specifically seeking compensation under Part 3, Division 4.

Claims for work injury damages made before 1 January 2027—threshold dispute

(1) This clause applies if, before 1 January 2027—

- (a) an injured worker makes a claim for lump sum compensation for the injury, and
- (b) a threshold dispute is lodged in the Commission in relation to the claim.

(2) Section 151H, as in force before the commencement of the amendment Act, Schedule 1.1[18], applies to the worker's injury.

(3) For the purposes of calculating when the injured worker must serve a pre-filing statement for the injury, any period during which the threshold dispute is unresolved must not be included.

(4) In this clause—

claim for lump sum compensation means a claim specifically seeking compensation under Part 3, Division 4.

threshold dispute means—

- (a) a medical dispute about whether the degree of impairment of the injured worker is at least 15%, or
- (b) a medical dispute about whether the degree of permanent impairment of the injured worker is fully ascertainable, or
- (c) an appeal in relation to an assessment under—
 - (i) Part 6, or

(ii) the 1998 Act, Chapter 7, Part 7.

No. 34 **Amendment of Schedule 2—amendment of Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998**
Page 51, Schedule 2[23], line 36. Omit "25%". Insert instead "at least 25%".

No. 35 **Amendment of Schedule 2—amendment of Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998**
Page 51, Schedule 2[23], line 36. Omit "31%". Insert instead "more than 26%".

No. 36 **Amendment of Schedule 2—amendment of Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998**
Page 51, Schedule 2. Insert after line 36—

[23A] Section 314(1)(a)(ii), as inserted by item [22] and amended by item [23]

Omit "more than 26%". Insert instead "at least 28%".

To reduce premium increases next year, the amendments reflect the proposal of crossbench Legislative Assembly Independents to support an increase in whole person impairment [WPI] thresholds for weekly payments after 130 weeks for workers with primary psychological injuries. We believe our proposal has fairer thresholds than those in the Government's original proposal. Also, amendments that I will move shortly, which are in line with the Chief Psychiatrist's review, are an opportunity for us to adopt a new tool before any worker would be impacted in any way as a result of the new thresholds.

The first increase would commence on 1 July 2026 and would be a 25 per cent threshold, in line with the Government's first bill, with a second and third increase to 27 per cent on 1 July 2027 and 28 per cent on 1 July 2029, lower than the bill's proposed 31 per cent. The dates relate to when an injury is notified, not when the whole person impairment is assessed. The purpose of the amendments is to make sure we have a new, fairer system in place before any worker would be impacted by an increase in the WPI threshold. They give the Parliament until 2029 to put in place a fairer and better tool and ensure that premiums on small businesses and non-government organisations do not increase to unsustainable levels. I commend the amendments to the House.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (19:27): I support the amendments. Workers compensation reform is about making sure that the most seriously injured workers are protected now and into the future, and promoting return to work as the best way to support injured workers to recover and maximise their lifelong wellbeing, as I said in my speech in reply. The amendments adjust the whole person impairment thresholds used to determine access to work injury damages and weekly payments beyond the 130-week maximum. The current bill, as introduced, would have set that threshold to 25 per cent and then 31 per cent from 1 July 2026. The Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 as passed did not include those new thresholds. The Government maintains that that is the wrong position and that these amendments will have significant implications for the financial sustainability of the scheme and the premiums paid by employers in New South Wales.

We have made clear the case for these changes to thresholds. The matters have been well ventilated but bear reiteration. WPI thresholds do not provide as strict a test of eligibility as they did a decade ago. The number and proportion of claims exceeding the current thresholds has grown exponentially over recent years. Prior to 2012, around 3 per cent of psychological injury claims obtained a whole person impairment assessment of 15 per cent or higher. In contrast, around 10 years later, approximately 15 per cent of claims reach that level. That gradual erosion of thresholds is a significant contributor to escalating costs in the scheme. Because of that, adjusting the thresholds to mitigate that erosion is the largest single measure we can take to improve the financial sustainability of the scheme.

The evidence heard by the Public Accountability and Works Committee makes clear that work capacity and impairment are different things. That is set out in the dissenting statement in the committee report by the Hon. Bob Nanva, MLC, the Hon. Mark Buttigieg, MLC, and the Hon. Peter Primrose, MLC. To quote former Workers Compensation Independent Review Officer Mr Kim Garling, "When you talk about capacity for work, that has nothing to do with impairment." I understand those imperfections of the current assessment system will be the subject of a different amendment.

These amendments recognise the reality and implications of threshold erosion. However, they provide further concession to address the concerns raised in the Public Accountability and Works Committee and in other places that, over the past few years, very few claims have received impairment assessments of 31 per cent or greater. The Government had already made some compromises in respect of those concerns by including a pathway for the threshold to increase first to 25 per cent, before reaching 31 per cent in July 2026. The amendments offer a further compromise by raising the thresholds more slowly and to a lower maximum. The thresholds would increase over three increments to reach 28 per cent by July 2029 rather than 31 per cent by 2026. The Government

expects that the lower and flatter profile for threshold increases will mean that threshold erosion will have a greater impact than originally anticipated in the bill. Nonetheless, the Government will support the compromise position.

Furthermore, the amendments will not modify the impairment threshold that applies for permanent impairment lump sum compensation payments, which will remain at 15 per cent. That is a significant additional departure from the bill as introduced and will ensure that compensation payments for non-economic loss will continue to be available for the same assessed impairment as before. Overall, the amendments will strike a balance between protecting and supporting injured workers now and ensuring that injured workers in the future are also protected. That is a key driver of the workers compensation reforms. The scheme needs to be financially sustainable so that it can continue to support workers as New South Wales evolves and grows.

A scheme that offers seemingly generous support in the present is of little benefit if it needs to be paid for through drastically reduced support for workers injured in the future. It will also be of limited benefit if the premiums paid by businesses and not-for-profit employers continue to rise. All employers and small businesses, NGOs in particular, are facing increasing pressure from the premium increases that have been needed to offset growth in claims. Ongoing increases are not sustainable, while freezing premiums now would be irresponsible and would risk pushing the scheme further into deficit. The Government supports the amendment.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (19:31): I speak for the Opposition on the whole person impairment threshold amendments moved by the member for Sydney. It is little surprise that the Minister has endorsed the threshold changes, because we all know that the Government has outsourced to the member for Sydney the changes it tried and failed to get through the other place. While the Minister referred to the amendments as a compromise, they do not fall too far shy of what the Government tried to get through the upper House. It is hardly a compromise.

Yesterday the House agreed without dissent to accept amendments made in the other place to the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. They included a set of amendments passed without division to remove all provisions in the bill that would have lifted the threshold for the degree of permanent impairment from 15 per cent to 31 per cent for access to work injury damages and for lump sum payments for non-economic loss, and from 21 per cent to 31 per cent for access to ongoing financial support and compensation for reasonable and necessary medical and related treatment, hospital treatment, ambulance service, workplace rehabilitation service and domestic assistance.

Now the member for Sydney wants to reverse the decision made by both Houses to dump the Treasurer's cruel plan to lift the thresholds by substituting his own plan to impose cruelty on injured workers by degrees. On 1 July 2026, the member wants to cut off access to work injury damages for all seriously injured workers with a degree of permanent impairment between 15 per cent and 24 per cent, and to ongoing supports for those with a degree of permanent impairment between 21 per cent and 24 per cent. On 1 July 2027 it will be the turn of workers with a degree of permanent impairment between 25 per cent and 26 per cent to be thrown to the wolves. Finally, on 1 July 2029, workers with a degree of permanent impairment of 27 per cent will be abandoned. A lot of people will be cut off from accessing the scheme. But the mover of the amendments—the member for Sydney—along with the member for Barwon and the member for Wagga Wagga, signed a pledge to the Injured Workers Campaign Network to "fight for a system that provides ongoing medical and financial support for workers unable to return to work".

I am advised that none of those members had the common decency to advise the Injured Workers Campaign Network that, rather than fighting for the abolition of sections 39 and 59A of the Workers Compensation Act 1987, they will break their pledge by actively fighting to deprive injured workers who are unfit to work in any capacity of ongoing financial support and compensation for the cost of reasonable and necessary medical treatment. Indeed, the Injured Workers Campaign Network has posted a delightful slide show of the three members proudly holding the signed pledge, with the caption "I didn't mean it", aptly set to the soundtrack of Fleetwood Mac's *Little Lies*. I strongly encourage members to look at the Facebook page. Coincidentally, the Fleetwood Mac tune was released in 1987, the same year that the Parliament passed the Workers Compensation Act.

The idea that this staggered approach to cruelty was a sensible compromise that the Opposition should have accepted can be maintained only by someone who has failed to pay attention to the evidence presented to the inquiry into the provisions of the bill. As I mentioned in my contribution to the second reading debate, the Public Accountability and Works Committee inquiry heard evidence about what it means for an injured worker to live with a 25 per cent degree of permanent impairment. Many things have been said during debate on the bill, but it could be argued that this approach is simply a callous political stunt.

In the broader context of the existing Act and the bill we agreed to yesterday, as amended in the other place, the amendments were incapable of support. That is why we are debating what many members consider to

be a substantially similar bill, although I note that the Speaker disagreed with that view. In the narrower context of this bill, which is riddled with 31 per cent thresholds, the amendments may mean a handful of injured workers can continue to access supports, so the Opposition will not oppose them. That emphatically should not be taken as support for the plan by the member for Sydney for staggered cruelty to injured workers.

I also draw the attention of the House to the multiple drafting flaws. I doubt that many members have gone through the drafting errors, which point to the fact that the amendments have been inappropriately rushed. Those errors highlight the rushed manner in which the consideration in detail stage is being conducted. The amendments as circulated will still leave one reference to 31 per cent in the bill. Mistakes have not been picked up. If members in this place had focused more on getting the bill right, as opposed to ramming it through to meet the Government's agenda, we would not be in this position—but I digress. The amendments will still raise the threshold for access to lump sum compensation for non-economic loss to 25 per cent, then 27 per cent and, finally, 28 per cent, despite the Government's public claim of a compromise in supporting the proposed amendments by the pledge-breaking member for Sydney to leave the threshold at 15 per cent.

That is an absolute disgrace. I am truly disappointed that after the amendments—particularly around whole person impairment—were so diligently considered in the other place for 16 hours, as has been referenced previously, we are here this evening and ramming this bill through with little consideration. Those comments should make my position abundantly clear. With that, I will leave the decision on these amendments to the House.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (19:39): I want to correct a few items for the record. I will not be doing this all night, in the interests of time. I note the important evidence that the member for Miranda pointed to of a meme that is circulating. I have dealt with this legislation in great detail. I have shared all my workings with this Parliament, provided copies of these amendments to Opposition members and even written to the Leader of the Opposition. To date, they have failed to engage with these amendments, and now they are misrepresenting what they seek to do.

The purpose of this suite of amendments is to make sure that two fundamental problems are dealt with: that we have the wrong tool for psychological injuries and that premiums are about to rise. These amendments seek to eventually remove that tool and replace it with a fairer one by the time the first injured worker would be impacted. These amendments do not cut off injured workers from supports. They ensure that an injured worker with a whole person impairment of 15 per cent or higher still gets access to a large lump sum payment. Later amendments remove the duplication of my amendment that passed in the Legislative Council. That is how that is achieved.

Subsequently, the injured worker will not have their whole person impairment assessment until after 130 weeks of weekly payments. They will also receive 3½ years of medical payments. The purpose of these reforms is to make sure injured workers get access to compensation and care sooner so that they are not engaged in a lifetime of conflict with a broken workers compensation system. I put it to the House that the member for Miranda completely misrepresented this suite of amendments. I signed a pledge to commit to a better, fairer workers compensation system, and that is exactly what I am doing tonight.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (19:42): Seeing as we are engaging in a discussion about social media posts, I put on record a post by Unions NSW in relation to the Government's intention to proceed in this way. I acknowledge that the amendment moved by the member for Sydney is a compromised position that is the result of many conversations and negotiations over a long period of time with a number of members. It is important to recognise that. In some cases, a sense of pride could exist about the idea of compromise. The Greens and I believe we should not compromise on the idea of raising the whole person impairment threshold. We are not talking about a percentage of funding being moved from one organisation to another. We are talking about a percentage of psychological injury increased to a level where workers are catatonic and unable to work anymore. In relation to this bill and the amendments we are considering, the Unions NSW post states:

BREAKING NEWS: The NSW Government is trying (again) to stop seriously injured workers from receiving long-term care and support. This is a betrayal of working people. The situation: Last week, the NSW Upper House rejected the Government's attempt to slash support for seriously injured workers. Now, they're trying again. Rather than listening to the community and making meaningful changes to workers compensation, the NSW Government is trying once again to make life worse for injured workers. The solution: Don't let them distract you. Injured workers are not the problem. Under the current scheme, private insurance companies are spending almost \$32 million a MONTH dragging injured workers through countless legal battles. In one case, a major insurance company spent \$85,000 of public funds trying to deny a \$5,000 surgery. THIS SOLUTION SHOULD BE SIMPLE. If the NSW Government wants to save money, it can start by holding insurance companies to account for their reckless use of public funds.

We should not compromise on a number that describes the level of psychological injury inflicted on workers. This amendment, moved by the member for Sydney, is a marginal improvement on what NSW Labor is proposing, but if there was ever a case of damning with faint praise, that would be it. Labor's proposal is "very bad", and this amendment is perhaps just "bad". Either way, as I said in my earlier contribution to the second reading debate on

behalf of The Greens, raising the whole person impairment threshold will have devastating consequences for injured workers and those who love them. This is absolutely heartbreaking.

A senior medical assessor at the Personal Injury Commission told the Public Accountability and Works Committee's inquiry into the previous Government bill that he could not recall anybody who had more than 20 per cent whole person impairment who was able to work. Just because this compromise gets the numbers does not mean it should happen. Some things cannot be compromised on. Negotiating percentages and figures with the Government is compromising on the wrong thing. Doing the numbers is not our job as legislators. Negotiating the whole person impairment threshold is not navigating through party politics; it is compromising on how the level at which someone is able to work, or not, is defined.

Under the existing legislation, any worker with a whole person impairment of between 15 per cent and 30 per cent has their work capacity reassessed every two years, at which point they are either determined to have work capacity and transition out of the scheme or back into work, or they remain in the scheme and receive support. Even raising the threshold to 22 per cent would see support ripped away from people with no work capacity, leaving them unable to support themselves. This is the legacy that members in this place will leave behind if this bill passes. Compromise and consensus are important, but we should never compromise on people's safety and health care if they have been injured at work.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): The question is that amendments Nos 1 to 5, 7 to 9, 11 to 15, 28, 32 and 34 to 36 on sheet c2025-313G of the member for Sydney be agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (19:47): I move my amendment No. 18 on sheet c2025-313G:

No. 18 **Amendment of Schedule 1.8—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Page 29, Schedule 1.8. Insert after line 1—

Section 8G Meaning of "relevant event"

Insert after section 8G(c)—

- (c1) a worker experiencing the death of a person in the worker's care, but only if—
 - (i) the death is the result of a traumatic incident, and
 - (ii) there is a real and direct connection between the traumatic incident and the worker's employment, and
 - (iii) the person who dies is under the immediate and primary care of the worker, at the workplace, at the time of the traumatic incident, and
 - (iv) the relationship between the worker and the person who dies is pre-existing, ongoing and close, and
 - (v) the relationship is a requirement of the worker's employment, or

This amendment proposes a new definition of "relevant event" to clarify what can and cannot cause a psychological injury, to help contain liability to factors legitimately related to work. Relevant events include vicarious trauma, which covers repeated exposure to the traumatic experiences of others from traumatic incidents and witnessing a traumatic incident or a dead or seriously injured person at a scene. Existing definitions leave a gap that could see vulnerable injured workers denied compensation. There is a circumstance where the trauma a worker suffers from the death of a person in their care is clearly work related even though the worker did not witness the incident. However, because it does not involve repeated exposure or the witnessing of the incident or aftermath, it would be excluded under the current regime.

This amendment adds a new definition of "relevant event" to include experiencing the death of a person in the worker's care where that death was caused by a traumatic incident connected to the person's work. The amendment has been requested by teachers who have been subject to workplace injuries from traumatic incidents experienced by students in their care.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (19:49): The workers compensation reforms have included a list of "relevant events", which are the events that can lead to a compensable psychological injury. The amendment proposes an additional relevant event that occurs where a worker experiences the death of a person in a worker's care as a result of a traumatic incident, but only if specific conditions are met. That would enable compensation for workers who experience psychological traumatic circumstances where the worker is not the direct victim of the trauma. It would mean that compensation is payable to workers who build close professional relationships as part of their role and lose someone in their direct care. The narrow definition ensures that support

is provided in cases where the emotional impact is most significant and where the relationship exists solely because of the worker's employment. The Government supports the amendment.

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (19:50): I make a brief contribution on behalf of the Opposition in relation to amendment No. 18 moved by the member for Sydney. It is unnecessary to go through the meaning of "relevant event". It is important to put on record that the Opposition does not object to this addition to the list of relevant events, but I note that it could have been done by way of regulation. Specifically, new section 8G (i) permits that to be done in that way. I further make the point, which has been made throughout this debate, that clearly this consideration is rushed.

There has been a lack of consideration. The process would have benefited from a more considered examination of the bill. Generally, the bill should not be before this House this evening. As we heard earlier, this bill is remarkably similar to the previous bill. There are multiple instances to argue that this House is now disregarding the returned bill from the other place. Since we are in this place, we do not intend objecting to this addition. But the fact that we are now amending sections of the Act instead of doing something by regulation indicates that this is clearly avoidable and that this bill has not had any of the rigour applied to it that the original bill did.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (19:52): I offer the support of The Greens for the amendment moved by the member for Sydney in relation to vicarious trauma protections. The fact that it was not included in the list of "relevant events" in the Government's bill demonstrates how ridiculous that concept is in relation to the legislation before us. I note that during debate in the other place on the other workers compensation bill the Government voted against The Greens amendments that would have expanded the scope of a relevant event to include discrimination on the basis of gender, sexuality, disability, religion or age.

The reforms have identified racial and sexual discrimination as events that can be compensated but omitted all other kinds of discrimination for no discernible reason. In fact, that seems quite discriminatory. As The Greens are always saying, we need to ensure that anti-discrimination protections do not discriminate. It is quite concerning that we are dealing with something that would look at issues of discrimination and harm in the workplace on the basis of gender, sexuality, disability, religion or age, but we are picking and choosing which attributes are more important to consider in relation to discrimination or otherwise.

In the interests of moving this debate along, I indicate that The Greens do not have further concerns with the other amendments foreshadowed to be moved by the member for Sydney. We indicate that, while we see merit in some of them, there are already ways that the bill, and the legislation, could have dealt with some of these, as would other policies and reforms. I once again strongly indicate that we have got ourselves into a situation where we are compromising and negotiating on the completely wrong thing. We have taken injured workers, some of the most psychologically harmed individuals and vulnerable people in this State, and we have negotiated on what percentage they have to be assessed at before they continue to get the support they need.

Why on earth are we not using the power of numbers and the abilities of members in this Chamber to negotiate on getting increased funding to community and support services so that they can pay the increased wages? Why are we not negotiating in other ways to crack down on the incredibly wealthy insurance industry? Why are we not looking at clever ways to boost State coffers by taxing the big banks, the wealthy property owners in this State and the developers making huge profits, out of so many things? Instead, we are trying to find some cost savings by compromising and negotiating on how catatonic a worker has to be, how psychologically harmed they have to be as a result of their work—where they can no longer work—as to whether they would be eligible for support.

Yes, sometimes this is a game and sometimes we come in here to score political points. But this time members have missed the point. We are negotiating and compromising in a way that is beyond belief. The negotiations that have taken place to get us to this point, where we are seriously debating selling out workers that have been so psychologically injured that they are catatonic but are unable to get government support, suggests that we have gone too far down the wrong path in this Chamber. I hope the end of this year marks the end of the dark days of this completely morally bankrupt approach in how we serve the people of New South Wales.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (19:57): I thank the members of the Opposition, The Greens and the Government for their support of the amendment. To provide some context, the amendment was the suggestion of the Teachers Federation. It follows a briefing of a very horrific incident that had a big impact on a school community that occurred in the context of debate happening. I take great offence at the accusations from the shadow Minister on many grounds. Firstly, the Opposition constantly says that the Government does too much in regulation. Yet now the member for Miranda is saying that we should have dealt with a specific provision to address a specific concern by regulation.

Secondly, the Opposition again says that this suite of amendments is rushed; yet it has had it for quite a while and chosen not to consult or engage on it. And, thirdly, there have been multiple inquiries that have looked into the bill. We have just heard from the Opposition and The Greens on how these bills are apparently similar, yet they are now being "rushed" with a whole bunch of "new" content. We have not had consistency from Opposition members when it comes to their approach. I do appreciate their support for this, but they can support these things without unnecessary and confected attacks.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (19:59): To support the point that the member for Sydney has made, I have to say that the member for Sydney has worked in good faith and across the board. People have genuine concerns. I get it. But to misrepresent a situation is wrong. The member for Sydney has been quite collaborative. Opposition members—who, as I said earlier, have had a sudden road to Damascus moment—have not taken into account all of the things that they have done that led us to this point. They talk about compromise. The fact of the matter is that when we came into government we inherited the single biggest debt ever handed to a government. It was \$187 billion. So I am not going to take lectures from them in terms of management. This is about making sure that we support workers, that there is sustainability and that we do the right thing by them. That is exactly what compromise is. It is about continuous improvement. I commend the member for moving the amendment. The Government is going to support it.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): The question is that amendment No. 18 on sheet c2025-313G of the member for Sydney be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (20:00): I move my amendment No. 31 on sheet c2025-313G:

No. 31 Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987

Page 40, Schedule 1.10. Insert after line 17—

Review by Chief Psychiatrist

- (1) The Chief Psychiatrist must conduct a review to assess, and report to the Minister and Treasurer about, the effectiveness and appropriateness of PIRS, and alternatives to PIRS, for assessing whole person impairment within the workers compensation scheme.
- (2) The review must be conducted in accordance with terms of reference—
 - (a) determined by the Minister and Treasurer, and
 - (b) tabled in each House of Parliament.
- (3) Without limiting subclause (2), the review must—
 - (a) consider the appropriateness of PIRS as a tool to determine the degree of permanent impairment of injured workers, and
 - (b) develop an alternative tool to determine the degree of permanent impairment of injured workers.
- (4) In undertaking the review, the Chief Psychiatrist must consider—
 - (a) the reliability, robustness and consistency of PIRS and other tools in assessing the degree of permanent impairment of injured workers, and
 - (b) any other matter the Chief Psychiatrist considers relevant.
- (5) The review must commence as soon as practicable after the date of assent to the amendment Act.
- (6) A final report on the outcome of the review must be—
 - (a) tabled in each House of Parliament within 18 months after the date of assent to the amendment Act, and
 - (b) given to the expert panel conducting a review under this part.
- (7) In this clause—

Chief Psychiatrist means the person appointed to the role of Chief Psychiatrist within the Ministry of Health.

PIRS means the assessment tool known as the psychiatric impairment rating scale that is—

- (a) used to assess the level of functional impairment caused by psychiatric conditions and provide a structured approach to evaluating the impact of mental health disorders on an individual's daily life and ability to work, and
- (b) set out in guidelines developed in consultation with relevant medical colleges, other relevant colleges and associations under the 1998 Act, section 377.

Review of workers compensation scheme

The terms of reference for the review of aspects of the workers compensation scheme conducted by the expert panel under this schedule must include consideration of the Chief Psychiatrist's report about the effectiveness and appropriateness of PIRS and alternatives to PIRS.

Joint Select Committee

The Joint Select Committee of the Parliament established to consider the report of the expert panel under this schedule must, in considering the expert panel's report, consider the expert panel's consideration of the Chief Psychiatrist's report about the effectiveness and appropriateness of PIRS and alternatives to PIRS.

The psychiatric impairment rating scale [PIRS] is used in workers compensation to assess the level of functional impairment caused by a psychological injury. A psychiatrist will measure six areas on a scale of one to five to determine a class score and then an aggregate score. The areas of assessment are self-care and personal hygiene; social and recreational activities; travel; social functioning; concentration, persistence and pace; and employability. The scheme was designed in the 1990s, adapting tools used to measure impacts from physical injuries to enable a whole person impairment rating for psychological injuries. It is widely viewed as outdated and not fit for purpose, yet that is what we have been arguing about.

In 2023 the Standing Committee on Law and Justice review of the workers compensation scheme recommended a review of the PIRS to determine if it is still an effective tool. Other States have reformed the tools they use to assess psychological impairment to achieve better consistency, objectivity and protections. New South Wales needs to consider these models. Psychological injuries have become a much bigger part of the workers compensation scheme, and claims and costs have increased substantially, especially in recent years. Psychological injuries now account for nearly 40 per cent of the scheme's costs and 12 per cent of total claims. It is important that we are measuring psychological injuries with the correct impairment tool.

The chief psychiatrist is best placed to understand the opportunities and challenges for measuring psychological impairment and to undertake a review and recommend new tools. Under the amendment, the chief psychiatrist will review the PIRS and develop a new tool. The review must commence as soon as practicable after assent, with a report tabled in each House of Parliament within 18 months. The expert panel will review the recommendations and report to Parliament by April 2028. The chief psychiatrist will give us the information we need to determine the best way to measure psychological impairment and compensate workers with primary psychological injuries. Recommendations will be available to members and the Government well before any worker is impacted by the changes to whole person impairment for weekly payments, enabling us to introduce appropriate reform. I commend the amendment to the House.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (20:03): The Government supports this amendment. It would require the chief psychiatrist to conduct a review of the effectiveness and appropriateness of the psychiatric impairment rating scale [PIRS] for assessing whole person impairment within the workers compensation scheme. It would also require the final report on the outcome of the review to be tabled in each House of Parliament within 18 months of the date of assent of the bill. Many have raised concerns about the shortcomings of the PIRS for the purpose for which it is being used. This is not to be overly critical of the PIRS. While it was developed with experienced psychiatrists, it has not been substantially updated since it was first adopted for the workers compensation scheme over two decades ago.

As we have heard through evidence presented during the committee hearings, PIRS assessments have subjective elements, and this subjectivity has drawn criticism. There are also genuine concerns about the need to ensure that PIRS aligns with the latest research and medical expertise. We have also heard that whole person impairment [WPI], as it is currently measured, is a poor measure of work capacity. This could mean that people with relatively high WPI assessments nonetheless have work capacity. Conversely, it can also mean that people with a relatively low WPI may have heavily reduced work capacity. We must also acknowledge the prevalence of mental illness within our communities, coupled with the evolving nature of work. These factors are not adequately accounted for in the existing PIRS assessment criteria.

These discrepancies are not helpful, given the role that the WPI assessment has in a workers compensation claim. A person's WPI assessment is arguably the largest single contributor in determining their access to potentially lifelong support payments in the form of damages or extended weekly payments. A tool of this importance needs to be robust. It is therefore vital that we address these concerns. We must ensure that our tools for measuring impairment and determining access to entitlements are fair, objective and as effective as possible. The Treasurer has already announced the Government's intention to commission a chief psychiatrist to devise a better system for psychiatric assessment in workers compensation claims. This amendment will back that commitment with legislation and integrate the chief psychiatrist's report into the reviews of the workers

compensation scheme that have already been included in the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. As I indicated earlier, the Government will support the amendment.

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (20:05): My contribution is on behalf of the Opposition in relation to the chief psychiatrist's review. The State Insurance Regulatory Authority supposedly started this review 18 months ago, although I note there is no documentary evidence of sustained work. Any such review should have been done before this bill or its twin was brought to this place. The amendment requires the review to be tabled 18 months after assent. Just to map it out for members, that will be just days before the timetable of the member for Sydney for staggered cruelty throws seriously injured workers with a degree of permanent impairment of 26 per cent or 27 per cent under the bus.

I should also say that whilst the member for Sydney is claiming that no-one will be affected by his increased thresholds before the chief psychiatrist's report is tabled and a new scale is introduced, he also claimed that no-one gets an assessment of a degree of permanent impairment before 130 weeks. This, we should put on record, is incorrect. The assessment must be done when a medical opinion indicates that the injured worker will not improve medically. That is why it is called a degree of permanent impairment. Nonetheless, the Opposition is not opposed to the review.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (20:07): In response to the member for Miranda, a worker under the scheme put in place is entitled to 130 weeks of payments, 3½ years of medical treatment and the computation of provisions that are in the bill that has passed, as well as access to the new funds and schemes that have been put in place by the Government in terms of early intervention and prevention. Again, the Coalition is misleading the House in that it will not be until 2029 that the first worker will be impacted, because that will be a period of 130 weeks after 1 July 2026. Any worker currently in the scheme is protected by the retrospectivity provisions—which the Opposition opposed, I might add.

The question we are grappling with now is how many businesses will close before we put in place a new tool? Business NSW says one in five businesses will close before we put in place a new tool if we do not address the other concerns in the first suite of amendments. This is serious. The Opposition is continuing to mislead the House. It is not misleading businesses, because businesses are not accepting what it is saying. The not-for-profit sector is not accepting what it is saying. The question is, how many critical community services will be cut and how many jobs will be lost before we have a new tool? The suite of amendments we have put forward is designed to address multiple concerns, to allow premiums to go down and to ensure that we have a new, safer and fairer tool.

Again, I argue that the Opposition has not really engaged in or understood this debate. It has stuck to its position. Opposition members talk a lot about this apparent State Insurance Regulatory Authority review. It is quite a separate process, if it is indeed happening, to the publicly defined process presented to the Parliament by the Chief Psychiatrist's review. Every element of those provisions has been negotiated by my office, by the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party in the upper House, by the Hon. Jeremy Buckingham, by the member for Barwon—members who are seriously trying to solve the problem rather than playing politics while shutting down businesses and costing people jobs and services along the way. I commend the amendment.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): The question is that amendment No. 31 on sheet c2025-313G of the member for Sydney be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (20:11): I move my amendment No. 33 on sheet c2025-313G:

No. 33 **Amendment of Schedule 2[1]–[21]—amendment of Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998**

Pages 44–51, Schedule 2[1]–[21], line 3 on page 44 to line 27 on page 51. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

[1] Section 105 Jurisdiction of Commission and Compensation Court

Insert after section 105(3)—

- (3A) Subsection (1) does not prevent the Industrial Relations Commission from dealing with an industrial matter referred to in the *Industrial Relations Act 1996*, section 6(2)(e1) relating to the return to work of an employee who has received a workplace injury.

In July, the Industrial Relations Commission [IRC] was given powers to deal with return-to-work disputes under the Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment (Workplace Protections) Act 2025. But section 105 of the Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998 gives the Personal Injury Commission exclusive jurisdiction to examine, hear and determine all matters arising out of the Act. Section 105 has been

interpreted to restrict the IRC from dealing with return-to-work disputes. The amendment clarifies that section 105 does not restrict this power for the IRC.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (20:12): In July this year the Industrial Relations Act 1996 was amended to enable the Industrial Relations Commission to deal with disputes regarding return to work for injured workers across the public and local government sector. Since its implementation, we have heard concerns from stakeholders about the interaction between the newly amended Industrial Relations Act and section 105 (1) of the Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998. By proposing a targeted amendment to section 105 (1), we are acting out of an abundance of caution to ensure that it is explicitly clear that this provision does not restrict the Industrial Relations Commission from adjudicating industrial disputes related to returning injured workers to work. I extend my thanks to the Industrial Relations Commission's commissioners for their invaluable feedback. This clarity is essential to uphold the confidence of workers, unions and employers in our legal process. We support the amendment.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): The question is that amendment No. 33 on sheet c2025-313G of the member for Sydney be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (20:13): I move my amendment No. 40 on sheet c2025-313G:

No. 40 Replacement of Schedule 5—amendment of other legislation

Page 60, Schedule 5, lines 1–27. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

Schedule 5 Amendment of Industrial Relations Act 1996 No 17

Section 163 Rules of evidence and legal formality

Insert after section 163(2)—

- (3) The *Evidence Act 1995*, section 128 is taken to apply to evidence given in proceedings in the Commission, even when the Commission is not required to apply the rules of evidence in the proceedings.
- (4) If it appears to the Commission that a witness or party may have grounds for making an objection under the *Evidence Act 1995*, section 128, as applied by subsection (3), the Commission may satisfy itself that the witness or party is aware of the effect of that section.

New jurisdictions for bullying and sexual harassment in the Industrial Relations Commission commenced in October. Both jurisdictions have the power to compel witnesses to give evidence that may prove that they committed an offence or expose them to civil penalties. Section 128 of the Evidence Act 1995 provides for certificates that protect a witness in proceedings against self-incrimination, but the commissioner has raised concerns that it is not clear whether such certificates are available in the Industrial Relations Commission. The amendment will clarify that the commission can issue a certificate under section 128 of the Evidence Act to give witnesses privilege against self-incrimination.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (20:14): The Industrial Relations and Other Legislation Amendment (Workplace Relations) Act 2025 created new powers for the Industrial Relations Commission, enabling it to hear cases about workplace bullying and sexual harassment from 13 October this year. A key concern addressed by the proposed amendment is whether witnesses in these proceedings have the privilege against self-incrimination, as outlined in section 128 of the Evidence Act 1995. The amendment to section 163 of the Industrial Relations Act will make clear that witnesses can seek this protection, and the commission will have the authority to issue certificates preventing evidence given from being used in future legal actions. Additionally, new section 163 (4) will require the commission to inform witnesses of their rights under section 128 whenever it appears relevant, ensuring fair treatment for all participants. Overall, those changes will support the effective operation of the commission's new bullying and sexual harassment jurisdictions, while safeguarding individual rights.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Michael Kemp): The question is that amendment No. 40 on sheet c2025-313G of the member for Sydney be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (20:15): By leave: I move my amendments Nos 6, 10, 16, 17, 19 to 27, 29, 30 and 37 to 39 on sheet c2025-313G in globo:

No. 6 Omission of Schedule 1.1[4] and [5]—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987

Page 3, Schedule 1.1[4] and [5], lines 18–35. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 10 **Omission of Schedule 1.1[8] and [9]—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Pages 4 and 5, Schedule 1.1[8] and [9], line 19 on page 4 to line 11 on page 5. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 16 **Omission of Schedule 1.2–1.7—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Pages 6–28, Schedule 1.2–1.7, line 30 on page 6 to line 41 on page 28. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 17 **Amendment of Schedule 1.8—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Pages 29–34, Schedule 1.8, line 2 on page 29 to line 29 on page 34. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 19 **Omission of Schedule 1.9—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Pages 34–37, Schedule 1.9, line 30 on page 34 to line 8 on page 37. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 20 **Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Page 37, Schedule 1.10, lines 10 and 11. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

Schedule 6 Savings, transitional and other provisions

Insert before Part 20, with appropriate part and clause numbering—

No. 21 **Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Page 37, Schedule 1.10, line 12. Omit "19R".

No. 22 **Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Page 37, Schedule 1.10, proposed clause 1, line 15. Omit "1".

No. 23 **Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Page 37, Schedule 1.10, proposed clause 1, line 15. Omit "Definitions". Insert instead "Definition".

No. 24 **Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Page 37, Schedule 1.10, proposed clause 1, lines 19 and 20. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 25 **Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Page 37, Schedule 1.10, proposed clause 2, line 21. Omit "2".

No. 26 **Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Page 37, Schedule 1.10, proposed clause 3, line 31. Omit "3".

No. 27 **Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Page 38, Schedule 1.10, proposed clause 3(3), line 4. Omit "[11]". Insert instead "[13]".

No. 29 **Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Pages 38–40, Schedule 1.10, proposed clauses 4–16, line 5 on page 38 to line 13 on page 40. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 30 **Amendment of Schedule 1.10—amendment of Workers Compensation Act 1987**

Page 40, Schedule 1.10, proposed clause 17, lines 14–17. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

Limit on payment of compensation

The amendment of section 59A made by the amendment Act, Schedule 1.1[10] applies only to a claim to which Part 1, Division 2, as inserted by the *Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Act 2025* applies.

No. 37 **Amendment of Schedule 2[24]–[40]—amendment of Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998**

Pages 51–54, Schedule 2[24]–[40], line 37 on page 51 to line 9 on page 54. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

[24] Section 327 Appeal against medical assessment

Omit "principal assessment was made under the 1987 Act, Part 6" from section 327(3)(a).

Insert instead "medical assessment was made under this part".

[25] Section 327(3A)

Omit "principal assessment" wherever occurring.

Insert instead "medical assessment".

No. 38 **Replacement of Schedule 3[1] and [2]—amendment of Personal Injury Commission Act 2020**

Page 55–58, Schedule 3, line 3 on page 55 to line 5 on page 58. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

[1] Section 58 Publication of decisions

Omit "The" from section 58(1). Insert instead "Subject to section 58A, the".

[2] Section 58A

Insert after section 58—

58A President may restrict disclosures about certain decisions

- (1) The President may make a relevant order if the President is satisfied it is desirable to make the order—
 - (a) because of the confidential nature of evidence or another matter, or
 - (b) for another reason.
- (2) A relevant order—
 - (a) may be made on the President's own motion or on the application of a party to proceedings, and
 - (b) must be made in accordance with the Commission rules.
- (3) In this section—

relevant order means the following orders—

 - (a) an order prohibiting or restricting the publication or disclosure of details of a decision referred to in section 58(1),
 - (b) an order prohibiting or restricting the publication or disclosure of the following, whether or not the person is a party to proceedings in the Commission or a witness appearing before the Commission—
 - (i) a person's name,
 - (ii) information, a picture or other material that identifies or is likely to lead to the identification of the person,
 - (c) an order prohibiting or restricting the publication or broadcast of a report, including a sound recording, video recording or transcript, of proceedings in the Commission,
 - (d) an order prohibiting or restricting the publication of evidence given before the Commission, whether in public or private, or of matters contained in documents lodged with the Commission or received in evidence by the Commission,
 - (e) an order prohibiting or restricting the disclosure of the following to some or all of the parties to the proceedings—
 - (i) evidence given before the Commission,
 - (ii) the contents of a document lodged with the Commission or received in evidence by the Commission in relation to the proceedings.

[3] Section 69

Insert after section 68—

69 Review of operation of section 58 in relation to workers compensation matters

- (1) The Minister must review the operation of section 58 in relation to workers compensation matters to determine whether—
 - (a) the policy objectives of the section remain valid, and
 - (b) the terms of the section remain appropriate for achieving the objectives.
- (2) The review must be undertaken as soon as practicable after the commencement of this section.
- (3) A report about the outcome of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within 12 months after the commencement of this section.

No. 39 Omission of Schedule 4—amendment of Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Page 59, Schedule 4, lines 1–36. Omit all words on the lines.

These amendments omit the duplicated provisions that have already been addressed in the Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill, which passed yesterday, with a small number of language tidy-ups.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (20:17): Again, I thank the member for Sydney for moving these amendments. Amendment Nos 6, 10, 16, 17, 19 to 27, 29 and 30 remove redundant content from the bill. The content is redundant because it is now addressed in the Workers Compensation Legislation Bill 2025, which passed Parliament yesterday. Amendment No. 37 also largely deals with redundant content. There are also

some minor tidy-ups to remove references to assessments of degree of permanent impairment made under the new part 6 of the 1987 Act.

Amendment No. 38 introduces new powers for the Personal Injury Commission. Currently the commission must cause details of various decisions of the commission and commission panels to be published in accordance with the commission's rules. That is consistent with the commission's objective to be accessible, open and transparent. The publication of decisions supports openness and transparency by giving the commission's users and interested members of the public access to the reasons of decision-makers. We know that decisions of the commission can have medical, personal and other highly sensitive information. That information is necessary to inform the decision. In most cases, it does not present a problem. However, there are circumstances in a relatively small number of matters where the commission's power to restrict publication or disclosure of evidence, transcripts, sound or video recording and other relevant material would be beneficial to the parties. An example might be a fatality matter where there are minor dependent children.

The proposed amendment gives the president of the commission power to make a relevant order to prohibit or restrict publication or disclosure of material. The power to restrict disclosure or publication is a routine power commonly available to tribunals and like bodies. The proposed amendment also requires the Minister to review the operation of the provision to make sure the policy objectives of the amendment remain valid and the terms of the section remain appropriate for achieving the objectives. A report about the outcome of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament within 12 months of the commencement of this section. The amendments to give the Personal Injury Commission power to restrict disclosures about certain decisions are sensible and proportionate. The review of the provisions provides further opportunity to review and improve the provision, if required.

Finally, amendment No. 39 removes the previous provisions relating to access and inspection of digital work systems following a suspected contravention of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. The Government is now pursuing that important work through a separate bill brought by the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety this afternoon. The Government remains committed to ensuring that the rapid changes arising from advances in AI and digital services do not come at the cost of the health and safety of workers. I acknowledge and thank the Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety, who is improving safety for workers in New South Wales. The Government supports the sensible and good amendments.

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (20:21): On behalf of the Opposition, I contribute to debate on the clean-up amendments put forward by the member for Sydney. Several of the amendments take out substantive parts of the bill, presumably with the idea that the parallel sections of the other bill will be proclaimed instead. That is a confusing way to legislate. For example, amendment No. 16 would knock out the single assessor provisions in new part 6. The Opposition proposed that in the other place as a major amendment to the other bill, so of course it supports that now. Are we to take Government support for amendment No. 16 as support for abandoning the flawed plan for a single assessor, inappropriately to be appointed by the State Insurance Regulatory Authority [SIRA]? The Public Accountability and Works Committee inquiry into the provisions of this bill found that:

On balance, the committee accepted that allowing injured workers and insurers/employers to each use an assessor of their choice is an important element of a system where the interests of the two parties do not always align. The proposal to only allow a single assessor – to be appointed by the regulator, SIRA, if the parties cannot agree – would undermine the rights of both injured workers and employers and inappropriately involve the regulator in the management of individual claims.

As well as being opposed by injured workers and legal bodies, the single assessor provisions were also strongly opposed by the NSW Self Insurers Association. At the end of the day, while there has been support for the amendments—bar the one amendment the member for Sydney is yet to move—they merely clean up an extremely flawed bill. The Opposition still maintains its lack of support for the bill overall.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (20:23): The amendments are provisions that clean up duplication—the member for Miranda is right. That required a great deal of work from my office and the Parliamentary Counsel's Office [PCO]. I acknowledge the amount of time my team and the PCO put into the amendments, and thank them, the Treasurer's office and others. It is worth doing that work because the amendments that Independent members of the Legislative Assembly, with the support of the Government, are trying to put forward are all about keeping the doors open for small businesses, keeping workers in their jobs and protecting vital community services, which will all be at risk if the Coalition has its way. I am not going to apologise for doing a lot of hard work to put forward a better proposal for people across New South Wales. I commend the amendments to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The question is that amendments Nos 6, 10, 16, 17, 19 to 27, 29, 30 and 37 to 39 on sheet c2025-313G of the member for Sydney be agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (20:24): I move my amendment No. 1 on sheet c2025-319:

No. 1 Whole person impairment

Page 5, Schedule 1.1[13] and [14], lines 25–28. Omit all words on the lines

The amendment picks up a drafting error that was not the intention of the bill. It removes an erroneous mention of 31 per cent under whole person impairment, which clearly is not the intention of my amendments.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (20:25): I note the error was picked up, and that is a great example of collaboration. I thank the member for Sydney for raising the issue. The amendment corrects a simple accidental error. The Government supports the amendment. Given this is the last opportunity to speak, I thank the member for Sydney for bringing amendments forward with the intention of trying to make the bill better. I acknowledge all the people who contributed to the bill. I acknowledge the incredible public servants who worked on the legislation. There was a lot of back and forth over a long period. Whether they are from the State Insurance Regulatory Authority, the Department of Customer Service, the Treasury or NSW Industrial Relations, sometimes we forget about those public servants and their hard work. The Government will continue to find compromise, as long as we never forget that the most important thing is to make sure we support workers, ideally prevent injuries, quickly get them support and then try to get them back into the workforce. There is an incredible sense of dignity when a person feels they are making a contribution. I thank the member for Sydney. The Government supports the amendment.

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (20:26): Of course the Opposition supports the amendment. Since we are on the topic of accidental errors that have been picked up this evening, there is another mistake in the bill on lump sum payments for non-economic loss, but we will see how long it takes for someone to pick that up. There was some confusion earlier that the Opposition was supporting the changes regarding the whole person impairment [WPI]. I make it crystal clear to all members that it is very simple as to why the Opposition is supporting the amendments. The percentages put forward by the member for Sydney are less than the 31 per cent that is already in the originating bill before the House.

The Opposition is still supportive of the position taken in the other place with the original bill when the WPI thresholds were removed, and it maintains its support for that position. When faced with the original bill as drafted, of course the lower percentages of WPI put forward by the member for Sydney this evening are preferable in that confined scenario. I echo the Minister's comments about the work that has gone into the bill from many parties. I am grateful that we are not considering the bill in the wee hours of the morning, as has happened with other legislation, and for the significantly swifter time frame to go through the amendments than we had with the original bill.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (20:29): I thank the Government and the Opposition for their collegial comments. We now have a suite of amendments that have been supported through this place. I hope they are adopted by the other place. If they are, the bill will keep people in jobs. It will prevent businesses from closing down. It will prevent services from being cut. It will provide a pathway for a fairer workers compensation system for injured workers. That is at the heart of what the Independents in this place have worked on and negotiated with the Government on. I commend this amendment and the suite of amendments to the House and to the other place. It is now up to members of the other place to determine what the impact on people, businesses and services in New South Wales will be.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The question is that amendment No. 1 on sheet c2025-319 of the member for Sydney be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The question is that clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 to 5 as amended be agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2 and schedules 1 to 5 as amended agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua): The consideration in detail stage has concluded. The question on the third reading will be considered tomorrow pending the outcome of the deferred division on the second reading.

24-HOUR ECONOMY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (VIBRANCY REFORMS) BILL 2025**Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (20:31): I make a contribution to debate on the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025. The bill is the third tranche of the Labor Government's incredibly important and effective vibrancy reforms for New South Wales. The reforms we are considering tonight highlight the importance of improving patron and staff safety. They remove a number of outdated liquor licensing conditions and increase operating and trading hour flexibility. Those things enable, rather than restrict, the night-time economy and are incredibly important.

As a number of other members have mentioned—and as I mentioned in debate on the previous two tranches of vibrancy reforms—the reforms are essential after a decade of lockouts and lockdowns. That followed a decline in live music over a long time. Restrictions at different levels, including at local government level, made it far too hard to host live music. Venues that had hosted live music—some for decades—were forced to close because of noise restrictions and various other restrictions and complaints made by people who knew perfectly well about the business they were moving in next door to but still complained.

To date, the vibrancy reforms have had important and positive impacts. They have reduced regulatory barriers and delivered a much fairer approach to entertainment noise. They have empowered councils to make outdoor dining, late trade and street activation much easier. In my electorate, Cumberland City Council has benefited from the reforms, receiving a \$350,000 grant to improve activation at Guildford. In the past year there was a huge uptick in the night-time economy in Merrylands, Guildford and Parramatta. Those benefits have been enormous. Live music has been reintroduced at Guildford Hotel. Recently, Yum Yum Bakery in Guildford was awarded *The Sydney Morning Herald* Cafe of the Year for all of Sydney, which is incredible. But it is not just Guildford; Merrylands and Granville have both benefited from increased late-night trade. There are a lot of fantastic restaurants across my electorate that have benefited enormously. There is a huge push across Sydney to improve night-time activity, and the vibrancy reforms have made that a lot easier.

One of the most important things the bill does is allow the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority [ILGA] to cancel a liquor licence if a licensee has failed to create a safe working environment for employees of the licensed premises. The secretary will also be able to approve or adopt a code of practice that ILGA may have regard to in determining whether a licensee has failed to create a safe working environment on the licensed premises. That was drafted with the support of the Women's Safety Commissioner and followed a series of recent scandals that exposed nasty secrets that were not far below the surface of a lot of licensed premises and that went back decades. There was a lot of sexual harassment of staff, both between staff and also tolerated from patrons. It is important to make sure that everyone can enjoy being on licensed premises.

The old approach was not based in any sense of economic reality. It diminished the value of money that women spent in such venues. It was as if the money that we spent did not count for anything, because greater value was placed on the people who made us feel unsafe and made us never want to go back to those venues. It placed the value of the work done by women as nothing and treated women like part of the furniture or as accessories rather than valued employees. It is important that we change that culture and make sure that going out at night is fun and entertaining for everybody. It is long overdue but very important.

The bill also improves patron and staff safety by adding an exemption to the offence for permitting intoxication on a licensed premises in limited and defined circumstances, such as a patron needing medical assistance or awaiting transport options home. In essence, it means that people who are staggeringly drunk or intoxicated in some other way will not be thrown out on the street and left to their own devices, which can be incredibly dangerous for them. It does not mean that people will be served more alcohol. It certainly does not mean that if people are a little bit too intoxicated but are accompanied by their friends they cannot be forced to leave. But if somebody is on their own and needs medical assistance or is waiting for a taxi, they will not be thrown to the kerb, where they could be in grave danger. It is a small but important change that should have been considered decades ago but was not.

The bill is the result of a lot of consultation that this Government has done on how to fully engage the night-time economy. It goes deep into the detail of improving activation at night. Another important part of the reform is that live music venues will be allowed to start live music performances at 6.00 p.m. on weeknights and after 12.00 p.m. on weekends, rather than at 8.00 p.m. The bill includes an option for regional venues to satisfy the extended trading eligibility on an annual basis, as opposed to weekly or monthly. That will allow a venue to have multiple performances in one day. An unusually positive thing that came out of the COVID restrictions was that a number of venues started to have a dinnertime show and a later show so that they could have fewer people

on the premises but still trade in a way that would keep them solvent. It really created opportunities for innovation, and one of those innovations was having earlier performances. I think it will be embraced. Given that the concern about live performances is noise, it is ridiculous that we cannot start live performances until 8.00 p.m. At 6.00 p.m. people are not nearly as worried about noise.

The reforms are incredibly important and, to date, they have been incredibly successful. As of 26 September, 485 licensed venues were claiming live music incentives across New South Wales—up from 132 in March 2023—and 211 of those venues are located in regional areas. That shows what an important impact these reforms are having. Western Sydney still has some way to go in terms of embracing live music, particularly new artists rather than cover bands. There is a hell of a lot of fantastic live music and wonderful new performers coming out of Western Sydney. I am sure plenty of them are sweeping up at the Arias as we speak. The reforms are important and need to continue. I commend the bill to the House.

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (20:40): I speak in debate in support of the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025. I commend the Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy and the Minister for Gaming and Racing for their work in this space. At the onset I say that life is about living. Our experiences define our lives and, with respect to the night-time economy, I think people connect the night-time economy with fun when they reflect on their childhood or their teenage years and adult years. I was in my late teens and early to mid-20s in the 2000s and 2010s. I enjoyed time going out with my friends to learn about the world, not only in Sydney but also in Europe and other places when I saved to go on holidays. It was a big learning experience and socialising experience, making friends and spending time with family. Some of my best memories are of being with my friends, watching live music and eating food in the late hours.

Mr Nathan Hagarty: Bring back Equinox.

Dr DAVID SALIBA: That was under-18s, Nathan.

Ms Lynda Voltz: What's Equinox?

Dr DAVID SALIBA: It was at Marconi.

Mr Nathan Hagarty: Club Marconi.

Dr DAVID SALIBA: Yes, Club Marconi. I remember having so many great times there and learning so much. I note from the 2000s to 2010s—

Ms Lynda Voltz: Sweethearts at Cabramatta, in my day.

Ms Jodie Harrison: Yes, the Radiators.

Dr DAVID SALIBA: I remember that place too. That was before my time. The point I am trying to make is that people remember their youth.

Mr Stephen Bali: Coogee Bay Hotel.

Dr DAVID SALIBA: Coogee Bay, yes. People remember their youth and associate it with fun. When we look at the night-time economy, it is important that we provide an avenue for people to go out and enjoy themselves. Probably from the 2010s until now I have noticed a bit of a decline in outdoor dining at night and in live entertainment. People work and do different things during the day, and to decompress they want to go out and have fun. It is important that avenues are provided, but obviously in a safe manner. I also make the point that the night-time economy is important for jobs. When we look at jobs for young people and for migrants, particularly culturally and linguistically diverse [CALD] groups in my area, they tend to work in the night-time economy and rely upon it to generate an income. In fact, people work multiple jobs—I know some of my mates do. They work during the day and at night to support their families, to deal with today's cost-of-living pressures and to save for holidays with their kids. It is important to provide that avenue for income.

We speak about loneliness and mental wellbeing. I dare say that if we work and then go home with nothing much to do because there are no avenues to go out with friends to socialise, that has a pretty dark impact on mental health and loneliness. We know that loneliness is a big issue in New South Wales—in fact, probably around the world. There is an economic opportunity to uplift areas with outdoor dining and entertainment to provide jobs, but also to uplift commercial activities. That is particularly important in Fairfield, not only to support the population economically but also from a social perspective. The Fairfield CBD is great, but it is a ghost town at night.

The night-time economy is important to our domestic tourism. People from overseas come to Sydney to spend time with relatives, but at night they do not have many places to go. That has an impact on tourism. I think members know I hate mornings. When I go overseas, I like to venture out at night to different dining spots because

I like to eat and have fun. I hear the commentary from people visiting from overseas. They say, "Hey, Dave, what's there to do in Sydney at night?" I think it is important that we think about how tourism can uplift our night-life.

Broadly speaking we need to think about sectoral resilience, which is probably an important point that not many people have thought about. As we transition into this technological age, the sectoral composition of our economy is going to drastically change. As a means of boosting our economic resilience in the future, particularly as we have technology and AI coming into the fray, we need to broaden the strength of different sectors. I believe the Minister for Jobs and Tourism spoke about the \$57 billion tourism brought to the New South Wales economy this year. Tourism is growing quite significantly post-COVID. Our goal is to increase that figure closer to \$60 billion. Tourism and the night-time economy are important to support resilience. The increasing use of AI will potentially lead to job losses, so finding industries in which people can work is an important path to follow.

Fairfield has a very diverse community. It probably has one of the most diverse communities in the world, with people coming from many different countries, which is why I love the place. We have Vietnamese, Iraqi, Lebanese, Cambodian, Chilean people, and many more. A lot of families in Fairfield work or are entrepreneurial in the entertainment and food space. Fairfield, Cabramatta, Leppington, Auburn and Blacktown—

Mr David Harris: Wyong.

Dr DAVID SALIBA: Your area has some good restaurants as well. To be fair, CALD people have businesses. Supporting them with a vibrant night-time economy will enable those groups to flourish economically and socially, because people love to connect. A lot of people like dancing and eating, so it is important to facilitate those environments. I dare say it is an economic equaliser for multicultural communities to have that night-time economy bolster. I place on record that CALD groups will definitely benefit from it. I will not go into the specifics of the bill because I know the Minister for Gaming and Racing has dealt with that aspect—

Mr David Harris: That is true.

Dr DAVID SALIBA: It is true and I am sure every other member of Parliament has gone through those points as well. I want to highlight why it is important to bolster the night-time economy. I cannot wait for it to flourish. I am excited about the special entertainment precincts across New South Wales. Broadly speaking, I am excited about the prospects for the future of New South Wales and I cannot wait for younger people to have fun, safely and responsibly. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (20:48): I am happy that the member for Fairfield kept his contribution PG when he shared his experiences in nightclubs. I contribute to debate on the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025, and congratulate Minister John Graham in the other place for enthusiastically taking up the commitment to bring the night-time economy to life across New South Wales. I thank Minister Harris in this place for introducing the bill. I acknowledge also that his portfolio includes responsibility for clubs, which are a vital component of the night-time economy. The purpose of the bill is to increase the vibrancy of the night-time economy by streamlining processes to remove outdated liquor licensing conditions, improve patron and staff safety, increase operating and trading-hour flexibility, and for other administrative measures and to correct drafting errors.

The vibrancy reforms have reduced regulatory barriers and delivered a fairer approach to entertainment and noise, with a single lead regulator, a streamlined compliance management framework and added incentives for venue operators to provide more live music. Councils are empowered to make outdoor dining, late trading and street activation easier, and create special entertainment precincts to grow a thriving and unique local precinct. I focus on that element of the bill and highlight the initiatives of the Minister and the Minns Labor Government. We have invested a substantial amount in various organisations across New South Wales, allowing them or councils to undertake studies into the night-time economy in their respective areas. I pay credit to a couple of councils, including Parramatta, which released its night-time economy strategy for 2020-24.

The member for Parramatta was Lord Mayor of Parramatta during that time. She put in a great amount of work there. Given the recent reforms by the Government, Parramatta council has updated its policy. In 2023 Lord Mayor Pierre Esber said that the new reforms would make Parramatta CBD "a vibrant destination after dark, with a range of transport options". It is the first city in Western Sydney to earn the Purple Flag accreditation for vibrancy, diversity and safety at night. The member for Penrith was Mayor of Penrith City Council at the time that it released its night-time economy strategy. At the Monday council meeting Todd Carney, the current Mayor of Penrith, updated the plan with practical ways to implement the night-time economy strategy as the council tries to increase patronage on the High Street and around Penrith.

Authors of a report on Blacktown entitled *The Gathering* undertook community consultation and outlined the current state of play, providing seven recommendations that were all fairly self-explanatory. They included strengthening partnerships with community, supporting local creative industries, supporting the local business

community, enhancing safety and accessibility, increasing community awareness and engagement, and expanding the precinct boundaries. These are the foundations of a night-time economy. It is great that we have given much money to various organisations to write those reports. But instead of writing about the bleeding obvious, which we could do fairly quickly, we must change the night-time economy, especially in the Blacktown community.

The Blacktown local government area has 450,000 people. By 2035 the population will surpass that of Tasmania. Yet the Blacktown CBD, its capital, is dying. About 16 businesses have closed. There are empty shops on Main Street. Blacktown CBD is like three different areas. There is level four at Westpoint, which has a vibrant night-time economy in the shopping centre precinct. The Walker Corporation's Blacktown Quarter will include a brand-new CBD over the next five to 10 years. That is great for the southern end of the CBD, but the vast majority of the CBD is dying at the moment. There is massive investment in two other areas, but what are we doing to keep our Main Street alive? For over 50 years we have had the Blacktown City Festival, one of the biggest festivals that Western Sydney or broader Sydney has ever seen, with 40,000 to 50,000 people in attendance.

I remember close to 100,000 people gathered in the 1970s and 1980s. There were seven stages and lots of bands, and we could barely move, all day long. Unfortunately, that has dropped off. There are some other festivals. The State Government, through Transport for NSW, funds FAM Fest. That is a great youth festival in most places, but it is into its third year in Blacktown and this year hardly anyone turned up. We shut down the main street, an area that is under severe pressure, on a Saturday, which is a key trading day. But the youth do not really appreciate mornings—as we heard from the member for Fairfield, who is one of the younger members of Parliament—and did not turn up. But we had just shut down the main street in Blacktown, and it did not come alive until late afternoon or evening. Unfortunately, it did not really come alive whatsoever.

Councils come up with ideas like food trucks on Friday nights or once a month. That is a wonderful way to bring people in and support Blacktown businesses—not. Food truck vendors do well, but our local businesses are dying. If we are going to give a few hundred thousand dollars to people to do these studies, we should really think about how to activate Blacktown CBD. While I have spoken about the negatives, Blacktown has a wonderful restaurant culture. There are cuisines from Africa, the Middle East, Türkiye and Ethiopia, which I will come to in a second. We have many different great food outlets, but what are we doing? Instead of doing one-off Friday night food markets or the once-a-year FAM Fest, which the youth did not turn up to, we should look at what these great restaurants are doing.

In his contribution to debate, the member for Fairfield said that most places around the world do not open until 10 o'clock, whether it is Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City or anywhere in Europe. Those places are alive from 10 o'clock at night until two o'clock in the morning. Yet after 10 o'clock there is hardly anyone around in the Sydney Basin, or even in the Sydney CBD. Instead of food trucks, we should ensure that all businesses stay open until 10 o'clock or 11 o'clock at night. We should have buskers, artists and mimes on the corner. I have spoken to CBD businesses, and they are crying out for that. We have African, Middle Eastern, Turkish and Vietnamese food. Blacktown has 188 different cultures. We have very good food. The Ethiopian restaurant Gursha, which is run by Yibeltal and Rahel on Main Street, was listed as one of the best restaurants in Australia in *Gourmet Traveller* magazine. That is pretty impressive. The magazine is sold across Australia, and Blacktown has one of the best restaurants. About 10 restaurants were featured in that issue, and the rest were just listed.

Blacktown, or any CBD, should have a \$60 card that one can use to pay for nibbles and other food along the way at various restaurants. That way, those who are not sure if they like Turkish or Ethiopian food can pay \$60 for the card and get three meals. For example, there could be a Blacktown menu. And people who want a full-on meal—good luck—can have a full-on meal at one restaurant. We need to invest in these sorts of things. That is my suggestion to the Minister, instead of funding more studies, because we should now know. There have been a lot of successful council studies. The New South Wales Government should identify the key success factors and then apply them. We must mobilise both small and large CBDs so they remain vibrant centres into the future. This is a big concern of the Government, which has done a massive amount of work on the night-time economy. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast) (20:59): In reply: I thank members for their contributions to debate on the 24-Hour Economy Legislation Amendment (Vibrancy Reforms) Bill 2025. I thank the member for Tamworth, the shadow Minister for Gaming and Racing, for his contributions to the bill. I thank the member for Newtown for her contribution, and the member for Pittwater. I also thank the member for Shellharbour, the member for Newcastle, the member for South Coast, the member for Parramatta, the member for Gosford, the member for Granville, the member for Fairfield, the member for Blacktown and the member for Camden. 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 vibrancy reforms.

I will make some general comments about the bill before touching on some of the matters raised in the debate. The bill progresses the excellent work we began last year and the year before through the first and second tranches of the vibrancy reforms. The reforms have unquestionably benefited the State, which I noted earlier but will highlight again. The Government has made it easier and cheaper for councils and businesses to establish vibrant precincts and support local events. Live music incentives have given participating venues licence fee reductions and additional trading hours, and incentivised venues across New South Wales to support local talent. Our sensible, sound management framework has removed red tape and reduced unreasonable noise complaints that prevented venues from putting on live music.

The bill is the next step in restoring vibrancy to the New South Wales hospitality industry. We have developed reforms that aim to improve patron and staff safety with a commonsense approach to managing risk, increasing flexibility and diversifying business options, streamlining processes to remove outdated licence conditions and red tape on businesses, further fostering New South Wales as an environment where live music thrives, and enhancing the benefits of celebrating significant events in regional areas. I thank all members for their detailed contributions to debate. The member for Fairfield brought back a lot of memories for many members in the Chamber. Apparently, they all used to frequent the same night clubs.

Ms Lynda Voltz: I'm not sure we frequented all the same night clubs.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: Not all the same ones. I have to say, I saw a lot of live bands, but they were all black and white in those days. I thank the member for Tamworth for his support for the bill and all previous tranches of vibrancy. I touch on several points made by the member. I acknowledge the member's comments that regional areas need additional support to ensure that their communities equally benefit from the vibrancy reforms. The bill particularly supports regional venues through initiatives that are tailored to their unique operating environment, recognising that this can be quite different to operating a pub or a club in the city. For example, reforms to the live music incentives scheme, changes to the rules around patron safety, and special event extended trading have all been signed with regional venues in mind. As a regional member, I am passionate about those issues.

I also highlight that over the past several years the Tamworth Country Music Festival was designated as a special event under the vibrancy reforms. I look forward to the festival running again in January next year. I hope I can get back there. I was there the year before, but I missed last year. I thank the member for his support for the special entertainment precinct trials in Tamworth town centre and the Longyard sports and entertainment precinct. Those will enable trading hours and sound settings to support live music and entertainment, not just during the country music festival but throughout the year. They will help protect the much-loved venues that are the lifeblood of music in the town.

I go to some of the comments made by the member for Tamworth about the implementation of the reforms. The removal of outdated conditions is an important reform. I agree with the member that implementing this reform will be important to ensure that there are no unintended consequences. The removal of conditions by the bill is done in a targeted way and coupled with the ability for the regulator to take action against venues that do the wrong thing. Further, the changes to the way in which intoxicated patrons are managed on licensed premises are overdue and are an important step towards a safer and more supportive night-time economy for both workers and patrons. I acknowledge the contributions made by a number of members on this reform in particular.

I confirm that this important reform will be communicated to licensees, and the team within Liquor and Gaming will be working with venues to ensure that the reforms to the management of intoxicated patrons are working and being implemented effectively. We want a safe nightlife. To do that, we need to make sure that licensees are equipped to understand the new rules and are able to make decisions in the best interests of their venue and patrons. Importantly, the new changes do not require venues to keep intoxicated patrons on their premises, especially if they do not have the facilities to keep them at the venue or it otherwise would not be appropriate for them to remain on the premises. That is a decision that each venue can make, and the Government will support licensees in that endeavour.

I thank the member for Newtown for her contribution to debate and for supporting the vibrancy reforms. I agree that while the Government is not the creator of "the vibe", it plays an important role in ensuring that the vibes can flow safely and sustainably without the Government and red tape getting in the way. The reforms passed over the past three years under the vibrancy reforms have had a meaningful impact on the State's nightlife, including a tripling of the number of live music venues. Over 20 councils have resolutions to investigate or establish special entertainment precincts. We are starting to see a marked improvement in the State's nightlife, and we know that the reforms play a key role in making that happen.

I acknowledge the comments made by the member for Pittwater about live music. The Government wants a flourishing live music sector, and the bill continues to support venues to put on live music. The changes made

to rules about noise complaints are a key part of the Government's vibrancy reforms. The changes that were implemented last year have improved the protections for venues to put on live music, ensured that single neighbour complaints do not shut down live music, and created a fairer set of rules for both licensees and neighbours. The Government has made a commitment to restoring our nightlife across New South Wales and supporting a flourishing 24-hour economy. The bill furthers that commitment to vibrancy with reforms focused on increasing flexibility and diversifying business options for venues, streamlining the process to remove outdated restrictions and red tape on businesses, further supporting our live music industry, and improving patron and staff safety.

I thank the Opposition and the crossbench in this place and in the other place for their detailed engagement on and support for the bill and our vibrancy agenda. Again, I extend my thanks to the many agencies that have collaborated to make the bill possible, particularly the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport, also known as the "department of vibes", which I recognised earlier today in my second reading speech. I thank all staff who are in the Chamber. It has been a long day. Several attempts have been made to pass the bill, and we are finally at the end. 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

Mr DAVID HARRIS: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

ANNE NICOLAOU

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (21:08): I acknowledge and farewell Mrs Anne Nicolaou, the founding principal of St Sava College in Varroville. Anne was appointed to lead St Sava's first intake of students in 2021, and she has guided every subsequent intake with wisdom, care and vision. She has been a pillar of strength in laying the foundations of a community built on faith, learning and character. With an impressive career across St Spyridon College, Ascham, Canberra Grammar and St Catherine's, Anne brought a wealth of experience and integrity throughout her leadership at St Sava. I thank her for her service. In knowing her over the past few years, she has been a pleasure to speak to and work with. Her warmth and belief in her students will leave a long legacy. I welcome incoming principal Mrs Lela Vukovic. I have no doubt we will get to work together. I wish her every success in her journey ahead.

PAUL BARNETT

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (21:09): I acknowledge Paul Barnett and his upcoming retirement after more than two decades of exceptional leadership at the Mingara Leisure Group. After over 27 years of dedicated service—including as operations manager from 1998 and as chief executive officer since December 2002—Paul has announced his intention to retire in January 2026. During his tenure, Paul has guided Mingara through a period of remarkable transformation. Under his visionary leadership, the organisation has grown from one registered club with 160 team members to a group of five clubs employing more than 450 people. His strategic foresight also delivered a new state-of-the-art fitness and wellness precinct, an 86-room hotel and a planned retirement living project that will further serve the community for years to come. Beyond expansion and innovation, Paul's legacy is defined by his authenticity, dedication and commitment to building a strong, community-minded team that shares the vision of improving the quality of community life. I thank him, the organisation's longest serving CEO, very much and wish him all the best in his retirement.

PARRAMATTA ELECTORATE YEAR 6 STUDENTS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (21:10): I congratulate and acknowledge the year 6 students in my electorate of Parramatta who are finishing their primary education. I also thank the dedicated teachers, principals and support staff that have guided and supported those students through their primary education journey. The transition to secondary education is a time of significance for our budding high schoolers, and I wish them all the best in their future schooling as they experience new opportunities and numerous challenges that will shape them into the next generation of leaders. I say good luck, congratulations and enjoy the summer holidays to the year 6 students from Bayanami Public School, Dundas Public School, Ermington Public School, Ermington West Public School, Maronite College of the Holy Family, Melrose Park Public School, Mother Teresa Primary School, Newington Public School, Parramatta Public School, Parramatta North Public School, Parramatta East Public

School, Parramatta West Public School, Rosehill Public School, Rydalmere Public School, Rydalmere East Public School, St Mary's Primary School, St Oliver's Primary School, St Monica's Primary School, St Patrick's Primary School and Wentworth Point Public School.

RYLAN GRAY

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (21:11): It is all zoom, zoom, zoom in the electorate of Upper Hunter because we will have our own Supercars driver in 2026. I congratulate Rylan Gray on being signed by the Shell V-Power Racing Team. The Denman teenager was snapped up by Dick Johnson Racing to join Brodie Kosteki in the Supercars Championship. Rylan celebrates his nineteenth birthday later this week and is already a rising star of Australian motorsport. He heads to Adelaide next week as a favourite to wrap up the Supercars Super2 championship. I also congratulate the Tickford Autosport driver pathway program as Rylan becomes the latest of more than eight drivers to progress to a full-time Supercars seat. I hope Rylan enjoys the next few weeks, and we look forward to seeing him in the Shell V-Power Racing Ford Mustang on the Supercars grid in 2026.

GEMMA LLOYD

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (21:12): Gemma Lloyd is a proud Dunghutti and Gumbaynggirr woman who was raised on Dharawal country. Gemma is an inspiring businesswoman and change-maker, committed to creating stronger, more sustainable futures for First Nations communities. Through her consultancy, Sacred Country Consulting, Gemma works with the mission of providing the essential tools and knowledge for communities and individuals to thrive. Her work champions self-determination and the advancement of sustainable circular economies, helping to build pathways for long-term success and independence. Gemma led the Illawarra Indigenous Business Expo, an important event that showcases the strength, creativity and diversity of First Nations businesses across a range of industries. The expo was held in a culturally safe and inclusive space, designed to celebrate Indigenous entrepreneurship and create opportunities for collaboration and growth. Gemma's leadership reflects the very best of community-driven innovation, empowering others, celebrating culture and ensuring that economic opportunity is built on respect, sustainability and connection to country.

ALLAMBIE BUSH KINDY

Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (21:13): Today I celebrate Allambie Bush Kindy for being named as a finalist in the annual Excellence in Early Childhood Education Awards. The centre landed nominations in five big categories: the Excellence Award for Large Private Metropolitan Service, Excellence in Environmental Program, Excellence in Community Involvement, Excellence in Multicultural Program and the Young Female Educator Excellence Award. That is a huge effort. The centre's beloved bush kindy program is now in its tenth year. Three mornings a week, the bushland above Manly Dam becomes the classroom. Children learn to spot plants and wildlife species, learn about sustainability and turn sand, leaves and sticks into art. Educators map progress against the Early Years Learning Framework and grow confidence and resilience in their students that carries into primary school. It is hands-on learning, fresh air and community pride in a package. It shows how Wakehurst raises curious, capable kids while caring for nature. Well done to Allambie Bush Kindy. I thank its staff for their hard work supporting the children in our community.

VIC100 CHARITY CYCLE EVENT

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (21:14): On Sunday 16 November nearly 400 cyclists rode the iconic and stunning Bells Line of Road and Darling Causeway with no through traffic. Those cyclists got to enjoy a stunning route through the Blue Mountains of New South Wales whilst raising funds and awareness for mental health, working with Lifeline as a charity partner. Go For Broke's VIC100 is a new charity cycle event. It is a 100 kilometre cycle event from Penrith to Mount Victoria. At the core of the event is supporting and raising funds for Lifeline. The founder, Ed Kirk, started Go For Broke in 2016 after his own battle with mental health. I thank the police, NSW Ambulance, Transport for NSW, St John Ambulance and the many Go For Broke volunteers who all contributed to making this incredible, well-organised event a success. It was great to be in the historic village of Mount Victoria to welcome the cyclists at the finish line at the 157-year-old Victoria and Albert Guesthouse. I congratulate them all.

ELLIE BENEFIELD

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (21:15): I ask members of Parliament to join with me in extending congratulations to Ellie Benefield. Ellie is a proud Kenthurst Public School student and competes for the Hills District Little Athletics club. In February this year, at the Coles Region Championships, Ellie achieved outstanding results. Ellie was first in the girls 12 years 100 metres with a time of 14.47 seconds, first in the girls 12 years high jump with a jump of 1.45 metres and first in the girls 12 years long jump with a jump of 4.44 metres.

She was also part of the 4 x 100 relay team, which was placed first with a time of 59.39 seconds. More recently Ellie competed in the NSW Primary Schools Sports Association All Schools State Championship, held on 22 and 23 October 2025. Ellie won the gold medal in the girls 12-13 high jump at the all schools championship, with an impressive jump of 1.61 metres. I congratulate Ellie. She is a rising star.

PROFESSOR GEOFF ISBISTER

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (21:16): I congratulate Calvary Mater Newcastle's Professor Geoff Isbister, director of clinical toxicology, who has been named among the world's top 2 per cent of scientists for 2025 by Stanford University. The prestigious global ranking, published in *PLOS Biology*, recognises researchers whose work has had significant international impact. Professor Isbister was recognised in the field of toxicology, reflecting his extraordinary contribution to improving the understanding and treatment of poisoning and envenoming. Professor Isbister has published more than 300 research papers and leads major national studies, including the Australian Snakebite Project and the Australian Toxicology Monitoring Study. His work has reshaped clinical practice, challenged long-held assumptions about antivenoms and antidotes, and improved care for patients across Australia. In 2019 he was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for his service to medical toxicology. I congratulate him on his achievements.

JOHNATHON TISDELL

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes) (21:17): I acknowledge the extraordinary bravery and community spirit shown by Johnathon Tisdell of Dumaresq Island during the flood event in May. In circumstances of significant danger and uncertainty, Johnathon acted selflessly to protect and assist those around him. As floodwaters rapidly rose and access to homes became impossible, Johnathon undertook multiple rescue efforts using his own vessel, retrieving families, elderly residents, children and individuals with medical needs from inundated properties. Among those he brought to safety were members of his own family, as well as numerous neighbours, local residents and individuals who were otherwise isolated. His actions also extended to helping two doctors, several nurses and young children, ensuring they reached safe evacuation points. In addition to rescuing people, Johnathon transported family pets, assisted local farmers to access their livestock and delivered essential medicines. Today, I formally commend Johnathon for his heroic service and his exceptional contribution to the safety and wellbeing of others during one of our region's most challenging moments. His actions will long be remembered as an example of true community leadership and bravery.

GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY YOUNG CHAMPIONS AWARDS

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (21:18): I proudly recognise the Greater Western Sydney Young Champions Awards, hosted by Rainbow Crossing Inc and founded by Brian Laul, celebrating the outstanding achievements of young people across Liverpool, Fairfield and Cabramatta. I congratulate this year's winners, Hazel Pohani, Jenna Le, Elspeth Luks, Aruzhan Ruslankyzy, Simonne Duffy, Isaac Al-Zakholi, Mia Michael, Alyssa-Kate Noble, Yousef Al Masri, Gabriella Viterale, Sahara Tellaoui, Isabel Tantiyasawatdikun, Sophie Brown, Kookies N Cream Dance School, Kayla Iran, Tea Mucenski and Elijah Duckworth, with Aruzhan Ruslankyzy named Champion of Champions and Miller Technology High School receiving the Outstanding Participation by a School award. I thank Rainbow Crossing Inc, local partners, schools and community leaders for supporting this uplifting celebration of youth excellence and community pride.

TRIBUTE TO EOIN JOHNSTON

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (21:19): Today I honour the life and contributions of former Deputy Mayor of Ballina, Eoin Johnston, and offer my deepest condolences to Eoin's family and friends and his wife, Christine, who is watching tonight. Known to many as Johnno, Eoin embodied commitment, determination and unwavering community spirit. In a different life he would have been a Rhodes scholar; he was super bright, a champion sportsman and utterly devoted to the community. A self-made man who left school at 15, he did all kinds of things. He worked as hard rock miner in Canada and with seismic crews near the border of Nigeria and Cameroon in the Bight of Biafra and later in Gabon. After returning to Australia and setting up his farm, he studied for his law degree by correspondence and was called to the New South Wales bar in 1997 at the age of 51. Eoin also served his community for eight years on Ballina Shire Council as an elected councillor and as deputy mayor from 2021 to 2024. Johnno held life memberships in multiple sports—surf lifesaving, swimming, rugby union and water polo—and shared life membership of the Wollongbar Alstonville Rugby Club with his son Bill. Eoin was a larger-than-life human being and he will be deeply missed by our community.

ALBION PARK RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Ms KATELIN McINERNEY (Kiama) (21:20): I recognise the Albion Park Rural Fire Brigade, which this year celebrates its seventy-fifth anniversary of service to our region. Formed in 1950, the brigade has grown

from modest beginnings—once operating with a converted World War II Ford Blitz truck from borrowed sheds—to the highly skilled, community-minded and professional volunteer brigade it is today. Over the decades, Albion Park Rural Fire Brigade members have stood on the front line during some of the Illawarra's most significant fire emergencies—from the severe bushfires of the 1960s to the Black Summer fires of 2019-20—protecting homes, local farmland, community spaces and lives. The brigade has also played a vital role in community education, regularly holding "Get Ready" days, visiting schools and ensuring that residents are prepared for the fire season. Today, their historic Blitz truck stands proudly as a reminder of where they began, while their modern station and tankers reflect how far they have come. I thank the past and present volunteers of Albion Park Rural Fire Brigade for their courage and unwavering commitment to our community.

ARMENIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF AUSTRALIA

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (21:21): This year marks 50 years of dedicated service by the Armenian National Committee of Australia [ANC], a milestone achievement for one of our nation's most active and respected community advocacy organisations. Since its founding in 1975, the ANC has worked tirelessly to represent the interests of Armenian-Australians, promote human rights and foster understanding and unity within our multicultural society. Its efforts have strengthened community ties, encouraged civic participation and ensured that the Armenian story continues to be heard across Australia's public life. Over five decades, the ANC has championed important causes, nurtured youth leaders and built enduring connections between Australia and Armenia. Through education, outreach and advocacy, it has helped preserve culture and identity while advancing shared values of respect and justice. I acknowledge executive director Michael Kolokossian, the ANC board, staff and volunteers past and present for their ongoing commitment. This fiftieth anniversary stands as a testament to the ANC's vision, resilience and service to the Armenian community and the broader Australian society.

DAVID HUBBARD

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (21:22): I recognise and thank coach David Hubbard for his outstanding contribution to the Quakers Hill Tigers Soccer Club where he has served as technical director since 2019. During his time with the Tigers, coach Hubbard played a pivotal role in strengthening the club's junior football program. He brought a clear technical vision, implementing a structured training pathway that enhanced both player and coach development across all junior age groups. His leadership helped shape a generation of young footballers and improved the overall standard of coaching within the club. A consistent presence at Paterson Reserve on weekends, he is known for his technical expertise and his unwavering commitment to supporting and guiding teams, players and their families. As coach, Hubbard transitions to supporting his son Matt in the National Premier Leagues with Ponds FC Soccer Club. I extend the thanks of the entire Tigers community. His contribution to grassroots football has been significant and lasting. I congratulate coach David Hubbard on his dedication to youth sport and community development.

FIONA LAMBERT

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills) (21:23): I acknowledge the outstanding contribution of Fiona Lambert, a dedicated teacher at St Paul the Apostle Primary School in Winston Hills, who was recently recognised as the Matific Australian World Teachers' Day Mathematics Teacher of the Year. Fiona began her teaching career at St Paul's in 1997. During this time, she has been a coordinator overseeing literacy and sport, inspiring students to strive for excellence both in the classroom and on the field. More recently, Fiona has taken on the role of a teacher coach to help her colleagues strengthen their skills and capacity in teaching mathematics. Her leadership, kindness and enthusiasm have left a lasting impact on generations of students and staff. Fiona is a shining example of dedication and service in Catholic education. I wish Fiona all the best for her well-deserved recognition as Mathematics Teacher of the Year. I am sure that all of her family—including Scott, Emily and Hannah—are very proud.

LIVERPOOL CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (21:24): It is that time of year again. Bells are ringing, trees are going up and shopping centres are filled with the sounds of Mariah Carey and Michael Bublé. It also marks the announcement of the winners of my annual Christmas card competition. I am delighted to inform the House that year 6 student Katie Pham from Ashcroft Public School is this year's winner. Her artwork captures the classic Australian Christmas with Santa on a surfboard racing toward the shore, present in hand. The decision was incredibly difficult, which is why the artworks of the six runners-up are featured on the inside of the card. The runners up are Khush Dahiya from All Saints Catholic College, Elijah Lucre from Cartwright Public School, Kattyia Kha from Green Valley Public School, Manya Singla from Liverpool Public School, Lisa Do from Marsden Road Public School and Skylar Rose Price from Busby West Public School. Thank you to the more than 500 students who entered the competition. The talent on display made the choice tough but I am confident that Liverpool will once again have the best Christmas cards in this place.

RIVERINA SHEARING COMPETITION

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (21:25): In my electorate on 18 October 2025, the town of Morven proudly hosted a momentous shearing competition where a team of five shearers, including skilled locals from the New South Wales Riverina region, set a new world record by shearing 2,301 merino lambs in eight hours—that is less than one minute per sheep. The historic event saw the extraordinary talent and endurance of Australian and New Zealand shearers. Among the record-breaking team were Riverina shearing contractor Lochie Robertson, Toby Walker from Jindera, Cameron Hicks, Benjamin Duncan from New Zealand and Nick Lehmann. They demonstrated remarkable skill and stamina under tough, dry seasonal conditions that made shearing especially challenging. Their average pace of shearing a lamb in under a minute reflects the high calibre of local and international shearers. The achievement not only celebrates the rich shearing heritage of the Riverina but also highlights the dedication and hard work of these extraordinary professionals. Congratulations to the competitors and to all those involved in putting Morven on the map of world competitive sheep shearing.

MAITLAND SHOWGROUND

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport, and Minister for Roads) (21:26): The Maitland Showground is at the heart of the Maitland community, and the Hunter River Agricultural and Horticultural Association has custodianship of the oldest regional show in Australia. Leading such an important organisation is a very important role in my community. My sincere thanks and appreciation go to Brett Gleeson, who has just retired from his role as manager of the Hunter River Agricultural and Horticultural Association after six years at the helm. During this time, Brett faced many challenges, including flooding events and the impacts of COVID-19 on the showground operations. It was my sincere pleasure to work with Brett to secure important improvements to the facility. I thank Brett for his guardianship of the Maitland Show and Showground and wish him all the best in his future endeavours. I wish all the best to president Margaret Enright.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN FARRAGHER, OAM

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (21:27): I express my condolences to the family and friends of the late John Farragher, OAM, and pay tribute to his extraordinary life. John was committed to the Penrith region and to the sport of rugby league. He was a professional rugby league player whose playing career was tragically cut short after just seven games in 1978 due to a life-changing injury. The bush boy from Gilgandra was in the front row of a scrum that collapsed, bodies piling on his neck. He became a quadriplegic at just 21, spending the rest of his life in a wheelchair. However, with incredible resilience and the unwavering support of the Panthers family, John went on to serve in multiple roles at Panthers Leagues Club, commencing as a doorman greeting patrons in his wheelchair with a smile. He also served as a director, a position he held until his sudden passing. In 2016 John was awarded an OAM in recognition of his service to rugby league. On behalf of my community of Badgerys Creek and the wider Nepean region, I offer my deepest condolences to all of John's loved ones. Vale, John Farragher.

RESILIENCE TO RECOVERY FETE

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (21:28): It was wonderful to attend the Resilience to Recovery fete at the beautiful Auburn Botanic Gardens. Resilience to Recovery is a community organisation that challenges stigma around disability and provides tailored support based on each individual's needs. Its commitment to inclusiveness reflects the rich diversity of my community, offering support workers from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds to ensure that everyone feels recognised and valued. The fete was a celebration of community spirit, with face painting, drumming lessons, a petting farm and a classic sausage sizzle. It brought together families, friends and support workers to acknowledge the strength, independence and achievements of people living with disability. Events like that remind us of the importance of creating spaces where everyone, regardless of ability, can participate and thrive. I thank the Resilience to Recovery team for their dedication to inclusion and their tireless work to uplift individuals and foster a community where every person has the opportunity to shine.

CALEDONIAN SOCIETY OF SYDNEY

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (21:29): On Friday 14 November I attended the Caledonian Society's first annual St Andrew's Day dinner. Celebrating St Andrew's Day is about celebrating everything Scottish: haggis, whisky—also known as scotch—kilts and bagpipes. But there's more: porridge, Nessie, black pudding, tartans, and, of course, my late grandfather, who was Scottish. I am proud to pay tribute to our Australian Scottish community. The St Andrew's Day dinner brought together business, creatives, professionals and patriots of Scotland to strengthen connections and begin a new chapter. Importantly, they also raised over \$25,000 for the Women's Housing Company. I recognise committee members Paul Gallagher, Paul Angus, Laura Haines, Millie Watt, Michelle Campbell, Angus Kunkler, Daniel Zakrzewski and Fiona Seath for their dedication and leadership. I am proud to acknowledge our Australian Scottish community in the Parliament of New South Wales.

SYMBIO WILDLIFE PARK

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (21:30): Seventy-five years ago, pharmacists Bob and Fran Grover acquired a five-acre park in Helensburgh, originally used as a laboratory. Over the next 25 years, the Grovers raised their family and developed a local wildlife park famous for its cow-milking demonstrations and native meet and greets, which both educated and entertained visitors. In November 2000, the Radnidge family became the park's third owners. Since then Symbio has quadrupled in size, evolving into a nationally and internationally recognised facility for quality education and animal care. While maintaining the original farmyard precinct, the family have expanded the native exhibits to include quokkas and fairy penguins, alongside exotic species such as meerkats and ring-tailed lemurs. This year the Symbio Conservation Foundation was established, leading breed-to-release programs for endangered species, including the green and golden bell frog, the southern stuttering frog and the Bellinger River snapping turtle. Symbio stands not simply as a tourist attraction but as a conservation leader and educator worthy of recognition in this House.

RECLAIM THE NIGHT MARCH

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (21:31): The Castle Hill Reclaim the Night march against domestic violence will be held this year on 28 November 2025 at Rouse Hill Town Centre. The inaugural Castle Hill Reclaim the Night march was held on 1 December 2023. The global movement began in the United Kingdom in the 1970s and has become an important symbol of resistance against all forms of violence towards women. The march is important to continue to raise awareness that we must continue to resist all forms of violence against women. Only by continuing our efforts to resist violence against women can we hope to change attitudes. Violence will never be acceptable in our society. I thank Ubah Gabris from the Castle Hill Rotary Club and District 9685 for organising the Reclaim the Night march. I thank everyone who continues to raise awareness that all forms of violence in our society will never be acceptable.

SUMAN AND URMI SAHA

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (21:32): I congratulate Suman and Urmi Saha, who welcomed their beautiful new baby girl, Sanjana, into their family. Lakshmi has visited again for that wonderful milestone, which will no doubt bring immense joy, laughter and love. Suman is well known across my community as a dedicated and respected leader. As a Cumberland city councillor, Suman has served my community with diligence since being elected in 2017. He is a thoughtful advocate and all-round champion for Western Sydney. Now Suman takes on an even tougher role as night shift manager for the smallest and loudest boss he will ever have. Suman's passion for community has always been about building a better future for families. Now he, Urmi and their eldest daughter, Rianna, get to build one of their own—a future filled with Sanjana's first steps, first words and hopefully not too many sleepless nights. I congratulate Suman and Urmi on behalf of the Prospect electorate and the Parliament of New South Wales.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Donna Davis): I also congratulate Suman and Urmi.

ANGELA BRODIE

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (21:33): I acknowledge Angela Brodie, a bright young student from Five Dock Public School, who recently joined me in the Parliament as the member for Drummoyne for a day. It was a pleasure to host Angela and her mum, Deanna, for question time and a tour of the bearpit. Angela reflected on her visit:

Dear Stephanie, my favourite part of the tour was when we went to the Lower House, and I also thought the Speaker's Dining Room and garden were beautiful. I remember you asked me to tell you something that was a problem that you can improve on. I think people should improve on bike lanes for E-bikes because I have had people on E bikes almost crash into me when I'm walking on the pathway. And we need to find a type of battery that doesn't catch on fire. Thank you, from Angela.

I sincerely thank Angela for taking the time to visit the Parliament. I loved spending time getting to know her and her mum. I wish her all the very best. Who knows—maybe we might see her here as the future member for Drummoyne.

STAND WITH PALESTINE GALA

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (21:34): I had the privilege of attending the end-of-year Stand with Palestine gala hosted by Palestinian Christians in Australia in Liverpool on 14 November. It was a night to honour culture, celebrate heritage and stand with those doing it tough, both here and overseas. Since November 2023, Palestinian Christians in Australia has raised over \$848,000 to support more than 100 Palestinian families, Christian and Muslim alike, as they begin new lives in Australia. That support goes beyond emergency aid. It is about securing housing, finding work, looking after mental health, and keeping culture and faith alive. With more families set to arrive from Gaza, sheltering right now in churches under siege, the work continues and so must our

support. I thank Palestinian Christians in Australia for everything it does to lead with heart, compassion and an unwavering commitment to justice.

LIVERPOOL REGIONAL MUSEUM

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (21:35): In honour of Liverpool's 215th foundation anniversary, Liverpool Regional Museum recently launched an exhibition to explore part of Macquarie's vision for a series of towns beyond the penal colony. Notably, the first Macquarie town was also the site of the first land grant awarded under colonial rule to an Aboriginal woman, Maria Lock. Maria Lock was born in 1805 to the Boorooberongal clan of the Dharug people near the current town of Richmond. In 1822 she married Dicky, the son of Bennelong, but he died only a few weeks later. She married a second time in 1824 to Robert Lock, a convict. That was the first officially sanctioned Aboriginal-British union within the colony. At the time of her marriage, Maria had been promised a land grant, but she never received it. After years of petitioning various Governors, she was granted 40 acres of land in 1831 at Brickmakers Creek in Liverpool. I thank the hardworking Liverpool Regional Museum staff for telling the untold stories of Liverpool so that we may better appreciate our history and our journey to the place we are today.

TIMOR CHINESE ASSOCIATION OF NSW

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (21:36): I honour the fiftieth anniversary of the Timorese community in Australia, commemorating the arrival of the first refugees in Darwin on 15 August 1975 aboard the *MacDili*. This historic milestone pays tribute to the strength and sacrifice of the Elders who rebuilt their lives while preserving their culture, language and faith for future generations. Established in 1978, the Timor Chinese Association of NSW has fostered unity through cultural events, educational programs and charitable initiatives. From supporting new arrivals to fundraising for international and local causes, the association continues to enrich community life. I acknowledge and thank president William Leong, vice-president and event coordinator John Paul Jong and the community members who make the association great.

Private Members' Statements

PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (21:37): Tonight I speak about an issue that should concern every member of this Parliament and every person who relies on our public hospitals. The Government is doing the hard work to strengthen our health system. We are recruiting more staff, modernising emergency departments and building the services that keep people well without always needing a trip to hospital. We are doing our part. We need the Federal Government to do its part and live up to the agreement it made with the States. The New South Wales Labor Government has taken on the largest staffing reform in the history of the State's emergency departments.

We are implementing one to three ratios in emergency departments, a change that will bring several thousand new nurses into our hospitals over the next few years. Ratios matter; they protect patients and the nurses who care for them. They make the system safer, calmer and more efficient. Since 2023 we have increased the health workforce by more than 7,000 people, which is a five per cent increase. Within that, we expanded the nursing workforce by about 3,000, which is a six per cent increase. These are real staff in real hospitals, not figures on a page. They are already making a difference, which can be observed in our busiest hospitals.

Westmead Hospital has recruited more than 23 full-time equivalent nurses, and the Children's Hospital at Westmead has added more than 19. Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital has recruited 37 nurses to meet safe staffing levels, while Liverpool Hospital and Campbelltown Hospital have added more than 34 and 41 respectively. They are major boosts to frontline care and reflect the seriousness with which this Government takes the task of rebuilding the system after years of strain. We are also reshaping how people access care, because easing pressure on emergency departments is not optional; it is essential. A good example of that is the virtualKIDS Emergency Department Short Stay Unit.

This new service supports young children who arrive at the Children's Hospital at Westmead with common gastroenteritis symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhoea, high temperatures and dehydration. Instead of being admitted, many of those children can now be treated safely at home through virtual care. More than 100 young patients have already used the service and around 85 per cent were able to stay at home. That is good for parents, clinicians and emergency departments. We are also seeing strong use of Healthdirect through the 1800 022 222 number. Roughly half a million people in New South Wales used that service in the past year. Around half of those callers would have gone to an emergency department if the phone service did not exist.

None of us would claim that the job is done. Our health system is under pressure, and the population of New South Wales continues to grow by around 100,000 people every year. But we are moving the system forward

by investing in virtual care, frontline professionals and strategies that prevent emergency department overload. We are doing the heavy lifting in a State that now holds more than 8½ million people, which is nearly a third of the entire national population. That is why we expect the Federal Government to stand by the commitments it made. In 2023 National Cabinet struck a deal to give public hospitals more support. The Commonwealth agreed to increase its share of funding to 42.5 per cent by 2030 and 45 per cent by 2035. In return, States and Territories agreed to co-fund new disability services outside the NDIS to help ease the pressure on that scheme.

New South Wales has honoured this agreement in letter and spirit. Yet the Federal Government has now written to the States saying that achieving its promised share will depend on States reducing hospital activity and costs to what it calls sustainable levels. That is a shift from a clear commitment to a conditional offer. It suggests that Canberra will decide whether our hospital activity levels are acceptable, even though activity is driven by need and population, not by wishful thinking. That is more than disappointing. It also ignores the reality that in Western Sydney and south-west Sydney hospitals, 166 aged-care patients have passed their discharge date and are waiting for a Commonwealth-funded aged-care bed. The Federal Government is very long on advice when it comes to health, but far too short when it comes to funding. New South Wales is meeting its responsibilities. We expect the Commonwealth to also do so.

ENERGY POLICY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (21:42): Considerable public debate regarding energy policy has occurred in recent months, both within the Federal Liberal Party and in New South Wales. These discussions matter because they go beyond politics. They go directly to the long-term prosperity of our State, the resilience of our regions and the wellbeing of the people we represent. Energy policy is not an abstract concept. It is not a debate confined to party rooms or press conferences. For families in Albury, for businesses in Thurgoona, for farmers around Gerogery and for vulnerable households across regional New South Wales, energy policy shows up in one place: the bill that arrives in the letterbox.

Today far too many people are opening those bills with real fear. Energy costs are climbing sharply, and the burden is falling hardest on families and small businesses who can least absorb the shock. That is why the Liberal Party, federally and in New South Wales, has made it clear that affordable energy and cost-of-living relief must sit at the centre of our economic future. In regional New South Wales, energy policy is lived and visible. Policy decisions shape our landscapes, affect our livelihoods and flow straight into the everyday cost-of-living pressures that regional families feel so acutely. In my own electorate, communities such as those at Gerogery have been gathering to discuss the proposed Yambula Range wind farm development.

These are genuine, grassroots conversations—farmers, business owners, young families and retirees all coming together because they care deeply about their community and the future being laid out before them. They are not people opposed to renewable energy. Nor are they opposed to the State moving towards a cleaner future. In fact, regional New South Wales has always been at the forefront of delivering the energy, food and industrial capacity that sustains the State. What they object to is the notion that change must be imposed on them without adequate consultation, without transparency and without a proper understanding of local impact.

If we are serious about an orderly, responsible and achievable transition to net zero, then regional people must not be treated as a collateral; they must be partners in it. Renewables need to be located in the right place, with communities restored to the centre of decision-making. We on this side of the House believe in a cleaner future and opportunity. We believe in innovation and technological advancement. But we also believe—unequivocally—in energy abundance and market certainty. Those are the foundations upon which industry grows, upon which businesses invest and upon which families can rely. Industry must not be an afterthought in this debate. From manufacturing to mining, food processing to freight logistics, and health care to small business, reliable and affordable energy is the lifeblood of economic activity. If energy is too expensive, industry relocates. If energy is unreliable, industry contracts. If energy policy is unstable, industry simply stops investing. That is not a future any of us should accept for New South Wales.

We must ensure that our State remains a place where employers have the confidence to expand, where new industries see New South Wales as a competitive location and where regional centres like Albury have the infrastructure and certainty to attract long-term investment. That means an energy policy grounded in engineering, economics and reality, not ideology or political expedience. It means ensuring that communities like those around Yambula Range are properly heard. Their concerns about visual impact, turbine proximity, noise, land use conflict and cumulative impacts are legitimate. They deserve answers, not platitudes. They deserve planning processes that recognise the dignity of their homes and the significance of their landscapes.

At the heart of this debate is something simple: the best interests of the people of New South Wales. Those interests are not served by rushing headlong into poorly planned development. Nor are they served by ignoring the cost pressures currently crushing vulnerable households—pensioners, low-income families, single parents and

people on fixed incomes who are watching power bills climb higher each quarter. Energy policy must improve their quality of life, not diminish it. We must build a future in which New South Wales is environmentally responsible and economically strong, where industry can thrive, where regional communities are respected and where affordable, abundant and reliable energy is not a privilege but an expectation. That is the future we should be working towards.

MAITLAND ELECTORATE HEALTH SERVICES

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport, and Minister for Roads) (21:47): I update the House on improvements to health services in Maitland that have come about through some great Minns Labor Government initiatives, and I provide an update on our health infrastructure. After 12 long years of neglect by those opposite, we knew on coming to government that the newly opened Maitland Hospital was struggling. It did not have enough staff and people were waiting for up to 100 hours—sometimes even longer—in the emergency department. It was a constant source of complaints to my office because people just could not get seen within a timely manner. We heard the horrific story of an apprentice who suffered a catastrophic break in his ankle and had to wait three weeks to be seen, only to have the ankle broken again. There was a lack of orthopaedic services for him to be looked at in a timely manner. In the lead-up to the last State election, when we were in opposition, I brought the then health Minister to Maitland. He listened to many people telling their stories, who spoke of their horror of the health department under those opposite.

Things have really improved under our Government. The biggest concern at the hospital was emergency department waiting times, and this has been addressed by both the State and Federal governments. We have had a commitment from Federal Labor that we will get an urgent care clinic, which is much needed after the former Federal Coalition Government took away our regional rating for health services. We lost a lot of doctors from the system in Maitland and bulk-billing is not common, so we are all hanging out for that urgent care clinic. I spoke recently to the member for Paterson, who told me things are coming along really well in that space.

In the meantime, while we are waiting, I have been working with Minister Park to make some immediate improvements. Probably the highlight is the establishment of the 24/7 emergency short stay unit, which aims to get better patient flows for people who might need care in a hospital setting for only 24 or 48 hours. They do not need to sit in a corridor, as happened under those opposite, but they also do not need to be admitted for a long hospital stay. The unit turns over quite a lot of people. It has eight beds, and it is not unusual for staff to see 20 or more people. Patients are seen by doctors, they get food and they are looked after, receiving an extra level of care compared with what they would get in a waiting room.

In addition, I am proud that, as a result of great initiatives by Minister Park, Maitland Hospital will employ 25 new nurses in order to achieve safe staffing levels in the emergency department. This was a critical campaign by the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association in the lead-up to the 2023 election. It was in Maitland that Minister Park, then in opposition, explained safe staffing levels and made a strong commitment to deliver them for our community. Our Government has prioritised frontline services. We scrapped the wages cap and we are working with the nurses on their wages. In the interim, we have given them more of a pay rise than they got under those opposite and the dreadful wages cap, which saw workers leave the system. We have also had some good conversations with our paramedics to ensure that they are resourced properly. That is a great initiative, and I thank Minister Park for his help.

This year we have committed \$7.5 million to expand the Maitland Hospital car park. Parking is inadequate because a full car park was not provided when the hospital was built. During the John Hunter redevelopment we have extra patients, and so there is a parking issue. The project will deliver an additional 100 car parking spaces and provide better flowthrough for public transport. We also have additional funding for the Maitland integrated and community mental health services, which we are working to relocate to a single space. We have seen a significant improvement of nearly 10 per cent in category 2 emergency patients starting treatment on time. I am reminded of the story about the apprentice who broke his ankle. Orthopaedic surgeons now do shifts on weekends to ensure a similar travesty never happens again.

UPPER HUNTER ELECTORATE

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (21:52): Tonight I give the House my reflections on this year in the electorate of Upper Hunter—a year that I believe many of my constituents will remember for its historical significance, whether it be the weather and accompanying natural disasters or, on a brighter note, the success of local sporting teams. But as I have said for the past 10 months, the treatment my constituents have received from the Minns Labor Government can be categorised as disappointing if I want to be kind, or appalling if I am honest. From January to August, there were five declared natural disasters involving council areas within the Upper Hunter electorate, from bushfires and storms in January followed by rain and flood events through autumn and winter.

Whilst I appreciate the natural disaster declarations, I am sure I speak on behalf of the people impacted by those events when I say that the joint Federal and New South Wales government assistance did not meet community expectations—the East Coast Severe Weather Personal Hardship Assistance payment was a postcode lottery and then farmers were overlooked for the primary producer, rural landholder or special disaster grants because of a clause to cover alleged "double dipping". They finally qualified for a small business grant. Health is another portfolio that has not met Upper Hunter community expectations in 2025. I qualify that statement by acknowledging our hardworking, often overstretched frontline medical personnel—doctors, nurses, NSW Ambulance paramedics and the staff who support them. Despite being under-resourced, they always do their best and deserve nothing less than their community's admiration.

Having mentioned community expectations, I have consulted widely this year. I met with the mayors of Singleton, Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter shire. We sat down with Hunter New England Local Health District management to discuss our local public health concerns—key among them being public maternity services. I attended a regional health forum hosted by the Muswellbrook branch of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association at Muswellbrook Workers Club. To repeat what I said in May:

The Upper Hunter has given so much to the New South Wales economy through industrial-scale export coal production. In return, there must be a fair approach to ensure quality health care is always available close to home.

I turn now to coal and energy. Where do we find ourselves as the daylight saving sun sets on this year, I ask the House? Amazingly, I scarcely see any progress on the work that needs to be done. Upper Hunter is still waiting. I told the House in September about the plea from Singleton Council for immediate intervention for employers and employees affected by the changing global market for thermal coal and the impact of the energy transition. The council wanted to raise with the Minister for Natural Resources the need for urgent transparent coordination between the New South Wales Future Jobs and Investment Authority and the Federal Government's Net Zero Economy Authority to highlight the importance of collaboration with local government. At the time, I concluded:

... we cannot leave the transition to chance. We need to get onto it. The Premier and Minister Houssos need to act now.

Before I leave coal and move on to energy, I point out that Upper Hunter is waiting. Where are the planning reforms that can and will free up coalmine buffer land for post-mining use?

Returning to Singleton, the Singleton Solar Standoff group, which opposed the Mitchells Flat Solar Farm, wants renewable energy developments on rehabilitated mining and coalmine buffer land. More than a year after this community group made that commonsense call, I question why this State Government has not adopted that suggestion and formulated policy. That brings me to the Energy portfolio. Again, the Minns Government has not met community expectations in 2025. The lives of hundreds of landholders from Muswellbrook to Walcha are turned upside down when EnergyCo decides to study a new route for the transmission lines to carry electricity from the New England Renewable Energy Zone to urban communities.

The landholders of Rouchel, Gundy, Waverley Station and Timor have already had their Christmases spoiled by uncertainty about the impact that the potential rerouting of these transmission lines will have on their lives and their livelihoods. It would be remiss of me not to mention the ongoing angst regarding the 15-year-old New South Wales Labor Government planning approval for the Hunter Gas Pipeline, which has still not eventuated. In closing, I acknowledge the resilience of each and every community during what has been an extremely challenging year.

JUDE COOKE

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (21:57): On Sunday 16 November I attended a surprise party for Jude Cooke of Katoomba in the Blue Mountains. After 30 years of dedicated service to TAFE NSW, she has just retired. It was a large gathering of community, colleagues, family and friends, all sharing their love and gratitude for her incredible work as head teacher and TAFE champion. In the words of her peers from TAFE Mount Druitt:

Jude is an inspiring role model with a remarkable ability to encourage Aboriginal staff and students to achieve. She is a selfless, dedicated mentor for students and a truly remarkable person.

I concur. Jude's advocacy and work in our public TAFE system promoting this great public institution is legendary. Jude Cooke has three decades of contributing to access and equity and outreach programs in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains. She is a graduate of the University of Technology Sydney adult education literacy and numeracy programs and taught in the career pathways and employability skills section for TAFE NSW. She navigated her way through tumultuous changes over three decades in various roles, always focused on access, equity and outreach through the lens of adult education. On those tumultuous years, I will reiterate a few things. In this Chamber, on 14 October 2015, I said:

Tonight I acknowledge TAFE NSW as the major provider of quality, comprehensive, public vocational education and training. Our TAFE system has built the economic, cultural and social capacity of communities across New South Wales. It has provided equity in education. It has offered opportunities and pathways for students and teachers from a wide variety of backgrounds. It is a public education system that provides quality education regardless of a student's capacity to pay.

On the changes implemented by the Baird Liberal Government—the funding cuts, the course cuts, the staff cuts, the fee increases and the move to privatisation of public education—I said:

This attack on teachers is yet another devious strategy to dismantle our TAFE system. The offer of either a reduced salary or redundancy does little more than destabilise and demoralise TAFE teachers. It is a kick in the teeth. It is a blatant and damaging display of disrespect to the teaching profession. Downgrading TAFE teachers' skills will have a devastating impact on education outcomes. Already many experienced teachers have left. I pay tribute to the dedicated teachers who are still swimming against the tide, who are frustrated, saddened, angry and depressed. I speak for them today.

TAFE institutes are going through constant restructures and reforms to reduce staff numbers and lower costs.

In those days, I spoke for teachers like Jude Cooke. She held her ground. Since coming to power in 2023, the Minns Labor Government has had an enormous challenge in addressing the years of devastating policy changes and cuts to TAFE and in reversing the far-reaching negative impacts on TAFE, which saw the shift from high-quality public education to a business model. It will take some time for the Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education and our Government to rebuild and restore stability, to reverse the horrors those opposite foisted upon this State and TAFE. I am relieved and pleased to have heard the Minister recently say in this Chamber that the Minns Labor Government's commitment to build a strong and stable TAFE NSW includes a record \$3.4 billion investment in skills and TAFE in the 2025-26 budget and removes competitive funding.

But I digress. I go back to Jude. Of particular note over many hard years is Jude's solid commitment to overcoming systemic barriers that threaten the integrity of access and equity programs that are tailored to address barriers to further education and participation for individuals and communities experiencing intersectional disadvantage. Jude's concerns are still valid. I am still in her corner and will continue to fight the good fight for her and for our TAFE system, teachers, students and communities. Jude Cooke was recognised every day for her tireless efforts to provide educational opportunities and being a social justice warrior. Some of her awards included the Western Sydney Institute Staff Award for TAFE Outreach at Mount Druitt in 2014, the Brigid Award in 2016, and being named Non-Aboriginal Employee of the Year for the 2020 TAFE NSW Gili Awards. I thank Jude for her strength, determination and capacity to speak truth to power and for always putting the needs and opportunities of her students at the fore, and I wish her a happy retirement.

HEATHCOTE ELECTORATE SURF LIFE SAVING CLUBS

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (22:02): I recognise and celebrate the incredible contribution of my 11 Surf Life Saving clubs across the Heathcote electorate, from Garie in the Royal National Park down to Bulli and Sandon Point in the south, and the dedicated team of volunteers who selflessly give back to the community time and again. Surf lifesaving is more than a summer pastime. It is also a proud Australian tradition built on service, courage and community spirit. Each weekend, often well before dawn, our volunteers put on the red and yellow uniform, not for recognition or reward but to keep others safe, roll out the gear on the beach and serve the community from 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Along the rugged coastline, our local clubs face some of the most challenging conditions anywhere in the State. I was lucky enough to visit eight of these clubs recently with the Federal member for Cunningham, Alison Byrnes, and Councillor Richard Martin from Wollongong City Council. Clubs are a hub for education, fitness and inclusion, home to Nippers, beach safety programs and special events that bring the whole community together. They play an active role in training young people not just in surf awareness but also in leadership and confidence, skills that stay with them for life.

The clubs in the national park—Era, Burning Palms and Garie—were established in direct response to community need after a local 19-year-old man was caught in a rip and could not be saved, back in the 1930s. They vowed that would never happen again. Era and Burning Palms are remote beaches, without road access, mobile coverage or the luxuries found at more urban locations. Yet, week after week, their members trek in, carry equipment by hand and remain steadfast in their commitment to saving lives. Garie Surf Life Saving Club has weathered significant challenges in recent years, including severe storm damage that left the club and the community without road access for three years, yet the resolve of its members never wavered. They continued to patrol at Wattamolla to train and to mentor the next generation of lifesavers, proving the strength of community spirit in the face of adversity.

Across the clubs of Helensburgh-Stanwell Park, Coalcliff, Scarborough-Wombarra, Coledale, Austinmer, Thirroul, Sandon Point and Bulli, there is one unifying feature: a commitment to community and saving lives. Each patrol, rescue and training session is underpinned by countless unseen hours of preparation, fundraising and maintenance. Our volunteers do it because they care deeply about their communities and about keeping our

beaches safe for everyone. We owe these volunteers our deep gratitude. The club presidents, patrol captains, trainers, parents and the junior members learning the ropes embody the best of what it means to serve. The Surf Life Saving movement also reflects the power of community partnerships. Local businesses, councils and governments all have a role to play in supporting the infrastructure and resources these clubs need, from reliable equipment and communication systems to facilities that meet modern standards.

As more people visit our beaches each year, especially those unfamiliar with coastal conditions, the work of our lifesavers becomes even more critical. Education and prevention save as many lives as rescues. That is why continued investment in training, surf safety education and youth engagement is essential. The Surf Life Saving clubs of the Heathcote electorate are not only guardians of our coastline but also teachers, role models and neighbours. Their work reminds us that strong communities are built on service, not self-interest. Anyone interested in volunteering should go to www.surflifesaving.com.au. There is a job for everyone. I thank every member of our local surf clubs and their families for their dedication, courage and unwavering commitment to keeping our coastline safe. They truly are the heart of our beaches, and their service makes our community stronger.

TRIBUTE TO DON BECK

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (22:07): I pay tribute to Donald Frederick Charles Beck, the former Nationals member for the electorates of Byron and Murwillumbah. Don passed away on 21 April 2024, survived by his wife, Lynne, and two daughters, Allison and Elizabeth. Unfortunately, due to nuanced scheduling considerations, a condolence motion in this place with Don's family in attendance has not been possible. As we come to the conclusion of this sitting year, I do not want another year to pass by without formally acknowledging and recognising the immense contribution Don made to the Tweed region.

Born on 21 March 1936 in Toowoomba to Frederick Charles Beck and Mavis Amy Chauveau, Don worked as a refrigeration and electrical contractor in rural Queensland, where he owned and operated the largest domestic and commercial refrigeration, air conditioning and electrical sales and service business in Queensland, outside of Brisbane. In 1958 Don married Lynne, the daughter of a well-known Tweed farming family. In 1960 Don and Lynne settled in Tweed, where Don owned and operated a sheet metal manufacturing business. The Becks also owned beef cattle properties at Cudgera and Tyalgum, breeding Charolais and Simmental stud cattle, incorporating a commercial crossbreeding program. Don and Lynne also had a small crop of passionfruit, and I believe there was at one point also a trial of rabbit farming to supply the Akubra factory.

Don joined the Country Party, now The Nationals, in 1960. Don was elected to Tweed Shire Council in 1979, serving two terms, including one year as deputy mayor. In 1984 Don was preselected by the National Party to contest the seat of Byron. The seat of Byron had been held by the late Jack Boyd since 1973. Boyd was a local canegrower and had a distinguished military career. He was a very popular member and his decision not to contest the 1984 election was unexpected. Jack Boyd's brother Max was widely tipped to become his successor, but in a hard-fought preselection battle, Don Beck emerged the victor. The electorate of Byron was later abolished, and Don successfully contested the new electorate of Murwillumbah. However, rapid development on the New South Wales far north coast then saw the electorate of Murwillumbah abolished. In 1999 Don contested the electorate of Tweed, losing a very close election to Labor's Neville Newell.

During his 15 years in the New South Wales Parliament, Don also served as a Parliamentary Secretary and Deputy Government Whip. During that time, Don's wife, Lynne, served as a councillor and mayor on Tweed Shire Council. Don and Lynne were tireless workers for the Tweed shire. Don delivered significant infrastructure upgrades to the regions he represented, including schools, sporting facilities and support for community groups. He was very proud of delivering the Barney's Point Bridge as part of the Chinderah bypass, getting rid of the old bridge that would have to open for boats several times a day, which would cause huge delays on the Pacific Highway. That was a very welcome development.

Don believed that a local member should stay in touch with local people and would attend every commemoration service, country dance, school presentation, sports event or service club meeting that his parliamentary schedule would allow, and he was always punctual. One of my former electorate officers who also worked for Don remembers him as always being impeccably groomed and never late. Don was a proud nasho, having completed national service at Wacol in Queensland in 1955, followed by service in the Citizens Military Forces from 1955 to 1958. Don later became the inaugural member and president of the Gold Coast South-Tweed branch of the National Servicemen's Association.

Don lived and breathed politics. His interest in projects that would bring benefit to the region never waned, and his commitment to The Nationals remained, serving on central council for many years. He and Lynne knew everyone, and everyone knew them. On behalf of the people of the Tweed electorate and the broader far north coast, I pay tribute to Don and his service to the New South Wales Parliament. To Lynne, Allison and Liz and

their families, Don was a great ambassador for the region, but more importantly he was a husband, father and grandfather. On behalf of the New South Wales Parliament, I extend our deepest sympathies to them and trust Don's memory will live on forever.

LIVERPOOL ELECTORATE SCHOOLS

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (22:11): Michelle Obama once said:

The ability to read, write, and analyze; the confidence to stand up and demand justice and equality; the qualifications and connections to get your foot in the door and take your seat at the table – all of that starts with education.

Her words highlight the important role our education system can play in setting people up for a lifetime of success and fulfilling their potential. It underscores the fact that education is only partly about the content of the classes. Often the most important experiences are those that help people identify, refine and define their values, build lifelong relationships, and forge skills and qualities that span one's career. Tonight I speak about the remarkable change in mindset and numerous creative approaches towards education taking place across schools in Liverpool. The innovation is not only lifting academic and educational outcomes but strengthening wellbeing, cultural connection and a sense of belonging for our young people. Liverpool is one of the most diverse and fastest-growing communities in New South Wales. Our schools reflect that diversity every day and also lead the way in designing new approaches that respond to the needs of students, their families and the communities they serve.

I highlight two powerful examples: the Mirrung hub at Ashcroft Public School and the Thriving Schools program, which Busby Public School is part of. The Mirrung hub based at Ashcroft Public School is a transformative initiative built on genuine partnership with the NSW Council of Social Service. "Mirrung" means "belonging" in the Dharug language, and that is exactly what the hub delivers by taking a whole-of-family approach to improve educational and wellbeing outcomes. That is only possible through the collaboration of Aboriginal leaders, community organisations and specialist services. The Mirrung hub provides a culturally safe place where students can access wraparound support, mental health services, tutoring, mentoring and cultural learning grounded in Aboriginal ways of learning. The hub has reimaged the way schools can work with service providers.

Instead of students travelling long distances or waiting months for help, the services come to them on country in a space designed with community and guided by culture. It truly places the school as a trusted and safe space where community can access what they need to thrive, addressing the social determinants of education to enable children to overcome barriers to learning. Poverty, unmet health needs, trauma and family instability all have a profound impact. The results speak for themselves. Students who were previously disengaged are showing hugely improved attendance, confidence and stronger connections with peers and elders. Of the indicators that track longitudinal, educational and wellbeing outcomes for children at Ashcroft, more students are demonstrating stage-appropriate outcomes. All of those will have a long-term impact on the children, the careers they go on to have and the future they see for themselves. The model is not suitable for all schools, but with three public preschools to be delivered in the 2168 postcode, I am confident that the Mirrung hub model can be successfully emulated at Cartwright, Miller and Heckenberg with similar results. I am proud it was pioneered in Liverpool.

Earlier today I visited Busby Public School, which is one of 20 schools that are part of the Thriving Schools program. The program is redefining what it means for a student to flourish. The initiative focuses not only on literacy and numeracy but on wellbeing, school culture and building capability in teachers to better support student needs. Funded by the Paul Ramsay Foundation and supported by the University of Newcastle, the program helps staff identify students who need extra help early and intervene before small challenges become bigger barriers. It is also providing educators with contemporary training, placing wellbeing at the centre of learning and giving principals greater flexibility to build environments where every student is known, valued and cared for. I have heard firsthand the impact that is having. Teachers report calmer classrooms, better attendance and students who are more confident in expressing themselves. It is a powerful reminder that when we invest in student wellbeing, we boost academic outcomes.

Those innovations are not happening in isolation. They form part of the New South Wales Government's commitment to creating fairer, safer and more supportive learning environments. Liverpool students deserve nothing less. I acknowledge the principals, teachers, support staff, Aboriginal community partners and service providers who are part of making the programs a success. I acknowledge every school principal across my electorate, but I particularly call out Poppy Loueizi of Ashcroft Public School, Ena Lakisoe of Busby Public School and Peter Rouse, the director of educational learning, for their incredible efforts and for making sure that every child, no matter where they start out in life, has an opportunity to succeed, thrive and have a future that everyone can envision. Our young people are our greatest assets. By investing in them and in programs, we are strengthening the future of Liverpool. I commend the programs to the House.

OATLEY ELECTORATE

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (22:16): I speak tonight in what all members hope is the final sitting week of 2025 to reflect on a year that has been full, fast, challenging and memorable for all of us. Before anything else, I wish every member and their families a very merry Christmas. I also send my very best wishes for 2026. This job affects not only us but the people who support us at home, and I acknowledge them. One thing that has really stood out for me this year is the genuine effort that members on both sides of the House give to their communities. We do not always agree, and that is democracy, but I see the long hours, tough decisions, difficult conversations and emotional weight that comes with trying to help people who are often at their lowest. For that, I commend every member. The job is not always easy. Some days are rewarding, others are challenging, but we turn up every day because we are in Parliament to make a difference for the people who elected us. Their trust is what drives us. I also sincerely thank the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Assistant Speaker and Temporary Speakers. Keeping this place functioning is not easy. Their patience, fairness and guidance ensure that we can debate passionately while still respecting the institution we serve.

This year has truly been a year of highs, lows and everything in between. The world kept us entertained and informed, but closer to home the moments that really mattered were the quieter ones—the emails, the phone calls or the residents stopping me in the Oatley electorate not because they want something big but because they simply want help. Like so many parents, I have also spent the year trying to keep up with my kids and whatever trend or meme they are laughing at that week. I have learnt that members cannot mention certain phrases in the House without being placed on a call by the Speaker, like "chicken jockey" or "6-7". Whenever I talk about the Oatley electorate, I speak with pride. It is the best place in New South Wales to live, work and raise a family, not because of infrastructure or parks or buildings, important as they are, but because of the people. As a lifelong local, I would not trade Oatley for anywhere else in the world.

I say thank you from the heart to everyone in the St George area—and particularly in my electorate of Oatley—who has stood with us this year and signed petitions, sent emails, showed up to community meetings and fought for better outcomes. Every win we have had belongs to them. This year we have delivered significant results together, including saving and reopening the Peakhurst West swimming pool and completing a major upgrade, after a tough grassroots campaign; completing stage one of the \$160 million King Georges Road upgrade and widening, and securing stage two; making major progress on the \$411 million stage three St George Hospital upgrade; fixing the Terry Street and King Georges Road lights after years of neglect from the council and Transport for NSW; and delivering substantial grants for schools, sporting clubs, multicultural and multi-faith groups, and community organisations.

Those achievements tell only a small part of the story. The real work is in the individual cases of families facing housing challenges, people struggling with cost-of-living pressures, seniors trying to navigate government systems, parents worried about safety, and residents dealing with maintenance issues. Every email represents a person, a story, a worry, a hope. Serving those people is a privilege that I never take for granted. I have also had the honour of continuing my work as shadow Minister for Multiculturalism, shadow Minister for Jobs, Industry, Innovation, Science and Technology, and shadow Minister for South-Western Sydney. This year has included many community meetings with multicultural and multi-faith communities. I have attended multicultural celebrations full of warmth and pride, not just in my electorate but across New South Wales. I have spoken with innovators, defence experts and entrepreneurs shaping the future of our State. I have always believed that the real strength of our community is our people. Seeing south-west Sydney grow and thrive this year has been inspiring. Visiting the new Western Sydney airport confirmed what many of us already know: Its impact will change lives.

None of that work happens alone. My team—Jayden, Jess, Will and Kayla—has given its all to the people of Oatley this year. I say a big thank you to our staff. They have shown patience, kindness and commitment, often in situations where people come to us distressed or overwhelmed. As all members know, good staff are hard to come by, but I am lucky to have a team that cares deeply about our community. As always, I thank my wife, Adla, a high school teacher. Her love and support carries me through the tough days. She is my anchor. Our kids, James and Sammy—or Hurricane and Tsunami, as I call them—fill our lives with laughter, chaos and joy. Seeing James finish primary school and Sammy start primary school has been incredibly special. I wish each and every person who makes this a special place a very merry Christmas. I thank our teachers, nurses, firefighters, police and SES volunteers and staff. I hope next year is just as good as this year. I wish everyone a merry Christmas.

CAMDEN ELECTORATE CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (22:21): Tonight I speak about one of our favourite times of year in Camden. It is Christmas! Camden has a lot going on at Christmas. We love to celebrate Christmas and we get very passionate about it. I will explain why in a minute. First, I will go through a couple of events that are happening. This Saturday we have the Camden Christmas Festival. There will be street stalls and the main street of Camden will be closed down. The festival used to be known as Light Up Camden, because on Saturday night

we light our Christmas tree. It is a fantastic event. It feels like the entire town comes out and purchases Christmas gifts and food. The Christmas markets are on at Cobbitty Public School in the first weekend of December. It is super exciting. A massive number of people come. In excess of five busloads of people from other areas of Sydney come to the Cobbitty markets because, as someone in this place described to me, it is the last true market in Sydney.

Carols by Camdenlight will happen on 6 December. It is an inaugural Christmas carols night. Spoiler alert for people in Camden: If they come along on that night, they may hear someone they know singing a carol with a local celebrity. It will be very exciting. Lots of Camden locals will be singing Christmas carols and generally enjoying what Camden is about. There is gift-wrapping for a gold coin donation for Lifeline at our shopping centre and for Kids of Macarthur at Macarthur Square. They are both fantastic opportunities to get gifts almost professionally wrapped by people, including everyone in my office, who spend a day wrapping gifts. We also have the end-of-year school presentations, which are the joy of my life. They are one of my favourite things. Of course, I have an annual Christmas picnic, which is lots of fun.

In 2021, 58.8 per cent of people in the Camden local government area identified as Christian. That means that almost two out of every three people in Camden are Christian. Although Christmas is exciting and it is lovely to think of the trees and of Santa, at the core of it is that our year is going to start very soon. Isaiah 9:2 states, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light". We are coming to the time of year when people turn to their churches and see what is on offer from Christianity. It is the beginning of the Christian year. We start with four weeks of Advent. It starts early this year, in November. The four Sundays leading up to Christmas are extremely special times to start afresh and to maybe make a new year's resolution. I do not mean something superficial like "This year I will lose weight"—it would be my thirty-fifth year in a row—but something deeper like "I will be kinder. I will be gentler. I will be more compassionate." I invite everyone to lift themselves this Christmas. Let us think about how we can treat each other better. In 2020 Pope Francis said:

The birth of Christ helps us to become aware of the value of human life, the life of every human being, from the first instant to natural death.

It is important to reflect that Jesus came to us as a helpless baby born in a stable to parents who were, at that time, homeless. Jesus is a representative of the most vulnerable of all of us. That is how God chose to put his son on our planet. That is how God chose to give us his greatest gift—as a vulnerable, helpless baby. May we all come with a sense of vulnerability and a sense of helplessness and look to our communities for the beauty, love and compassion that is waiting for us. We should look out for that feeling that Christmas brings to us, not only with Christmas trees and Santa Claus—by all means, do not stop those things—but with a sense of hope, love and excitement for the year ahead.

KU-RING-GAI COUNCIL RATES EDUCATION AND PARENTAL CHOICE

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (22:26): Tonight I discuss two issues affecting the Davidson electorate as we end 2025. I speak about Ku-ring-gai Council supporting an increase of 29 per cent to its rates in 2026. On 21 October 2025 the council voted to pursue a special rate variation of 24.6 per cent, plus a 4.4 per cent rate peg. The proposal is currently on public exhibition before it is formally submitted to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal in early 2026. If approved, the 29 per cent increase would see average rates increase by 500 per cent for households and 1,600 per cent for businesses each year. Two separate council surveys show overwhelming community opposition to the 29 per cent rate rise. In its own opt-in survey of 4,500 people and a survey of 400 randomly selected residents, both found that 78 per cent of residents preferred the lesser rate. A 29 per cent rate rise is not on while our community faces higher cost-of-living pressures.

Households are doing it tough right now. The council should tighten its own belt and make savings before reaching deeper into residents' pockets. I encourage residents to have their say on the council website and sign my community petition. I thank the hundreds of residents who have signed the petition. I read the following feedback from people who have signed the petition. The first said, "Extreme hardship and stress. I'm on a fixed income and cannot afford to pay higher rates." Another said, "We would have to cut down on other essential needs." Another person said, "I am a pensioner. My income doesn't increase at this rate, and I would have to reduce my other limited expenditure." Another said, "Foregoing sport for the kids." Finally, someone said, "This means we go without either a Christmas break away or presents for the kids." I am on the side of residents against this rate rise in a cost-of-living crisis.

The next issue is the importance of education school choices for Killara, Lindfield and Roseville families and students. Earlier this year it was revealed that students in West Killara and West Lindfield would be forced to attend Lindfield Learning Village and not Killara High School from 2026. Thanks to the community for its pressure and advocacy, that will not take place until 2028. I am committed to making sure students have choice

between those two schools beyond 2028. Lindfield Learning Village and Killara High School have different learning models. Lindfield Learning Village has an innovative education model, while Killara High has a traditional education model. Just as same-sex schools and co-educational schools have local joint enrolment areas, the same should apply in this case with education models. I thank the hundreds of local residents who have signed the petition to date and note their feedback. One person said:

Innovative education does not suit all children. To only offer this one type of education in a particular catchment disadvantages those whose outcomes do better in traditional teaching schools.

Another person said:

The changes won't affect me personally as my kids have already moved to Killara High, but they will impact my friends and neighbours. If my kids were younger this would be a devastating change.

A third person said:

Education style should be a choice, not forced upon by the bureaucrats.

Someone else said:

The change will force us to undergo major financial expenses since we will have to relocate to another apartment in the new catchment area.

I call on the Minister for Education and the Department of Education to listen to local families, students and our community and allow choice in education for West Killara and West Lindfield families. Rest assured, I will continue to campaign for choice in education up until 2028 and beyond.

As we soon enter the final sitting week of the year, I pay tribute to my local community. I thank them for their support and for allowing me to represent them and make their voices heard in the Parliament of New South Wales. I deeply thank my electorate team, led by Annie, along with Richard, Abby and Laura. I thank them so much for all their work. They go way above and beyond. I welcome their wonderful justice of the peace services to the community. I also pay tribute to my family, in particular my wonderful wife, Gess. I love you very much, Gess. This year it was wonderful to welcome little baby Beau. He just turned seven months. For the record, he is starting to eat solid foods and sleep much better. I did not know I had that type of love until Beau came along. To Gess and Beau, I love you very much.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (22:31): I congratulate the member for Davidson on the birth of his child and wish him and his wife the very best in this new stage of their lives. I know they have had a difficult few years, and this is a very welcome light as they progress together. In light of that, Merry Christmas.

KING PARK PUBLIC SCHOOL

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (22:32): I congratulate and recognise the outstanding sporting achievements of King Park Public School, which was once again crowned boys NSW Primary School Sports Association Knockout Football champions. That incredible victory marks the fourth consecutive year that King Park Public School has claimed the State title, and an extraordinary fourteenth championship in total—a record that stands as one of the most successful in Australia. Their journey to this year's title was nothing short of remarkable. After progressing through the highly competitive south-west region, King Park recorded wins in the quarterfinal, semifinal and State final as follows: 15-1, 8-2 and 10-0 respectively.

These results reflect not only the talent of the players but also their teamwork, discipline and commitment to representing their school and community with pride. I acknowledge each of the boys who contributed to that outstanding achievement. I know some of these amazing players. They include captain Sameer Quadan, Vincenzo Raco, Maverick Reid, Dangelo Rios, Harvey Heckenberg, Cooper Duong, Antony Gkiatas, Tatum Kriesch, Alexis Jovanic, Malik Al Afchal, Aahil Muhammad, Ace Cuello, Giuseppe Brunetta and Obrad Romic. Together, these young athletes have built on King Park Public School's proud sporting legacy and once again set a shining example of teamwork and excellence.

I also extend my sincere thanks and congratulations to the coach, Rodney Galic—a very good guy whom I also know—whose guidance, dedication and leadership continue to inspire his players year after year. Thanks are also due to the teachers, staff and families who support these students both on and off the field, helping them to achieve such remarkable success. King Park Public School's achievement is something our entire community can be proud of. It is a celebration of perseverance, sportsmanship and local pride. I commend the school and that exceptional team for their record-breaking victory.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (22:35): In my home, Sunday morning is a time for family and our Catholic faith. On our drive to St Anthony's in Toongabbie, our biggest concern is whether my daughter

remembered her alb for her altar serving or whether we will go for Maronite or Tamil brunch afterwards. When we arrive at mass, we are greeted by smiles from friends and welcomed by fellow parishioners to our parish. But for many families across Sydney, attending their church, temple or synagogue is a far more serious matter. Families may discuss their safety plan and how to access their place of worship. They may tell their children to move quickly, hold their mum's hand and keep their heads down. Some families are not greeted by members of their congregation but by vocal and sometimes even violent protesters in New South Wales. That is unacceptable.

Every person must have the right to practise their faith free from fear, harm or intimidation. Our faith communities across New South Wales are important. They are the foundations of our community, offering comfort, sanctity and support. Whether it is the Sydney Murugan Temple at Mays Hill, the Parramatta and District Synagogue, St Mark Coptic Catholic Church, Our Lady Queen of Peace Greystanes, St Hurmizd's Cathedral in Greenfield Park or the Smithfield Mosque, our multi-ethnic faith community stands united in the electorate of Prospect. But in recent times, the peace and stability of places of worship across our Prospect electorate and the wider New South Wales community has been shattered. This morning, the Minns Labor Government passed an important bill through this House.

The Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025 makes vital reforms to ensure that each and every person in New South Wales can practise their faith without fear of harm or persecution. The bill affords vital protections for our faith communities in Prospect and throughout New South Wales. It is imperative that the bill passes both Houses of Parliament. It amends the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 to authorise police to issue a move on direction in relation to unauthorised demonstration, protests, processions or assemblies occurring in or near a place of worship. Reflecting on the judgement handed down in *Lees v State of New South Wales*, the bill addresses concerns to strengthen and clarify existing protections.

In her judgement, Her Honour Justice Anna Mitchelmore found that the Act did burden the implied constitutional freedom of communication, but she also determined that this provision had an important underlying purpose to protect the rights and interests of persons trying to attend places of worship to express their faith. She recognised that this provision affords important safeguards—safeguards that benefit our Prospect community and other faith communities in New South Wales. Justice Mitchelmore assessed that the Act operated more broadly than necessary. As such, the Government has taken that on board and acted by repealing this provision to reinforce and reintroduce a stronger protection for our faith communities.

In the electorate of Prospect, I am proud to represent a vibrant faith community. Prospect is home to the largest and most active faith community in New South Wales—Catholic, Jewish, Coptic, Assyrian, Maronite, Hindu, Chaldean, Buddhist, Islamic, Orthodox and Protestant faith traditions. Last year we all watched in horror as our Jewish brothers and sisters experienced acts of hate and aggression, purely because of their faith. We were appalled to witness it in our own State and in our own backyard. We stood in shock after the knife attack at Christ the Good Shepherd Church in Wakeley and after the vandalism and arson at synagogues in Newtown and Allawah.

Over the years we have seen our Christian faith also demonised and attacked. Those instances are intended to intimidate. They are manufactured to express contempt, inflame anger and drive wedges between people. They sought to transform differences into hatred and violence. It is unacceptable that public hatred and hostility has emerged in our respectful and contemporary New South Wales society. Many in our Prospect community are people of diaspora who have immigrated seeking prosperity and safety. Some have endured unimaginable lived experiences, carrying historic trauma from religious persecution and human rights abuses. They come to New South Wales in search of peace and a chance to rebuild in an accepting and supportive society. We must protect that. Our faith must come first.

DRUMMOYNE ELECTORATE EMERGENCY SERVICES

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (22:40): Today I speak about emergency services for my community. On Friday I joined Minister Dib and other members of the Government to announce that a new fire station will be built at Rhodes. I start by saying that I always welcome investment into my community. I give credit where credit is due. I acknowledge and thank Minister Dib and his team, as well as Fire and Rescue NSW, for their work in securing the site. I have had many meetings and conversations with the Minister about the issue. I have written to the Minister and asked five questions on notice about securing the future of Rhodes Fire Station since being elected. I have been working on this project collaboratively with the Minister since my election in 2023. I am proud to have played a small part in ensuring this issue remained front of mind and to have helped lobby for this investment.

When I came to this place, I always said I would put politics aside to work in the best interests of my community. It is unfortunate that we cannot say that about all members, particularly elected Labor members who were present at that press announcement. Members—elected representatives—tried to crop me out or publish

photos where I was not looking because I was a Liberal member at a Labor Government announcement. It was pathetic, really. It says a lot that the council's Liberal mayor and general manager were not even told about the announcement, when Fire and Rescue actually bought the site off council. The new Rhodes station is important and necessary for a growing community.

Rhodes is one of the most densely populated suburbs in Australia. The current station is over 100 years old and no longer fit for purpose. It cannot even fit a modern fire truck. The private landowner of the current site has sold the land, hence the necessity to find a new site. The announcement ensures a Rhodes fire station for future generations. Rhodes Fire Station has a long and proud history in our community. First opened in 1921, the station operated out of Captain Charles McIlwaine's personal residence and consisted of just eight volunteer firefighters from the surrounding area.

The Rhodes fire brigade has since become synonymous with the McIlwaine family name. In 1946 Charles McIlwaine's son, Vic McIlwaine, took over as captain of the station, followed later by his son Greg McIlwaine, who retired recently after nearly 60 years of service. It was a privilege to be invited to Greg's farewell party to acknowledge and thank him for his longstanding commitment and to wish him well in his retirement. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank the McIlwaine family for their contributions to our community. I thank each firefighter who has served at Rhodes station over the past almost 105 years for their service to our community. I acknowledge the new captain, Dominic, whom I met on Friday, and all on-call firefighters currently serving at Rhodes today.

This is an important investment, but it comes with a caveat that cannot be ignored. The Minns Labor Government and the Minister for Emergency Services have refused to rule out the permanent closure of North Strathfield Fire Station. At a time when the Minns Labor Government is rapidly increasing population density right across our community, we will not accept any cuts to emergency services. The Government's Transport Oriented Development policy plans to whack 18,000 new homes, with towers up to 50 storeys, in North Strathfield and surrounding suburbs. What does this Labor Government do? It wants to close a fire station when more people are moving in. More people, more density, one less local fire station and longer response times—it is absolutely ludicrous.

More density comes with an inherent fire risk and closing a vital fire station is a step in the wrong direction. The maths does not add up—more homes, more people and less services than there are now. I raise this as an important public safety concern for my community. I respect the Minister for Emergency Services immensely and I am always open to working with him, but the Minister must be transparent about his plans. I wrote directly to him about this matter last week. I am yet to receive an acknowledgement or a response, but I look forward to receiving that shortly; I know it will come.

Every minute matters during an emergency and the 3½-kilometre stretch of Concord Road between Rhodes Fire Station and North Strathfield Fire Station could easily be the difference between saving and losing lives. That area is already congested. I want a guarantee that response times will not blow out in my community. I make it clear that my concerns are not about the announcement of the Rhodes Fire Station upgrade. I welcome it. It is a matter that we have raised in the Chamber and in the community multiple times. My concern is whether North Strathfield Fire Station will stay. I ask the Minister to please be honest and transparent with the community about what is planned for the future.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (22:45): I make a couple of points. Firstly, I congratulate the member for Drummoyne on the Minns Labor Government having delivered a new fire station in her community. The Minister has always engaged in good faith. This Government is committed to investing more resources than ever before, especially in our frontline emergency services. Since coming to government, Labor has addressed a number of issues that were left behind by the previous Government. When I was elected to this place, my community was faced with the potential closure of the Busby Fire Station. However, we managed not only to save that fire station but also to redevelop it and make sure that the community did not experience a vicious downward spiral. I appreciate that the member for Drummoyne is proud of the new fire station in her community, but I take issue with her remarks relating to the Minister's approach and the Government's commitment. The proof is in the pudding.

FAIRFIELD CITY LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (22:46): Tonight I acknowledge and celebrate the outstanding achievements of local businesses in my electorate in the 2025 Fairfield City Local Business Awards. Each year the awards shine a well-deserved spotlight on the hardworking small and medium businesses that are the backbone of our local economy. From family-owned shops to service providers, tradespeople to hospitality venues, these businesses contribute more than just goods and services. They create jobs, support local families, and bring vibrancy and life to our suburbs.

I particularly acknowledge the following winners from Fairfield, many of whom have become beloved institutions in our community: David's Auto Repairs, for Automotive Services; Pasticceria Caruso at Stockland Wetherill Park, for Bakery/Cake Business; Diana's Beauty Lab, for Beauty Services; Skin and Laser Haus, for Beauty Services - Laser; Joe Papandrea Quality Meats at Greenway Wetherill Park, for Butcher; The Woods Pantry, for Café of the Year; Barbara Easton Dance Studio at Stockland Wetherill Park, for Dance Studio; Smiles Unlimited, for Dental Services; The Green Elephant at Horsley Park, for Early Childhood Centre; DA Tuition, for Education Service; Savio Suits, for Fashion; Le Wrap at Stockland Wetherill Park, for Fast Food/Takeaway; Fernwood Fitness Wetherill Park, for Fitness Services; Freds One Stop Shopping, for Fruit and Vegetable Shop; Hair & Co at Bonnyrigg Plaza, for Hairdresser; Greenfield Physiotherapy, for Health Improvement Services; Atlas Jewellers at Stockland Wetherill Park, for Jewellery Store; Mr K's Cafe at Wetherill Park, for Most Inclusive Employer; Faito Media, for New Business; Chemistworks at Stockland Wetherill Park, for Pharmacy; NYP7 Studio, for Photography Business; WISE Employment Fairfield, for Professional Services; La Tratt at Fairfield RSL, for Restaurant; Zag Seafood at Stockland Wetherill Park, for Seafood Outlet; Rayiss Electrical and Solar, for Service and Trade; Fowler Homes, for Specialised Business; King of Pickles and Spices, for Specialised Retail Business; Bridal, for Wedding Services; and Century 21 – South West Fairfield, for Real Estate Agency, as well as Business of the Year.

I also commend all the finalists. Making it to the finals of these awards is no small feat and represents the high standards and resilience of Fairfield's business community. The awards are not just a celebration of business excellence; they reflect the multicultural spirit, entrepreneurial grit and community-minded values that define our city. Many of the businesses support local causes, employ local people and give back in ways that go far beyond what is seen at the shopfront. I thank the organisers, sponsors and Fairfield City Council for their continued support of this important initiative, and I extend my warmest congratulations to every business that took part this year.

CHERRYBROOK METRO PRECINCT

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (22:50): Tonight I speak about the recent announcement by the Government on the Cherrybrook metro precinct. Before I consider the announcement, I will note the brief history of the precinct. A few years ago, in 2022, the then New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government—based on advice from the then Department of Planning and Environment—released a master plan for the Cherrybrook station precinct that provided for a total of 3,200 new homes. On 26 July 2022 the *Hills Shire Times* said, "A north-west Sydney suburb is set for a mammoth transformation."

The rezoning proposal was lodged by Landcom. When the Labor Government was elected in March 2023, the master plan for those 3,200 homes was put on hold pending further consideration. On 7 November 2025 the Government abandoned the 2022 place strategy for the Cherrybrook precinct that had proposed those 3,200 high-density apartments. The Government now proposes a total of 9,350 homes, with an anticipated 5,200 of those homes to be built by 2045. The Minister has not explained what has changed between 2022, when the department produced the master plan for the 3,200 homes, and 2025, when the department has now produced a plan for three times as many homes.

The residents of Castle Hill and West Pennant Hills, which I represent, are not nimbys. However, there will always be a point in any local community or village when the level of increased development adversely affects the liveability of the community. The important matters that affect the liveability of a local community include things such as traffic congestion on local and arterial roads; access to open parks, including active playing fields for children's sports; access to retail precincts; and access to public schools. The decision by the Government to propose 9,350 homes in the Cherrybrook metro precinct has been announced without an explanation as to the effects of the additional homes on the local roads, any planning for additional schools, and any planning for additional active sports fields for children to play sport.

The planning department has scheduled community information sessions on 25 November 2025 at the West Pennant Hills Sports Club. When I went onto the department's website this evening, I found that the information sessions are already fully booked. I note the member for Hornsby has called on the Government to extend the consultation period and to provide additional community consultation sessions. I join with the very good member for Hornsby in calling on the Government to extend the consultation period and to provide additional community consultation periods for the members of the community who will be affected by the proposal.

It is critical that government provide additional infrastructure and upgrade the road network within the Castle Hill electorate and the wider Hills Shire Council local government area. The increase in housing without appropriate investment will adversely affect the liveability of the suburbs in the local community. The current "Have your say" period, whereby the community can provide comment on the Cherrybrook precinct proposal, unless extended, will expire on 5 December 2025. I am sure that the West Pennant Hills and Cherrybrook

communities will be hoping that the Government listens to them. I trust that, when the consultation period expires, we will receive further information from the Government as to the appropriate infrastructure for the local community.

GLENFIELD PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (22:54): Today I recognise the outstanding young voices of the Leppington electorate who took part in this year's Glenfield Public Speaking Competition. Public speaking is one of the most valuable skills a young person can develop. It builds critical thinking, clear communication and confidence, which are life skills that foster leadership and shape the next generation of change-makers. Speaking in front of a crowd takes courage and writing a meaningful speech takes real creativity. Every student in this competition showed they have both in spades. I am proud that two of the winners came from schools in the Leppington electorate. From Denham Court Public School, year 3 student Isabella won first place in stage 2 with her speech "Why poverty and homelessness must be put to an end for good". At Greenway Park Public School, school captain Brianna, who is in year 6, took first place in stage 3 for her speech "Australia at a crossroads".

Then there is Josiah Verlingieri, a bright year 3 student from Leppington Public School who, in preparing his speech, visited my office with thoughtful questions on an issue close to my heart: the need for more outdoor spaces in our community. After the competition, Josiah returned to proudly deliver the speech that earned him second place in stage 2. It flattered me, but more importantly, it made a compelling argument. With the indulgence of the House, I share Josiah's speech in full:

Parks, pathways, skate parks, water parks, playgrounds, BBQ areas, sports grounds, picnic spots. These are outdoor spaces, and we need more of them!

Backyards are getting smaller, and we have less space to be kids. Outdoor spaces are essential, and we must have more of them. These are the reasons why:

To start with, outdoor spaces are essential for our health. Having enough outdoor spaces is good for our physical health because it gives us a place to run around, jump, climb and play. It helps us get exercise by doing things like walking your dog and riding bikes and scooters. The benefits of physical activity are well known; it strengthens our bones, improves heart health and even reduces the risk of certain cancers.

Also, the main source of Vitamin D comes from the sun's ultraviolet light. To get Vitamin D, you have to be outside in the sun. Outdoor spaces give us a place to get Vitamin D. Vitamin D is important for our health. It helps us build strong bones and have a good mood. Studies done in Melbourne and Sydney show communities with less outdoor space have lower levels of Vitamin D in kids, which leads to higher levels of anxiety and depression.

Secondly, outdoor spaces increase liveability and create stronger social ties in our community. This means our community will be a happier place to live, and people will connect with each other more. If our area had more outdoor spaces, people would go out more, chat together, and visit local cafés. Imagine if Leppington had lots of trees, pools and parks around every corner. There would be places to meet neighbours and spend time together. We would be more connected and much happier.

Finally, our community is saying we need more outdoor spaces and that it is essential. In an interview I had with our local MP, Mr Nathan Hagarty, he said he has had lots of people ask for more outdoor spaces. It is one of the most common things he has been asked. He said, 'With backyards getting smaller, young families need more outdoor spaces and parks.' This is one of the top demands he receives along with better roads and schools.

Mr Hagarty also thinks this is a very important issue and is working extremely hard to make sure the council delivers more parks. To summarise, outdoor spaces are essential for Health, Liveability and Stronger Community Ties, and people in our community are desperate for more of them. So, unless you want us kids to grow up sad, sick and lonely, please join us in the battle for more outdoor spaces!

I commend all the students who took part in this year's public speaking competition for the important speeches they gave on a number of very critical issues, including Josiah's speech on the need for Liverpool City Council to get on with the job of delivering more open space and more parks, especially in Austral and Leppington. The students are thoughtful, confident and unafraid to raise their voices. With young leaders like these stepping forward, our future is certainly in good hands. I am sure that if members of this House are in need of some fantastic speechwriters, I can put them in touch with Josiah and the other students that competed in this very important public speaking competition.

HOUSING SUPPLY AND PLANNING

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (22:59): We all agree that New South Wales needs more housing. Our State must build more homes, and my community absolutely supports that task. We want the next generation and our children to have the chance to live in the communities they grew up in. We need to build homes for their futures. But they must be liveable homes in liveable neighbourhoods, supported by the infrastructure, schools, open space, transport and services that make a community function. A house is not truly a home if the community around it is overwhelmed. That is why proper planning matters, and that is where this Government is falling short. While my community supports more housing, and is doing its part to deliver it, what is emerging is a piecemeal, ad hoc, site-by-site approach to development. It has increasingly become a free-for-all for developers. Strategic,

precinct-wide planning that considers cumulative impacts and infrastructure provision is giving way to a haphazard system driven by the Housing Delivery Authority [HDA] and the State significant development [SSD] pathway. Where once communities could rely on coherent plans, we now have planning by exception.

We have seen what good planning looks like. In Crows Nest and St Leonards, the 2036 plan under the previous Government laid out a clear and comprehensive framework. It balanced homes with open space—proposals for Holtermann Park and Hume Street Park—and integrated the new metro infrastructure. It also examined sewerage, water and electrical capacity. Future schools were provided for, acknowledging the impacts of the growth and preparing for it. Even the current Government's own Transport Oriented Development Program was grounded in more strategic planning. Yet, barely a year later, we are increasingly seeing that consistency and planning has been discarded. The HDA and SSD processes now override carefully developed precinct-wide controls in a haphazard way. Residents see it happening in real time and community voice is being stripped out of the system.

A developer now submits an expression of interest to the HDA, the HDA recommends it as State significant, the department issues the secretary's environmental assessment requirements, the developer prepares the documentation and the proposal is exhibited. Residents object and councils comment, but none of it carries weight. The last safeguard that sent contentious projects to the Independent Planning Commission was removed by this Government late last year. Fifty objections no longer trigger review. Council objections no longer trigger review. This is not planning. It is, in effect, a rubber stamp.

A recent proposal for seniors housing in Rosalind Street in Cammeray illustrates the consequences. This exploits a loophole through the SSD pathway to qualify as seniors housing. The proponent has provided a token two-bed facility to secure significant uplift. This is not strategic planning; it is box-ticking to secure uplift. At Lot 4B Herbert Street in St Leonards, the State Government is selling off State owned Royal North Shore Hospital land for a private 62-storey residential tower. There is no indication of any public benefit being secured, no required childcare centre, no open space and no community floor for organisations like the recently lost PCYC. Where once councils negotiated voluntary planning agreements to deliver real public benefit—libraries, parks, child care, community space—this Government's SSD system is consistently delivering nothing but housing.

In Willoughby, we see an ever-growing pipeline of major development. In Chatswood alone, there are 28 major high-rise developments in the pipeline, with more on the way. This is on top of the significant densification of Chatswood that has already been completed. Willoughby has been doing its fair share and will exceed its housing targets, yet the community sees little by way of new infrastructure under this Government—no new schools, insufficient open space and worsening congestion. The Government is even selling off the Chatswood metro dive site. Instead of providing the infrastructure our growing population requires, they are disposing of it.

On Penshurst Street, major redevelopment right next to Willoughby Girls High School and Willoughby Public School represents a missed opportunity to safeguard land for the future expansion of our public schools, something parents have been calling for as enrolments steadily climb. Hospital emergency wait times are creeping towards five hours; roads are at a standstill in peak periods; buses remain short, with too few drivers and too little capacity; and our schools are full, with many at or over capacity. Yet this Government has cancelled two previously approved schools in the Willoughby electorate alone.

This is not a system experiencing falling demand; it is a system under strain, and the Government knows it. Communities want housing—they absolutely support it—but planning must be transparent. It must be strategic. It must be balanced. It must involve the community. New housing should enhance liveability, not diminish it. It should add to the social fabric, not erode it. If the Government wants communities to embrace housing, it must build trust again. There should be genuine precinct-wide planning that considers cumulative impact, not just individual sites. Because when planning becomes a free-for-all, community confidence will collapse. We all want a New South Wales where our children can afford to live close to home, but that requires homes that are well planned, well supported and well loved by the communities they are part of. Communities deserve better, and I will continue to stand up for the community of Willoughby and beyond.

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (23:03): I wish to respond to elements of the private member's statement given by the member for Willoughby. I draw attention to the fact that the housing target for the Willoughby local government area was 3,400 homes, which is a measly target in comparison with Liverpool's target, which is 16,700 homes. The member for Willoughby called for a transparent strategic approach to planning and for infrastructure to be aligned to the development of homes. All of those things were forgotten by members opposite when the Coalition was in government. That is part of the reason my community has dealt with congestion and underinvestment in schools, hospitals and other core pieces of infrastructure. My community has been under-resourced for over a decade, which coincides with the length of time members opposite were in government. It is a bit like "Do what we say, not what we do" from the Coalition.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 23:04 until
Thursday 20 November 2025 at 10:00.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

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

KYSHAYA FRITZ-HOSKINS RECEIVES CULTURE AWARD

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Congratulations to Melville High School's Year 8 student, Kyshaya Fritz-Hoskins, recipient of the Culture Award at the NASCA 2025 Youth Awards night. This is an incredible achievement and a proud moment not just for Kyshaya, but for the entire Melville High School community and her family. The NASCA Culture Award recognises young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who demonstrate exceptional cultural pride, leadership and connection, qualities Kyshaya clearly embodies. Culture is the heart of community. It shapes identity, builds confidence, and strengthens the ties that bind us to one another and to Country. Through her actions, Kyshaya is showing what it means to live those values every day - leading by example, celebrating heritage, and sharing knowledge that keeps culture strong for future generations. It's inspiring to see young people like Kyshaya honouring their culture while striving for success in school and beyond. I have no doubt that her passion and pride will continue to enrich not only Melville High School but the wider community as well. Congratulations, Kyshaya, your achievements are a credit to your culture, your family, and your community.

GENERATIONS IN THE SADDLE

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Pony Camp 2025 was another shining example of what makes the Dorrigo community so special. Over four and a half days, more than 50 riders of all ages embraced the chance to learn, improve and have fun across disciplines from dressage and show jumping to campdrafting and polocrosse. What makes North Dorrigo Pony Club so unique is the way it brings generations together. This year, children rode alongside parents and grandparents who have been part of the camp for decades, with some families marking more than 18 years of involvement. Children were seen mastering new skills, smiles were around every corner, and volunteers made it a huge success. These are the experiences that build confidence, resilience, and friendships that last a lifetime, leaving memories that will be cherished for years to come. The North Dorrigo Pony Club is a place where traditions, family connections and community spirit flourish. Every participant felt welcomed, supported and included, thanks to the tireless efforts of volunteers and organisers. Congratulations to all the riders who won awards, and to each rider for developing their skills and love of horsemanship.

RIEDEL JEFFS' REMARKABLE CONTRIBUTION

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Riedell Jeffs story is one of courage, resilience, and unwavering dedication to giving back. In 2024, Riedell faced one of life's toughest challenges, being diagnosed with liver cancer. Yet, even during treatment and recovery, she continued to pour her energy and heart into the volunteer-run Frederickton Golf Club. As President of Frederickton Golf Club, her commitment to the club has ensured that this important community hub continues to thrive. Riedell's passion for giving back was recognised after being awarded Golf NSW's Volunteer of the Year, a well deserved honour. An achievement she credits to the incredible team of volunteers who support her and keep the club running day in, day out. Her dedication spans 24 years of involvement, including five years as president, and reflects the spirit of community service that keeps regional clubs and organisations alive. Riedell's story reminds us that volunteering is about creating connection, supporting one another, and making a lasting difference. I congratulate Riedell on this remarkable recognition and thank her for her tireless service. Her commitment inspires us all to give back to our communities.

HEARTS RUN GOLD IN WEST WYALONG

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I rise to recognise the outstanding success of the Hearts of Gold Festival recently held in West Wyalong. This vibrant three-day celebration showcased the true spirit of the Bland Shire, a community rich in generosity, creativity, and connection. The festival brought together locals and visitors alike for a weekend of live music, market stalls, food trucks, rides, and family-friendly entertainment. Highlights included the popular "Brunch and Browse" on Main Street, the energetic Colour Fun Run, and the elegant Golden Gala evening at Regal Estate, which celebrated community achievement and local pride. The event was made possible through the dedication of countless volunteers, community groups, local businesses, and sponsors, with strong leadership from Bland Shire Council and valued support from Evolution Mining. Together, they created an inclusive and uplifting festival that strengthened community ties and boosted the local economy. I commend all who contributed to the Hearts of Gold Festival for their hard work, vision, and community spirit. West Wyalong has once again demonstrated that its heart of gold truly shines through the people who call it home.

ANDREW WHITEHEAD – SCULPTURE ARTIST

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—Over the course of twelve months sculptor Andrew Whitehead has been busy creating a heartfelt tribute to the bravery and resilience of our Australian soldiers during World War II. This remarkable artwork now proudly on display in Ardlethan, portrays a young Australian soldier in 1944, taking a brief rest in the jungles of New Guinea during the campaign to halt the Japanese advance toward Australia. Recently installed with the valued assistance of Daphne and Daniel from Coolamon Shire, the distinctive scrap-metal style, sculpture captures both the grit and spirit of those who served. Adding to the authenticity of the piece, Dan Deleur created two 37 Pattern ammunition pouches and a water bottle replica along with an Owen sub-machine gun. These components are an incredibly accurate portrayal of the well-used webbing and equipment, complete with the texture, bends, swelling, creases, and naturally worn appearance that are so difficult to reproduce. A heartfelt thank you to Kerry-Jane, the Lions Club members, and the wider Ardlethan community for their support in bringing this meaningful project to life. Together, we honour our shared history and celebrate the courage, craftsmanship, and community spirit that made this tribute possible.

COWRA JERSEY DAY GOLF EVENT

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—Congratulations to the Cowra Golf Club and Julie and Mark Tucker for hosting another hugely successful Jersey Golf Day event to raise awareness for organ and tissue donation. Participants were encouraged to wear their favourite sports jersey as part of the National Jersey Day Organ Donation Awareness initiative, combining community spirit, sport, and an important message about the gift of life. Julie and Mark Tucker have shown remarkable strength and compassion following the unimaginable loss of their beloved son, Brady, in 2021. Through their grief and inspired by Brady's love of golf and his selfless act of organ donation, they have dedicated themselves to increasing awareness about the importance and life-changing impact of organ donation. This annual event continues to grow each year, showcasing the Cowra and golfing communities' generosity, unity, and commitment to supporting meaningful causes. I extend my congratulations to all who helped organise the day and to everyone who participated. This event not only raises vital awareness for organ and tissue donation but also honours Brady's memory and the enduring impact of his life on family, friends, and those who received his precious gift of life.

HELEN BRYAN AND SAUL BRADY

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—Today I recognise two outstanding members of our community who have been honoured nationally by the Country Education Foundation of Australia for their exceptional contributions to rural and regional young people through the Great Lakes Education Fund. Helen Bryan, a founding member of GLEF, has been awarded the Katie Walker Outstanding Service Award for more than 14 years of dedicated service. As Public Officer and the originator of the Student Liaison Officer role, Helen has provided critical emotional, practical and financial support to local students pursuing further education. Her work has ranged from organising emergency accommodation and mentoring, to creating opportunities for connection and guidance. Her efforts have had a profound impact on countless young people and their families. Also recognised was Saul Brady, named the 2025 Alumnus of the Year at the Audi Foundation–CEF Alumni Awards. A former GLEF recipient, Saul has gone on to forge an impressive international career in strategy consulting after graduating with distinction from UNSW. He continues to give back through leadership roles with both CEF and UNSW, advocating strongly for equitable access to education. I congratulate them both on this well-deserved recognition.

SHEILA CAPPERAULD

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—Today I recognise Sheila Capperault for her remarkable service to the local pickleball community and congratulate her on being awarded Life Membership. Sheila has been an outstanding leader, mentor, and role model within the club. As President, she demonstrated exceptional dedication, organisation, and a genuine commitment to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment. Her willingness to host club sessions—often up to four times each week—has supported the sport's rapid growth and ensured new and experienced players alike feel supported and encouraged. Beyond her work locally, Sheila proudly represented the club at the state level, serving four years on the Pickleball Association of NSW Committee. During this time, she also took on the role of Regional Ambassador, promoting the sport throughout New South Wales and strengthening connections between clubs across the state. Sheila's vision, passion, and tireless volunteerism have left an indelible mark on both our club and the broader pickleball community. Her pioneering efforts and ongoing service make her a truly deserving recipient of Life Membership. Congratulations, Sheila, and thank you for the tremendous contribution you continue to make to our community.

FORSTER TUNCURRY BUSINESS CHAMBER

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—Today I acknowledge the outstanding achievements of the Forster Tuncurry Business Chamber, which received two major honours at the 2025 Business NSW State Business Awards held at the International Convention Centre Sydney on 29 October. The Chamber was recognised with the award for Outstanding Visitor Economy Collaboration for its innovative Community Partnership Program, and the award for Outstanding 24-Hour Economy Collaboration for its significant role in supporting the Lakeside Festival. These accolades highlight the Chamber's tireless commitment to strengthening local business, promoting collaboration and enhancing the visitor experience across our region. Through initiatives such as the Spring Festival, the Lakeside Festival, Pink Up Golf and its well-attended monthly Connect Events, the Chamber continues to create opportunities for local businesses to thrive while fostering a strong sense of community. I commend the Chamber President, Jessica Gray and the entire Forster Tuncurry Business Chamber for its leadership, its vision for a connected and prosperous local economy, and its ongoing contribution to the Myall Lakes community. Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition.

ADELE & SERA, CURIOUS MINDS PROGRAM - JAMES FALLON HIGH SCHOOL

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I congratulate Adele and Sera from James Fallon High School, who have been selected to participate in the prestigious Curious Minds Program, an eight-month mentoring and STEM extension initiative that empowers girls with high potential in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Only 120 students from across Australia are chosen for this program each year. For two outstanding students from our local regional community to be selected is an achievement of the highest order and a testament to their dedication, talent and curiosity. Their success also reflects the strong learning culture at James Fallon High School, whose motto, "Together We Succeed," speaks to the school's commitment to engaging and supporting students to reach their full potential. I commend Adele and Sera for their hard work and congratulate them on this remarkable opportunity. They are wonderful representatives of their school and our region, and I wish them every success as they embark on this exciting STEM journey.

HONOURING IVO & LINO, 35 YEARS OF SERVICE, SMILES & THE BEST FISH AND CHIPS IN SOUTH ALBURY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I acknowledge two incredible locals Ivo and Lino, who for more than 35 incredible years have been at the heart of South Albury, serving up not only the best fish and chips in town, but also warm smiles, friendly banter, and genuine community spirit. Their takeaway shop has been a place where great food and great service were the norm, and where every visit felt like catching up with old friends. Ivo and Lino your dedication, humour, and kindness have made your shop a local staple and a cherished part of many lives. From the early days through to today, you've created memories, nourished families, and built a legacy that will be fondly remembered long after the fryer cools. Many have grown up with your food, your jokes, and the familiar comfort of knowing you'd always be behind the counter. As you step into a well-earned retirement, please know that your community celebrates you. You shall be missed, the laughter, the unbeatable fish and chips, but we're grateful for every year you gave us. Congratulations, Ivo and Lino.

SEEDS OF UNITY, BHUTANESE COMMUNITY FARM TAKES OUT THE GIVE500 2025 AWARD

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I congratulate the Bhutanese Community Farm Albury Wodonga, this year's winners of the Border Trust Give500 collective giving award. People from diverse backgrounds coming together for a shared purpose. For a decade, a two-hectare farm has offered far more than a place to grow food, it has cultivated connection, confidence, and cultural pride. The farm nourishes not only fresh produce, but also belonging, wellbeing, and unity across our region. I also extend my congratulations to this year's runners-up, Junction Support Services and Albury Wodonga FoodShare, whose projects continue to strengthen, uplift, and support our community. And to those not selected this year: please continue your important work. The choice is never easy, as every proposal reflects deep passion, commitment, and a vision for positive change. I thank Albury Business Connect, Albury Atura, and the generous donors who support this initiative. I also thank Border Trust, who for the past 20 years has connected people who care with the local causes that matter. Local giving is powerful, and it builds stronger communities.

JASON WHITTON

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to acknowledge and congratulate Mr Jason Whitton, Health and Security Assistant at the Casino & District Memorial Hospital, who has recently been recognised as a joint winner in the Small Acts of Kindness Award at the 2025 NSW Health Awards. Jason is widely admired across the Casino community and within the Northern NSW Local Health District for his compassion, empathy and unwavering commitment to helping others. Whether supporting patients and families during difficult moments or assisting his colleagues, Jason consistently goes above and beyond the expectations

of his role. His acts of kindness – often small, but always impactful – bring comfort, dignity and reassurance to those around him. Jason's positive influence embodies the spirit of our public health system and highlights the importance of kindness in healthcare settings. Being one of only sixteen winners across New South Wales is a tremendous honour and reflects the high regard in which Jason is held by his peers and the wider community. On behalf of the Clarence electorate and the NSW Parliament, I thank Jason for his outstanding service and congratulate him on this deserved recognition.

CLARENCE VALLEY COMMUNITY FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I acknowledge Clarence Valley Community Financial Services Limited, operators of Bendigo Community Bank in South Grafton, as they celebrate 25 years of community-focused banking. Since opening on 1 December 2000, this branch has stood as a local success story — restoring banking services to South Grafton and ensuring the benefits remain in our region. The Community Bank model is built on supporting the very people who support it, and the results speak for themselves. Because of strong local backing, the branch continues to thrive and reinvest in our community. This year alone, almost \$70,000 has been provided to local schools, sporting clubs, cultural and community groups, aged care programs and youth partnerships with PCYC and Grafton Headspace. Festivals in Iluka, Nymboida and Grafton have also received support. These contributions highlight the life-changing power of community-owned banking. Congratulations to everyone who has been part of the journey — from the original leaders who championed the idea, to current and former directors, hardworking staff, loyal customers, and the many community partners — thank you for your shared commitment and dedication in delivering 25 years of local pride and progress. Here's to many more years of service and community investment.

EMILY LAMBERTH - NASA SPACE CAMP SELECTION

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—I would like to congratulate Clarence Valley Anglican School student Emily Lamberth on her acceptance into the world-renowned NASA Space Camp in the United States. Emily is one of only four students across Australia who have been selected to take part – what a remarkable achievement. Emily managed to secure her spot after two previous attempts to apply for the program, highlighting her ongoing interest in the field and determination to be involved in the experience. NASA Space Camp is an internationally recognised program that allows for students to gain hands on experience with astronaut training simulations, space mission planning and STEM based challenges, aimed to inspire the next generation of scientists, engineers and explorers. Emily will have the great opportunity to join other young people from all around the world and I'm sure she will bring home many stories of her unique experience to share with others, especially Mrs Sharlene Kennedy, one of Emily's science teachers who encouraged her to apply. You should be very proud of your persistence and passion, Emily, and I hope that you enjoy your experience at the NASA Space Camp. Congratulations.

AFRICULTURES FESTIVAL

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I was delighted to attend the 17th Africultures Festival at Sydney Olympic Park. It is Australia's largest celebration of African cultures and a vibrant showcase of music, food, dance, fashion and community spirit. Congratulations to Festival Director Fatma Mohamed, the organising committee, volunteers, performers, and the many community groups who brought this extraordinary day to life. Africultures is a celebration of identity, heritage, and belonging. From Ethiopian coffee ceremonies to West African drumming, from dazzling textiles to the children's activities in Watoto's Corner, the festival captures the beauty and diversity of an entire continent in one joyful, colourful day. My electorate of Granville is home to one of Australia's fastest-growing African communities. Africultures holds special meaning locally because it provides a place for families to reconnect with culture, for young people to see their heritage celebrated proudly, and for emerging artists to perform on a major stage. It also builds bridges. Thousands of people who may never have travelled to Africa gain a deeper appreciation of its richness and warmth. My congratulations to everyone involved. Africultures continues to enrich NSW and strengthen our multicultural community.

IFEFA 10TH ANNIVERSARY CURTAIN RAISER

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I was delighted to host the 10th Anniversary Curtain Raiser of the International Film and Entertainment Festival of Australia [IFEFA], on 13 September at NSW Parliament House. This milestone reflects a decade of creativity, cultural exchange, and community leadership. IFEFA began as a bold vision to bring cultures together through the powerful language of film and the arts. Today, it stands as one of Australia's leading multicultural festivals, showcasing stories and talent from across the globe while strengthening community harmony here in New South Wales. I especially acknowledge Maxine Simmons, whose dedication, imagination and commitment have shaped IFEFA's success from its earliest days. I also commend the volunteers, partners, artists and filmmakers whose contributions have made this festival a vibrant celebration of diversity. In one of the most multicultural States in the world, festivals like IFEFA play a vital role. They build

understanding, challenge stereotypes and give voice to communities whose stories enrich our shared identity. I congratulate IFEFA on ten remarkable years and look forward to its continued contribution to our cultural landscape.

WESTERN SYDNEY ARTISTS

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I recognise the upcoming 50th Sydney Festival, and to particularly acknowledge the outstanding contribution of Western Sydney's artists, creatives and cultural organisations who are central to this milestone year. Sydney Festival has long been a cultural anchor for our state, but its increasing presence in Parramatta, Blacktown and Bankstown reflects the profound truth that Western Sydney is one of the most dynamic, diverse and creative regions in Australia. Its artists, storytellers and communities are shaping the cultural identity of modern NSW. This aligns strongly with the NSW Government's Western Sydney Arts Strategy, which puts local artists at the heart of our cultural future by expanding creative infrastructure, supporting new work and creating pathways for artists to thrive where they live. I congratulate the rising Western Sydney electronic/experimental act Wytchings who will perform in collaboration with Tibetan artist Tenzin Choegyal at Bankstown Arts Centre; Undercurrent takes over Riverside Live at Phive with three nights celebrating the bold, boundary-pushing sounds of Western Sydney; and FORM Dance Projects, a leading independent artist-led dance company based in Western Sydney. Thank you to Festival Director Kris Nelson and all Western Sydney artists whose work continues to inspire and transform our state.

STEVE MACE AND COOPER MACE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I highlight the selfless actions of Cronulla's Steve and Cooper Mace who were recognised at the Sutherland Shire Police Area Command Medal and Awards Ceremony on 21 October. The father and son were driving on the Princes Highway at Engadine on 25 August 2024 when they saw a car being driven erratically and then colliding with another vehicle. Steve and Cooper ran to find the disturbing scene of a man in the crashed car stabbing his female partner. Steve tried to pull the victim from the car and protect her from the attack while Cooper returned to the family car to call emergency services. The offender fled when Police arrived, but after a short foot pursuit through heavy traffic he was taken into custody. Steve received the Commissioner's Commendation for showing "exemplary courage and unwavering commitment to public duty" while Cooper was awarded the Commander's Certificate of Appreciation for "calmness and maturity". Steve and Cooper's showed great courage to intervene in a dangerous situation and wonderful compassion for a woman needing help. Their spontaneous act of help is very worthy of recognition and I congratulate them on receiving these awards.

KURNELL RURAL FIRE SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I was honoured to be at the Rural Fire Service [RFS] Sutherland District Awards Presentation earlier this month to see Kurnell brigade members awarded for years of dedicated volunteer contribution. Brigade president Rebecca Hinshelwood was awarded her National Medal first clasp for 25 years of diligent service. She joined the brigade aged 17 and has been an integral part of the executive committee since 2003, including 11 years as president, as well as serving as deputy captain for more than 19 years. Three brigade members were presented with awards for long service to the RFS. David Hinshelwood received his Long Service Medal second clasp for 30 years active service that has seen him hold a range of positions, including as brigade captain since 2011. Craig Byrne has 22 years of service with the RFS and was recognised with a Long Service Medal first clasp, while Megan Horsman was awarded with a 10 years of active service Long Service Medal. I congratulate these four volunteers and all award winners and thank them for the extraordinary hours of service they have given in times of emergency and behind the scenes to help keep us safe.

PARC PAVILION CRONULLA

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate the team at Cronulla's Parc Pavilion on being named Metropolitan Hotel of the Year at the Australian Hotels Association NSW Awards for Excellence. Parc Pavilion opened in May has made a big impression in a short time. The much sought after title was awarded after independent judges evaluated everything from food and beverage, ambience and overall presentation of the hotel to community support and customer service. Parc Pavilion also took out the award for Best Metropolitan Local in the Experience Awards category. The hotel overlooks beautiful Monro Park. It features Parc Bistro with a café, takeaway outlet and bar on the ground floor, while on the first floor guests can enjoy The Terrace bistro and bar along with Italian inspired restaurant Call Me Mamma. It is a big achievement to be named the best of a strong field of contenders and the Feros Group and everyone at Parc Pavilion can be very proud of what they have achieved. It's exciting to see new venues like Parc Pavilion joining Cronulla's vibrant hospitality scene.

SHAILYN WILLIAMS

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Speaker, today I would like to recognise the outstanding achievement of Shailyn Williams and the Griffith Black and Whites women's league tag team for reinstating the Pink Game, a fundraiser for Can Assist Griffith, which supports local people affected by cancer. The event, held during a recent league tag match between the Black and Whites and the Yenda Blueheelers, raised over \$6000—double the original target. Team members purchased their playing jerseys at an auction following the game, further contributing to the total. Coach and organiser Shailyn Williams emphasised that the money raised would stay local and support members of the community. It was heartening to hear Can Assist Griffith President Olga Forner express her pride in the team's efforts and note the vital importance of the funds raised to both the organisation and the broader community. I congratulate Shailyn, her team, the volunteers and sponsors who helped make this event a success.

SIMONNE DUFFY

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—I rise to congratulate Simonne Duffy, the Fine Arts Senior winner at the Greater Western Sydney Young Champions Awards. Simonne is an exceptional young artist whose talent and creativity are matched by her leadership at Miller Technology High School. As Acting Vice Captain and a dedicated prefect, she plays a central role in organising school art exhibitions, musical performances, and assemblies. Her commitment to showcasing the creativity of her peers has strengthened the artistic culture of her school community. Simonne's own artistic achievements are outstanding. She has been awarded first place and multiple recognitions for excellence in Visual Arts, and she continues to push boundaries by exploring new creative mediums. Her passion for fine art, her willingness to innovate, and her strong sense of service make her a standout role model. I congratulate Simonne, her family, and Miller Technology High School on this well deserved honour.

SAHARA TELLAoui

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—I rise to acknowledge Sahara Tellaoui, the Outstanding Young Carer at the Greater Western Sydney Young Champions Awards. Sahara is an exceptional young woman whose strength and compassion set her apart. As a Year 12 Prefect at Miller Technology High School, she balances the pressures of study and leadership while carrying responsibilities far beyond her years. During her mother's illness, Sahara stepped up to care for her family, managing the household and supporting her younger siblings with maturity and grace. Her quiet resilience speaks volumes. In the face of significant challenges, Sahara has shown courage, patience, and unwavering commitment to the people she loves. She represents the very best of our young leaders and reminds us of the powerful role young carers play in our community. I commend Sahara for her remarkable dedication and the example she sets for her peers. I also acknowledge her school and her family for supporting her on this journey.

A DECADE OF SETA'S CAFÉ!

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—For a decade now Seta's café has been an icon of Dumaresq Street and of our community. I constantly drop in for meetings or just for my morning coffee, and I've been greeted with the same smile and exceptional service every time. Seta has quietly supported school fundraisers, sporting club mornings and community events, and her staff have become familiar, friendly faces who know our suburb and its stories. Seta is a true talisman of our community, and I thank her, and her team, for their decade of exceptional service. I wish Seta's Café every success in the years ahead and look forward to many more visits, conversations and coffees there.

THE ARMIDALE COMMUNITY

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the Armidale community for coming together to stage a wonderful musical production in honour of local Pam Menzies, aptly called 'A musical Time Machine.' The event included various genres of music and performances and concluding with everyone dancing the Macarena. I congratulate each and every participant involved with this initiative, including Director and driving force Jenny Hanna, Producers Amber Wightman, Sharyn Donnan and Warren Bartick, along with many local talented performers providing the entertainment. Such was the magnitude of this production, those involved included a raft of groups, societies, dance teachers and local identities. Special thanks to volunteers working tirelessly behind the scenes, as community events such as this in regional towns, cannot function without the wonderful support and commitment volunteers give. I commend all involved in this event, which was not only great entertainment, but importantly it honoured friend and colleague Pam, who pioneered musical revues and pantomime for more than 30 years. At the same time, the musical raised in excess of \$20,000 for a cause dear their heart, supporting Dementia Australia. I speak for the Northern Tablelands when I say 'thankyou' for being an inspiring example of selfless community spirit.

WELL DONE WALCHA

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the Walcha community for pulling together for their own, holding a fundraising auction for their local Chinese restaurant to reopen their kitchen. Such was the support, the event raised \$8,500, with the community digging deep to assist one of their own, a stalwart local business. I congratulate all involved in organising the auction, including New England Hotel/Motel along with group members of the Oxley Riders. Special thanks to members of the Walcha Volunteer Support Group for the Westpac Helicopter Rescue selling tickets, as well as to auctioneers Andrew Blomfield and Troy Davey. Thank you also to the many donors of goods and services, and of course to all those that attended, each contributing to the great success of this event. I commend all involved, for working tirelessly behind the scenes ensuring the auction came together. This is what's special about country people in country towns - they know how to pull together, make it happen, whilst taking the opportunity to give back to their own.

MOREE SERVICES FOOTBALL CLUB 2025 SEASON

Mr BRENDAN MOYLAN (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the remarkable achievements of the Moree Services Football Club (FC) throughout an outstanding 2025 season. The club's dedication to nurturing talent across all levels has ensured a bright future for football in Moree. In times when Moree faces many challenges, this celebration of our sporting men and women remind of us all of the strength and joy that comes from community spirit. I congratulate the Moree Services FC Blue team players: Chloe Tindal, Matthew McLane, Steven Pinner, John Addae, Sandeep Basnet, Ethan Hayes, Charles Onus, Todd Jones, Rhys Miller, Adam Ha, Jonah Strahan, Kenneth Wright, Lucas Schembri, Philip Strahan, Travis Hook, PJ Ryan, Dominic Miller and Olivia Pinner on their thrilling grand final victory in the Namoi Football League. Ironically beating last year's winners by the same score! I commend the players, coaches, volunteers, sponsors and loyal supporters whose efforts made this success possible. Your dedication and teamwork, both on and off the field, embody the true spirit of community. The 2025 season will be remembered not only for its triumphs, but for the way the Moree Services FC brought people together through shared effort, pride and love of the game.

BAULKHAM HILLS GIRL GUIDES, 80TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I ask that member of Parliament join with me to acknowledge the 80th anniversary of the foundation of the Baulkham Hills Girl Guides. Baulkham Hills District was formed in 1945, the first recorded meeting of the Local Association being held on 14 November 1945. Local Association meetings were usually held in the Baulkham Hills School of Arts on Windsor Road, which has since been burnt down. Brownies met in the grounds of the Baulkham Hills Public School, Windsor Road, until the Guide Hut was built in Railway Street, and officially opened on 6 February 1960, after which all meetings were held in the Guide Hut. The Baulkham Hills Girl Guides have over the last 80 years contributed in a meaningful way to build confidence, leadership and life skills to young women in our community. The supportive environment fosters leadership and growth enabling girls to grow into resilient and compassionate leader. I particularly thank Gay Wilson who is the Leader, Baulkham Hills Bat-Tacular Guides as well as the District Volunteer Administrator, Baulkham Hills. Gaye originally joined the Baulkham Hill Girl Guides in 1966.

ALISON MCLEOD, THE HILLS CATERING BRIGADE

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—On Sunday 26 October 2025 I attended The Hills District Rural Fire Service Awards. The Hills District have many dedicated volunteers who give up many hours to keep our community safe. There were many awards presented during the ceremony. I acknowledge Alison McLeod from The Hills Catering Brigade, who received the National Medal 1st and 2nd Clasp with a total of 45 years. Alison joined Kellyville Brigade in July 1980. During this time, Alison prepared meals and refreshments for the firefighters during emergencies. In 2019, Alison joined the Hills Catering Brigade, becoming a Deputy Captain in 2024. Alison is a valuable member of the Brigade who is always willing to mentor new members and assist with any activity that the Brigade may undertake. Alison is very involved in all aspects of the brigade including the preparation and provision of meals during emergency incidents. Alison is a worthy recipient of the National Medal award having given 45 years of exemplary and diligent service to the NSW Rural Fire Service and her local community.

IAN SPENCE, ROUND CORNER BRIGADE

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—On Sunday 26 October 2025 I attended The Hills District Rural Fire Service Awards. The Hills District have many dedicated volunteers who give up many hours to keep our community safe. I acknowledge Ian Spence who has been a valued member of Round Corner Brigade for 46 years. In that time, he has held the position of Deputy Captain along with Equipment Officer, Senior Deputy Canteen Officer and Communications Duty Officer. Ian is an accredited Crew Leader, Senior First Aider, Trim Felled Trees & Tree Fell Intermediate, Rural Fire Driver (response), Chainsaw Instructor and Advanced Fire Course

Coordinator. Ian has attended calls to incidents all over the state as well as locally, including fires in Blue Mountains, Victoria, Warringah, Hornsby, Eurobodalla, Gosford, Wollondilly, Shoalhaven, Cobar, Hilston, Cootamundra, Cooma, Dubbo, Sutherland, Hay, Griffith to name a few. He has also attended storm and flood incidents in Wollongong, Randwick, Blacktown, Hornsby, Newcastle and Gosford. Ian was heavily involved in The Hills District Chainsaw team and in 2024 he was awarded the Commissioner Unit Citation for service The Hills Chainsaw team. Ian is a worthy recipient of the National Medal 3rd Clasp.

FRIENDS OF PALLIATIVE CARE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport, and Minister for Roads)—Following the recent Friends of Palliative Care Inc. Annual General Meeting, I would like to recognise and sincerely thank Montana Duggan and Belinda McQuillen for their outstanding service to our community. Over the past five years, Montana and Belinda have both held key leadership roles as President and Vice President of Friends of Palliative Care Inc. Their dedication and compassion have helped the organisation grow and continue to provide vital support to people and families in our region needing end-of-life and palliative care. Montana has stepped down as President to focus on her growing family, with her and her husband Alex, also a past President, expecting their first child in May 2026. Belinda has stepped down as Vice President to pursue new opportunities while continuing her involvement in another role. Thank you both for your leadership and commitment to palliative care in our community.

HUNTER NRL BEACH TOUCH GALA DAY AT ONE MILE BEACH

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport, and Minister for Roads)—Congratulations to the four Rutherford Technology High School teams on their outstanding performance at the Hunter NRL Beach Touch Gala Day at One Mile Beach! All four Rutherford Technology High School teams demonstrated incredible skill, teamwork, and determination throughout the pool stages, showing not only strong play but fantastic sportsmanship and spirit. The high standard of performance from every student made the selection of the final team a tough decision, a true reflection of the depth of talent across the school. In the end, with two players from each team forming the final side, Rutherford Technology High School claimed the overall win, a remarkable achievement and a testament to the dedication and effort of every player. Well done to all students who represented Rutherford Technology High School with pride, enthusiasm, and class. Your commitment and teamwork made for an unforgettable day, and thank you for the pride with which you represented our community.

JOSIE MCINTOSH

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport, and Minister for Roads)—Congratulations to Josie McIntosh for shining as a true rising star! Josie's 16 years of dance training at Galaxy Talent Academy in Rutherford has led to an impressive journey through musicals, high school productions, and standout performances in tap and jazz ensembles at StarStruck Newcastle. Her talent was further celebrated during the Schools Spectacular in Sydney. A former student of Rutherford Technology High School, Josie was a key part of the school's dance program and has continued to pursue her passion for dance with incredible commitment. Josie made her Civic Theatre debut with The Very Popular Theatre Company in the Newcastle production of Mamma Mia. Her performance captured the hearts of audiences with her energy, skill, and stage presence. Her performances on stage are a true testament to her talent and dedication, and the community is thrilled to celebrate her achievements. Well done, Josie! Your hard work, passion, and commitment to your craft have truly paid off. Everyone is excited to see where your talent will take you next!

MANLY SPIRITS CO. CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, I rise to recognise Manly Spirits Co., an iconic, home-grown Northern Beaches business celebrating an impressive 10 years this month. What began as a bold idea to create premium Australian spirits inspired by our coastline has grown into one of our community's great success stories. Over the past decade, Manly Spirits has built a reputation for quality, innovation and a commitment to showcasing local flavours. Their distillery has become a welcoming hub for residents and visitors alike, offering tours, tastings and hands-on experiences that highlight the skill and artistry behind their craft. I particularly acknowledge founders David Whittaker and Vanessa Wilton, whose vision, hard work and passion have shaped a business that is proudly local while recognised well beyond our shores. Their team has helped establish the Northern Beaches as a leader in Australia's craft spirits scene. I congratulate Manly Spirits Co. on their 10-year milestone and wish them continued success in the decade ahead.

FELONS MANLY

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, I rise to congratulate Felons Manly, who this month celebrate their first year in our community. In just twelve months, Felons have made a significant contribution to

revitalising Manly Wharf, bringing new life to one of our most iconic public spaces while bolstering our visitor economy. Their bold approach to renovating and modernising the wharf has created a safe and welcoming venue that locals and visitors alike now enjoy. As part of their One Year of Beers celebration, Felons have partnered with four outstanding local artists - Amanda Tye, Ben Brown (Mental Ben), Elliott Routledge (Funskull), and Jamie Browne - each transforming a surfboard into a unique artwork. These boards are being auctioned with all proceeds supporting Lifeline Northern Beaches. I congratulate Felons Manly on their first year and thank them for contributing to the vibrancy, culture and spirit of Manly.

2025 LIFELINE SURF CLASSIC

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—Mr Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the 2025 Lifeline Surf Classic, a much-loved Northern Beaches event now in its eighth year. Each November, our community gathers at Queenscliff Beach not only for a great day of surfing, but to stand behind the vital crisis-support and suicide-prevention work of Lifeline Northern Beaches, Mosman to Kirribilli. The Surf Classic brings together local businesses, families, volunteers and some of our region's most talented surfers. Teams of four take part in a tag-style competition, raising funds in the lead-up to the event before hitting the water alongside a pro surfer. It is a day filled with energy, connection and purpose, and every dollar raised stays right here in our community, supporting people when they need it most. I commend Lifeline Northern Beaches, the sponsors, organisers, volunteers and participants for their commitment to this life-saving cause, and I wish everyone involved a safe, successful and memorable 2025 Surf Classic.

ORAN PARK ANGLICAN COLLEGE – SENIOR SCHOOL SERVICE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—My community in the electorate of Badgerys Creek is grateful for the committed service of Oran Park Anglican College's Senior School students, who are serving the local community through a range of Service-Learning projects. The service from one of the groups involved helping to clean up public spaces in the local area, demonstrating their commitment to caring for the environment. The compassion, responsibility and respect of the students shine through their service and is second to none. Thank you to all students involved in making our local area a better place.

JOSEPH HONA

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I acknowledge and commend Joseph Hona, whose responsibilities and work ensure that Queen Street St Marys and its surrounds are impeccably maintained. Mr Hona, a resident in my electorate of Badgerys Creek, is a proud father of two and grandfather of one and generally prefers to stay out of the limelight. However, despite his reserved nature, Joseph's hard work has been recognised and acknowledged. Now, in his 20th year with VDG Services and his 3rd year in St Marys, Joseph works a seven-day shift, weekdays and half-days on weekends, and is recognised by business owners and passers-by alike. Many thank him directly while others joke in admiration, telling him he's 'flogging a dead horse' and that he's 'got his work cut out for him'. Thank you, Joseph, on behalf of us all!

ETHAN MCGUINNESS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—It is a great honor to congratulate a new World Champion tumbler and local Glenmore Park resident Ethan McGuinness on winning Gold at the 2025 Trampoline Gymnastics World Championships in Spain this month. Ethan has had the toughest 12 months of his career and at the age of 24 years has bounced back in the best possible way being crowned Australia's newest World Champion. Ethan lost his Men's Tumbling World Championship title in 2023 and despite a string of challenges, including several injuries and the passing of his pet dog, he was determined to return to the top. After his determination Ethan put together a complete performance which saw him take out the Men's Tumbling title with a sensational final score of 26.900. I congratulate and wish Ethan continued success in the future of his tumbling career.

MCHAPPY DAY

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—Each year McHappy Day brings Australians together to support Ronald McDonald House Charities and help keep families close to their children receiving hospital care. This year our local McDonald's restaurants in Chatswood, St Leonards and Cremorne once again showed strong community spirit and raised vital funds for families in need. I was pleased to attend and celebrate McHappy Day at Cremorne with staff, volunteers and many locals. It was heartening to see young people pitching in, families giving generously and a steady stream of customers choosing to support a great cause. The energy in the restaurant spoke to the best of our community. I thank the franchisees, managers, crew and volunteers who gave their time and effort to make the day a success. I also thank every local who bought a meal, made a donation or spread the word. Ronald McDonald House Charities continues to make a real difference for families doing it tough and McHappy Day is a clear reminder of what we can achieve when we come together with purpose and care.

OPENING ARMENIAN KERMESSE CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I was delighted to attend the opening of the Armenian Kermesse at the Armenian Apostolic Church of Holy Resurrection in Chatswood, marking a wonderful milestone — ten years of this cherished community tradition. The Kermesse is a joyful celebration of Armenian culture and faith, bringing together families, parishioners and community groups in a spirit of fellowship and generosity. This year's event, blessed by His Grace Bishop Vardan Navasardyan and led by Ara Kopoushian and Taleen Marcarian, continues a proud legacy of service — raising funds for the repair of the church roof and for the Arev Children Development Centre in Yerevan, which provides vital care and education for children with down syndrome. I congratulate the organising committee, volunteers, performers and the entire Armenian community for their dedication and hospitality. The Kermesse has become an enduring symbol of community strength, faith and cultural pride here in Willoughby.

MARY'S HOUSE SERVICES WALK

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I acknowledge Mary's House Services for its fundraising walk held on Sunday, 26 October 2025, at St Leonards Park, North Sydney. The event brought our community together to support women and children escaping domestic and family violence, with an 8.8 km route via Waverton, Balls Head, McMahon's Point and Lavender Bay. I recognise Chair Helen Conway and CEO Yvette Vignando for their leadership, and thank the staff, volunteers and supporters who made the day possible. I also acknowledge the NSW Police Brass Band for entertainment, and event partners Rydges North Sydney and the Rotary clubs of the northern suburbs for on-ground support. I commend and thank all who registered, donated and walked. Their contributions fund crisis support, counselling and safe accommodation for those in need. Mary's House Services plays a vital role on the North Shore. I congratulate the organisers and participants on a successful event and for their commitment to safety, dignity and hope for women and children in our community.

LAMBTON RESIDENTS GROUP

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—The Great Spring Clean Up Day, a Clean Up Australia event hosted by Lambton Residents Group at Lambton Park and Ker-rai Creek, took place on Sunday, 19 October. 23 volunteers, including the event coordinator, Ward 3 Cr Mark Brooker, met at the picnic tables under the fig trees, ready with water, hat, sunscreen, and gloves, and subsequently filled several Clean Up Day bags. It was a great turnout in beautiful weather, with smiling and happy locals to lend a hand. Thanks also to the 1st New Lambton Cubs for showing up in force. There's no doubt that Lambton Park is much-loved and after the morning's effort, it was even more beautiful. Along with the Clean Up Day in March, Lambton Residents Group will now make this October date an annual event. Volunteers comprised Kelly Herbert, Kyan Dine, Les Kiss, Tim McPhee, Logan Parker, Theo Haywood, Daisy McPhee, Leo McPhee, Sandie Rufo, Min Green, Jacqui Espinoza, Donna Howley, Matthew Howley, Jonty Orenstein, Theo Orenstein, Jen St George, Peter Hamer, Siobhan Isherwood, Annie Boston, George Heaney, Guy Lyon and Casey Lyon. Bravo to everyone involved!

ASHLEE SALAMON

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—At the Newcastle Football Presentation Night on Saturday, 8 November, Ashlee Salamon was named Volunteer of the Year for her outstanding dedication, tireless work ethic and unwavering commitment to Wallsend Junior Football Club, while also managing her own work and family life. In 2024, Ashlee took on the role of Treasurer with no prior experience of working with a sporting club. She embraced the role wholeheartedly, learning quickly and gave it her all. Whilst continuing in her role as Treasurer in 2025, Ashlee has also progressed into a leadership role that has literally kept the club running: organising referees, managing last-minute changes on game days, coordinating field marking, liaising with the council for ground access and maintenance, managing club emails, general enquiries, organising team photos, handling kit restocks, and merchandise orders. Ashlee plans end-of-season presentations and prize-giving, runs the Club's Facebook page, budgets and manages invoices, fundraises and rosters volunteers. She is the go-to person for just about everything, all with approachability, kindness, and a genuine love for the Club. Congratulations, Ashlee. You are the definition of what makes grassroots sport possible. Wallsend Junior FC is lucky to have you.

NICOLE SAWKA

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—Nicole Sawka has made significant contributions as an employee of Merindah Children's Centre in Wallsend and to the community with her involvement in the South Wallsend Netball Club. Nicole reached 30 years of service at Merindah, a community-based long day care service, on 14 October 2025. She has worked her way up from an untrained assistant position to a Diploma-qualified childcare educator. She is now an integral part of the Centre as both an educator and an administrator. Nicole is extremely dedicated to her role and has been part of the education team in upholding the centre's "Exceeding Rating across all 7 Quality Areas" for 12 years. Nicole is also an exemplary member of the South Wallsend Netball Club. She

has been member for 36 years, as an active player, coach, umpire, being involved in the management of the Club and donating many hours of her own time to this important community organisation. Nicole has justly earned numerous club awards over the years, including a Life Member Award in 1998. Congratulations, Nicole!

RICHARD GLASS WOLPER JEWISH HOSPITAL

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vacluse)—I would like to acknowledge Richard Glass who was recently awarded Honorary Life Governor of Wolper Jewish Hospital in Woollahra. This is an honour which can be bestowed on individuals who have rendered to Wolper "meritorious services worthy of special recognition". That's certainly true in Richard's case. Richard joined the board in 2002. He became Honorary Secretary in 2010 and Vice President in 2014. He was appointed President at the end of 2019, with the COVID pandemic landing in his lap as an existential threat to the Hospital's operations and viability. Richard has maintained his commitment to the Hospital over the last two years as Immediate Past President [IPP]. Throughout his time on the board, Richard has given generously and selflessly of his time and energy. I want to thank Richard for his service to our community and congratulate him on this worthy recognition.

ROGER SELBY NAJEX

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vacluse)—I would recognise Roger Selby who is stepping down from the Presidency of the NSW Association of Jewish Service & Ex-Service Men & Women [NAJEX] after 9 years. Throughout this time, Roger has broadened the audience at the annual commemorations of Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, he has been successful in encouraging members of the Jewish community who may not have had a connection with NAJEX to memorialise their family members who had served in the ADF or the armed forces of Australia's allies. Finally, Roger has encouraged attendance and participation of Jewish school students, Scouts and youth movements, so that they could learn about and draw inspiration from the service of their forebears. This has included the established of the Youth Leadership Award. I want to thank Roger for his service to our community over the past 9 years and look forward to seeing what he does next.

TINA BOGER WOLPER JEWISH HOSPITAL

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vacluse)—I would like to acknowledge Tina Boger who was recently recognised for 10 years of service to Wolper Jewish Hospital in Woollahra. Tina joined Wolper in 2015, as Director of Clinical Services, reporting to the CEO. Upon the CEO's retirement in 2022, Tina put her hand up to also take on the leadership role of General Manager, with overall responsibility for the operation and management of the hospital. Tina has made outstanding contributions throughout her tenure which included the challenges of the COVID pandemic. Tina and her team have ensured continuity of excellent service with near-capacity occupancy – very rare for a private hospital – while also overseeing development and implementation of a range of new services both within and outside the Hospital. I want to thank Tina for her service to our community and congratulate her on this incredible milestone.

CANTERBURY-BANKSTOWN BEYOND FORUM

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I had the pleasure of attending Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue's Canterbury-Bankstown Beyond Forum, an inspiring event that highlighted the transformative growth and future potential of Bankstown CBD. Bankstown's story is one of resilience and renewal. During the forum, we reflected on Bankstown's identity and future — from jobs and digital transformation to cultural pride and community cohesion — and how local leadership can unlock Bankstown's potential. This forum was a way to highlight the city-shaping projects that are emerging and how they're set to impact the growth of one of Sydney's most dynamic and interesting cities. Bringing together community leaders, business representatives, and government officials to share insights, exchange ideas, and celebrate the exciting future ahead is inspiring. A highlight of the forum was discussion around the City & South West Metro line, a game-changing investment that will enhance transport links, connect residents to jobs and services, and stimulate the creation of new homes and revitalised public spaces. Thank you to CEO Adam Leto and the team at the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue for organising this event. There is a bright future being built for the Bankstown community, one I am incredibly proud to represent.

SYDNEY PEACE PRIZE LECTURE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I was privileged to attend the recent Sydney Peace Prize Awards—an inspiring evening that celebrated courage, justice, and the power of advocacy. It was an honour to witness Navi Pillay, former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who received this year's award. A distinguished international jurist and lifelong advocate for justice, Navi Pillay has dedicated her life to defending human rights. Her tireless work has been instrumental in challenging impunity for war crimes, crimes

against humanity, and genocide—reminding the world that justice and human dignity must always prevail. It was also wonderful to reconnect with former NSW Premier, Bob Carr, UN Human Rights Committee Member, Chris Sidoti, and many passionate community advocates who continue to champion human rights across Australia and beyond. This event highlighted the importance of moral courage—the courage to speak truth to power, to defend the vulnerable, and to stand firm in the face of injustice. Thank you to Director Melanie Morrison and the team at the Sydney Peace Foundation. The Sydney Peace Prize serves as a powerful reminder that peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of justice, equality, and compassion.

THE SONG ROOM'S BANKSTOWN BIG DAY OF LEARNING

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—I recently had the pleasure of attending The Song Room's Bankstown Big Day of Learning at the Bankstown Arts Centre, a wonderful celebration of creativity, community, and cultural connection. As we approach the final term of what has been an inspiring and fun school year, this event brought together 80 students from Villawood East, Condell Park, Bass Hill, and Chullora Public Schools to showcase the incredible impact of The Song Room's music and arts programs. Through interactive and engaging activities, students explored teamwork, self-expression, and well-being—building confidence and joy through the power of creativity. It was uplifting to see firsthand how these programs are transforming educational experiences for children in our community. The event also honoured First Nations culture while celebrating the many cultural traditions represented by families across the Bankstown region. Thank you to CEO Alice Gerlach and The Song Room team for your ongoing dedication to making music and the arts accessible for all children. The Bankstown Big Day of Learning was a powerful reminder of how creativity can connect communities, inspire learning, and nurture the next generation of confident, compassionate young Australians.

PARTICIA FRY

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater)—Today I recognise Patsy Fry of Newport, whose creativity and persistence have brought colour and character to our Newport village. Patsy has lived in Newport for 30 years and has spent much of that time finding practical, community-minded ways to improve the place she loves. When she saw Newport needed more vibrancy, she took action, working with Northern Beaches Council to deliver the fairy lights that now brighten Robertson Road. More recently, Patsy has been the driving force behind Newport's unique stump planters. After seeing a tree removed on Queens Parade, she salvaged the stump, carved it by hand over 16 weeks and transformed it into a natural planter filled with geraniums. With support from generous locals, she has installed several more and is already working on the next set, hoping this becomes a defining feature for the village. Patsy also co-founded the Newport Sculpture Trail, engaging 35 local shops and bringing art, music and performance to the community. Patsy's passion, patience and commitment have left a lasting mark on Newport. I thank Patsy for her imagination, hard work and love for our community.

NATHAN CASEY

Ms JACQUI SCRUBY (Pittwater)—I would like to recognise Mr Nathan Casey, an outstanding teacher at Narrabeen Lakes Public School, whose dedication, leadership and care for students have made an extraordinary impact across the Pittwater community. For more than a decade, Mr Casey has served as a Sydney North Team Manager, consistently demonstrating professionalism, enthusiasm and a deep commitment to helping young people thrive through sport. As President of the Pittwater Primary Schools Sports Association [PSSA], he continues to champion physical activity, teamwork and healthy competition, ensuring every child has the chance to be active, confident and connected. Mr Casey's efforts go far beyond the sporting field. He is known for genuine empathy and thoughtful gestures — such as writing to schools after sporting events to celebrate students' achievements and highlight their personal stories. Parents describe him as "a proper enthusiastic legend" whose positivity and kindness inspire everyone around him. His time at Avalon Public School was equally valued by parents, students and teachers alike. On behalf of the Pittwater community, I thank Mr Casey for his exceptional service, generosity of spirit and lasting contribution to the lives of local families.

LACHLAN KIDD

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Kellyville)—I recognise the outstanding achievements of Lachlan Kidd, a talented 13 year-old Cross Country, Road Running and Track athlete from Kellyville, NSW. In 2025, Lachlan represented NSW at several national championships and delivered exceptional results. He competed at the Australian Junior Athletics Championships in Perth, the Athletics Australia National Cross Country Championships in Ballarat, and the Schools Australia National Cross Country Championships on the Gold Coast. There, he produced a standout performance, winning two Gold Medals and one Bronze. Lachlan's road running results in 2025 were equally impressive. He became the NSW U14 Road Running Champion and secured victories in the Canberra Marathon (5.4km), the Lindfield Fun Run (2km) and the Foster-Tuncurry Running Festival (5km). He also achieved second place at the South West Rocks Running Festival (5km) and the Orange Running Festival Secondary School Dash

(2km). These results highlight his versatility and ability to perform across a range of distances and race formats. With ambitions to win a national title and represent Australia on the international stage, Lachlan is a young athlete to watch—and the state of NSW will be cheering him on every step of the way.

YOUNG HEROES

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Last my month, it was my pleasure to meet talented students at the inaugural Snowy Valleys Heroes Schools Competition. Initiated by Tumut's Zita Vafiopulous and assisted by Aunty Winnie Bulger, the competition was open to students of all ages and asked them to interpret 'remembrance' by creating posters, artworks, stories, poems or digital materials. Zita is a driving force behind the Snowy Valleys Heroes movement, which is dedicated to ensuring the legacy of our veterans is never forgotten. By broadening the remembrance theme, the group has been able to harness the skills and imagination of new generations to keep the stories of the past alive. Congratulations to Brungle School, Tumut Public, Tumut High, St Joseph's Adelong and Snowy Valleys Schools for taking part and special mention to award winners, Mahalia Dowling, Mundara Walford, Liam Ferreira, Kaeleisha Leggett, Gulaanga Williams, Sai Yukthika, April Couzens, August Smith, Charlee Arnold and Jett Baker. Thank you to the organisers, the Tumut Library staff for judging the entries and sponsors, the Bendigo Bank, for enabling the event to proceed. The competition will be held annually, ensuring the guardianship of our past and the memories of all who deserve remembrance will continue.

ALL ABOARD

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—A small but important piece of the Riverina's rail history is literally back on track, thanks to the hard work and dedication of a small team of volunteers. In October, I was thrilled to be invited aboard the first rail trike to cross the Tumberumba Road at Ladysmith in more than 20 years. This short but epic journey was testament to the work of the Ladysmith Tourist Railway group which spent countless hours obtaining permission to reopen the line across the road – from the old Ladysmith Station to the Kyeamba Creek – so that visitors can be taken on an extended trike ride and relive the glory days of the rail era. The last rail vehicle to cross the road made the journey back in 2003, so it was a very special occasion for all who have worked so hard to bring this experience back to life. Congratulations and thank you to Wally Bell, Alan Ward, Carol (Kaz) Dumont and David Goodman for making this new attraction a reality. Money raised from the trike rides will help to pay for further improvements to Ladysmith rail history, with concreting of a shed floor the next priority. Well done to all!

ALLIED HEALTH AWARDS

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—The Allied Health Awards are an opportunity to recognise the dedication, compassion and professionalism of allied health workers across New South Wales. These awards celebrate the individuals who make an extraordinary difference in the lives of patients and communities every day. I would like to congratulate Emily Clough and Jennifer Nolan on their remarkable achievements at the 2025 Allied Health Awards. Emily Clough was named Allied Health Assistant, Technician or Support Person of the Year, a well-deserved recognition of her passion and commitment to patient care. At such a young age, Emily has already demonstrated exceptional skill, empathy and dedication to improving outcomes for those she supports. Jennifer Nolan received the honour of Allied Health Professional of the Year for her outstanding contributions to clinical excellence, leadership, education and workplace culture. Her professionalism and compassion have made a lasting impact on both her colleagues and patients. Emily and Jennifer are both valued members of the Hunter New England Health community and serve as an inspiration to the next generation of health care professionals. I warmly congratulate them on their outstanding achievements and thank them for their dedication to their patients and profession.

NATALIA HOGAN

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—I would like to once again acknowledge Natalia Hogan, who has now completed her remarkable 170-kilometre run from Sydney to Newcastle, in support of people experiencing homelessness. Beginning at Observatory Hill Park in Sydney and finishing at Empire Park in Newcastle on Sunday, 26 October, Natalia undertook the challenge as part of Nedd Brockmann's "Uncomfortable Challenge", which encourages participants to push their limits for a meaningful cause. Her run, titled "Running Home," was a deeply personal journey inspired by her own lived experience of homelessness as a teenager. Partnering with We Are Mobilise and the Samaritans, Natalia aimed to give back to the organisation that once supported her, while raising awareness of the barriers faced by young people without stable housing. Across the two-day run, Natalia showed remarkable endurance, strength and determination. Her effort raised more than \$40,000 to support homelessness services in our region. I sincerely congratulate Natalia Hogan on completing

this incredible challenge and thank her for her dedication to helping others. Her achievement is a powerful reminder of what can be accomplished through courage, resilience and compassion.

BANDFEST MUSIC EISTEDDFOD

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—I'd like to recognise the students and teachers who recently took part in this year's Bandfest Music Eisteddfod, an event that celebrates the talents of primary and secondary public school musicians. Bandfest offers a supportive space for students to perform, build confidence and develop their musicianship and is a highlight of the year for many school communities. Schools from across the Charlestown electorate and surrounding areas made a wonderful contribution to this year's event. In the secondary categories, congratulations go to the Warners Bay High School Jazz Ensemble and the Warners Bay High School Concert Band. At the primary level, I would like to congratulate the Eleebana Public School Training Band, New Lambton Public School Training Band, New Lambton South Primary School Concert Band, New Lambton Public School Concert Band, Warners Bay Public School Concert Band, Charlestown South Public School Concert Band and the Dudley Public School Concert Band. Each ensemble represented their school with pride and enthusiasm. I congratulate all participating students and extend my appreciation to the teachers, conductors and support staff who guide and encourage these young musicians. Their dedication helps foster a strong and vibrant music culture in our local schools.

AFRICAN AUSTRALIAN YOUTH SUMMIT 2025

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—When you give young people the space to thrive, they do. That's exactly what I witnessed at the launch of the African Australian Youth Summit on 8 November at Western Sydney University, Parramatta. Hosted by the African Australian Advocacy Centre, the summit was an influential and uplifting event dedicated to empowering young African Australians. With the theme "I See Me - Thriving", the event encouraged young people to see themselves as leaders, changemakers, and valued members of their communities. It was all about belief, opportunity and connection, and the energy in the room made it clear just how much that matters. The day featured youth-led panels, interactive workshops, and honest, solution-focused conversations. From leadership and mentoring to breaking down barriers in education and employment, the summit tackled big issues with real action in mind. We also enjoyed some brilliant live performances, which served as a reminder of how music and art are vital parts of identity and community. Thank you to the African Australian Advocacy Centre and every young voice that made the day meaningful.

ANNUAL MEZBAN CELEBRATION

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—It was a real pleasure to be part of the Annual Mezban on 9 November at Fairfield Showground, hosted by the Brihottor Chattagram Samity Australia. This festival has deep roots in the Chattagram region of Bangladesh, and it's all about coming together. To share food, stories, and culture. Events like this are a great way for people to stay connected to their heritage, especially for those who are building a new life here in Australia. Since 1989, the Greater Chattagram Association has been bringing the community together through Mezban, and every year it just keeps growing. The food, the music, the atmosphere, it all speaks to the strength and warmth of the Chattagram community here in Sydney. These celebrations matter. They bring people closer, help us learn more about each other, and show just how richly diverse our community really is. Thank you to all involved who made it possible.

CABRAVALE CLUB RESORT LAUNCH

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington)—Western Sydney is booming and the new Cabravale Club Resort is a perfect example of the kind of world-class infrastructure we're now proud to call our own. Who needs to head into the city when we've got something this impressive right in Canley Vale? It was a pleasure to attend the grand opening of the newly refurbished resort, a \$230 million transformation that builds on the proud legacy of Cabra-Vale Diggers. For over a century, the club has been a cornerstone of the local community, and this next chapter stays true to those roots while offering something fresh, modern and exciting. With a partnership alongside Novotel Sydney Cabramatta, top-quality dining options, including the exceptional Magma, and stunning architecture throughout, the Cabravale Club Resort brings a new level of local luxury to our area. Congratulations to CEO Boris Belevski, President Walter Robinson OAM and the board, and everyone involved in this visionary project.

VALE CRAIG MOORE

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—Craig 'Moose' Moore is remembered as an extraordinary member of the Bondi community whose compassion and enthusiasm inspired everyone around him. His tireless support for local events, swimming clubs and dementia awareness made a significant impact and brought people together. Moose's warmth, storytelling and commitment to community service enriched countless lives, leaving a legacy of

kindness and unity. The Bondi community is grateful for his leadership and generosity and his influence will be felt for years to come. Thank you for making Bondi a better place and may you rest in peace.

24-HOUR SWIM AT DES RENFORD POOL TO RAISE FUNDS FOR A WORTHY CAUSE

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—We proudly recognise the incredible efforts behind the 24-hour Swim at Des Renford Pool, an inspiring event supporting the autism community through Ocean Heroes. This initiative not only promotes health and teamwork but also raises vital funds to provide surfing lessons for people on the autism spectrum. We'd like to especially recognise Lachlan McArther and all participants for their dedication to commitment embodies inclusion, resilience and compassion - values that strengthen and unite our local community.

VALE KEVIN BROOKES

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—The community fondly recognises and celebrates the life of Kevin Brookes, a true Bronte original who dedicated his years to helping others and strengthening community spirit. From his long-standing involvement with the Bronte Surf Club to decades of volunteer work with the St Vincent de Paul Society and Matthew Talbot hostel, Kevin embodied kindness, humility and generosity. His warmth, humour and care for the vulnerable left a lasting mark on all he knew. Bronte has truly lost one of its great characters, but his legacy of compassion endures. May he rest in peace.

AUSTRALIAN ARAB CULTURAL FORUM

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—I would like to acknowledge the Australian Arab Cultural Forum for their outstanding dedication to fostering understanding, inclusion, and unity within our multicultural society. Through their leadership, research, and community engagement, the Forum has become a vital platform for dialogue, education, and collaboration across cultures. Under the guidance of Professor Amira Issa Hassan, Founder and President, the Forum continues to lead important discussions on issues that deeply impact our communities, including the prevention of violence, the empowerment of women, and the promotion of peace and social cohesion. Their work brings together academics, community leaders, and policymakers to share knowledge and develop practical solutions that strengthen harmony and wellbeing across our diverse society. The Third International Conference on Preventing Violence in Multicultural Societies exemplifies the Forum's commitment to creating safer, more inclusive communities through awareness, compassion, and action. I commend the Australian Arab Cultural Forum for their unwavering dedication to building bridges of understanding between cultures and for their ongoing contribution to the social fabric of Southwestern Sydney and beyond.

MAYDAAN CUP

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—I would like to acknowledge the Maydaan Archery Club Australia, a community organisation that has been fostering inclusion, diversity, and participation through the sport of archery since 2017. During my engagement with the club, I was inspired by their commitment to bringing people together from across Sydney, particularly the South Western suburbs, through a shared passion for sport and community connection. The club reflects a healthy balance of gender representation, strong youth involvement, and a rich cultural mix, making it a true example of unity through diversity. I had the recent privilege of attending the Maydaan Cup, an event that embodied teamwork, dedication, and the vibrant spirit of our local community. It provided a platform for local talent, encouraged active participation, and strengthened the bonds that connect families and neighbours. I commend the Maydaan Archery Club for their tireless efforts in promoting healthy lifestyles, inclusion, and opportunity through sport, and I look forward to seeing their continued growth and positive impact in the years to come.

ANNATE

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—I would like to acknowledge ANNATE, an outstanding organisation dedicated to empowering young people through education, skills training, and personal development. During my recent visit to their facility, I was deeply impressed by the passion and purpose that drive their work. ANNATE's innovative programs provide hands-on experience in the sectors of trade and health, as well as, leadership, and life skills, equipping young people with the confidence and capability to build meaningful futures. A highlight of the visit was seeing their simulation nursing lab in action, offering students practical, real-world training that bridges the gap between learning and employment in the health sector. Through strong partnerships with schools, local businesses, and industry leaders, ANNATE is creating clear pathways to further education and career opportunities, while also fostering resilience and community connection. I commend Founder and Director, Sophie Najjarin and the entire ANNATE team for their dedication to shaping the next generation of skilled and confident young Australians, and for their ongoing contribution to strengthening our local community through opportunity and empowerment.

GREEK FEST 2025

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I recently had the pleasure of attending the annual Greek Fest in Brighton-Le-Sands, held by the Greek Orthodox community of NSW. The celebration included live music, entertainment, Greek cuisine and market stalls, with entry free to all community members. The event was an incredible showcase of what Greek culture has to offer, demonstrating warm hospitality and vibrant traditions. The Greek Orthodox Community of NSW is a non-profit organisation that has devoted their time to serve the Greek Australian community, providing guidance in Greek spiritual, cultural, social, educational and welfare needs. The event they seamlessly hosted brought together members throughout the local area to enjoy the wonderful spirit of our Greek-Australian community. I must say, as Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism, it fills me with great pride to see our Greek community thrive, celebrating their unique traditions to further enrich the cultural diversity of our country. I would like to thank the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW and the Greek Festival of Sydney, particularly their amazing Chair, Nia Karteris for continuing to show such commitment to bettering the lives of our Greek community and for hosting a fantastic event dedicated to appreciating Greek culture.

MCHAPPY DAY 2025

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I was recently fortunate enough to be invited to South Hurstville McDonalds where I was part of their 2025 McHappy Day fundraiser. McHappy Day supports the Ronald McDonald House Charities which is an independent charity that aids seriously ill and injured children as well as their families through such difficult periods in their lives. During McHappy time, the proceeds received at restaurants all across Australia support the Ronald McDonald House with \$2 of every Big Mac sold on McHappy Day given to the wonderful charity. The day was a great showcase of community care and strength, with the South Hurstville McDonalds team, sponsors and local community members and people who simply bought a Big Mac on the day, all coming together to support such an incredible cause. I would like to thank the South Hurstville McDonald's team for welcoming me so enthusiastically as well as Alex Stamiris who hosted the event. I look forward to showing my continued support towards McHappy Day and the Ronald McDonald House in the future. This year's McHappy Day was a great success, and I must say, it was in fact the McHappiest time of the year!

WESTERN SYDNEY AIRPORT

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to tour the new Western Sydney Airport for the very first time. I was completely blown away at the scale of the development, it is certainly very impressive. Our tour revolved around us pretending to be a passenger for the day, departing the airport and then going back through the arrivals process. Our tour began in the main lobby, which is an absolute marvel of engineering. We then moved on past the bag drop to the main terminal, where we went through security and customs. The designs at the Airport focus heavily on the surrounding environment. For example, the pebbles in the ground are actually from the Nepean River and the sandstone from a local quarry! We then walked past the food court and to the lounges where future passengers will wait for their planes to arrive. Then, we did it in reverse, going past the bag pick up area, back to the main terminal. This new airport will be a game changer for our city and put Western Sydney on the map as a world-class international destination. I can't wait till it opens!

STAY FOUNDATION

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—People in crisis are often forced to make the heartbreaking decision of surrendering their pets, just when the unconditional love and support of their animals is most needed. This reality is experienced by too many in our community, either due to cost-of-living pressures, the threat of homelessness, domestic violence, or other challenges. I acknowledge the work of the Stay Foundation. This relatively new Lake Macquarie-based charity launched in August 2024 when they recognised a gap in animal welfare support. The foundation's mission is to help people and pets remain together in their homes, where they're safe and secure, and avoiding the trauma of shelters. So far, the foundation has provided 27,250 meals, 122 microchips and desexed 121 pets. They have also delivered emergency boarding, general supplies, bedding, toys, and essential vet care. Recently, supported by local organisations, the Stay Foundation hosted the inaugural Westlakes Community Connect Day. Under the guidance of Jesse Reinhard, the event was a great success and offered free microchipping, vet checks, supplies, and connection to local support services. Thanks to everyone at the Stay Foundation for their dedication to caring for our two- and four-legged community members.

MCHAPPY DAY

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—I had the privilege of participating in McHappy Day on Saturday 15 November, helping out at Tweed Heads South McDonalds. I was delighted to meet the two store managers Erin and Saffron who are outstanding young leaders whose professionalism and dedication to their roles was impressive to see. McHappy Day is McDonalds' biggest fundraiser in support of Ronald McDonald House

Charities, an independent charity that helps seriously ill children and their families. The cornerstone of the program is the Ronald McDonald House which provides a home away from home for families of seriously ill and injured children being treated at nearby hospitals. The Houses keep families close by, giving parents and siblings the opportunity to stay together to support their sick loved ones. I was honoured to play a very small role in supporting McHappy Day in my Electorate and thank Erin, Saffron and the staff at Tweed Heads South Maccas for their guidance and encouragement on the day.

KINGSCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—Well done to the Kingscliff High School students who have showcased their film making talents at Rotary Kingscliff's recent short film festival. The annual event, now in its fourth year, was themed "Towards Respectful Relationships: First Step, Self Respect" and saw young filmmakers explore empathy, respect and positive relationships. The entry from students Jason Edwards, Theo Walsh, Taylor Scutts, Noah Tilton and Jake Herben entitled Liquid Redemption was awarded both the People's Choice Award and the Rotary Prize. Unstuck, produced by Liv Ivey, Billie Hurst, Claudia Rishton-Potter, Isla Florence and Milli Puckeridge was awarded a special commendation, and Roots of Respect produced by Mackenzie Blackburn, Charlotte Waddell, Isabella Matthias, Sienna Nicole, Kyla Morton, Sonny Ellis-Halls and Ivy Moloney was also recognised with a special commendation. The Towards Respectful Relationships initiative was developed by Rotary Club of Kingscliff member Ginny Giorgio, a former family lawyer who saw firsthand the impacts of domestic and family violence. The film festival's goal is to help young people understand respect and empathy early in life to help prevent future relationship violence. I commend Rotary Kingscliff on this important initiative and well done to all the students on their participation in this event.

EMPLOYER OF CHOICE AWARD

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—Congratulations to Tweed Shire Council on being awarded the Employer of Choice Award from the Local Government Engineers' Association [LGEA] and Vision Super. This is the second time the Council has been awarded Employer of Choice, first receiving this award in 2021. The award acknowledges Council staff's dedication to creating a safe, inclusive and future-focused workplace. Key achievements recognised included: A Civil Liability Allowance review that set a new benchmark for how engineering and technical roles are recognised; Council's strong focus on retaining highly skilled engineering and technical roles in-house; the launch of the Women in Water traineeship program; delivery of psychosocial safety training to more than 700 staff to strengthen respect and cultural safety across the organisation; ongoing investment in career pathways; and supporting flexible work options. Well done to Tweed Shire Council on this important recognition.

LOU'S PLACE

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown electorate, I congratulate The Marmalade Foundation for their successful 2025 Community Building Partnership grant and thank them for their work operating Lou's Place in Redfern. Since 1999 Lou's Place has supported women who may be in crisis or experiencing social isolation. They provide an opportunity for community members to access homecooked meals, shower and laundry facilities, emergency clothing and toiletries in addition to important services such as casework and legal advice. This work is made possible by a team of wonderful volunteers and staff who over the past 25 years have supported over 175,000 women in our community. It is always wonderful to visit Lou's Place to see their important work in action – and to share space with the wonderful women who are part of the Lou's Place community. I would like to particularly acknowledge the leadership, passion, and compassion of CEO Amanda Greaney. The grant for Lou's Place will be used to upgrade air conditioning across the building to ensure the safety and comfortability of staff and clients, particularly during summer. I thank the wonderful team at the Marmalade Foundation and Lou's Place for their tireless work supporting women in our community.

GADIGAL INFORMATION SERVICE

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown electorate, I would like to congratulate the Gadigal Information Service on their successful 2025 Community Building Partnership grant application. The Gadigal Information Service is a First Nations community media and arts social enterprise. They host Koori Radio 93.7fm, Sydney's only Aboriginal owned and operated community radio station. The importance of amplifying First Nations voices and artists cannot be understated. Their work strengthens community connection and supports a vibrant First Nations music scene to thrive. The Gadigal Information Service will use these funds to reactivate their outdoor broadcast van to support greater participation in community events including at Yabun, Australia's largest one day festival showcasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. The van will be wrapped in culturally appropriate branded design and include upgraded internal technology. I thank all the staff and volunteers at the Gadigal Information Service for their important work supporting First Nations voices, artists, musos and storytellers. Always was, always will be, Gadigal Land.

THE WOMEN'S LIBRARY

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown electorate, I would like to congratulate The Women's Library for their successful 2025 Community Building Partnership grant and thank them for their work providing a welcoming and inclusive community library in the heart of Newtown. The Women's Library in Newtown has long been a hub for feminist literature in Sydney, chronicling the history of feminist movements in our city and providing a space for activists, artists, authors and community members to gather and showcase their work. The library is entirely staffed by volunteers whose efforts keep the place running. It is so important that members of our community continue to have access to welcoming and free community spaces, and the Women's Library has done just that for over 30 years. The Women's Library will use this grant to replace the library's ageing carpet and install mobile shelving to ensure the library is up to acceptable amenity and safety standards for ongoing community use. I thank The Women's Library for their ongoing work and particularly acknowledge their volunteers whose tireless work brings the library to life.

DAVIDSON CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION 2025

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—I am delighted to recognise local students in Year 3 and Year 4 for entering the annual Davidson electorate Christmas Card Competition. The 2025 theme was 'Christmas in Australia'. More than 250 wonderful entries were submitted, each one bursting with colour and creativity. Once again, choosing a winner was no easy task; the artistic flair of our students is truly inspiring. I recognise the winner, Esther from Covenant Christian School in Belrose. Her artwork of Santa racing across the red desert near Uluru in a sleigh pulled by kangaroos and wombats was a standout. I also recognise our highly commended students: Alleesi (Oxford Falls Grammar), Alessandra and Lucinda (Turramurra North Public School), Alyssia (Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School in St Ives), Bob (Frenchs Forest Public School), Isla (St Martin's Catholic Primary School in Davidson), Jessica (Wakehurst Public School in Belrose), and Kevin (Cromehurst School in Lindfield). Thank you for all your entries, and Merry Christmas everyone!

HORNSBY KU-RING-GAI DFV WALK THE TALK

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Wednesday 26 November 2025, I will join our community for the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Domestic and Family Violence Walk the Talk. This will include a minute of silence to honour those who have lost their lives to domestic and family violence. As part of the United Nations 16 Days of Activism campaign against gender-based violence, we will walk the streets of Waitara to spread awareness and show support for those affected. I recognise Women's Shed Hornsby Ku-ring-gai, PCYC Hornsby Ku-ring-gai, KNS, NSW Police Force, Hornsby Ku-ring-gai DV Network, Rotary District 9685, Women's Shelter Hornsby Ku-ring-gai and Catholic Care in collaboration with the Hornsby Shire and Ku-ring-gai Councils. I also recognise Hornsby Girls High School, Knox Grammar School and Normanhurst Boys High School for their strong support and participation. I acknowledge Mala Mehta OAM, Chair of Women's Shed Hornsby Ku-ring-gai, for her leadership in bringing this vital event to our community. Violence in all its forms is unacceptable. This year's theme, "UNiTE! Activism to end violence against women and girls", calls on all of us to continue working together to end domestic and family violence.

LINDFIELD & KILLARA UNITING CHURCHES: LINDARA MARKETS

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On Saturday 22 November 2025, the Lindara Markets are holding their markets hosted by Lindfield Uniting Church and Killara Uniting Church. For more than 30 years, the markets have brought together volunteers from Lindfield and Killara Uniting Churches, local church groups and the wider community to participate in a unified effort. The Lindara markets donate, recycle and repurpose quality household goods to raise funds for local programs that support vulnerable families. All proceeds support the Lindara Family Program, which provides counselling, intervention and practical assistance to around 30 families, including 50 children, experiencing crisis in Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai. Thank you to Lindfield Uniting Church and Killara Uniting Church for their ongoing commitment to supporting vulnerable families in our community. I am proud to represent such committed members of our community in the Parliament of NSW.

HAYDEN O'CONNELL

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge Wareemba local, Mr Hayden O'Connell, Leader of the Scouts NSW 2nd Abbotsford Rover Unit. Hayden is currently undertaking the Rover Section Peak Award (Baden Powell Scout Award) and the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. Throughout these programs, he has demonstrated great initiative, actively participating in community service programs and developing a range of new skills. He is currently planning to undertake a 12 day, 231km hike across the Larapinta Trail in the Northern Territory where he will be engaged in learning about First Nations history and culture. Outside of his involvement with the 2nd Abbotsford Rover Unit, Hayden also serves as Leader of the 1st Balmain Scout Troop and South Metropolitan Rovers Community Engagement Officer. He also currently studies

paramedicine, which he hopes to use to support our local community. On behalf of our community, I sincerely congratulate Hayden on his many outstanding achievements. I wish him all the very best.

MARK SCHWEGLER MARINE RESCUE SHOALHAVEN

Ms KATELIN McINERNEY (Kiama)—I wish to recognise Mr Mark Schwegler for his dedicated and ongoing service to the Shoalhaven community, particularly through his volunteer commitment with Marine Rescue Shoalhaven. Since joining in 2021, Mark has served as both a radio operator and a rescue crew member, responding to call-outs and supporting the safety of those on our waterways. Recently, Mark and his team were recognised at the Australasian Rescue Boat Challenge, where they received the Spirit of the Challenge award and a President's Commendation for outstanding teamwork and effort. These honours speak to the skill, discipline and collaboration required in emergency marine response, and highlight Mark's strong contribution to the organisation and the community it protects. Alongside his volunteer service, Mark is also a respected local business owner and an active contributor to civic life in Kangaroo Valley. His leadership, generosity and willingness to step forward have strengthened community resilience and connection. Mark's dedication to service—quiet, consistent, and motivated by care for others—exemplifies the best of community spirit. I extend my sincere thanks for his contributions and the positive impact he continues to make in our region.

BALMAIN PUBLIC SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS SHOWCASE

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—I would like to recognise Balmain Public School's Performing Arts Showcase, an event celebrating creativity & talent across music, drama, and dance. This annual showcase provides students with an opportunity to express themselves, build confidence, and share their skills with family, friends, and the wider community. The showcase was a vibrant and inspiring celebration, featuring energetic performances that captivated the audience and reflected the hard work of students and their teachers. I wish to acknowledge the dedication of teachers and staff who mentor these students, the families who facilitate, encourage and celebrate their children's creativity, and the wider school community who make events like this possible. The Performing Arts Showcase not only highlighted individual talent, but also the school's community spirit, creativity and appreciation for the arts. Congratulations to Tara Smith, Jen Widjojo, Natalie Khan, Bianca Astwood, Kate Hurst, Rhema Tieu, Leah Rosalky & Alex Mair on putting the showcase together. I commend Balmain Public School, its students, staff, and families for creating such a memorable and uplifting event that has enriched the lives of local young people.

WORLD KOBANE DAY COMMEMORATION

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Kobane Day marks the anniversary of the liberation of Kobane City from ISIS occupation in 2014. This historic event is a testament to the bravery of the allied coalition of Kurdish, Yezidi, Syriac and Arab forces. It is a day of reflection for and with oppressed people the world over. This year, Kobane Day was marked in State Parliament thanks to the efforts of the Federation of Democratic Kurdish Society – Australia, the Democratic Kurdish Community Centre of NSW, and the Sydney Kurdish Youth Society. The commemoration honoured the sacrifices made by the Kurdish people and their allies, and expressed solidarity with oppressed peoples across the globe still struggling for liberation, gender equality, multiculturalism and peace. Congratulations and thank you to Brusk Aeiveri, co-chair of the Federation of Democratic Kurdish Society – Australia, Gulay Alkan, co-chair of the Democratic Kurdish Community Centre of NSW, and Baran Sogut, Diplomacy Representative of the Federation of Democratic Kurdish Society – Australia and the Democratic Kurdish Community Centre of NSW. Thank you also to the Sydney Kurdish Youth Society, and to everyone involved in the organisation and running of this meaningful and moving event.

LANE COVE WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—I congratulate Lane Cove West Public School on its outstanding efforts in this year's Jump Rope for Heart program. This initiative promotes physical activity and healthy lifestyles among students while raising vital funds for the Heart Foundation's life-saving research and support services. In 2025, Lane Cove West Public School raised an extraordinary \$32,969, placing it second nationally among participating schools across Australia. This is a remarkable achievement for one of the smaller schools in our community. Special recognition goes to Charlotte Shanahan, who raised \$2,035 and skipped for more than 700 minutes in memory of her late grandfather, John Shanahan. Charlotte's dedication reflects the compassion and community spirit that make our electorate proud. I also commend Miss Amelia Richards, who coordinated the event, along with all the staff and students under the leadership of Acting Principal Roslyn Gee. Their collective effort highlights the values of teamwork, empathy and perseverance. Lane Cove West Public School's achievement is a shining example of what can be accomplished when a community comes together for a worthy cause.

LANE COVE AQUATIC LEISURE CENTRE

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—I congratulate the Lane Cove Council on securing funding through the Community Energy Upgrades Fund to transition the Lane Cove Aquatic Leisure Centre from gas to electric operation. This \$1.14 million upgrade will significantly reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency, and modernise a much-loved community facility used by families, schools, and local swim clubs. I acknowledge the Council's commitment to sustainability and the staff who maintain the centre to such high standards. Lane Cove continues to lead by example in practical environmental action, reducing its carbon footprint while investing in facilities that enhance community wellbeing.

BIRDWOOD LANE IN LANE COVE VILLAGE

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—I acknowledge Birdwood Lane in Lane Cove Village, recently recognised in the 2025 NSW Favourite Urban Place Awards. Finishing among the top three, Birdwood Lane has been transformed into a vibrant, accessible public space through the collaborative efforts of Council, local traders, and residents. Its outdoor dining, murals, and community events have revitalised the heart of the village and made it a gathering place for all ages. This recognition highlights the power of good urban design in strengthening local identity and social connection. I congratulate all who contributed to this achievement and thank them for helping make Lane Cove a more welcoming and lively community.

ASHFIELD BOWLING CLUB – 136TH BIRTHDAY!

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—Congratulations to the Ashfield Bowling Club on celebrating an incredible 136 years of community, sport and friendship. The Ashfield Bowlo is one of the oldest bowling clubs in Sydney and the third oldest in New South Wales. For more than 130 years, the club has proudly highlighted the sport of lawn bowls and contributed positively to its reputation across the state. Generations of families have come through its doors to celebrate milestones and create lasting memories, making the Bowlo a true cornerstone of the Inner West. This Sunday, 23 November 2025, the Bowlo invites everyone to join a proper old-school celebration of the local. Celebrate 136 years with DJs, half-price bowls, summer-green upgrades and massive raffles, plus cheap beer, sunshine, mates and unbeatable community vibes. It's the perfect chance to honour the club's rich history while embracing its exciting future. Congratulations to the members, volunteers and supporters who keep this institution strong. Here's to many more years of bowls, laughter and local pride.

HABERFIELD GARDEN AWARDS 2025

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—I was honoured recently to be a judge for the Haberfield Association 2025 Garden Awards. These awards celebrate the beauty and community spirit that make Haberfield such a unique and cherished suburb. To all the entrants, thank you! Your gardens are more than beautiful spaces; they are reflections of care, creativity, and connection. Special thanks must go to Jeff Malyon, whose tireless efforts brought this year's awards to life. Thanks also to my fellow judges, it was a difficult task to pick winners from such wonderful entries. Congratulations to the winners! Ron and Beryl Brown took out first place in the Whole Garden category, and Takis Constantopedos won first place in the Part Garden category for his stunning front garden. Congratulations also to the second and third placegetters in each of the categories: Whole Garden – 2nd Madelaine Digiusta and 3rd Vittorio and Franca Locantro; Part Garden – Equal 2nd Jozefa Sobski and Bronwyn Thorncraft and Katie Malyon and 3rd Konstantinos Katsantonis. Haberfield is truly a garden suburb, and these awards remind us why. Thank you to everyone involved for making this celebration so special.

DR PHILIP BENJABUTR AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CHIROPRACTOR OF THE YEAR

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—Congratulations to Dr Philip Benjabutr on being named the 2025 Australian Community Engagement Chiropractor of the Year. This award recognises Dr Benjabutr's outstanding contribution to the chiropractic profession and his deep commitment to community wellbeing. Dr Benjabutr is not only a leader in health care but also serves as President of ASHBiz, the Ashfield, Summer Hill and Haberfield Chamber of Commerce, championing local businesses and economic growth. His volunteer work at Ashfield Public School, promoting healthy lifestyles for students, reflects his passion for education and preventative health. For decades, Dr Benjabutr has gone above and beyond to support families and improve health outcomes, earning the respect of colleagues and the gratitude of the community. His recognition by the Australian Chiropractors Association is a testament to his professionalism, generosity and tireless service. Congratulations, Dr Benjabutr – your leadership and dedication make Ashfield and the Inner West stronger and healthier.

RFS YOUTH AWARDS

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury)—Mr Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the achievements recognised at the RFS Youth Awards held at RFS Headquarters, Olympic Park. I am especially proud that half of

this year's recipients are from Hawkesbury. Congratulations to Lauren Wiggett of Colo High School, who has been named the RFS Cadet of the Year. Lauren has shown outstanding dedication, teamwork and leadership throughout her cadet training and she is an exceptional representative of the Hawkesbury's strong volunteering spirit. I also recognise Deputy Group Captain Phil Hurst AFMS of Hawkesbury's Kurrajong Heights Brigade, who received the Secondary School Cadet Program Outstanding Contribution Award for his work guiding young cadets, including many across the Hawkesbury. Phil's commitment to mentoring the next generation has had a lasting impact, with numerous students going on to serve in local brigades. Young people play a vital role in the future of the Rural Fire Service. Their willingness to learn, serve and step forward in times of need, reflects the very best of our community values. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

TRACTOR 828

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury)—Mr Speaker, I rise to recognise Tractor 828, a much-loved roadside café in Ebenezer that has become a favourite stop for locals, morning cyclists, and the vibrant automotive community. For nearly a decade it has served as a gathering place for food, coffee and connection along Sackville Road. I congratulate its new owner, Joanne Sepping, who has taken on this Hawkesbury institution with passion and resilience. Joanne's journey has been remarkable—having lost everything in the March 2021 floods, fostered four children, and cared for her late mother, she has faced immense personal challenges with courage. Now, she is embracing the chance to do something for herself, while continuing to give back to the community she loves. Since taking over, Joanne has been warmly embraced by staff and customers alike, with returning patrons and plans already underway to expand Tractor 828 into a true community hub. With family-friendly spaces, local suppliers, live music and events, Tractor 828 is set to thrive under her guidance. I commend Joanne for her vision and determination and wish her every success as she writes this exciting new chapter for Tractor 828. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

HAWKESBURY LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury)—Mr Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of volunteers in Hawkesbury City Council's Library, Museum and Gallery Volunteer Program. Our Library Service, Regional Museum and Regional Gallery are much-loved cultural institutions, and the efforts of volunteers ensure they remain vibrant, welcoming spaces for our whole community. The Library Volunteer Program offers a diverse range of roles. Volunteers deliver books to housebound residents, seniors groups and nursing homes, helping people stay connected to reading and learning. Others assist with Local Studies, ensuring the unique history of the Hawkesbury is preserved for future generations. Many give their time to technology support, to programs such as Preschool Story Time and Rhyme Time, and to school holiday activities and events, enriching the lives of children and families across our region. The program not only strengthens the services our cultural institutions provide but also creates a supportive, engaging environment for volunteers themselves. On behalf of the Hawkesbury community, I thank every volunteer who gives their time and energy to the Library, Museum and Gallery program. Your work embodies community spirit and ensures these services continue to thrive. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

RHYS HANKEY

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to acknowledge young Drummoyne performer Rhys Hankey, who recently appeared in the Teatro Italian Forum production of The Addams Family. At just 13 years old, Rhys was cast in the role of Pugsley, performing in multiple shows each week throughout October 2025. His enthusiasm for acting, singing and dancing from a young age and his commitment to his passion is inspiring. Prior to taking up the role of Pugsley, Rhys starred as Charlie Bucket in the 2022 Notable Theatre Company's production of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Rhys' many performing credits also include Opera Australia's production of 'Tosca' and the NSW School Spectacular, where he has been a featured vocal artist in 2023, 2024 and again later this month. I sincerely congratulate Rhys for his achievements. I look forward to seeing his creativity and performing skills continue to flourish. I know he will achieve great things and I wish him all the very best in the future.

SOPHIE BRADBERRY

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion)—It is with great respect and admiration that I recognise Sophie Bradbery of the Port Stephens Netball Association, who has been named the Netball NSW Community Volunteer of the Year for 2025. This award acknowledges Sophie's outstanding dedication to the Association's annual Mental Health and Wellbeing Round, held in memory of her close friend Nicholas Johnson, who tragically passed away in 2022. Motivated by this personal loss, Sophie has shown remarkable courage and leadership, ensuring that her efforts make a lasting impact on the mental health and wellbeing of our community. Through her work, the Port Stephens netball community has raised more than \$20,000 over the past two years for organisations including U Matter

Awareness and Talk2MeBro Jupiter Australia. Her commitment has fostered open conversations about mental health, reduced stigma, and strengthened community support networks. Sophie's compassion, resilience, and dedication serve as an inspiring example for all. On behalf of our community, I extend heartfelt congratulations to Sophie Bradbery for her exceptional service and leadership.

NELSON BAY GOLF CLUB

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion)—It's been a challenging year for many across our region, yet Nelson Bay Golf Club has continued to shine - demonstrating resilience, innovation, and community spirit. This commitment has been recognised on the state stage, with two team members honoured at the 2025 NSW Golf Industry Awards. Course Superintendent Greg Stynes and Director of Golf Duard Nel received awards celebrating their leadership and excellence in their respective fields. Presented by the NSW Golf Course Superintendents Association, this award recognises Greg's exceptional leadership in sustainability and course management. He has introduced innovative irrigation systems, enhanced wildlife habitats, led a passionate volunteer program, and strengthened our partnership with the Port Stephens Koala Hospital to help protect and rehome local koalas. Awarded by Golf Management Australia, Duard was recognised for his vision and leadership in modernising the Golf Shop, improving member engagement, and driving innovation across operations - all while guiding the club through one of its toughest winters. Congratulations to Greg, Duard, and the entire Nelson Bay Golf Club team.

MEGAN CHIPPINDALE

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion)—Every year in New South Wales, more than 9,000 people experience an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest. For each minute that passes without intervention, the chance of survival falls by up to 10%. It's during these critical moments that community volunteers, supported by initiatives such as the GoodSAM app, play a lifesaving role. Megan Chippindale, a registered nurse from Boat Harbour, exemplifies this commitment. In June, Megan received an alert through the GoodSAM app regarding an active cardiac arrest. She promptly attended the scene and provided chest compressions while paramedics were en route, contributing directly to the patient being stabilised and transferred to hospital. This was not the first time Megan had acted swiftly in an emergency. In 2024, a man suffered a heart attack during a car accident outside her home. Megan immediately administered CPR until paramedics arrived and secured the patient's safe transfer. Megan's courage, skill, and selfless dedication make her a true asset to our community. Her actions reflect the very best of what it means to be a Good Samaritan.

PENRITH CITIZENSHIP 1

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith)—It was with great pleasure that I congratulate all those new Australians who became citizens in Penrith on Wednesday, 12 November 2025, at the first afternoon ceremony. The Penrith community are richer for the diversity of culture you all bring to our city: Vicheslav Alkaeva, Marina Alkaeva, Daria Alkaeva, Sabarilingam Amirthalingam, Sabarilingam Andujar, Simon Ankuma, Monireh Akhond, Atoosa Nooralizadeh Asl, Vahid Nooralizadeh Asl, Arya Nooralizadeh Asl, Violet Asadian, Pezhman Asadian, Mojgan Asgarpour, Sumit Biswas, Rishit Biswas, Susmita Biswas, Sujata Budhathoki, Daniel De Souza, Marianna Di Lauro, Piyanoot Doemkayom, John Ferreras, Maria Frayna, Harris Hajizaada and Asma Khalil. I wish them all the best for their futures as Penrith locals.

PENRITH CITIZENSHIP 2

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith)—It was with great pleasure that I congratulate all those new Australians who became citizens in Penrith on Wednesday, 12 November 2025, at the second afternoon ceremony. The Penrith community are richer for the diversity of culture you all bring to our city: Muhammad Islam, Fatemeh Terakemeh, Christine Jurilla, Samarpan Kapoor, Madhuri Kapoor, Hanaya Kapoor, Astha Khatiwada Subedi, Kamal Subedi, Thi Luu, Oluchi Mbachu, Ivy Magno, Carolina Mata, Sharnez McMaster, Prerana Pokharel, Ying-Ling Shih, Maria Vaiouga Levi, James Cox, Mason Denver, Evan Denver, Thaddeus Efaw, Ya-Chi Hong, Rana Katene, Bo Lim Momna Malik and S Wijerathnalage Wijerathna. I wish them all the best for their futures as Penrith locals.

PENRITH EMUS 60TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith)—The Penrith Emus rugby union club has a proud history dating back to 1965, when it was founded as the Nepean Rugby Club before adopting the Penrith name in 1981. Recently, the club marked its 60th anniversary in style at Penrith RSL Club, a major sponsor and long-time supporter. The Emus' journey has not been without challenges. After joining the prestigious Shute Shield in 1995, the club faced setbacks—removed from the competition in 2018, readmitted in 2020, and then dropped again before the 2022 season. Today, as of 2025, the Emus compete in the NSW Suburban Rugby Union competition. Under the

leadership of President Adam Fletcher, the club has shown resilience and determination, working tirelessly to rebuild after being excluded from premier rugby three times. The 60th anniversary was not only a celebration of past players but also an opportunity to shine a light on the current squad and their future. The Board remains committed to preserving the Emus' heritage. They understand that rebuilding is never easy—but there's no doubt they're ready for the challenge by living up to the motto 'strong, proud & ruthless'.

CHALLENGE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS GALA DINNER

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—We had such a delightful evening at the Challenge Southern Highlands Gala Dinner in support of the Welby Garden Centre, held at Centennial Vineyards. It was wonderful to attend alongside Carol Berry MP, Member for Whitlam. The night was a heartfelt celebration of community, dignity, kindness, and opportunity, a reminder of the importance of giving everyone the chance to thrive. Challenge Southern Highlands and Welby Garden Centre embody these values beautifully. Their work helps people of all abilities grow in confidence, purpose, and pride. You could really see the effort the team put in to make the night such a success, huge thanks to Aaron Malouf, Emily Sinclair, Wayne Kidd, Justin Longhurst, and the entire team for their hard work, dedication and impact. The speeches were truly inspiring, with Barry Du Bois, TV Presenter and R U OK? Ambassador, and Ange Clarke from Moonacres School sharing powerful and moving stories of resilience, emphasising the importance of dignity, empathy, community, and kindness. And a big thank you to Nat and her hardworking team at Centennial Vineyards for a beautiful dinner and warm hospitality. Everyone Living With A Disability Has The Chance To Thrive.

GUMNUT PRESCHOOL BOWRAL

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—In September, I was delighted to visit Gumnut Preschool in Bowral. This Centre provides an inclusive play-based program which reflects the needs, interests and cultures of the children attending. They offer new and challenging experiences in both the indoor and outdoor environments which are designed to foster confidence, relationships and elevate children's learning. The curriculum aligns with the principles and learning outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework. Teachers develop and implement the programs in consultation with other staff working in the room. The belief is that play-based learning creates children that are active, investigative and capable learners. The environments, both indoors and out, are designed with a variety of learning spaces and resources which are carefully planned to engage, intrigue and inspire. Children have access to a wide range of resources such as books, puzzles, blocks, loose parts, art materials, music, instruments, dress up clothes, home corner equipment, games and imaginative play resources. Centres like Gumnut are a great starting point for learning in Wollondilly.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2025

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly)—On 11 November, I gathered with veterans that served, their families and community, at Picton Memorial Park for a poignant commemoration service, one of thousands held across the nation. On this Remembrance Day, we honour the many Australian personnel who gave their lives in service to our country. Thanks to Picton High School Performance Ensemble Band and technical Crew for their moving musical contributions. Their performance added great dignity and feeling to the service. It's a day to pause and reflect on the more than 103,000 Australians who lost their lives, and to honour all who have served in wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping missions. Memorial parks are among the first places seen by visitors travelling through our region, and Wollondilly can be proud of the dedicated teams who keep these open spaces looking welcoming and peaceful. As always a heartfelt thank you to Picton Anzac Day Committee, and, many RSL sub-Branch organisations across Australia and New Zealand, for their tireless work in organising services for veterans, their families, and the wider community. Your dedication and commitment uphold a proud tradition that remains a vital part of our national fabric. We will remember them. Lest We Forget.

PCIA FUNDRAISING GALA

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)—Recently, Palestinian Christians in Australia hosted its 4th annual gala to a packed audience of supporters. It was a beautiful event of cultural celebration and preservation and solidarity, featuring a fashion parade highlighting traditional Palestinian embroidery, tatreez. Tatreez is a symbol that has outlasted empires and kingdoms, leading it to be inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2021. Embroidery is an intergenerational practice, transmitted from mother to daughter, and now, through formal training courses. The choice of colours and designs can indicate the woman's regional identity and marital and economic status. The proceeds raised on the night will go to supporting newly arrived refugee families from Gaza, as well as students in Palestinian universities. Over the last 2 years, PCIA has raised over \$1.3 million including donations and grants and spend over \$1.2 million in financial support to the settlement of the refugees arriving in Australia and to funding education in Palestine. This work would not be possible without the donors, sponsors, volunteers and the artists and artisans whose work was featured. I particularly acknowledge the board of PCIA, led by Suzan Wahab, for their hard work.

ASSYRIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA AT THE NSW PARLIAMENT 2025

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—In August 2025 I had the privilege of attending two significant events organised by the Assyrian National Council of Australia, both of which paid tribute to the memory and resilience of the Assyrian people. The first was the Assyrian Martyrs Day Remembrance held at the NSW Parliament on 6 August 2025. This solemn and moving event honoured the countless lives lost in the struggle for freedom, identity, and survival. It was a powerful reminder of the historical hardships faced by the Assyrian community and the importance of remembering those who have sacrificed so much. The second event was the Wreath Laying and Commemorative Prayer held on 10 August 2025, a heartfelt ceremony that brought the community together in reflection and unity. The act of laying wreaths and offering prayers served not only as a tribute to the martyrs but also as a symbol of hope and resilience for future generations. I sincerely thank the Assyrian National Council of Australia for its kind invitation and congratulate them on the successful organisation of both events. These occasions ensure the legacy of the Assyrian people continues to be recognised.

52ND ANNIVERSARY MEMORIAL EVENT FOR BRUCE LEE 2025

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—On 19 July 2025, I had the honour and privilege of representing Chris Minns, the Premier of New South Wales, at the 52nd Anniversary Memorial Event for the legendary Bruce Lee, held in Kogarah. It was a deeply meaningful occasion that brought together members of the martial arts community, Bruce Lee fans, and cultural advocates to celebrate the enduring legacy of a global icon. Bruce Lee was more than just a martial artist or film star, he was a philosopher, a bridge between cultures, and a symbol of strength, discipline, and perseverance. His influence continues to resonate across generations and communities around the world, including here in Australia. I would like to sincerely thank Mr. Ben Wang, Master Sam Luo, and the World Dragon Fans Club Australia for their kind invitation and for organising such a respectful and inspiring tribute. Their commitment to preserving Bruce Lee's legacy and promoting cultural understanding through martial arts is commendable. It was a privilege to be part of an event that honours Bruce Lee's remarkable contributions and also celebrated the unity and shared values within our multicultural society.

ARMENIAN CULTURAL CENTRE VISIT 2025

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta)—I recently had the pleasure of visiting the Armenian Cultural Centre and meeting with members of the Armenian National Committee of Australia in my Cabramatta Electorate. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with such a vibrant and proud community that continues to make an invaluable contribution to our multicultural society. During my visit, I was also delighted to announce their successful application of the Community Building Partnership Program, which supports local organisations in improving their facilities and services for the benefit of the community. The funding provided will go towards upgrading essential equipment at the Armenian Cultural Centre, including the installation of a new sound and public address system, a commercial refrigerator, and enhancements to the common area. These improvements will make a real difference to the Centre's operations, creating a more functional and welcoming space for all visitors. The upgrades will especially benefit the Centre's programs for senior citizens, youth, and families, ensuring that community members can continue to gather, celebrate, and support one another in a comfortable and inclusive environment. I look forward to seeing these upgrades strengthen the Centre's capacity to serve our local community.

RYDE SECONDARY COLLEGE GRADUATING STUDENTS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Rok Seo on graduating Year 12 at Ryde Secondary College. Graduating from high school is no small feat. It marks the culmination of years of dedication, growth and perseverance. For Rok, it is also a celebration of his time at one of our community's finest public schools. Ryde Secondary College is a proudly coeducational school with a dual focus on academic excellence and personal development. With a strong emphasis on student wellbeing, inclusive values and leadership, it has fostered an environment where students are encouraged to thrive in the classroom and beyond. Rok contributed to the fabric of this school in his own unique way. Whether through academic pursuits, creative expression, leadership or community spirit, he has left his mark and should be enormously proud of his achievements. As the Member for Ryde, I commend Rok on reaching this significant milestone and wish him every success in the exciting new chapter that lies ahead. Thank you for representing the Ryde community with pride, determination and promise.

RYDE SECONDARY COLLEGE GRADUATING STUDENTS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Roshan Nair on graduating Year 12 at Ryde Secondary College. Graduating from high school is no small feat. It marks the culmination of years of dedication, growth and perseverance. For Roshan, it is also a celebration of his time at one of our community's finest public schools. Ryde Secondary College is a proudly coeducational school with a dual focus on academic excellence and personal development. With a strong emphasis on student wellbeing, inclusive values

and leadership, it has fostered an environment where students are encouraged to thrive in the classroom and beyond. Roshan contributed to the fabric of this school in his own unique way. Whether through academic pursuits, creative expression, leadership or community spirit, he has left his mark and should be enormously proud of his achievements. As the Member for Ryde, I commend Roshan on reaching this significant milestone and wish him every success in the exciting new chapter that lies ahead. Thank you for representing the Ryde community with pride, determination and promise.

RYDE SECONDARY COLLEGE GRADUATING STUDENTS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—I ask the House to join me in congratulating Sophie Chan on graduating Year 12 at Ryde Secondary College. Graduating from high school is no small feat. It marks the culmination of years of dedication, growth and perseverance. For Sophie, it is also a celebration of her time at one of our community's finest public schools. Ryde Secondary College is a proudly coeducational school with a dual focus on academic excellence and personal development. With a strong emphasis on student wellbeing, inclusive values and leadership, it has fostered an environment where students are encouraged to thrive in the classroom and beyond. Sophie contributed to the fabric of this school in her own unique way. Whether through academic pursuits, creative expression, leadership or community spirit, she has left her mark and should be enormously proud of her achievements. As the Member for Ryde, I commend Sophie on reaching this significant milestone and wish her every success in the exciting new chapter that lies ahead. Thank you for representing the Ryde community with pride, determination and promise.

2025 DRUMMOYNE CHRISTMAS ARTWORK COMPETITION HIGHLY COMMENDED

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I rise to sincerely congratulate the following students from local primary schools in our community. These students have been recognised for their Highly Commended artworks and their participation in the 2025 Drummoyne Electorate Christmas Artwork Competition. This year's theme was 'An Aussie Christmas' and each student perfectly captured this essence in their artwork. They have showcased a passion for creativity and art and are to be congratulated for the time and effort they have dedicated to submitting their artwork. I acknowledge the following students for their highly commended entries: Nina Sutherland, Ellysse Tran, Alexia Gander, Aden Noor, Austin Jones, Hugo Wang, Tania Azarmir, Jensen Pollard & Jasmina Lisica. Each of these students will have their artworks featured in my 2025 Christmas Card and December Community Newsletter. I know that every year, our community looks forward to seeing the artworks of our talented young artists. I thank everyone who took part in the 2025 Drummoyne Electorate Christmas Artwork Competition. I look forward to seeing next year's entries and I wish them all the very best.

JOHN TANTI

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to John Tanti, on receiving an award for 15 Years as a Special Religious Education (SRE) Catechist on 31 October, presented by Rev. Bishop Vincent Long OFM at St Patrick's Cathedral. A parishioner of Mary, Queen of the Family Parish, Blacktown, John has devoted three decades to SRE education, sharing the Good News with public school students. His commitment exemplifies the 'humble servant' — someone who lives their faith not for praise, but with genuine love and generosity. Throughout his years of religious education, John has planted seeds of faith, hope and compassion in generations of young people. The 2025 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Mass recognised dedicated SRE Catechists, helpers and student catechists across Western Sydney for their efforts to bring the Catholic faith to public school students. Honouring these remarkable educators, Bishop Long said, "The whole Church is indebted to you for the way in which you share your love of Christ and the generosity you demonstrate in fulfilling your sacred duty. Congratulations again, John on this significant Award. I commend you on the integral role you play and thank all our SRE Catechists for their stewardship of our community.

ERICK OPENA

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Erick Opena, for receiving a Special Religious Education (SRE) Coordinator Service Award on 31 October, presented by Rev. Bishop Vincent Long OFM at St Patrick's Cathedral. As SRE Coordinator of St Anthony of Padua Parish, Toongabbie, Erick has devoted himself to sharing the Good News with young people in our parish and promoting Catholic teachings across local public schools. Erick's service exemplifies the 'humble servant' — someone who lives their faith not for praise, but with genuine love and generosity. Throughout years of religious education, Erick has planted seeds of faith and compassion, inspiring generations of young people in their journey with Christ. The 2025 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Mass recognised dedicated SRE Catechists, helpers and student catechists across Western Sydney. Honouring these remarkable educators, Bishop Long said, "The whole Church is indebted to you for the way in which you share your love of Christ and the generosity you demonstrate in fulfilling your sacred duty. Congratulations again Erick on this significant Award. As we celebrate your retirement as SRE Coordinator,

I commend you on the way you've served and shaped our Parish. I thank you and wish you the best in this next phase of discipleship.

BATISTA EMMANUEL

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Batista Emmanuel, on receiving an award for 15 Years as a Special Religious Education [SRE] Catechist on 31 October, presented by Rev. Bishop Vincent Long OFM at St Patrick's Cathedral. A parishioner of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Seven Hills, and St Anthony of Padua Parish, Toongabbie, Batista has devoted three decades to SRE education, sharing the Good News with public school students. His commitment exemplifies the 'humble servant' — someone who lives their faith not for praise, but with genuine love and generosity. Throughout his years of religious education, Batista has planted seeds of faith, hope and compassion in generations of young people. The 2025 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Mass recognised dedicated SRE Catechists, helpers and student catechists across Western Sydney for their efforts to bring the Catholic faith to public school students. Honouring these remarkable educators, Bishop Long said, "The whole Church is indebted to you for the way in which you share your love of Christ and the generosity you demonstrate in fulfilling your sacred duty. Congratulations again, Batista on this significant Award. I commend you on the integral role you play and thank all our SRE Catechists for their stewardship of our community.

PAUL DAVISON

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I extend my warm congratulations to Paul Davison on the selection of his artworks "To the Top of the Tower" and "Warrior Lady" for display in the Shine Arts Exhibition at NSW Parliament House. I was delighted to have the chance to view exhibition while in Parliament and to witness firsthand the talent, depth and resilience they reflect. A keen athlete and former stone cutter, Paul has long embodied discipline, strength and determination. These qualities have served him well in navigating life after a brain injury sustained in 2014, when he was struck by a cyclist on the footpath. Despite the significant challenges he has faced, Paul continues to inspire others undergoing rehabilitation. His courage, honesty and willingness to share his story provide hope and motivation to many within the brain injury community. The Shine Arts Prize celebrates the artistic achievements of Lifetime Care participants and Workers Care Program clients, recognising the powerful role of creativity in healing, wellbeing and connection. This year's theme, "My Favourite Things," highlights the activities and inspirations that sustain us through hardship and recovery. Paul, your achievements exemplify this spirit. Congratulations on your remarkable work and the inspiration you bring to so many.

ANDY (DREW) WONG

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—An evening drive to admire Christmas lights is a treasured ritual for many Central Coast families, and few displays have captured the region's imagination quite like Drew's Christmas Winter Wonderland in Saratoga. After six extraordinary years of snow, sparkle and festive magic, this December marks the final chapter of Drew's much-loved community event. What began as a simple passion project to lift spirits during the COVID years grew into a cherished local tradition, welcoming more than 3,000 visitors last year alone. From the 8,000-piece LEGO Christmas village to the SNOW5000 snow machine and spectacular five-metre Cold Spark Fireworks lighting up the street each weekend, Drew has created a true North Pole experience on the Coast. This year's addition of "The Twister" fireworks machine ensures the final display goes out with a bang. Drew's creativity, generosity and community spirit have brought joy to thousands of families, and his ongoing support for Coast Shelter continues to make a meaningful difference. Thank you, Drew, for making Christmas magical for so many. Your impact will be long remembered.

DR STEPHEN HINKS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—Today I acknowledge Dr Stephen Hinks as he prepares to retire as Pastor after twelve years of dedicated service to Hardys Bay Community Church and the wider Bouddi community. Since moving to Killcare Heights in 2010 with his wife Anne, Stephen has shared his deep commitment to faith, learning and community through a lifetime of service shaped by roles in teaching, pastoral leadership, executive management and theological education. Stephen's impact extends far beyond the church walls. His involvement with the Rural Fire Service, his role as founding president of Killy Cares, his chaplaincy with Killcare Surf Life Saving Club, and his work as a Disaster Recovery Chaplain highlight a genuine devotion to supporting others in times of need. As Stephen steps into retirement, hoping to enjoy more time with family, friends and his eight grandchildren, he and Anne remain steadfastly connected to Hardys Bay Community Church. I look forward to being part of the community's celebrations in December as we express our gratitude for his leadership, compassion and unwavering service. Thank you, Stephen, for your extraordinary contribution to our community. Your legacy will continue to bless the Coast for many years to come.

JAMIE LOBB

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker..... I would like to recognise Jamie Lobb who has been named Western Premier League Coach of the Year. 2025 has been an exceptional year for Jamie on and off the field. As a Senior Coach, he led the Macquarie United Football Club to their first Western Premier League Title, playing an influential role in the club's historic success through his energy, knowledge and passion for the game. Beyond his achievements on the field, Jamie has been instrumental in driving growth of Macquarie United. He established a player and coach development program, providing valuable training opportunities for the club's mini roos and junior players. Jamie also played a key role in developing strong partnerships with club sponsors, and essential foundation for the club's continued success. For his outstanding commitment and dedication, Jamie was named Macquarie United Football club's 2025 Club Person of the Year and Senior Coach of the Year. In addition to his contributions to Macquarie United, Jamie extended his passion for the game to the wider football community through his leadership roles as Vice President and Coach within the Western Premier League. A true leader and role model, well done Jamie!

PAT AULD

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker..... I would like to recognise Pat Auld who was recently the recipient of a State Award from Football NSW recognising his outstanding contributions to the advancement of football in NSW. Pat has been affiliated with the Dubbo and District Football Association for an incredible thirty-nine years, achieving remarkable milestones along the way. At just fourteen years old, he represented Dubbo at the Kanga Cup in the under-eighteen's side and later went on to captain the state side at eighteen, leading the under twenty-one division to victory. Pat's coaching journey began over fifteen years ago when his eldest son joined an under-fives team. Since then, he has gone on to coach all five of his sons' teams, as well as numerous men's sides, junior representative teams, and the Macquarie United first grade women's side. A driving force behind the success of the Macquarie United Football Club, Pat has played a pivotal role in fostering growth and development, particularly within the junior ranks. He is admired as a role model by his peers, teammates, and players alike. Always humble in his approach, Pat's dedication, leadership and long-standing commitment make this recognition truly well deserved. Congratulations Pat.

DENNIS CRIMMINS AND PAT YEO

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Speaker..... I would like to recognise Dennis Crimmins and Pat Yeo of Dubbo who were honoured at the inaugural St Vincent de Paul Society Good Works Summit awards ceremony. Dennis has been a dedicated member and volunteer for an incredible fifty-two years. He was honoured with the Collaborative Impact Award, recognising his outstanding teamwork within the society and his contribution to meaningful, mission-driven outcomes for the community. Throughout his time with the society, Dennis has undertaken numerous roles of care and support for those in need, whether it's working behind the scenes in the shop or coordinating the annual Christmas food hampers. Pat, a member and volunteer for over twenty years, was honoured with the Outstanding Vincentian Service Award for contributions that reflect the highest ideals of the St Vincent de Paul, demonstrating a deep and lasting commitment to its mission. Throughout his service Pat has also held key leadership roles including Central Council and Regional President. Through their compassion, kindness and dedication to making their community stronger and more connected, both gents are inspirations to others, and extremely deserving of statewide acknowledgement. I congratulate them both and thank them for all they do.

ANOTHER BUSY YEAR FOR CWA NIMBIN BRANCH MEMBERS

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Recovery, and Minister for the North Coast)—It's been another busy year for Nimbin CWA branch members judging by Publicity Officer Sue Stock's column in the November edition of The Nimbin Good Times. CWA Far North Coast Group President Alison Larcher visited Nimbin on 13 October and chaired Nimbin CWA's annual general meeting. Congratulations to office bearers for 2025-26: President Tashanna Fuller; Vice President Karen Ratcliffe; Secretary Sarah Dobson; Treasurer Ashoka Joblin; Cookery Suzanne Snoeks, Handicrafts Pauline Ahern; International Robyn Counter; Publicity Sue Stock; Op Shop Co-ordinators Sue Hammond and Cheryl Maddocks. Sue wrote that the branch welcomed new and returning officers who put their hands up to dedicate their time to supporting the community. October was a busy time for the branch, according to Sue. "Our enthusiastic members baked and cooked, sorted and sold clothes and other items for our op shop, and held open days with delicious lunches and friendly conversations, as well as helping local community members in need. "Volunteering for a non-profit organisation like the CWA is a rewarding way to give back to the community, support causes you care about and develop new skills." The branch's Bunnings stall in Lismore was very well received.

KYOGLE SERGEANT REGIONAL POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Recovery, and Minister for the North Coast)—I Wish to congratulate Kyogle Police Station's Sergeant Michael 'Mick' McCormack who was named Regional NSW Field Operations Rotary Police Officer of the Year at a gala ceremony in Sydney recently. The Richmond Police District's Facebook page officially congratulated Sgt McCormack on this well-deserved Statewide recognition. Sergeant McCormack has served the Richmond Police District since 1988, dedicating most of his career to the Kyogle community. Known for his daily foot patrols and genuine connection with locals, Mick is more than a police officer – he's a trusted mentor and friend. His leadership during the 2019 bushfires and 2022 floods provided calm and reassurance to a community in crisis. Sergeant McCormack supports his colleagues with quiet strength and compassion, always checking in after tough jobs. His deep local knowledge and unwavering presence have earned formal recognition from Kyogle Council and a nomination for Citizen of the Year. Sergeant McCormack embodies country policing – he's steadfast, approachable, and deeply committed to his community. The Facebook post, shared by Kyogle (the friendly town & villages) page, features a photograph of Sgt McCormack with new NSW Police Commissioner Mal Lanyon APM, formerly head of the NSW Reconstruction Authority.

MURWILLUMBAH SEED LIBRARY MARKS FIRST DECADE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Recovery, and Minister for the North Coast)—I Wish to congratulate the Murwillumbah Seed Library on distributing more than 90,000 packets of seeds to Murwillumbah Library members since its launch in October 2015. Established as the third seed library in New South Wales, the initiative has grown into a thriving community hub centred around sustainability, food security and heritage seed preservation. Launched after local resident Therese Krix was inspired by a talk from celebrity gardener Costa Georgiadis, the seed library was built on a simple concept: take seeds, grow your plants and return some seeds if you can. The Tweed Valley Weekly recently chronicled the homegrown success of the seed library. Murwillumbah Library branch technician Kym Thompson said: "We've built something really special here – it's a testament to the dedication of our staff and the passion of the local community. Springtime alone sees about 30 different types of seeds available." Members of the Richmond Tweed Regional Library can visit Murwillumbah Library and take home up to five free seed packets per visit, choosing from a rotating range of vegetables, herbs and flowers. Library assistant Rita Chilcott said: "It's more than just gardening – it's about healthy lifestyle choices, food education, and sustainability."

BILL RENTON & KEITH PIERCE

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Kellyville)—Today I recognised the achievements of Hills residents Bill Renton (68) and Keith Pierce (72), who enjoyed remarkable success at the 2025 Australian Masters Games in Canberra. Although together they founded Alive n Kicking Hills, a football club for players over 60, the two friends found themselves on opposing sides in the Masters Games grand final. Bill's team, the Canberra Old Boys, ultimately claimed victory over Keith's team, the Camden Hasbeens. The Australian Masters Games is a week-long festival of sport that brings together athletes from across Australia and around the world. Participants compete across age groups 45+, 50+, 55+, 60+, 65+ and 70+, celebrating both competition and camaraderie. The 20th edition, held in Canberra from 18–25 October 2025, lived up to its reputation as a place "where competition and fun meet" and "where friends reconnect and new friends are made." Congratulations to Bill and Keith, who continue to demonstrate the power of community sport and the spirit of lifelong participation.

BEECROFT GARDEN CLUB – 70TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms MONICA TUDEHOPE (Epping)—I ask the Parliament to join with me in congratulating the Beecroft Garden Club on their 70th anniversary. This club's story is one of people who share a love of growing things and, through that love, have helped the suburb of Beecroft itself to flourish. Over the decades, this club has seen gardens change with the times. But what makes this club special isn't just its longevity. It's the people. I would particularly like to thank and acknowledge those members that have volunteered their time to the Club in the role of President and members of the Committee. These volunteers have sustained the Club over 70 years. I would also like to thank President Robyn McShane, Gillian Parsons and Robert McShane for their organisation of the 70th Anniversary event, which allowed people to come together to remember the many Presidents that have served; excursions that were had to gardens far and wide and many historical pictures of gardens past. Attendees were also treated to a wide ranging historical presentation from friend of the Club, Graham Ross. Congratulations once again to Beecroft Garden Club on your 70th anniversary.

KATE SHERIFF

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Kate Sheriff, from Warilla High School, who was nominated for an award in her VET Hospitality subject at the 2025 Workplace Learning Awards.

Kate's accomplishment highlights her exceptional dedication to her education. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I congratulate Kate on her hard work and diligence to her studies.

MADISON HOGG

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Madison Hogg, from Warilla High School, who was nominated for an award in her VET Hospitality subject at the 2025 Workplace Learning Awards. Madison was also named as runner-up Hospitality student of the year. Madison's achievement highlights her exceptional dedication to her education. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I congratulate Madison on her hard work and diligence to her studies.

YASAR HOOSEN

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Yasar Hoosen, from Warilla High School, who was nominated for an award in his VET Business Studies at the 2025 Workplace Learning Awards. Yasar's success highlights his exceptional dedication to his learning. On behalf of the Shellharbour electorate, I congratulate Yasar on his hard work and commitment to his schooling.

SYLVANIA BOWLING CLUB 70TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate Sylvania Bowling Club on 70 remarkable years. Founded in 1955, the club began with nothing more than vision, determination and an old chicken coop that locals worked tirelessly to transform into a bowling green. Those early years weren't without challenges - resources were limited and membership was so small that inaugural president Teddy Rose famously spent a night in Sutherland jail when it was discovered there weren't enough members to legally operate the pokie machines. That moment sparked a spirited membership drive, and thanks to the passion and perseverance of its volunteers, the club grew into the thriving community hub it is today. To celebrate this milestone, the club hosted a wonderful open day on 2 November featuring market stalls, live music and entertainment for all ages. I acknowledge Sylvania Bowling Club's Executive Committee of Don Crotty, Keith Howell, Ross Robson, Reg Harris, Lyn Davis, Paul Nelson and Steven Gleeson, along with the dedicated organising committee of Krystal Smith, Bev Herbert, Robyn Mackenzie, Margaret Collins and Lee Clarke, for their efforts. I congratulate Sylvania Bowling Club on 70 proud years and wish the club many more chapters of friendship, fun and community spirit.

JOEYS JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate the newly elected executive of Joeys Junior Rugby League Football Club [JRLFC], appointed on 13 November 2025 at the Annual General Meeting. Since its founding in 1964, Joeys has played a vital role in shaping young athletes, giving local players a place to learn the game, develop life skills and grow in confidence. Today, with nearly 400 players and more than 20 teams, the club continues to thrive thanks to the tireless efforts of its volunteers, families and supporters. Joeys is more than a sporting organisation - it is a community built on spirit, resilience and connection. Through trivia nights, initiatives supporting female athletes and a strong commitment to mental health education, the club continues to foster inclusion, wellbeing and a sense of belonging. I acknowledge the 2025–2026 Executive Committee of Joel Fisher, Nicole Chick, Paul Kamper, Anthony Howard, Steve Cheetham, Grant Chick, Mark Marigliano and Peter Jamieson on their recent appointments. I also recognise the exceptionally hardworking outgoing president, Mick Evans, who led Joeys with dedication for a decade. I commend the new Executive Committee and thank them for their commitment to leading Joeys.

SIGN HEAR

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I recognise Sign Hear for becoming an Inclusive Employment Australia [IEA] program provider, an important step forward in expanding opportunities for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community which will be celebrated on 2 December. Founded in 2018 by Sharon Xabregas, Sign Hear has grown into a trusted and compassionate support service for individuals and families, ensuring they receive the workplace assistance, advocacy and opportunities they deserve. Their recent success in securing a highly competitive government tender through IEA marks a significant milestone in the organisation's journey. This new program will deliver flexible, personalised support, broaden access to essential services, enhance service quality, and provide increased wage subsidies - all aimed at strengthening employment pathways and creating more meaningful, inclusive workplaces. I commend the incredible Sign Hear team, whose passion and commitment drive this important work. I acknowledge Sharon Xabregas, Christine Wilson, Lucy McAuliffe, Samantha Randall, Gabi O'Sullivan, Rosanna Arrowsmith, Danielle Papakostas, Sally Bevan, Lisa Sothern, Mark Hooper, Ellen McCabe and Eleanor Hanlen for their dedication to supporting the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. I congratulate Sign Hear on this milestone and wish the team continued success as they work to build a more inclusive future.

CELEBRATION SING OUT

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—What an incredible experience it was attending Celebration Sing Out at Sydney Town Hall on October 26. Supported by the City of Sydney, this concert was nothing short of magnificent. The event brought together Massed Primary and Secondary Schools, Adult Choirs, a Grand Organ and a Symphony Orchestra to deliver a stunning performance of both classical and pop music. Under the expert direction of conductors Brett Weymark OAM, Mal Hewitt OAM, Warren Fisher, Jay House and the featured composer Joan Thorp, the choirs performed beautifully, showcasing the incredible talent of Sydney and NSW. The energy in the hall was contagious, and it was a privilege to witness such a powerful display of community spirit through music. What made this event even more special was its support for the Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation, raising crucial funds for music therapy at the hospital in Westmead. It was a heartwarming reminder of how the arts can make a difference in the lives of others. A big thank you to everyone involved in making this event a reality. The night was truly inspiring, and I look forward to seeing more community-driven events like this in the future!

CUMBERLAND WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE PROJECTS SUPPORTING WOMEN

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—Recently I had the pleasure of visiting Cumberland Women's Health Centre. I would like to acknowledge the CWHC's two successful projects: Employment Boost and Connected Communities. The Employment Boost project aims to create a sustainable future for women who have experienced Family and Domestic Violence [FDV]. By providing access to employment opportunities, qualification pathways and workshops to rebuild self-determination, the Centre is helping to build bright futures. The Connected Communities Project collaborates with the University of NSW's Big Anxiety Research Centre to develop a Virtual Reality [VR] experience, Space for Action, which allows survivors of domestic violence to reflect on their experience and engage in facilitated discussions about domestic violence, community attitudes, and practical actions they can take to prevent and respond to violence in their communities. Cumberland Women's Health Centre takes the time to understand community needs while creating a space for support and empowerment. I praise Abeerah, a project worker, for her dedication to Connected Communities and I commend Kiara, a health promotion worker, for her commitment to Employment Boost. I look forward to watching the success and growth of these projects and applaud the work of Cumberland Women's Health Centre.

SMALL BUSINESS FORUM

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—I would like to share with the House, the success of my Small Business Forum held at the NSW Parliament with the Parramatta Chamber of Commerce. Local businesses engaged in a Q&A with The Hon. Janelle Saffin, Minister for Small Business - a valuable opportunity to strengthen connections, find out about Service NSW's support for small businesses including discussions about bolstering Parramatta's nighttime economy and improvements to public transport. Thank you to attendees Aditya Kumar, Amanda Shell, Anne Rajan, Annie Southavong, Ash Chawla, Ash Yogachandra, Bruno Lara Alvarez, Cawley Hennings, Derrin Brown, Evelyn Gardis, George Roper, Harry Tran, Helen Aprim, Jason Sotiris, Kapil Bob Bajaj, Leon Dimino, Malik Ali, Marinda Carelsen, Martin Davison, Martin Rogers, Megha Birudavolu, Nidhi Sharma, Odette Lafourcade, Raymond Raad, Raj Raman, Roy Halabi and Sandra Bristowe. Around thirty small to medium businesses were represented across sectors including education, the arts, finance, real estate and law. Small businesses are a vital cog in Sydney's second Central Business District. Ensuring local businesses have a direct stake in driving the city's economy is one of my priorities. Special thanks to Parramatta Chamber of Commerce President, Anthony Mazza, alongside Romina Busman ensured the event ran smoothly.

LIFELINE HARBOUR TO HAWKESBURY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I acknowledge Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury Sydney on the opening of their new Crisis Centre in North Sydney. An important and compassionate addition to the support services available to our community. This centre represents a deep commitment to ensuring that every person facing distress, loneliness, or crisis has somewhere to turn, day or night. I especially recognise CEO Elizabeth Lovell and General Manager Karen Burke, whose leadership, dedication, and unwavering belief in Lifeline's mission have been instrumental in bringing this centre to life. Their work strengthens the safety net that so many rely on, ensuring that help is not only available but delivered with empathy, professionalism, and hope. The establishment of the North Sydney Crisis Centre is also a tribute to the extraordinary volunteers and staff who are the heart of Lifeline's service. I acknowledge their compassion, resilience, and tireless commitment to being there when people need it most, moments of crisis reflect the very best of community service. This new Crisis Centre, Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury Sydney continues its vital role in supporting mental health and wellbeing offering care, connection, and lifesaving support when it is needed most.

CELEBRATING INDIGENOUS BUSINESS MONTH

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Across October, Indigenous Business Month celebrates and showcases Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses by building awareness of the role of Indigenous businesses in creating jobs, preserving culture and providing economic self-determination. On 31 October, held on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, Business Sydney held the First Nations Forum, which showcased many businesses owned and led by inspirational indigenous business people, including: Kari, Supply Nation and the National Indigenous Culinary Institute. The forum highlighted the leadership of those driving positive change and building stronger partnerships between business, government and community. I acknowledge Business Sydney Executive Director Paul Nicolaou, Business NSW President Joseph Carrozzi AM, KARI CEO Casey Ralph, the KARI performers, panellists - Jason Ardler PSM, Co-Founder, Thirriwirri; Nathan Lovett - CEO, National Indigenous Culinary Institute; Adjunct Professor Wayne Quilliam, Co-Owner, Mt Yengo Wines; Auntie Margret Campbell, Dreamtime Southern X; Phillipa McDermott, Chair, Bangarra; Kate Russell, Chief Executive Officer, Supply Nation; John Bacon, General Manager Sourcing & Category, Compass Group; and Lend Lease. The forum was a powerful reminder of the importance of listening, learning and walking together towards a shared future built on respect, inclusion and opportunity.

PEPPERMINT IT WINS 2025 AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S SMALL BUSINESS CHAMPION AWARDS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I congratulate Peppermint IT on being awarded Champion for Information Technology at the 2025 Australian Women's Small Business Champion Awards. This achievement reflects the innovation, dedication, and people-focused excellence at the heart of this remarkable business. I especially acknowledge CEO Louise, whose leadership, experience and unwavering commitment to client care have shaped Peppermint IT into a trusted and community-minded organisation. Her vision is strongly supported by an exceptional team whose passion and expertise drive the company's continued success. I recognise Rachel, Laura, Felix, Maui, Eula, Breina, Mark, Isha, Kyle, Amiel, Jenn, Kim, and of course the dog Rowdy, whose combined skills span operations, marketing, data and software solutions, cloud technology, cybersecurity, account management, design, customer support, and more. Each member contributes their own strengths, creativity, and commitment, forming the backbone of Peppermint IT's service and culture. This award is not only a testament to their hard work but also to the loyalty of customers, partners, and supporters who have believed in Peppermint IT's mission. Here's to many more years of innovation, service, and meaningful impact together.
