

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| ALBURY ELECTORATE COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS .....                             | 2660             |
| ASYLUM SEEKERS CENTRE.....   | 2658             |
| AUSTRALIAN REPTILE PARK ZOO AND SNOOZE.....                                | 2659             |
| AUSTRALIAN RUGBY LEAGUE.....   | 2631             |
| BLUE MOUNTAINS ELECTORATE SPORTS PARTICIPATION.....                        | 2658             |
| BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS.....                                   | 2643             |
| BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE .....  | 2598             |
| CABRAMATTA ELECTORATE VESAK DAY CELEBRATIONS .....                         | 2660             |
| COFFS HARBOUR ELECTORATE EVENTS.....                                       | 2666             |
| COMMUNITY RECOGNITION STATEMENTS .....                                     | 2656             |
| CONNECTED COMMUNITIES PROGRAM .....  | 2662             |
| CURE BRAIN CANCER FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER .....                              | 2658             |
| DISABILITY CARE HUB.....   | 2636             |
| DISABILITY SERVICES .....  | 2668             |
| DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE.....  | 2669             |
| EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION .....  | 2632             |
| EDUCATION WEEK 2015 .....  | 2675             |
| ELECTRICITY PRICES.....  | 2637             |
| FAIRFIELD ELECTORATE RAILWAY STATION EASY ACCESS PROGRAM .....             | 2598             |
| GASFIELD FREE NORTHERN RIVERS .....  | 2660             |
| GLEN INNES QUOTA CLUB .....  | 2614             |
| GLOUCESTER AND GREAT LAKES RURAL FIRE SERVICE MEDAL RECIPIENTS .....       | 2665             |
| HANNAH WORSLEY, LIONS YOUTH OF THE YEAR .....                              | 2622             |
| HUNTER MANUFACTURING .....   | 2673             |
| INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY FOUNDATION OF ST GEORGE .....                      | 2661             |
| KIAMA STUDENT LEADERS FORUM .....  | 2674             |
| LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE.....  | 2624             |
| MACLEAN PUBLIC SCHOOL SESQUICENTENARY .....                                | 2657             |
| MAX POTENTIAL PROGRAM .....  | 2676             |
| MOORE PARK .....   | 2617             |
| NARELLAN ROTARY CLUB.....  | 2672             |
| NEED A FEED AND CARESOUTH.....   | 2666             |
| NSW JUSTICES ASSOCIATION CUMBERLAND BRANCH.....                            | 2658             |
| PETITIONS.....   | 2639             |
| PORT MACQUARIE-HASTINGS REAP FOOD RESCUE.....                              | 2660             |
| PORT OF NEWCASTLE.....   | 2626, 2628, 2670 |
| PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL FUNDRAISER .....                                  | 2667             |
| PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS .....  | 2661             |
| QUESTION TIME .....  | 2626             |
| RESIDENTIAL STRATA AND COMMUNITY SCHEMES .....                             | 2629             |
| SERBIAN FOLKLORIC FESTIVAL .....   | 2657             |
| SHAUN FARMER, NSW STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE YOUNG VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR..... | 2659             |
| SINGLE-USE LIGHTWEIGHT PLASTIC BAGS.....                                   | 2653             |
| SMALL BUSINESS.....  | 2627             |
| SMART AND SKILLED REFORMS.....   | 2663             |
| SOUTH WEST SYDNEY ACADEMY OF SPORT AWARDS .....                            | 2656             |
| STATE INSURANCE AND CARE GOVERNANCE BILL 2015.....                         | 2598, 2640       |
| SURF LIFE SAVING LOWER NORTH COAST BRANCH AWARDS .....                     | 2656             |
| SYDNEY JEWISH MUSEUM .....   | 2661             |
| SYDNEY SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE .....   | 2633             |
| TRIBUTE TO CONNOR MCLEOD .....   | 2659             |
| TRIBUTE TO DAN HUNT .....  | 2657             |
| ULLADULLA MARINE RESCUE BASE.....  | 2664             |
| VAL ANGEL AND DOREEN SCRIVEN, MUSWELLBROOK RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS.....       | 2659             |
| VISITORS .....   | 2625             |
| WARIALDA HIGH SCHOOL UNDER 16 GIRLS RUGBY UNION TEAM.....                  | 2659             |
| WASTE LESS, RECYCLE MORE INITIATIVE.....                                   | 2635             |
| WESTCONNEX.....  | 2603             |
| WORKERS COMPENSATION AMENDMENT BILL 2015 .....                             | 2598, 2640       |
| WORONORA MILITARY MEMORIAL.....  | 2657             |



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday 13 August 2015

---

**The Speaker (The Hon. Shelley Elizabeth Hancock)** took the chair at 10.00 a.m.

**The Speaker** read the Prayer and acknowledgement of country.

## WORKERS COMPENSATION AMENDMENT BILL 2015

## STATE INSURANCE AND CARE GOVERNANCE BILL 2015

Messages received from the Legislative Council returning the bills with amendments.

Consideration of Legislative Council's amendments set down as orders of the day for a later hour.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

### Notices of Motions

General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) given.

Pursuant to sessional order General Business Notices of Motions (General Notices) proceeded with.

## FAIRFIELD ELECTORATE RAILWAY STATION EASY ACCESS PROGRAM

Debate resumed from 6 August 2015.

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS** (Castle Hill—Parliamentary Secretary) [10.13 a.m.]: I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out all the words after "That" with a view to inserting instead:

"this House commends the Government for further investing \$890 million over four years in the Transport Easy Access Program, which has already delivered more than 380 projects across New South Wales, and will continue to deliver further projects to benefit commuters utilising the public transport network in the future."

**Mr Mark Coure:** Just a small amendment—a minor amendment.

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS:** It is only a minor amendment. This Government is incredibly proud of its investment in public transport and the improvements that have been made to enable easy access to stations across New South Wales—improvements that are carried out on a needs basis not a political basis. When Opposition members spoke in debate on this motion they talked down this Government's investment in their electorates. The member for Fairfield, who moved this motion, denigrated the Government for not investing in his electorate. However, any amount of research will reveal that the Labor Government allocated an abysmal amount of funding for upgrading railway stations in his electorate—an issue to which my colleague will refer later in debate. Contrast the funding of the Labor Government with the three-quarters of a billion dollars that has been invested by this Government since 2012 for easy access stations in New South Wales and the additional \$890 million that will be injected into our public transport network in the future.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance under Standing Order 76. Paragraph (1) of my motion refers to Carramar, Villawood, Canley Vale and Yennora railway stations. So far the comments of the member for Castle Hill do not relate to any aspect of the motion.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member moved an amendment to the motion and, therefore, his address to the House so far has been in relation to that amendment. Therefore, it is accepted.

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS:** If Opposition members continue to take vexatious points of order they will never be re-elected. If members of the Opposition choose to talk down their electorates and the fact that this Government has made record funding announcements for projects in their backyards, they will never be re-elected. I refer to Fairfield station and to the improvements to Canley Vale station. Earlier in debate the member for Prospect referred to his long-suffering wife who struggles to access Pendle Hill station. I have great news for the member for Prospect: This Government will be investing an additional \$890 million into the Easy Access Program to afford commuters better access to public transport.

Pendle Hill station is currently going through the design process and construction will commence before the end of this year. I also advise the member for Prospect that he could take his long-suffering wife to Wentworthville station—a three-minute walk from Pendle Hill station—as lifts have already been installed at that station and his wife would no longer have to struggle up the stairs. This Government has made massive investments into the North West Rail Link and the South West Rail Link, which will make it easier for commuters to access our public transport network. This Government believes in the value of public transport but, unfortunately, Opposition members do not.

**Mr NICK LALICH** (Cabramatta) [10.18 a.m.]: I support the motion moved by the member for Fairfield regarding the Easy Access Program for commuters at Yennora, Villawood, Carramar and, in particular, Canley Vale railway stations.

**Mr Mark Coure:** Just say you're sorry.

**Mr NICK LALICH:** I am sorry. It is important to install a lift at Canley Vale station as it services a large number of residents living in surrounding suburbs, including Cabramatta, Fairfield and Smithfield. It is a disgrace that this Government has turned a blind eye to the problems at these stations, which urgently need lifts to be installed as many people who use them have disabilities, are elderly or have mobility impairments. As nursing homes are located on either side of Canley Vale station the people who are accessing it are inevitably disabled and in need of support. It is all right for the member for Castle Hill to say that they can walk three minutes down the road but at Canley Vale station there is a 300-metre walk to the roadway that goes to one platform and another 300-metre walk to cross to the other platform. I thank the Government for the renovations to Canley Vale station that give people access to the platform from the road—that was great—but people also need to be able to cross easily over the tracks between the platforms.

The member for Castle Hill said that the Government has invested \$800 million in railway station easy access programs. We are happy that the Government is doing that throughout New South Wales, but it is not helping Canley Vale station. As I said, there are two nursing homes on either side of Canley Vale station. Those people need to be able to cross over tracks to catch their train. They could hop on the train and go to Fairfield or Cabramatta, which are the next stations in each direction, but that will take too long if they have to wait 10 minutes for a train and then change platforms using lifts at those stations. It causes problems for people, so what will they do? People who have private vehicles will not use public transport as the Government and Opposition want them to. They will say, "Blow this; I will just go into town in the car." That will cause congestion on the roads. Government members talk about easy access and encouraging people to get out of their cars and use public transport. Unfortunately, it is not working at Canley Vale. The other day the Parliamentary Secretary, the member for Drummoyne, opened the new car park at Canley Vale station. I thank him very much for doing that.

**Dr Geoff Lee:** Did you get invited?

**Mr NICK LALICH:** I was there with him. While he was at Canley Vale station he saw the two nursing homes located on either side of the station and he is now more sympathetic to the problems that are being experienced than he was when he spoke in debate last week. I again thank him for visiting my electorate the other day. We need lifts at Canley Vale station. I implore the Government to give us the money to install those lifts. We probably only need \$500,000, which is not a great deal of money. The lifts will help those poor people at the nursing home, the elderly and the disabled who need to cross from one platform to another at the railway station.

**Mr MARK COURE** (Oatley) [10.22 a.m.]: The member for Cabramatta today apologised to the House. He came clean and apologised for 16 years of Labor inaction, neglect and failure. The Labor Government should have upgraded these stations but it did not.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Point of order: My point of order is relevance under Standing Order 76.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The member for Fairfield will have an opportunity to speak in reply.

**Mr MARK COURE:** The only thing I could find in *Hansard* was former member for Fairfield Joe Tripodi allocating just \$80,000 to upgrade Carramar railway station and \$220,000 to improve bus shelters at Canley Vale station. Labor members had 16 years to upgrade local railway stations. Instead, they wasted \$500 million on the Rozelle metro.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order and cease interjecting.

**Mr MARK COURE:** That money could have been used to upgrade a lot of railway stations. Instead, all the former member could do was upgrade a couple of bus shelters and put in a bit of money to paint some railway stations. There was no plan under Labor. It neglected those areas for 16 years.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Fairfield will have an opportunity to reply.

**Mr MARK COURE:** We are getting on with the job of upgrading many railway stations, including Arncliffe, Caringbah and Como. In fact, we upgraded Fairfield station. Labor did not do it so we did it instead.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Fairfield to order for the first time.

**Mr MARK COURE:** We are upgrading stations at Glenbrook, Granville, Jannali and Kiama because for 16 years Labor failed to deliver a program to upgrade railway stations and commuter car parks across Sydney and New South Wales. The people of Oatley have wanted to upgrade Oatley railway station in my electorate for not 16 years but 20 or 30 years. We are upgrading Oatley railway station because members opposite could not do it.

**Dr Hugh McDermott:** Point of order: My point of order is relevance under Standing Order 76.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member is being relevant. There is no point of order.

**Dr Hugh McDermott:** We do not care about the electorate of the member for Oatley; we are talking about Fairfield.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Prospect will resume his seat. I call the member for Prospect to order for the first time. I call the member for Prospect to order for the second time. The member for Prospect will remove himself from the Chamber for one hour.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Prospect left the Chamber at 10.25 a.m.]*

**Mr MARK COURE:** Who is upgrading Canley Vale railway station? We are, because members opposite failed to do it for 16 years. They neglected their communities and Western Sydney. We are the true friends of Western Sydney, not members opposite. When it comes to delivering easy access programs and additional car parking the Government is getting on with the job.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order. I do not appreciate the lack of respect for each other this morning. Shouting and screaming at each other does not help anybody, let alone the communities we represent. That includes the member for Fairfield, who now has the right of reply. The same amount of discipline will be accorded to the member for Fairfield as was accorded to others.

**Mr GUY ZANGARI** (Fairfield) [10.26 a.m.], in reply: I acknowledge the contributions of the member for Drummoyne, the member for Prospect, the member for Castle Hill, the member for Cabramatta and the member for Oatley. This motion is about our community in Fairfield. It is about Carramar, Villawood, Canley Vale and Yennora railway stations. The diatribe from the member for Oatley was absurd. I draw the attention of members to the words of Premier Mike Baird on 5 August 2015, when he said:

We want to be clear that as a Government we are here to support those who need help, who are vulnerable, who are in disadvantaged positions.

It is disappointing that the Government is playing politics today. The essence of the motion calls on the Government to deliver. It does not condemn the Government. We want to work with the Government and I want to work with the Parliamentary Secretary and the Minister for Transport to deliver for my community. It is as simple as that. Members opposite cannot keep going on about the 16 years of Labor. We are the members now. What happened in the past is the old war. The Government is now in its fifth year and it has an obligation to all communities irrespective of what party they are represented by in this Chamber.

I commend Fairfield City Council for announcing that it will commit funding from its infrastructure fund to fast-track the delivery of the Easy Access Program. The council realises that the residents of the two nursing homes on either side of the station need improved access. It has yet to be mentioned in this debate that four disability services are also located about half a kilometre up the road. Rosary Village nursing home is at Yennora and many seniors also live in Carramar. I commend Fairfield City Council for telling the Government that it wants to work with it to resolve these issues. I feel the same way as the member for Fairfield. I will not condemn the Government in this motion because that will do nothing for the disadvantaged people I want to help. I want people to be able to get onto and over the platform at Canley Vale station. It is as simple as that.

The Parliamentary Secretary came to Canley Vale last week to open the new car park. In the car park there are lifts, ramps and handrails, which tells me that people with mobility difficulties were considered in its design. While we were at the station speaking with the member for Cabramatta the Parliamentary Secretary saw firsthand the difficulties experienced by parents with prams just 50 metres down the road. We simply cannot wear the information that the member for Castle Hill provided to the House today. He said that lifts have been delivered at Wentworthville train station but that has not happened. We cannot continue to listen to the Government's diatribe about 16 years of Labor Government. Guess what? We are now moving into the fifth year of Coalition Government in this State. I inform the member for Oatley that this interchange was put on the map by the former member. He either does not know that or neglected to mention it.

**Question—That the amendment be agreed to—put.**

**The House divided.**

**Ayes, 46**

|                |                 |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mr Anderson    | Mr Grant        | Mr Roberts      |
| Mr Aplin       | Mr Gulaptis     | Mr Sidoti       |
| Mr Ayres       | Mr Hazzard      | Mrs Skinner     |
| Ms Berejiklian | Mr Henskens     | Mr Speakman     |
| Mr Brookes     | Ms Hodgkinson   | Mr Stokes       |
| Mr Conolly     | Mr Humphries    | Mr Taylor       |
| Mr Coure       | Mr Johnsen      | Mr Toole        |
| Mr Crouch      | Dr Lee          | Mr Tudehope     |
| Mrs Davies     | Mr Maguire      | Ms Upton        |
| Mr Dominello   | Mr Marshall     | Mr Ward         |
| Mr Elliott     | Mr Notley-Smith | Mr Williams     |
| Mr Evans       | Mr O'Dea        | Mrs Williams    |
| Mr Fraser      | Mrs Pavey       |                 |
| Mr Gee         | Mr Perrottet    | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Mr George      | Ms Petinos      | Mr Bromhead     |
| Ms Goward      | Mr Provest      | Mr Patterson    |

**Noes, 37**

|                |             |                 |
|----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Ms Aitchison   | Mr Harris   | Mr Park         |
| Mr Atalla      | Ms Harrison | Mr Parker       |
| Mr Barr        | Ms Hay      | Mr Piper        |
| Ms Burney      | Ms Haylen   | Mr Robertson    |
| Ms Car         | Mr Hoenig   | Ms K. Smith     |
| Ms Catley      | Ms Hornery  | Ms T. F. Smith  |
| Mr Chanthivong | Mr Kamper   | Ms Washington   |
| Mr Crakanthorp | Ms Leong    | Ms Watson       |
| Mr Daley       | Mr Lynch    | Mr Zangari      |
| Mr Dib         | Ms McKay    |                 |
| Ms Doyle       | Mr Mehan    | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Ms Finn        | Ms Mihailuk | Mr Lalich       |
| Mr Greenwich   | Mr Minns    | Mr Warren       |

**Pair**

Mr Baird

Mr Foley

**Question resolved in the affirmative.****Amendment agreed to.****Question—That the motion as amended be agreed to—put.****Division called for and Standing Order 185 applied.****The House divided.****Ayes, 46**

|                |                 |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mr Anderson    | Mr Grant        | Mr Roberts      |
| Mr Aplin       | Mr Gulaptis     | Mr Sidoti       |
| Mr Ayres       | Mr Hazzard      | Mrs Skinner     |
| Ms Berejiklian | Mr Henskens     | Mr Speakman     |
| Mr Brookes     | Ms Hodgkinson   | Mr Stokes       |
| Mr Conolly     | Mr Humphries    | Mr Taylor       |
| Mr Coure       | Mr Johnsen      | Mr Toole        |
| Mr Crouch      | Dr Lee          | Mr Tudehope     |
| Mrs Davies     | Mr Maguire      | Ms Upton        |
| Mr Dominello   | Mr Marshall     | Mr Ward         |
| Mr Elliott     | Mr Notley-Smith | Mr Williams     |
| Mr Evans       | Mr O'Dea        | Mrs Williams    |
| Mr Fraser      | Mrs Pavey       |                 |
| Mr Gee         | Mr Perrottet    | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Mr George      | Ms Petinos      | Mr Bromhead     |
| Ms Goward      | Mr Provest      | Mr Patterson    |

**Noes, 37**

|                |             |                 |
|----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Ms Aitchison   | Mr Harris   | Mr Park         |
| Mr Atalla      | Ms Harrison | Mr Parker       |
| Mr Barr        | Ms Hay      | Mr Piper        |
| Ms Burney      | Ms Haylen   | Mr Robertson    |
| Ms Car         | Mr Hoenig   | Ms K. Smith     |
| Ms Catley      | Ms Hornery  | Ms T. F. Smith  |
| Mr Chanthivong | Mr Kamper   | Ms Washington   |
| Mr Crakanthorp | Ms Leong    | Ms Watson       |
| Mr Daley       | Mr Lynch    | Mr Zangari      |
| Mr Dib         | Ms McKay    |                 |
| Ms Doyle       | Mr Mehan    | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Ms Finn        | Ms Mihailuk | Mr Lalich       |
| Mr Greenwich   | Mr Minns    | Mr Warren       |

**Pair**

Mr Baird

Mr Foley

**Question resolved in the affirmative.****Motion as amended agreed to.**

**WESTCONNEX**

**Ms JENNY LEONG** (Newtown) [10.44 a.m.]: I move:

That this House calls on the Government, in the interests of good governance and financial accountability, to suspend all activity on the WestConnex project until the full business case and environmental impact statement are made public.

Right now work has already begun at the Alexandria landfill, or Dial a Dump site, with improper safety assurances being given to the community. Why unsafe work, with asbestos-riddled trucks driving through our community, is happening without an environmental impact statement is completely unclear to me. At a meeting in the electorate of Newtown on Monday night one member of the community expressed serious concern about the WestConnex project, saying basically that the project appeared to be a covert way of transferring significant amounts of public money into private hands under the guise of a road project. What else can people think when the Government refuses to release the business case or the environmental impact statement and plans?

The total budget for this project has blown out to \$15.4 billion—a \$500 million increase in the budget this year, and a 50 per cent increase since it was announced. To be clear, that is \$450 million per kilometre. To put that into perspective for our Nationals colleagues, that is double the amount promised in this budget, per kilometre, for the upgrade of country rail. The community and the public—the people whose interests we are elected to serve—are not asking for much today. They are asking to see the business case and the environmental impact statement before any planning or construction activities go ahead. It seems clear that the Minister for Planning has not yet even seen the environmental impact statement. Though the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure said the business case would be released in July—it is now August—we still have not seen that business case. The Minister has the unfortunate job—I do not envy him—of representing the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight in this place. The New South Wales Auditor-General released a report on the WestConnex project, which stated:

... the process applied to WestConnex project to provide independent assurance to Government did not meet best practice standards.

The Auditor-General went on to say that there is a fundamental conflict of interest in the way in which the WestConnex Delivery Authority is going about delivering this massive infrastructure project. Since then, neither the WestConnex Delivery Authority nor the roads Minister has taken any action to improve public faith in this project. Some \$3 billion worth of contracts have already been signed, despite the fact that no planning approval has yet been granted for the project. This Government is undermining its own gateway processes, established by Treasury, and its own planning processes, set by the Department of Planning and Environment, enabling roads Minister Duncan Gay to sign off on billion-dollar contracts while the community are left in the dark. The Government is not following its own processes. But it is not only the money that is the issue here.

*[Interruption]*

Government members laugh. But in the gallery there are people who are losing their homes, people who have had their homes acquired, and people who are suffering because of the noise of the pre-construction works that have already commenced. Communities are at risk of losing habitat and endangered species as a result of plans that are being put in place, contracts that are being decided and signed, and construction that is commencing—without a business case being released publicly and without an environmental impact statement. I am talking about families who will no longer be able to live in the St Peters area because Roads and Maritime Services is treating them appallingly; it is not offering them market value for the loss of their homes, and they will have to remove their children from local schools and live in another area. I am talking about residents in Kingsgrove who will live next to unfiltered stacks and who have not been told by the WestConnex Delivery Authority what is going on.

These are real people who are feeling the real impacts of the Government's actions. The Government arrogantly promotes its allegedly world-class, polluting motorway but it refuses to provide the public or this House with any evidence to justify the project. The Government is intent on destroying lives and communities for a reason that is unclear. It is unclear why the Government is committing \$15.4 billion to spend on a motorway when there has been no public consultation on why that is the best way to solve congestion. I would welcome the opportunity to be part of a conversation with this Government, to ask: If we spent \$15.4 billion on something to address Sydney's congestion, what would it be? Let us have that conversation. But we cannot have it because the Government will not release its business case.

In recent times road projects in Sydney and other cities have turned into financial disasters. The WestConnex Delivery Authority and Roads and Maritime Services have entered into contracts with companies



such as Parsons Brinckerhoff and AECOM that have recently settled lawsuits for allegedly reverse engineering traffic studies for the Lane Cove Tunnel and providing inadequate and incomplete traffic data for the Clem7 project in Brisbane. Our Government is signing contracts with those companies without a business case and without proper planning approval. AECOM has won contracts for the administration of the environmental impact statement process as well as contracts that will benefit from the construction of WestConnex. If that is not a conflict of interest, I do not know what is.

What do we do, when independent reports cannot justify this project, when 24-hour clearways threaten to affect residents in my area and when the Government refuses to share with the people its justification for this project? Members know my position on the WestConnex project. It is clear that there is growing community concern about this polluting tollway. This motion simply asks for two things: That all construction activity on the WestConnex project cease until the Government has released the business case and until the environmental impact statement becomes available. That is good governance. That is open and transparent government, and I call on the Government to recognise that it is the only way forward.

*[Interruption from gallery]*

**The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George):** Order! I appreciate the concern of visitors in the public gallery, but I ask for silence during the debate.

**Dr GEOFF LEE** (Parramatta—Parliamentary Secretary) [10.53 a.m.]: The Government opposes this motion, as it is unnecessary and politically motivated. As the member for Parramatta I am acutely aware of the needs of people in Western Sydney. One need only sit in the daily traffic on the M4 and Victoria Road to understand that this city is at times crippled by road congestion. This has an impact not only on the economy of our city but also on people's lifestyle. People spend hours a day stuck in traffic, whether on the bus or in their car. It is the Government's responsibility to alleviate the congestion. During the 2015 election campaign the Government went to the people with an open and transparent agenda, which was to lease poles and wires to deliver \$20 billion to invest in necessary infrastructure.

People in Western Sydney experience traffic congestion every day and they know that something has to be done. In the next 10 years an additional one million people will call Sydney home. Over the next 20 years one million more people will live west of Parramatta. If nothing is done about congestion, roads will get more crowded. There will be more people and more freight on our roads. Not only does congestion create economic problems but also it affects people's lifestyle. The time people spend in traffic could be better spent with their families. Tomorrow's Sydney needs new infrastructure—new roads, new public transport networks, new hospitals, new schools and new motorways. Tomorrow's Sydney needs a government that will invest in the future, a government that recognises the need to find real solutions to the problems of population growth and traffic congestion. Tomorrow's Sydney needs community representatives who are willing to examine on merit the projects that will provide these solutions and help their communities to consider them thoughtfully. Tomorrow's Sydney needs new train lines and new light rail services. Tomorrow's Sydney needs the WestConnex motorway.

The alternative is bleak. Does the Government put its head in the sand and hope that the traffic congestion goes away? That is not an option for this Government. This is a government that wants to get on and do things. To meet the congestion challenge, the New South Wales Government is investing more than \$60 billion in infrastructure over the next four years for tomorrow's Sydney. This infrastructure includes new public transport projects such as the Sydney Metro and new motorway links such as the M4 East and the new M5, or stages one and two of WestConnex. When stage three of WestConnex is completed, motorists will be able to continue seamlessly via the M4 to M5 link to the widened and extended M4, as well as to the future Western Harbour Tunnel. The WestConnex network will transform how Sydneysiders travel, connect and do business. WestConnex will benefit the people of Sydney and New South Wales and will work alongside the much-needed public transport infrastructure upgrades this Government is delivering to keep our city moving, as essential elements of tomorrow's Sydney.

The motion moved by The Greens lacks credibility. Whatever action the Government takes, The Greens remain opposed to WestConnex. The Greens will oppose WestConnex no matter what the business case says. The Greens will oppose WestConnex no matter what the environmental impact statement says. Theirs is a politically motivated stance. The motion is just a smokescreen. The Government will not stand by and let congestion choke Sydney. There are publicly minded people sitting in the gallery today who have an interest in this matter. I commend them for their interest. But consider the people of Western Sydney. They have difficulty

accessing the central business district. They spend hours in traffic trying to get to work. The Government will build this motorway to reduce the impact of congestion on the lives of those people. In Western Sydney 90 per cent of people have to use a car to get to work every day. Cars are a fact of life for people living in Western Sydney.

Yes, the city needs other forms of transport. Yes, the Government needs to invest in trains, light rail and ferries. WestConnex is one part of the solution. WestConnex is especially important for people in Parramatta. It starts at Parramatta. I am very proud that stage one has already commenced. The Premier and the Hon. Duncan Gay were in Parramatta recently for the start of the project. WestConnex will connect Parramatta to the airport—the international gateway. It will remove 52 sets of traffic lights, which will reduce travel time by 40 minutes. It will open up Parramatta to a new level of economic development. Businesses will be able to set up in Parramatta and still have access to that international gateway, the airport. The reduction in travel time will allow residents to spend more time with their families.

One has only to drive along the M4 to see that it ends abruptly at Concord, and in the morning and afternoon peak times it becomes a long car park. The Government has taken up the long-neglected infrastructure challenge. We have record levels of investment in public transport and road infrastructure. We are delivering a complete transport solution for the people of greater Sydney. WestConnex is an integral component of the Government's major infrastructure package to manage Sydney's population growth effectively—something we cannot ignore. WestConnex will deliver more than \$20 billion in benefits to New South Wales and will play an important role in supporting Sydney's expected population growth of 1.6 million over the next 20 years. This is one part of a record investment in infrastructure for the State. I commend the Government also for investments in NorthConnex and in other projects in Parramatta, including the light rail and the ring road around Parramatta.

**Ms JODI McKAY** (Strathfield) [11.00 a.m.]: I thank the member for Newtown for bringing this motion to the House. We support the motion. While the Opposition understands the importance of improving travel into the central business district for the people of Western Sydney, we believe the gross mismanagement of this project is at such a level that this project must be paused until the business case and the environmental impact statement are released. It is staggering that a \$15.4 billion project—the largest infrastructure project in New South Wales—is progressing without proper governance arrangements: Sound governance can determine whether a project succeeds or fails.

According to a 2013 joint University of Melbourne Business School and Caravel Group study, poor project governance causes major projects to fail. The University of Melbourne study rings alarm bells about WestConnex. The governance deficiencies with this project are at a level not seen before. In October 2013 Minister Gay announced the creation of the WestConnex Delivery Authority to "oversee the construction, financing and management" of the motorway. The following year, in August 2014, the Government created yet another organisation, the Sydney Motorway Corporation. The reason for creating a rival organisation for the same project was never explained or justified properly.

The inevitable happened: Conflict between the two competing organisations commenced and a bureaucratic turf war got underway. As the *Sydney Morning Herald* described it, the conflict was about "the Sydney Motorway Corporation asserting its right as financier to direct the way in which the WestConnex Delivery Authority planned the motorway". By the middle of this year it was common knowledge that the governance of WestConnex had become totally dysfunctional. In June an announcement was quietly placed on the WestConnex website advising:

The NSW Government has taken the opportunity to evolve the early governance model created to deliver WestConnex.

The status of the WestConnex Delivery Authority is now unclear. Does it still exist or has it been abolished? The Minister has not given a clear statement on that. The WestConnex website lists the members of the board of the Sydney Motorway Corporation and it is clear there has been a significant purge. It has been the motorway's night of the long knives, with several members of the old WestConnex Delivery Authority being unceremoniously dumped from the project. Incredibly, the casualties of this bureaucratic power play include Peter Duncan, Chief Executive of the Roads and Maritime Service, and Tim Reardon, Secretary of Transport for NSW. They were on the WestConnex Delivery Authority board, but they are not on the board of the Sydney Motorway Corporation.

This is an amazing and concerning outcome. The State's largest transport project is now proceeding without the involvement of the State's two most important and senior transport officials. Stripping the board of a

major infrastructure project of its subject matter experts is a dangerous thing to do. But this is just the latest in a long line of errors. For example, when the Office of the Auditor-General delivered its report on WestConnex in December 2014 it advised that the preliminary business case was deficient and fell well short of the standard required. This was a damning report by the Auditor-General, with red flags raised on every important governance issue.

The secrecy and lack of transparency surrounding WestConnex is cause for alarm. This is especially so, given the amount of public money involved. When WestConnex was first proposed in October 2012 it was a \$10 billion project. By the time the WestConnex Delivery Authority was created in October 2013 the cost had increased to \$11 billion and then it increased to \$11.5 billion. By early 2015 that cost had escalated to \$14.9 billion, and in the last budget another lazy \$500 million was thrown on the tab, with the cost of WestConnex now blown out to \$15.4 billion.

The detailed design plans for the M4 East were released recently and the Government has begun acquiring homes, but we have not seen the environmental impact statement or the business case. Labor believes that the Government should immediately release the full and comprehensive business case for public scrutiny and the environmental impact study for the M4 East. The Government must give a straightforward explanation of the board changes and the Government must provide detailed information on the roles of the Sydney Motorway Corporation, the WestConnex Delivery Authority—if it still exists—and other committees that are involved in the governance of this project.

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI** (Drummoyne—Parliamentary Secretary) [11.04 a.m.]: I speak against this motion and I hope my local newspaper picks up on the fact that the member for Strathfield wants the WestConnex project to stop immediately. She wants more congestion in the inner west for prolonged periods. The Government considered and endorsed the original WestConnex business case, which was developed by a team of local and international experts in 2013. A business case executive summary has been publicly available since September 2013—something that Labor and The Greens continually choose to ignore. This explains the fundamentals supporting the Government's decision to go ahead with the WestConnex project.

It is disappointing to see residents and business owners, and legitimate questions about important projects affecting their communities being sidelined by a collection of politically motivated agitators who continually push their own agendas. I am sympathetic towards property acquisitions and I know that many residents, who may be in the gallery today, would have some concerns about those acquisitions. But, unfortunately, property acquisitions are a necessary part of any modern-day infrastructure project. I know that is no consolation for the people affected, but WestConnex is no exception.

**Ms Jo Haylen:** There are plenty in my electorate. How many are in yours?

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI:** There are plenty in my electorate as well.

**Ms Jo Haylen:** There are 122 in my electorate.

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI:** There are plenty in my electorate as well. As good local members we do our best to represent our constituents and try to solve their issues. That is exactly what I have been doing on an ongoing basis. All stages of WestConnex are being designed to limit the impact on local communities and property owners. More than 50 per cent of the project will be in tunnels, with existing road reservations used as much as possible where tunnels can come to the surface. Many properties that have been acquired for the project are within longstanding road reservations—land that has been earmarked for decades for future road developments.

**Ms Jo Haylen:** Not heritage Haberfield.

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI:** No, quite a few property acquisitions took place many years ago in the Haberfield area.

**Ms Jo Haylen:** On Wattle Street?

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI:** I know a bit more about this than the member for Summer Hill because I have been around a bit longer than she has. However, as detailed intersections and alignment designs are finalised, some properties are required in areas that may not have been expected to be included earlier in the planning. Similarly, some properties previously flagged for acquisition are now not required for the project. I understand people's frustration.

**The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George):** Order! The member for Newtown will have her opportunity to speak in reply.

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI:** Their frustration is perfectly legitimate. But to deliver the best project for the people of New South Wales, the most cost-effective project with the best design, things will change—it is a fact of life. I understand people's legitimate concerns and I have been dealing with quite a few of them in my electorate, particularly in the Concord area. For example, one of my constituents had an operation and, through no fault of his, ended up in a wheelchair. His house has been totally adapted for him but he now has to move because his property is part of the acquisition process. We are doing our best as local members to deal with these issues and I am glad that the WestConnex Delivery Authority has sympathetically dealt with many of them. In the case of my constituent, it is terrible that he has to move away from his networks and the hospital, but the WestConnex Delivery Authority is trying to relocate him near to where he currently lives. [*Time expired.*]

**Mr JAMIE PARKER** (Balmain) [11.08 a.m.]: This motion is *deja vu* to me because during my time as a councillor on Leichhardt Municipal Council from 1999 to 2011 we fought tooth and nail against Labor's proposal for the M4 East, a proposal that Labor still supports today. When in government Anthony Albanese allocated billions of dollars to WestConnex and the M4 East proposal. We know that Federal Labor supported WestConnex through Minister Albanese and consequent infrastructure. This WestConnex project is getting the Government into a lot of trouble because of huge internal turmoil regarding the administration of the project. The financial modelling for stage three is not stacking up and the Government is unable to justify its key claim that it will reduce traffic.

I ask the Government to demonstrate to the community that the proposal will reduce traffic. The Government should release the business case and environmental impact statement so that a determination can be made. This is about the power of the infrastructure and finance industry peddling the myth that more capacity does not induce more demand. We know that the academic literature around the world demonstrates clearly that if more capacity is created to make it easier for people to drive faster, more people will drive and when more people drive the result is more traffic. Therefore, any increase in capacity is reduced over time. In this case it is even more important because both Labor and the Coalition parties support reintroducing tolls on the M4.

We have seen the modelling—the only modelling that is publicly available, which is the SGS report from the City of Sydney—which demonstrates that reintroducing tolls on the M4 will induce more traffic onto Parramatta Road and more rat running. The report demonstrates that the proposal will not deliver the long-term traffic solution that is claimed. If that is true, let us see and interrogate the modelling. Any developer who submits a plan to local government or State Government must provide a traffic model showing the impact of that plan. We cannot get that plan for the biggest infrastructure project in the State's history. The developer will not deliver the modelling because it knows the justification for the plan simply is not there. If it were, it would be the first to release that business case and to say, "See, the evidence is clear."

What is not being said is that the project is also about fleecing the people of Western Sydney; it is about reintroducing tolls on the M4, imposing \$10 to \$20 return fares on the people of Western Sydney. It does not give them independence; it locks them into dependence on cars and the fossil fuel industry because we are not providing world-class public transport that every cent of the money for this project should be invested in. We know that the Government is in trouble, but we are disappointed by Labor's position. Before the election Labor announced that it would not only build WestConnex and the M4 widening project from Parramatta Road to Homebush but also extend WestConnex through to the city. It also planned to duplicate the M5 East.

That is a major problem because Labor's position at the moment is, "Well, the management is bad; we should pause it." We need to go to the heart of the evidence. The demonstrable fact is that building more capacity induces more demand. If we do not address the facts we will continually be building roads to nowhere and building bigger roads that simply fill up over time. We must provide the right solutions for these communities. Labor said that if it had won government it would not have cancelled compulsory acquisitions, it would have paused them. We are disappointed that both major parties want to proceed with the M4 widening with no public scrutiny, no transparency and no detailed business case. Both parties support the expansion of the M4 and the M5, and that should be opposed. [*Time expired.*]

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS** (Castle Hill—Parliamentary Secretary) [11.12 a.m.]: I advise the House that I will amend the motion. Therefore, I move:

That the motion be amended by omitting all words after "That" with a view to inserting instead:

"this House commends the New South Wales Government for investing more than \$60 billion in infrastructure, including the WestConnex project, which will widen and extend the M4 and M5, ease traffic congestion, create jobs and connect the communities of Western Sydney."

**Ms Jenny Leong:** And who is playing political tactics with people's lives?

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS:** I advise the member that she has had the opportunity to speak. I gave her the courtesy of listening to her in silence. I ask that she extends the same courtesy to me. First, I commend the member for Newtown for bringing the motion to the House and for supporting her community. I would expect nothing less. In the past I have advocated on behalf of my community on the acquisition of property for large-scale projects such as the upgrade of Windsor Road and the North West Rail Link, which runs through my electorate, as well as the upgrade of NorthConnex, another large-scale tunnelling project. These projects provide challenges for all communities. Nobody denies that the member has a right to be heard, as do all residents in New South Wales; on that point we certainly agree.

To deny the fact that we need motorways across the Sydney metropolitan area is to deny the fact that 80 per cent of our travelling and commuting public rely on their motor vehicles to get to and from work each day and that at the very best we can only ever hope to encourage 20 per cent of the population to utilise public transport. However, in saying that, the Government has also invested heavily in public transport. We are seeing unprecedented levels of traffic congestion across the Sydney metropolitan area. If the Labor Government had stuck to one of its dozens of rail project promises, whether it was the North West Rail Link, the South West Rail Link or the inner city metro, we would not have this massive traffic congestion and ultimately the pollution from vehicles that utilise our motorways. If the member for Strathfield were to doorknock her community today I can guarantee she would find overwhelming support for removing the massive amount of traffic from Pennant Hills Road via a tunnel to allow that particular strip—

**Ms Jodie Harrison:** You mean Parramatta Road; nothing to do with Pennant Hills Road.

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS:** From Parramatta Road to allow that particular strip to be redeveloped to bring those communities together and through high-density apartments and appropriate urban development provide people with the opportunity to have a better quality of life, to have the inner-city lifestyle they seek without being subject to the massive amounts of traffic congestion that currently inhabits Parramatta Road. There is always conjecture about any large-scale government project and there will be challenges ahead. I certainly hope that we can work together for the betterment of all communities.

**Ms JO HAYLEN** (Summer Hill) [11.16 a.m.], by leave: I speak against the amendment and in favour of the motion moved by the member for Newtown. I thank her for bringing forward this important debate for our Sydney community. It is time to get real and expose WestConnex for what it is. It is an attempt by this Government to ram its obsession with big cars and private enterprise onto an unsuspecting Sydney. When I speak with residents across my electorate they raise the many issues they and their families face. They speak about our housing affordability crisis, with young people worried they will never own their own home. They speak about our overcrowded schools, the importance of protecting jobs and of doing better to promote equality and fairness. They speak about our congested streets, about air pollution and the need to act on climate change. They share their vision about the kind of city they want to live in, a diverse and sustainable Sydney, a truly global city in every way—a city supported by a comprehensive public transport system and active transport corridors, peppered with green, open space.

Instead of building towards this city of the future, they are being let down by a Government stuck in the past. At the heart of WestConnex is a complex problem: How can we support the many millions of people who live in Western Sydney to gain access to the city? How do we get freight to the port? How do we get better access to Kingsford Smith airport? At its heart, this is an equity problem; a problem of fairness. Why should the people of Western Sydney spend hours stuck in traffic trying to get to and from work each day when they should have that precious time with their kids and families.

But despite what this Government thinks, a complex problem cannot be solved with a simple answer. And that is what it is very quickly discovering. Its simple answer is unworkable, unwieldy and unwise. From the very beginning, the WestConnex process has been shambolic. Property owners were issued acquisition notices, then told their properties would not be acquired, and then told that they would be acquired after all. The tunnel was to run under Parramatta Road, spurring a revitalisation of the entire corridor, but then it was not; instead it was to run under thousands of homes in Croydon and Burwood. More than 180 properties—122 of which are in my electorate—are being acquired, many of them stunning Federation-era homes in Haberfield, the world's first garden suburb.

A proposed private hospital was served an acquisition notice, two weeks before being granted approval by the Department of Health. One hand of government does not know what the other is doing. Home and

business owners, after months of being in the dark, are now being offered valuations that are hundreds of thousands of dollars below market value, meaning they will never be able to live in their communities again. For this Government, this project is just chaos and confusion. If the Government wants to prove to the people of Sydney that this road will work it is time to give the people of New South Wales some straight talk. It is time to release the business case. It is time to release the environmental impact statement. It is time to release the traffic modelling and the cost-benefit analysis.

The Government says WestConnex will relieve congestion. Independent modelling says it will not. The Government says it will reduce pollution—gently dispersing pollutants into the air like a weak shandy—but that claim is not backed by health professionals. The Government says it will make money, it will build the third stage by using toll proceeds, but there is no public financial data to support its claims. Let us be honest, that is why the Government has signed contracts without an environmental impact statement: It knows what it will say. That is why it is moving ahead without planning approval and without releasing a business case: It knows what it will say. WestConnex is a sham; it will not work. There is a better way.

We can think about people and the kind of city we want to pass on to our kids. We can think big and build a world-class public transport network that links our city both east to west, and north to south. We can start locally. Let us connect the dots of our cycling networks and walking paths. We can build that vision of a sustainable Sydney by encouraging people out of cars and making public transport a more affordable, effective option. I reiterate that I am categorically opposed to this road. I have opposed it from the very beginning. I stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Haberfield and Ashfield, and across the inner west. We can solve Sydney's congestion and transport, but WestConnex is not the answer.

*[Interruption from gallery]*

**The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George):** Order! I acknowledge that this is an emotive issue for those in the gallery; but I ask that they listen to the debate in silence. Interruptions from visitors in the gallery are disorderly.

**Mr MARK COURE** (Oatley) [11.21 a.m.], by leave: It is quite clear that Labor is split in relation to fixing the M5 and M4 and getting on with the job of alleviating congestion throughout Sydney that WestConnex will fix. This is an historic occasion, with a \$15.4 billion 33-kilometre project over the next 10 years that will bypass 52 sets of lights, create 10,000 jobs and, more importantly, widen the M5 East once and for all. My constituents have complained that the M5 East was at capacity at almost every time of the day as soon as it was built. This Government is getting on with the job of continuing what it had done already with the M5 West.

I note the member for East Hills is in the Chamber and he, like me, championed the widening of the M5 West. Now the M5 East will also be widened, which will enable people to get home a lot sooner. This Government will spend \$1.8 million from Restart NSW and the Federal Government has committed \$1.5 billion, from memory, to see WestConnex started once and for all. Only recently, together with the Prime Minister, the Premier, the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, members of Federal Parliament, the member for East Hills and Infrastructure—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Commiserations.

**Mr MARK COURE:** I did not interject when the member for Strathfield spoke. I saw construction at the King Georges Road interchange upgrade, which commenced 18 months ahead of schedule courtesy of the Federal Government and this Government. This \$130 million project will fix one of the city's worst bottlenecks. More than 40,000 Sydney motorists will have their travel times slashed. This vital project is part of WestConnex stage two. Nearly half of the 100,000 motorists who use the M5 East each day get stuck at the King Georges Road interchange. On behalf of my community who use the M5 East I put on record my appreciation for this project.

I use the M5 East to get to and from Parliament when I drive; I used the train yesterday. On behalf of all communities around the M5 I congratulate the Minister for Roads and the WestConnex Delivery Authority on their great work and for getting on with the job of fixing the bottleneck once and for all. This huge bottleneck causes congestion at the interchange on King Georges Road, WestConnex and throughout the tunnel, and it is being widened. We are getting on with the job to ensure that people get to work and home a lot more quickly. It is all about breaking congestion. This Government takes WestConnex seriously. It is an historic project that we take seriously while Labor is opposed to it.

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH** (Sydney) [11.25 a.m.], by leave: I move:

That the motion be amended by omitting all words after "this" with a view to inserting instead:

"House:

- (1) Notes the importance of scrutinising the WestConnex project.
- (2) Calls on the Government to stop activity on the project until the business case and environmental impact statement has been made available for public scrutiny.

The WestConnex project is Australia's biggest urban road project. It will widen and extend the M4 Western Motorway, create a new section for the M5 South-Western Motorway, and connect the two with a new central business district bypass. The project will cost \$15 billion, but many expect blowouts to increase the cost to \$20 billion. I support the original motion moved by the member for Newtown because at this time of escalating climate change, growing traffic congestion, eroding air quality and increasing obesity rates, when other countries are transferring their focus from new roads to public and active transport, a full business case and environmental impact statement process must determine whether WestConnex is in the public interest before it proceeds. The massive cost diverts much-needed funds from much-needed public transport projects that could transform Sydney's sustainability and liveability into the future.

We have not seen a business case for the project, and documents and justifications are not publicly available. Contracts are being signed even though an environmental impact statement process has not been commenced. What we do know is that houses will be demolished and much-needed open space will be lost. Last year the City of Sydney commissioned an independent review of the project by SGS Economics and Planning, which concluded that WestConnex will not achieve its stated objectives and will create serious impacts for inner Sydney. The majority of Western Sydney residents use public transport to get to jobs in the central business district, and this is the preference for increasing numbers of Sydneysiders.

WestConnex will be a costly way to travel with tolls costing approximately \$20 a day and the cost of parking once reaching the city up to \$240 a week. That excludes the costs associated with petrol and car maintenance. Nobody wants car dependency. Western Sydney residents would be better off with faster, less crowded and more reliable public transport. Plans for a 24-hour airport at Badgerys Creek will reduce freight load at Sydney Airport and reduce the need for freight links between the west and the airport.

The argument that WestConnex will provide an opportunity to renew Parramatta Road is now redundant, given that the recent route changes involve a portal at Camperdown that will channel large volumes of traffic onto Parramatta Road near the University of Sydney. New vehicles will be spewed into many inner city suburbs, including an additional 10,000 in the central business district where existing traffic levels already create congestion and where historic streets are not designed to accommodate large volumes. The central business district will become unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. Amenity will be eroded and Sydney's global competitiveness will be put at risk.

The overwhelming evidence shows that more roads encourage more traffic; roads are not the solution to congestion. The project must be reconsidered. Public transport and active transport should be the transport focus. The community has not been provided with information to properly assess the project. In addition, the Auditor-General has criticised the business case and raised concerns about conflicts of interest and lack of information to assess the project's economic viability. It is not too late. I commend the motion of the member for Newtown and join calls for activity to cease, information to be released and a real opportunity for public consultation to be provided. I commend the amendment to the amendment to the House.

**The DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr Thomas George):** Order! I rule the amendment of the member of Sydney to the amendment of the member for Castle Hill to the motion out of order because it is in virtually the same terms as the original motion.

**Mr JIHAD DIB** (Lakemba) [11.29 a.m.], by leave: I support the original motion and do not support the amendment. I do not want my words to be twisted, so let me make it clear that this motion is not about denying the need to ease traffic congestion across the metropolitan area. It is about seeking an immediate release of the business case and the environmental impact statement for scrutiny so that a fair, independent and accurate determination can be made. On 6 June I attended a meeting of more than 150 members of the Beverly Hills residential community who were deeply concerned about the impacts of the WestConnex project. The members

had varying degrees of support for the project but the overriding concern was the way in which some residents were being treated by the WestConnex Delivery Authority and government agencies. Some described the agency as arrogantly dismissive.

Many pieces of legislation govern the Government Information (Public Access) Act. The object of the Act is to "maintain and advance a system of responsible and representative democratic government that is open, accountable, fair and effective" by "encouraging the proactive public release of government information by agencies, and giving members of the public an enforceable right to access government information." The Act further provides that access is only to be restricted "when there is an overriding public interest against disclosure". Is there an overriding public interest against disclosure in this case? If there is we have something to worry about. If there is not the Government should release the business case as soon as possible.

The people of Sydney, particularly those in communities directly impacted by broader WestConnex projects, deserve proper and genuine consultation and, wherever possible, accommodation of their mostly very reasonable requests. The issues they have include things such as the need for substantial noise walls to be installed at positions that allow landscaping that reduces the visual impact; recognition of the impact of "rat runners" requiring some speed-restricting measures to be implemented on local streets; the need for maximum use of high-quality landscaping; and the need for installation of community facilities in the many spaces along the M5 Linear Park, including playground equipment, circuit exercise equipment, picnic and barbecue facilities.

Those requests do not prevent the M5 upgrade development but seek to enhance the local community as a display of goodwill between residents who will be significantly inconvenienced and the WestConnex Delivery Authority. In recent days the same community has asked me to ensure that the business case and the complete environmental impact statement are released and that construction ceases until the public and independent experts have an opportunity to review those documents. That will alleviate concerns that the project has something to hide. The WestConnex website talks about construction on the M5-King Georges Road Interchange Upgrade being "fast-tracked by up to 18 months". What pressure is that fast-tracking putting on various agencies to cut corners, accept overly generous assumptions in reports and work-to-rule when it comes to meeting the bare minimum of consultation requirements?

My broader concern is about the sheer lack of integrated long-term thinking. Many of our constituents have very real concerns about air quality as large motorways absorb more and more traffic. Who is focused on cleaning up the fleet of cars, trucks and buses on those motorways? Who is driving industry to design to cleaner standards? We know that a quarter of Sydney's bus fleet is more than 12 years old—well past its use-by date and in clear breach of the Government's decommissioning rules. How can a project commence and continue without a business case? Where is the planning? I trust this is not an ad hoc situation. I call on the Minister to use his discretion to ensure that the consultation process is genuine and extended, to take all steps to ensure maximum transparency and to release the business case and environmental impact statements for the full set of WestConnex projects as soon as possible.

**Mr RON HOENIG** (Heffron) [11.33 a.m.], by leave: I support the motion moved by the member for Newtown, which simply asks for a proper planning process to apply to the WestConnex project. I move:

That the amendment be amended by leaving out all words after "this" with a view to inserting instead:

"House calls on the Government to immediately release all planning and strategy documents to the community relating to WestConnex."

My views on WestConnex are well known. Since its announcement in 2012 I have spoken about the project repeatedly in this House and in published material. The matter that has caused me and my electorate the greatest difficulty relates to the St Peters Interchange because it will have a catastrophic effect on not only my electorate but also other electorates such as Coogee. I thank the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, the Hon. Duncan Gay, who is always prepared to listen to my views on the consequences of the project. As I pointed out to the Minister several months ago, it is not a disaster that will come from the St Peters Interchange but a catastrophe.

The large volume of vehicles travelling east in particular will filter through to all eastern parts of inner Sydney. Some 50,000 vehicles will filter through into Mascot, East Lakes, Kensington, Kingsford, the University of New South Wales, Erskineville and Alexandria. As I said to the Minister, neither he nor any government will be able to solve the catastrophic gridlock that will unfold. There is no space to build more roads to move that traffic after he has created the catastrophe. Every time I see the Minister he is with bankers



and businesspeople from the WestConnex Delivery Authority. I have asked the Minister to direct Roads and Maritime Services to undertake some traffic modelling, because I am sure what I am saying is right. I want government traffic engineers to look at the proposal.

The other issue I will raise relates to the location of the proposed St Peters Interchange. People have been racing around my electorate saying that asbestos has been illegally removed. The member for Newtown has said the same thing in this House. A cursory inquiry indicates that the Environment Protection Authority issued clean-up notices to the proprietors of the Alexandria tip in 2011 to 2014 to remove contaminated material. There has been WorkCover supervision and the removal of asbestos and other material has been occurring for the past four years. I want that insidious substance removed from my electorate. This has been occurring for four years and it will continue to occur.

I have asked a question about the current licensing regime. The approvals occurred with WorkCover supervision. People living near that site are panicking, and for very good reason. People are living in fear because of the disastrous conduct of those who have been protesting about this issue. It is one thing to protest about an issue generally because it is of concern; it is another to disgracefully instil fear in people about their health simply to advance a particular view about this project.

**Ms JENNY LEONG** (Newtown) [11.37 a.m.], in reply: I acknowledge and thank for their contribution to this debate those members representing the electorates of Parramatta, Strathfield, Drummoyne, Balmain, Castle Hill, Summer Hill, Oatley, Lakemba, Heffron and Sydney. I particularly thank those on this side of the House for the collaboration and connection they have shown in wanting to support good governance and transparency even though it is clear that they may not agree on all aspects. The Premier said in this place that, "The 33 kilometres of WestConnex will make an incredible difference to people's lives." He said it will bypass 52 sets of traffic lights, take 3,000 trucks a day off Parramatta Road, deliver a 40-minute saving in travel times and deliver an overall \$20 billion benefit to the New South Wales economy. It is impossible for us to verify whether any of these claims are true because the Premier and this Government will not share any of the information or documents that allegedly support these claims.

If we are talking about investing \$15.4 billion of public money into addressing Sydney's congestion problems we should be asking: What is the best solution? Allowing an exploration of world-class public transport options to be put up in comparison to an open and transparent business case, with all the analysis and modelling, for WestConnex would be something we would expect from a Government that believes this is the answer. If it is the answer, what is there to hide? I have two specific examples from publicly available government information which point to why we have serious concerns. The first might interest the member for Parramatta, who talked about the travel times of constituents in his electorate.

Without WestConnex, travelling from Parramatta to the central business district will take approximately 64 minutes. With WestConnex, it will take 44 minutes. But he did not mention, and neither does the WestConnex Delivery Authority, that by train it currently takes 17 minutes. Similarly, travelling from Parramatta to the airport takes 40 minutes by train. By car with WestConnex it will take 66 minutes. I am sure that all those tradespeople and other people who need to use the roads would love it if the member for Parramatta would encourage those who can catch the train to get off the roads so that those who need to use the roads are freed from congestion and those who live in his area are provided with efficient and effective public transport. This does not even factor in the tolls and what it will cost people across the 33-kilometre route.

What about the long-term benefits? The New South Wales Government Department of Planning environmental overview report on WestConnex M4 widening from 2014 said that, by the Government's own measures, Sydney's road speeds will fall from 34 kilometres today to 28 kilometres an hour as a result of WestConnex being built. These are just two examples of why we have serious concerns about this project going ahead without the proper business case, without the traffic modelling and without the environmental impact statements.

If the business case and environmental impact statements stack up the Government should show them to us to strengthen its argument. If those are not yet finished the Government should stop signing contracts, acquiring people's homes and undertaking construction before those clear and important governance and planning processes have been put in place. Today we have talked about WestConnex in this House. We have called for good governance. I hope the Government will join us and support this motion in the interests of transparency. [*Time expired.*]

**Question—That the amendment of the member for Heffron to the amendment of the member for Castle Hill be agreed to—put.**

**The House divided.**

**Ayes, 38**

|                |              |                 |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Ms Aitchison   | Mr Harris    | Mr Minns        |
| Mr Atalla      | Ms Harrison  | Mr Park         |
| Mr Barr        | Ms Hay       | Mr Parker       |
| Ms Burney      | Ms Haylen    | Mr Piper        |
| Ms Car         | Mr Hoenig    | Mr Robertson    |
| Ms Catley      | Ms Hornery   | Ms K. Smith     |
| Mr Chanthivong | Mr Kamper    | Ms T. F. Smith  |
| Mr Crakanthorp | Ms Leong     | Ms Washington   |
| Mr Daley       | Mr Lynch     | Ms Watson       |
| Mr Dib         | Dr McDermott | Mr Zangari      |
| Ms Doyle       | Ms McKay     | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Ms Finn        | Mr Mehan     | Mr Lalich       |
| Mr Greenwich   | Ms Mihailuk  | Mr Warren       |

**Noes, 46**

|                |                 |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mr Anderson    | Ms Gibbons      | Mr Provest      |
| Mr Aplin       | Ms Goward       | Mr Sidoti       |
| Mr Ayres       | Mr Gulaptis     | Mrs Skinner     |
| Mr Barilaro    | Mr Hazzard      | Mr Speakman     |
| Ms Berejiklian | Mr Henskens     | Mr Stokes       |
| Mr Brookes     | Ms Hodgkinson   | Mr Taylor       |
| Mr Conolly     | Mr Humphries    | Mr Toole        |
| Mr Constance   | Mr Johnsen      | Mr Tudehope     |
| Mr Coure       | Dr Lee          | Ms Upton        |
| Mr Crouch      | Mr Maguire      | Mr Ward         |
| Mrs Davies     | Mr Marshall     | Mr Williams     |
| Mr Dominello   | Mr Notley-Smith | Mrs Williams    |
| Mr Elliott     | Mr O'Dea        | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Mr Evans       | Mrs Pavey       | Mr Bromhead     |
| Mr Gee         | Mr Perrottet    | Mr Patterson    |
| Mr George      | Ms Petinos      |                 |

**Pair**

Mr Foley

Mr Baird

**Question resolved in the negative.**

**Amendment of the member for Heffron to the amendment of the member for Castle Hill negatived.**

**Question—That the amendment of the member for Castle Hill be agreed to—put.**

**Division called for and Standing Order 185 applied.**

**The House divided.**

**Ayes, 46**

|                |                 |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mr Anderson    | Ms Gibbons      | Mr Provest      |
| Mr Aplin       | Ms Goward       | Mr Sidoti       |
| Mr Ayres       | Mr Gulaptis     | Mrs Skinner     |
| Mr Barilaro    | Mr Hazzard      | Mr Speakman     |
| Ms Berejiklian | Mr Henskens     | Mr Stokes       |
| Mr Brookes     | Ms Hodgkinson   | Mr Taylor       |
| Mr Conolly     | Mr Humphries    | Mr Toole        |
| Mr Constance   | Mr Johnsen      | Mr Tudehope     |
| Mr Coure       | Dr Lee          | Ms Upton        |
| Mr Crouch      | Mr Maguire      | Mr Ward         |
| Mrs Davies     | Mr Marshall     | Mr Williams     |
| Mr Dominello   | Mr Notley-Smith | Mrs Williams    |
| Mr Elliott     | Mr O'Dea        |                 |
| Mr Evans       | Mrs Pavey       | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Mr Gee         | Mr Perrottet    | Mr Bromhead     |
| Mr George      | Ms Petinos      | Mr Patterson    |

**Noes, 38**

|                |              |                 |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Ms Aitchison   | Mr Harris    | Mr Minns        |
| Mr Atalla      | Ms Harrison  | Mr Park         |
| Mr Barr        | Ms Hay       | Mr Parker       |
| Ms Burney      | Ms Haylen    | Mr Piper        |
| Ms Car         | Mr Hoenig    | Mr Robertson    |
| Ms Catley      | Ms Hornery   | Ms K. Smith     |
| Mr Chanthivong | Mr Kamper    | Ms T. F. Smith  |
| Mr Crakanthorp | Ms Leong     | Ms Washington   |
| Mr Daley       | Mr Lynch     | Ms Watson       |
| Mr Dib         | Dr McDermott | Mr Zangari      |
| Ms Doyle       | Ms McKay     | <i>Tellers,</i> |
| Ms Finn        | Mr Mehan     | Mr Lalich       |
| Mr Greenwich   | Ms Mihailuk  | Mr Warren       |

**Pair**

Mr Baird

Mr Foley

**Question resolved in the affirmative.****Amendment of the member for Castle Hill agreed to.****Question—That the motion as amended be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.****Motion as amended agreed to.****GLEN INNES QUOTA CLUB****Mr ADAM MARSHALL** (Northern Tablelands) [11.54 a.m.]: I move:

That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Glen Innes Quota Club and its members on the occasion of its sixtieth anniversary.
- (2) Notes that the club will celebrate this milestone at its conference on 16 May 2015.
- (3) Further notes that Quota International, founded in 1919, is a non-profit international service organisation of people of diversified occupations dedicated to a common cause serving those in need of help.
- (4) Acknowledges the efforts of all current and past members of the Glen Innes Quota Club who have given so much of their time to make a huge difference to those in need.

The objects of Quota International are very important, and for that reason I will read them out for the benefit of the House: They are:

To seek individuals committed to sharing their time, talent, and resources to meet Quota International's service goals, and more particularly:

- To serve country and community;
- To promote high ethical standards;
- To emphasize the dignity of all useful occupations;
- To develop good fellowship and friendship; and
- To advance the ideals of righteousness, justice, international understanding, and good will.

After witnessing the tone of the last debate, I think those are ideals and goals that everyone in this place should have and adhere to. The Glen Innes Quota Club has just celebrated its sixtieth year in operation—a significant milestone, but not a surprising one, given the great community that Glen Innes is. It is a very giving community, a service orientated community, and a community with incredible spirit, incredible pragmatism and a deep desire to do good. Indeed, of all the communities surveyed in New South Wales a few years ago, the rate of volunteerism in Glen Innes was the highest in the State. More than 60 per cent of Glen Innes residents are involved in one or more volunteer organisations serving their community. That is an incredible statistic, and it is one of the reasons that the Quota Club and other service clubs in Glen Innes have stood the test of time. They have not only been around for 60 years but also are as vibrant, as large and as giving to the community as they ever have been.

I want to acknowledge Quota Glen Innes president Jan Miller, her vice-president Eileen Halloran, and immediate past president Kerrie Sturtridge, as well as a number of members of the club, including Judi Toms, who have all made a significant contribution over many years to the club and to the community. All of those whose names I have just read out are involved not just in Quota; their names are to be seen on the executive and on the membership lists of a number of other very worthy organisations throughout the community. I had great pleasure in joining Glen Innes Quota members, as well as more than 120 Quotarians from right across region 11, held in Glen Innes on 16 May, for the inaugural region 11 conference and a special sixtieth anniversary celebration for the Glen Innes chapter. This three-day event in May attracted members from across the 20 clubs in the region; and, despite the chilly weather, the visitors were given a typical Glen Innes warm welcome.

**Mr Geoff Provest:** Snow and sleet.

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL:** I acknowledge the interjection by the member for Tweed, but there was no snow and sleet that weekend. It was cold, but the visitors were welcomed very warmly in the opulent Glen Innes and District Services Club. I make special mention of Pat and the team at the Glen Innes and District Services Club. They did a brilliant job hosting the visitors over the three days. Glen Innes Quota has assisted many organisations in the Glen Innes community over the years. It has supported the Glen Innes Hospital Auxiliary in its quest to have a helipad built at the Glen Innes District Hospital—which the community and I fully support. Quota supports the Glen Innes Severn Council Australia Day celebrations. Many Quota members assist in the Australia Day competitions and organise luncheons and celebratory events on the day. The club supports the Salvation Army's Caravan of Hope. The hardworking members of Glen Innes Quota donated \$1,400 to the Caravan of Hope.

It was not only Glen Innes Quota members who celebrated the club's 60 years. They were joined by people from across Quota region 11, from Tweed Heads, Forster-Tuncurry, Walcha, Quirindi and Taree. The guest speakers at the conference included Deaf Camp coordinators John O'Shaunnessy and Mark Thurston, as well as itinerant teacher Jock Robinson, and Merron McEvoy, who spoke about life and change. I also pay tribute to the President of Quota International, Karen Murphy, who hails from Queensland—but we will not hold that against her—the international vice-president, Emilie Simon, from Manilla, a proud community in the electorate of Tamworth; and the South Pacific liaison officer, Beris Prichard. It was great to catch up with all three of them to welcome them to the region 11 conference at Glen Innes hosted by the wonderful Northern Tablelands community. Any organisation that achieves 60 years is worthy of recognition in this House. I congratulate Glen Innes Quota and I commend the motion to the House.

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST** (Tweed) [12.01 p.m.]: I take great pleasure in supporting my colleague from the Northern Tablelands in recognising the great Glen Innes Quota club. Sixty years of achievement is no small

feat. Jan Miller is the club president and does an excellent job. Quota International was founded in 1919. It is a non-profit international service organisation for people of diverse occupations who are dedicated to a common cause: to serve those in need of help. It is a group of friends who volunteer their time to create projects that have an impact on communities around the world. The idea for Quota International was sparked when Wanda Frey Joiner attended a Christmas ladies' night party hosted by a club in Buffalo, New York. On 6 February 1919 she and four other businesspeople founded Quota International. It has grown from there.

Quota's motto "We share" empowers members to develop friendships, encourage others and promote international understanding. Sometimes we could use a little of that in this House. Quota members around the world provide educational opportunities to women in traditional and non-traditional ways. At the core of Quota International's mission are areas of focus that represent the needs of the communities in which it operates. The work of Quota members focuses on advocating to empower women, to ensure child development, to fund resources for the deaf, to inspire future leaders and to deliver services in 264 communities around the world.

Glen Innes Quota is a tremendous club. Any organisation that continues for more than 60 years deserves congratulations. Imagine the number of organisations, charities and individuals the club has helped. I am fortunate that there is a Quota club in the great electorate of Tweed. It is in Quota region 11 and the club president is Janet Ahrens. In 2006 the club held an international event. I have been called on a number of times to address the club and delegates from elsewhere in New South Wales and Queensland. The club is very active in my local community. It focuses on empowering women in education, to allow women to access courses that will improve life for them and those around them.

One of Quota's five objects is to fund resources for the deaf. The club invests in resource centres for the deaf and hard of hearing, with the aim of creating equal opportunity for all. Deaf people live in all electorates. With the support provided by clubs such as Quota, they can enjoy a full life and participate in the wider community. Quota also focuses on child development. Children whose fundamental needs are met are more likely to stay and succeed at school. My local Quota club, like the great club in Glen Innes, assists young people in various ways. The club provides breakfast to children. When parents have busy lives their children often go to school without breakfast. Studies show that having breakfast improves a child's learning capability. Quota members are thoroughly committed to assisting children by providing them with breakfast.

I praise the member for Northern Tablelands. He is a great advocate for his area on both major and minor issues. What impresses me most about the member for Northern Tablelands is his firsthand knowledge of the many service clubs and organisations in his electorate. Recently the member was limping around the building. When I inquired about the cause of his limp, the member told me that he had walked more than 60 kilometres in one day to support local organisations to raise money for homeless people. That is a fine achievement. No wonder the member was limping. I have also heard that the member for Northern Tablelands has been seen walking to venues in his electorate, rather than using a car or pushbike. He sets a fine example to both young and old. He promotes physical fitness by being out there, enjoying the brisk Armidale air. I praise the member for Northern Tablelands. I also praise Quota clubs across the great State of New South Wales, with particular reference to the Glen Innes and Tweed clubs.

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL** (Northern Tablelands) [12.08 p.m.], in reply: I thank the member for Tweed for his typically erudite contribution to the debate about the Glen Innes Quota Club. In closing, I again acknowledge president Jan Miller, vice-president Eileen Halloran, immediate past president Kerrie Sturtridge as well as other members such as Judi Toms, who make an enormous contribution to their community by being involved in the Glen Innes Quota Club. I cannot say enough about the respect the community has for the club because of the number of organisations and individuals it has helped. The activities I listed earlier are just those the club makes public. I will not reveal names in the Chamber because the people whom the club has assisted will be embarrassed, but I know the club has been responsible for helping scores of people in the Glen Innes community over the years—people who have fallen on hard times, people who have had disaster strike and lost loved ones, property or homes. The Quota Club members have been there to help them out with funding or with donations of goods.

Such things never make the newspapers or radio new items, but they matter to people in the Glen Innes community. That is why the club is regarded so highly and why I am calling on the House to publicly acknowledge the club's work. I believe the club deserves recognition for 60 years of service to its community and for the wonderful way it hosted the inaugural region 11 conference. Quotarians attended from across the region, as far north as the Tweed and south to Gloucester and Taree. They enjoyed their time in Glen Innes and the Northern Tablelands—and why would they not? I use the Quota Club—as I unashamedly use any vehicle

I can—to promote living in the Northern Tablelands. One never knows, but we might convince a few Quotarians to move to Glen Innes and the Northern Tablelands after the magnificent way the club hosted the region 11 conference.

I have a wonderful photograph from that magnificent journal of record, the *Glen Innes Examiner*—a fine publication—of the Quotarians gathered outside the Glen Innes and District Services Club. Pat Lonergan is the general manager of that great club and the Quotarians were magnificent adornments to the club during their three-day stay. One will never see a finer group of people. They are salt of the earth and they are community servants, and I doff my cap to them. I commend the motion to the House. Well done Glen Innes Quota Club.

**Question—That the motion be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Motion agreed to.**

### **MOORE PARK**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH** (Sydney) [12.12 p.m.]: I move:

That this House calls on the Government to:

- (1) Protect Moore Park from any further commercialisation, development or encroachment.
- (2) Ensure Moore Park is not transferred to the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust.

Two proposals to build on and completely decimate Moore Park have been exposed this year. I move this motion to give the Government the opportunity to bury these proposals and any future proposals for development on our parklands and to once and for all commit to the future protection of our parklands. The Centennial Parklands provide a vital recreation resource to the Sydney population, and have done so since they were set aside by Governor Lachlan Macquarie in 1811 as part of the Sydney Common. However, successive governments have not respected the Macquarie bequest and have supported massive encroachments.

In the past 20 years we have seen the temporary tram sheds of Moore Park sold to create a Supa Centre; 2.2 hectares of Moore Park removed to make way for the Eastern Distributor; car parking continue on Moore Park East during events at the stadia, despite promises for its removal to compensate for the Eastern Distributor; major music festivals and commercial events fence off parklands from public use; the Fox Studios leasehold and massive development that bears no relevance to films, as required in the original lease—and further development is mooted—offices and the National Rugby League headquarters built on public land managed by the Sydney Cricket Ground [SCG], with the removal of old-growth trees; laws that restricted development on SCG land to public recreation changed to allow commercial, residential and tourist accommodation buildings in the future; significant Moore Park land carved off for the Anzac Parade busway; significant Moore Park land built over by the Tibby Cotter Bridge, at a cost of \$38 million to taxpayers; massive parts of both Moore Park and Centennial Park to be built on for the CBD and South East Light Rail; and plans to build a synthetic field over grasslands on Moore Park, with mature trees already cut down.

Less than one-third of the original Macquarie bequest is now open, public land. But the biggest, most outrageous threats have been exposed only recently—threats that would completely destroy Moore Park as we know it. The first is from a well-known culprit: the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust, which has a long history of blatant attempts to grab Moore Park land. In 2010 its secret plan to control Moore Park east to build on, park cars on, commercialise and privatise was stopped only by a massive community campaign launched by residents, community groups, Lord Mayor Clover Moore—who was then also the local member of Parliament—Neville Wran, Malcolm Turnbull and David Shoebridge.

**Mr Bruce Notley-Smith:** And Bruce Notley-Smith.

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH:** And Bruce Notley-Smith. The sporting trust continues to plot for Moore Park land behind closed doors. Everyone knows that the Tibby Cotter Bridge, which does not serve cyclists or take the most intuitive route for pedestrians, is part of the trust's plan to link pedestrians from Moore Park west, which it hopes one day will be a car park. Now the trust wants to build a 65,000-seat stadium adjacent to Kippax Lake, which the Government is considering and its stadium adviser, John Brogden, is soon to report on.

Encouraged by the Government's failure to refuse developing our parklands, other sporting bodies have now joined the assault, with Tennis NSW recently revealing it wants a 10,000-seat tennis arena at Moore Park, with two potential locations mooted.

The Moore Park master plan was due to be released this year and I understand that it has been stalled by the Government because it excludes development. This is outrageous. We must not decimate vital green public open space for private gain at a time when the need to expand it is greater than ever. Adjacent populations are increasing rapidly and existing and future residents will live with little or no private open space. More than 54,000 residents will move into apartments at Green Square alone by 2030. Where will residents walk, run, exercise, play informal sport, lie in the sun and picnic if there is no expansive grassland left? Creating pocket parks is not enough to ensure healthy and sustainable densely populated communities. Any further loss of parkland is irresponsible and is a recipe for future toxic communities. Our sporting bodies will continue to plot for their share of public parklands unless the Government, with the support of the Opposition, once and for all declares Centennial Park and Moore Park off limits. It must send a strong message that development, alienation and commercialisation will never be permitted on the parklands.

Prior to the election, the former environment Minister said that the Government would not consider any changes without the agreement of both trusts. This is not good enough. The clear message should be that the Government will not permit further loss of public open space under any circumstances. The Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust has come out strongly with the community to condemn the Sydney Cricket Ground proposal and we will continue to fight for the preservation of the parklands. Spectator sport is important, but it should not be at the expense of healthy and sustainable communities. There are alternatives to decimating our parklands, including upgrading sporting grounds at Olympic Park and Parramatta, which have community support. Our precious parklands must finally be respected and permanently protected; they should never be considered for commercialisation, development or encroachment. I call on the House to support this motion, to support the recreation needs of inner-city, inner south and east Sydney residents now and in the future, and to rule out any building, alienation or commercialisation of Moore Park or its handover to any sporting bodies. I commend the motion to the House.

**Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH** (Coogee) [12.18 p.m.]: I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out all words after "That" with a view to inserting instead:

"this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the significance of Moore Park as vital and cherished Sydney green space.
- (2) Notes that the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust is developing a master plan to ensure the long-term viability and conservation of Moore Park."

There is no formal proposal to excise a portion of the land under the care, control and management of the Centennial and Moore Park Trust to expand the facilities of the Moore Park sporting precinct. The Government's position is clear. I advise the House that the former Minister for the Environment and Heritage wrote to the chair of the Centennial and Moore Park Trust, Tony Ryan, stating that there would be no change in ownership of Moore Park East without the approval of both trusts and the Minister for the Environment and Heritage. Considering the congeniality between the two trusts, I do not think we are likely to see agreement on that basis any time soon.

In 2010 I was involved when the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust made a move. A minute was supposed to go to Cabinet—I think it was pulled at the eleventh hour; it was under the Keneally Government—that sought to excise Moore Park East from the Centennial Parklands trust and hand it over to the Sydney Cricket Ground, for whatever purposes it had in mind. I was out of the blocks quickly to oppose that, as was Malcolm Turnbull, for whom I was working at the time. The former Lord Mayor of Sydney, Lucy Turnbull, the current Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Mayor, and various others also came out in strident opposition to the proposal. This is not the first time that the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust had tried to get its hand on Moore Park East or other sections of the Centennial Parklands.

There is nothing we can do here to bind future Parliaments, but it is essential that elected representatives who cherish this green space—Sydney's jewel in the crown—ensure that we remain forever vigilant and protect these parklands. In the past there has been development on what is known as the Macquarie grant or the Macquarie domain. Who can forget going to the Sydney Royal Easter Show when it used to be held

at the showgrounds, which then became the Entertainment Quarter? Land was excised from the parklands for the construction of the Eastern Distributor, but of course compensation was paid and substantial capital works have taken place in the park as a result of that compensation package.

The Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust has an opinion on what should be done with Moore Park East. It is not the Government's position, and I will ensure that not one inch of Moore Park East is handed over for development. It is currently being used as a car park and as sporting fields for many codes. It brings in about \$1.8 million a year for the Centennial and Moore Park Trust to maintain the trust's assets. The trust has managed the parklands extremely effectively. They have multiple uses, such as passive recreation, running and jogging, horseriding—it is where I learned to ride a horse—and sports. The place is a hive of activity. I agree with the member for Sydney that we cannot afford to lose any green space in the east of Sydney, especially considering the construction taking place in Zetland with the new Green Square development. In the next decade or so about 50,000 people will live in that precinct and they will need open space for passive recreation. Earlier this week the heir apparent to the member for Heffron, the Mayor of the City of Botany Bay, said that the Eastlake golf course could be turned into parkland.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Not The Lakes or Bonnie Doon.

**Mr Jamie Parker:** Not the private golf courses; only the public ones.

**Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH:** No, Eastlake golf course. The Australian is freehold. Although he is on the other side of the political fence, I agree with the Mayor of the City of Botany Bay that if we are going to continue to increase the population in eastern Sydney and south-eastern Sydney such as around Zetland—and enormous development is taking place in the City of Botany Bay thanks to the member for Heffron—we need open space for passive recreation and we cannot afford to lose one square inch of it.

**Mr RON HOENIG** (Heffron) [12.25 p.m.]: I move:

That the amendment be amended by adding the following:

"(3) Ensure that Moore Park remains under the control of the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust."

I am sure that my amendment will be acceptable to the Government, bearing in mind that everything that came out of the mouth of the member for Coogee is in my amendment. I thank the member for Sydney for moving this motion about Centennial Park and Moore Park. As a result of the recent electoral redistribution that area is now within the electorate of Heffron and no longer in the seat of Sydney. However, because of some unfair application by the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal the member for Sydney has more electorate staff than I have, so it is probably appropriate that he move the motion. The Centennial and Moore parklands are quintessential parklands. They have been dubbed the people's parks. The way that government since 1811, when the area was gifted to the people by Governor Macquarie, has sought to alienate part of the parklands is disgraceful.

But the approach has been even more disgraceful in the past few years. I may have represented the area for only a short time but I believe the attempts to commercialise both Centennial Park and Moore Park are disgraceful. The conduct of the trust has also been disgraceful, and I have no confidence in it. A month or so before the election I held one of my usual mobile offices outside Centennial Park, simply meeting with a group of residents who were concerned about commercialisation of the park. A ranger told me that I could not stand in Robertson Road because the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust owned Robertson Road and I had to move. A 75-year-old man and I had to move 100 metres because the trust claimed ownership of the road, which we subsequently found was not the case. It somehow thought my meeting was political.

The next day the member for Coogee and the then Minister for Environment and Heritage, the member for Pittwater, were in the park near the water filming election advertisements. Those are the sorts of people who manage the parklands and are trying to alienate them. The Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust is an agent of the Liberal Party, trying to extort money and hand over land to any available vested interests. It does not even try to hide its agency before the election. I was not allowed to stand on a public road talking to constituents yet the member for Coogee and the environment Minister were permitted to enter the park, stand next to the water and be filmed for an election advertisement.

I have been inundated with complaints about the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust and I have received dozens of emails about the charges levied on the Primary Schools Sports Association. Seventeen



schools can no longer use those lands and fields because of the extortionate charges imposed by the trust. Kensington Public School, which was formerly in the electorate of the member for Coogee, has been pleading for some sort of fee relief from the increases. The only item on the agenda for the Government is to hand over Moore Park to make more money, build some great stadium with synthetic fields and take the peoples' park away from them.

*[Interruption from gallery]*

**The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser):** Order! Visitors in the gallery are not entitled to participate in the debate. Their behaviour is disorderly.

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON** (Vaucluse—Attorney General) [12.29 p.m.]: The member for Coogee has moved an amendment to the motion moved by the member for Sydney, upon which the member for Heffron has moved an amendment, but I will not go through them. Let us be clear: There is no formal proposal that seeks to excise a portion of land owned by the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust to expand the facilities of the Moore Park sporting precinct. I do not know how much clearer I can be about that. The member for Coogee has said that. It is an important public space. The Government's position is clear. The former Minister for the Environment wrote to the chair of the trust stating that there would be no change in ownership of Moore Park East without the approval of both trusts and the Minister for the Environment, and that is entirely appropriate.

There is no disagreement across this Chamber. Moore Park was set aside as a public recreational space almost 150 years ago in 1866. Next year we will celebrate the 150th anniversary of that space as a sporting, entertainment and recreational precinct. The Government's responsibility for precious space such as Moore Park and the Centennial Parklands requires appropriate planning for the future, particularly given their historical significance to Sydney and to the amenity of Sydneysiders over the past 150 years. That is why, quite appropriately, the trust has begun work on a long-term vision for Moore Park with the Moore Park Master Plan. The history of Moore Park involves an evolving landscape of uses, but both the member for Coogee and I recognise, as do all members in this Chamber, the one thing that has remained constant is that public amenity, community facilities and open space have been the primary focus.

This precious space is not inside, but is adjacent to, my electorate of Vaucluse, but we are debating this motion because it has a significance way beyond the electorate in which it sits. It is critical that the master plan recognises the historical social amenity that Moore Park and the broader parklands bring to the whole of Sydney. I grew up in the eastern suburbs, where I have lived for almost all my life apart from six years in New York City and six months in London. I grew up in north Randwick, close to Queens Park. We all have stories about things that are significant to our childhood and are indelible in our lives as adults—values that we treasure.

The breadth of the Centennial parklands remains a critical part of the backdrop to my life. It is where I played sport when I was at school, where I learned to ride a bike as a child, where I went to the Royal Easter Show, as referred to by the member for Coogee, and where I introduced my children to the wildlife that exists there. I have fantastic memories of when my children were younger of doing spotlight tours at night to see the diversity of wildlife that inhabits this magnificent space. It is where my husband and I cycle now. It has been a constant. *[Extension of time agreed to.]*

Members can see I lost track of time because I am passionate about this motion, as are all members who are speaking today. It has been a constant in my life. As the member for Coogee on this side of the House said, its value goes beyond the beauty and the amenity; it is a place of refuge and solace. I see the parklands as simply the lungs of our city. I commend the motion moved by the member for Sydney. Amendments have been made to the motion, which may or may not be supported by the Government. The Centennial Park and Moore Park parklands are such a precious resource to our community that they need to be protected and recognised. I commend my statement to the House.

**Mr JAMIE PARKER** (Balmain) [12.34 p.m.], by leave: Moore Park is not only critical to the people of the eastern suburbs but also sets the tone for the rest of this State. Callan Park in my electorate sits on 60 hectares of publicly owned space around the cove. It is a beautiful site that The Greens have fought tooth and nail for ever since I was elected to the Leichhardt Municipal Council in 1999. I commend this Government for having committed to establishing a trust for Callan Park, managed by Environment and Heritage, similar to other trusts in our community. I strongly support the motion moved by the member for Sydney. The Greens have a strong record of defending public open space. It is important to acknowledge the role of passive recreational space.

Earlier today I moved a motion about active sporting fields for young people in the my electorate, but there is something very powerful about passive recreation, about space where we can wander and dream just as the Attorney General did in her speech. We need a place for the poets and the lovers, for the romantics. One of the challenges of the constant pressure on development is the atomisation of people in their communities. Never before have we lived so closely together and never before have we been so divided. Places where families, communities and friends can come together are so important, and that is why people are so passionate about these spaces.

I commend the motion moved by the member for Sydney. It is critical that the significance of Moore Park is cherished as an important part of the green space in this city. The Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust is developing a master plan, something that the Callan Park and Broughton Hall Trust will have to do in the future. This Parliament should not let our city be designed by developers but by people who have a connection to the community. We should defend these public open spaces. In fact, we should extend them. All members have seen the passion of people in our community when it comes to protecting public open space. We should invest in public open space.

Investing in infrastructure is often about roundabouts, traffic lights, cement and brick walls, but we should invest in public open spaces in our communities. When the Minister reads *Hansard* and the Attorney General and others discuss it, they should acknowledge that passive recreational space, which is so strongly supported by the community, needs investment and support. In relation to Callan Park in my electorate I call on the Government to support the Callan Park Trust in the first instance and not to instantly drive the pressure onto the trust to make money and be profitable at no cost to government. We need a transition period for the trust to be established and to prosper, and the Callan Park Master Plan principles, which the Government acknowledges are important, must be implemented.

I congratulate the member for Sydney on his work. We must ensure that Moore Park remains under the control of the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust. I encourage members of the trust to not be pressured into commercial activities but to remember that government is there to support them. The member for Sydney, the member for Heffron and I are advocates for government supporting our trusts and appointing the right people to the trusts to ensure that green spaces continue to be protected, defended and created into the future—just as they have been for the past 100 years.

**Ms JENNY LEONG** (Newtown) [12.38 p.m.], by leave: I support the member for Sydney's motion to protect Moore Park and to ensure that our open and green spaces are not handed over to commercial and pay-for-use interests or lost in any other way. As the member for Balmain said, The Greens have a strong position on the protection of green space. The new electorate of Newtown takes in areas of Surry Hills and Redfern that were once part of and now border the Sydney electorate. I am acutely aware of the need of those residents to access green and open space. I make this brief contribution to say that we need to protect the open space and green space in our cities. We are under huge pressure from overdevelopment and massive public land sell-offs. We must ensure that our green space is always held in public hands for public use at no cost.

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH** (Sydney) [12.41 p.m.], in reply: It is wonderful that members from both sides of Parliament have come together to protect our parklands and in particular Moore Park. After the member for Coogee sought to amend the motion and the member for Heffron sought to further amend the motion to protect our parklands my motion has really become a motion of the House. We also heard contributions from the member for Newtown, the member for Balmain and, of course, the member for Vaucluse. We have parklands only because local communities have been willing to fight for their preservation and will continue to fight for them.

Parklands are publicly owned and held in trust for the people. The public needs the lands for passive recreation, and that must be respected now and into the future. We need formal guarantees to protect our parklands. The only thing we hear about now is the building of massive stadiums. Governor Lachlan Macquarie's request in 1811 for 405 acres of land for the outdoor recreation needs of future Sydney generations was visionary and that land must be protected. I commend the motion and the amendment to the amendment to the House.

**Question—That the amendment of the member for Heffron to the amendment of the member for Coogee be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Amendment of the member for Heffron to the amendment of the member for Coogee agreed to.**

**Question—That the amendment of the member for Coogee as amended be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Amendment of the member for Coogee as amended agreed to.**

**Question—That the motion as amended be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Motion as amended agreed to.**

### **HANNAH WORSLEY, LIONS YOUTH OF THE YEAR**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL** (Northern Tablelands) [12.45 p.m.]: I move:

That this House:

- (1) Congratulates Inverell High School Year 12 student Hannah Worsley on winning the recent New South Wales final of this year's Lions Youth of the Year competition.
- (2) Notes that Hannah also won the public speaking component of the final.
- (3) Further congratulates Hannah on winning the public speaking section, addressing the issue of feminism, at the national final of the competition held in Newcastle on Saturday 2 May 2015.
- (4) Acknowledges Lions Clubs of Australia for supporting and convening this impressive competition, which places students in an interview situation, assesses leadership ability, sporting and cultural interests, citizenship and community involvement, general knowledge and academic achievements, as well as public speaking skills.
- (5) Commends Hannah for being an outstanding ambassador for rural young people and wishes her every success with the remainder of her Higher School Certificate studies.

Hannah Worsley is a very impressive young woman who has enjoyed incredible success at the Lions Youth of the Year competition. She is a smart, articulate, politically aware and civically minded young person in rural New South Wales. In addition to her success at the Lions Youth of the Year competition Hannah has twice been a member of the New South Wales Youth Parliament and a winner of the Country to Canberra essay competition. Hannah has also recently returned from a trip to London where she took part in the National Youth Science Forum and was an Australian delegate to the European Organization for Nuclear Research to learn even more about science, pursue her passion and discuss her ideas with young people from across the globe.

I first met Inverell High School student Hannah Worsley some years ago. I was struck by her maturity and the care and compassion she showed for her fellow students and the people around her. I was also impressed by her great desire to pursue new ideas and campaigns to support people in rural New South Wales, which was why I was very happy to support her taking part in the Youth Parliament. I am pleased to say that despite being placed in the upper House during the Youth Parliament experience, Hannah wanted to come back for a second year. I was more than happy to support her to do that.

Last year Hannah was named as one of three winners of the new Country to Canberra essay competition and she travelled to Canberra to participate in workshops with her fellow finalists. The aim of the competition is to bridge the gap between rural areas and cities by connecting young female students from country areas with powerful female politicians and executives based in Canberra. Hannah's essay caught the attention of the judges, who declared her work to be an excellent representation of the issues young women face in rural communities. Hannah has had an avid interest in politics for some time. I am sure her trip to Canberra encouraged policymakers to focus more on rural areas. From talking to her I know it certainly helped her to focus on her career and the educational opportunities that country areas offer.

It came as no surprise that Hannah did incredibly well in the Lions Youth of the Year competition. Hannah faced an interview that took into account her leadership ability; her sporting and cultural interests, which are many; her citizenship and community involvement, which is lengthy; her general knowledge, which is extensive; and her academic achievements, which are many. In the public speaking component she performed incredibly well. She won through the local competition at the Inverell Lions Club. She went on to compete against students from Yamba, Nambucca Heads and Taree, winning the State final at Port Macquarie. At the national final in Newcastle she was pipped at the post for the overall title, but awarded the public speaking championship.

Hannah attributes her success to hard work and a bit of luck. All this is occurring while she is in the midst of studying for her higher school certificate exams. Knowing Hannah as I do, I know that she takes her studies very seriously. Indeed, despite living more than 50 kilometres out of Inverell near Nullamanna she can be found most weekends at the Inverell Shire Public Library. She comes into town on the weekend to do even more study with some of her peers from Inverell High School. She said in the *Inverell Times*, "trying to balance everything is hard but I think balance is really important so I'm trying it and I'm really enjoying it".

I congratulate Hannah on her tremendous achievements. As a young woman who has not even finished high school, she shows incredible promise and already has a very impressive curriculum vitae of achievements. She is one to watch. I look forward to continuing to support and encourage her, together with her family and the entire community of Inverell. She is an incredible young woman, and I am sure she will be spoken about again in this place. I commend the motion to the House.

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD** (Myall Lakes) [12.51 p.m.]: I support the motion moved by the member for Northern Tablelands. I congratulate Hannah Worsley on her achievements. I listened intently as the member for Northern Tablelands spoke of all her achievements, which are remarkable for someone so young. I wish her well in the future. I acknowledge Lions Australia for putting on this competition and for the great work Lions Clubs across Australia and across the world do for their local communities, particularly when it comes to issues of sight. Regional communities really do depend on service organisations such as the local Lions Club. They do a fantastic job.

I draw to the attention of the members and staff of this Parliament the great work of the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club. I encourage every member and staffer to consider joining the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club and contributing to the work of the club, which raises money for all sorts of charity. Last year we raised money for the Australian Red Cross. The funds are going to the appeal for earthquake victims in Nepal. Last year we raised \$148,000 to buy a world-class prostate cancer machine. There were only three in the world at the time, and there is now a machine going into the Nepean Hospital. Prior to that we raised money for the Follow Your Dream Foundation, which raises money in Australia for disadvantaged children, and the year before that we raised \$134,000 to purchase a very specific eye machine for the eye hospital next door. Each year we also raise money for the Australian Lions Childhood Cancer Research Foundation, which I am sure all would agree is a great cause.

On 16 September the Lions Club will be running its famous barbecue on the rooftop garden. The funds raised from that event will go to the Australian Lions Childhood Cancer Research Foundation. I am looking forward to seeing the member for Heathcote there in his apron cooking the barbecue, and helping to sell sausage sandwiches and steak sandwiches to raise much-needed funds. I ask members and staff to think about joining the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club. The club is not exclusive; it is open to all members and staff. In fact the secretary is Chris Angus from the library research section. We are in this building. We have to be here to serve our communities. But it is wonderful to be able to also use our time here to raise money for worthy charities.

As I said, Lions Clubs right across New South Wales and Australia are working for their local communities every day of the week. People in metropolitan areas may not appreciate how important service clubs are in regional areas. They do phenomenal work. They adopt and look after parks. They adopt all sorts of causes in their local area and raise funds for those causes. I commend the member for the Northern Tablelands for bringing his motion to the House. I commend Hannah Worsley for winning the recent New South Wales final of this year's Lions Youth of the Year competition and for her other achievements at such a young age. I commend the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club to all members and staff in this place.

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL** (Northern Tablelands) [12.55 p.m.], in reply: I acknowledge my friend and colleague the member for Myall Lakes, who is the President of the New South Wales Parliamentary Lions Club. I thank him for his contribution to this debate extolling the virtues of "lionism". I do not think we could ever say enough positive things in this place, or indeed elsewhere, about the work of Lions Clubs and all the other service clubs. They perform a very important function in modern society, particularly in rural communities. I join the member for Myall Lakes in thanking and paying tribute to Lions Clubs right across Australia. They continue to run and support a wide range of initiatives. In this instance, I particularly highlight the efforts of the Lions Club in running the Lions Youth of the Year competition.

I am particularly proud of Hannah not only because she is from my electorate but because she is a young woman with incredible promise. I am very proud of her achievements, as is the community. She has been

successful in a competition that I participated in not long ago. I was also fortunate enough to win the New South Wales final and to progress to the national final—that year it was in Geelong. Like Hannah, I was pipped at the post and was not successful in the national final but was awarded the public speaking championship. So I can relate to Hannah's experience in the competition.

It is a great competition that prepares participants for challenges later in life. Participants are grilled by a group of people whom they meet only when they walk into the room for the interview. It is similar to a job interview, which we have all been through, or a preselection or meet-the-candidates function, which all members have been through. It prepares participants to respond to things on the spot. They face questioning, interviews and impromptu public speaking. Participants have to speak impromptu for a couple of minutes on questions given to them on the spot. There is no time to think—the question is read out twice and then participants respond. They also deliver a prepared speech of five minutes. It is a competition that tests participants and really seeks to find the best all-rounders amongst our young people.

I have no hesitation in saying that Hannah Worsley thoroughly deserved to be recognised as the champion all-rounder in New South Wales. As I say, there are many superlatives in the English language that can be attributed to this young woman. She continues to impress. She makes her school, her family, the entire Inverell community and certainly this local member incredibly proud. I am incredibly proud to say that I know Hannah. I will continue to support her in any way I can in her endeavours to see her reach her full potential.

I sincerely hope that, whatever Hannah chooses to do in life beyond her secondary schooling years and whenever she finishes further studies, she can come back to Inverell or go to another rural area to ply her skills because I know that she will enrich whichever community she chooses to live in. Any community will be much the better for her presence—not only because of her maturity, her vision and her foresight but also because of her compassion and her deep desire to champion the needs of those less fortunate. On that basis I publically congratulate Hannah Worsley on her achievements. I wish her the best of luck in her upcoming higher school certificate, although, knowing Hannah, I am sure she needs no luck. I wish her every success for the future whatever challenges may confront her. I congratulate Hannah and say well done. I commend the motion to the House.

**Question—That the motion be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Motion agreed to.**

**Pursuant to sessional order Orders of the Day (Committee Reports) proceeded with.**

## **LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

### **Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 3/56**

**Question—That the House take note of the report—proposed.**

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN** (Upper Hunter) [1.00 p.m.]: This is the third Legislation Review Committee digest for the Fifty-sixth Parliament, tabled on 11 August 2015. The committee reviewed five bills and commented on all of them, namely, the Health Services Amendment (Ambulance Services) Bill 2015, the Impounding Amendment (Unattended Boat Trailers) Bill 2015, the Real Property Amendment (Electronic Conveyancing) Bill 2015, the Residential Housing Legislation Amendment (Public Housing—Antisocial Behaviour) Bill 2015, and the Workers Compensation Amendment Bill 2015 and cognate State Insurance and Care Governance Bill 2015. The committee also reviewed 24 regulations. I will focus on some key issues identified by the committee in its bill review digest.

In relation to the Health Services Amendment (Ambulance Services) Bill 2015, the committee identified two issues under section 8A (1) of the Legislation Review Act 1987. This bill recognises a role for private sector and non-government organisations in providing non-emergency transport for clients. It addresses the inefficiencies of using emergency vehicles for non-emergency situations. The committee commented that the bill may trespass on personal rights and liberties in introducing a strict liability offence. Clause 4 establishes an offence that a person must not directly or indirectly provide or take part in the provision of supported non-emergency transport for fee or reward in contravention of the prescribed standards; the bill does not provide for a defence or reasonable excuse. However, the committee noted the importance of patient safety and of non-emergency transport providers complying with prescribed standards, and this principle overrides the issue, and for this reason the committee did not make any further comments.

I move now to the Impounding Amendment (Unattended Boat Trailers) Bill 2015. This bill addresses concerns regarding the loss of amenity and increased road safety risks due to boat owners using on-street parking as storage for their boats. The committee noted that the bill may delegate legislative powers by allowing a key time frame in the bill to be altered by regulation. However, due to the safeguards in place with regard to any proposed regulation being subject to disallowance under section 41 of the Interpretation Act 1987, along with balancing the right to use public space and possible road safety risks associated with the long-term storage of boat trailers in public places, the committee made no further comment.

I turn now to the Residential Tenancies and Housing Legislation Amendment (Public Housing—Antisocial Behaviour) Bill 2015. This bill addresses antisocial, illegal and fraudulent behaviour in social housing. This was identified as an issue of concern during the recent report of the Public Accounts Committee on tenancy management. The committee noted that proposed section 154C introduces a three-strikes policy whereby tenants in social housing engaging in antisocial behaviour on three or more occasions within 12 months can have their tenancy terminated. The committee commented that this may trespass against an individual's right to housing, especially those tenants who may be vulnerable in finding alternative housing options. However, the committee also stressed the importance of balancing this with the rights of other tenants to live in a safe and peaceful environment. For this reason, the committee made no further comment on the issue.

The committee also noted that proposed section 154D gives the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal the power to make an order terminating a social housing tenancy agreement in cases where a tenant has committed or been charged with certain serious offences. In some cases, the tribunal does not have any discretion to decline issuing a termination order. The committee noted this may possibly act to fetter the discretion of the New South Wales Civil and Administrative Tribunal. However, as I mentioned previously, the committee stressed the importance of balancing this with the rights of other tenants to live in a safe and peaceful environment. As such, the committee made no further comment. Finally, I turn to the Workers Compensation Amendment Bill 2015 and cognate State Insurance and Care Governance Bill 2015. The committee did not find any issues with this bill other than its commencing by proclamation. As such, the committee made no further comment. I commend the digest to the House.

**Question—That the House take note of the report—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Report noted.**

*[Temporary Speaker (Mr Lee Evans) left the chair at 1.05 p.m. The House resumed at 2.15 p.m.]*

## VISITORS

**The SPEAKER:** I extend a very warm welcome to the Australian Political Exchange Council Fifth Delegation, from the Republic of Korea, guests of the Speaker and the Parliament of New South Wales. I hope that the delegation has had an enjoyable day. I ask members to show respect for our guests in the gallery this afternoon by refraining from interjections.

I acknowledge Mr Ken Grant, father of the Deputy Premier and guest of the Deputy Premier, Minister for Justice and Police, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Racing and member for Dubbo. Welcome, Mr Grant.

I welcome members of the Putney branch of the Liberal Party, including Councillor Roy Maggio, guests of the Leader of the House, Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy and member for Lane Cove. I welcome members of the Sylvania Probus club to the House today, guests of the member for Heathcote; and members of the Cronulla South Probus club, guests of the Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, and Assistant Minister for Planning and member for Cronulla, and of the Deputy Speaker and member for Lismore.

I welcome representatives from the Kiama Show Society, including their president, David Young, guests of the Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast and member for Kiama. I acknowledge Bronwyn Sargeant from Warialda, guest of the member for Northern Tablelands.

I extend a special welcome to a young lady who is about to attend a national championship in aerobics and has attended national championships in diving and trampolining. She is Isla Barr, daughter of the member for Cessnock. Congratulations, Isla. As I say to everyone who is talented: You get everything from your mother.

**QUESTION TIME**

*[Question time commenced at 2.19 p.m.]*

**PORT OF NEWCASTLE**

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** My question is directed to the Treasurer. Why has the Government imposed constraints on the growth of container movements through the Port of Newcastle?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The Labor Party opposed at every stage the Government's improvements to the port and maritime strategy. At every stage the Labor Party opposed asset recycling in Newcastle. Now the proceeds of that asset recycling are going back into the community.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister does not know the answer and she has no notes.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maroubra has no knowledge of those matters. There is no point of order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** We are yet to find out—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will be directed to leave the Chamber if the interjections continue.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The Leader of the Opposition has previously highlighted his opposition to what this Government has done in the Port of Newcastle. He has no credibility raising the issue now. The Government ensures that it uses the State's assets in the best way possible and returns the proceeds to the community, where they belong. Daily in this place, members from the Hunter region talk about jobs, infrastructure, education and health—

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: You had better coach her; she has got no idea, Premier.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members should not make inappropriate comments when they take a point of order.

**Mr Michael Daley:** I apologise. My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. It was a simple question: Why is there a cap on containers coming out of Newcastle? That is constraining the growth of the Port of Newcastle.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Treasurer is being relevant to the question. There is no point of order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I find it quite ironic that those opposite care about growth and activity when they opposed the Government's plans to maximise that asset for the people of New South Wales. They have no credibility on this issue. They opposed everything that this Government proposed to do in relation to the ports. As I was saying, before I was rudely interrupted by the member for Maroubra—who does not know very much about this or any other issue regarding the budget—whilst the current member for Newcastle, the Leader of the Opposition and all those opposite, including the members for the Hunter, come in here and complain about lack of jobs in the Hunter and other issues, this side of the House is using the proceeds from that asset recycling to invest back into the community.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Maitland to order for the first time. I call the member for Maitland to order for the second time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I was extremely pleased when every time I had the pleasure of visiting the Hunter—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maitland will come to order.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: It is under Standing Order 129 again. If the Treasurer does not know the answer she can take the question on notice. The Port of Newcastle is being constrained and the Minister will not answer the question. The question is very, very simple.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister is being relevant to the question and, pursuant to the standing order, that is all I can ask of her.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I reiterate the hypocrisy of the Labor Government's question in relation to this matter. Why does it not care about investment in the Hunter?

**Ms Linda Burney:** Point of order: I suggest if the Minister does not know the answer and cannot get a note she should sit down.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** When those opposite have a straight answer on what they want for the Hunter and about what they want for the port strategy then they will have the right to ask about it. I say to those opposite: Do not stop progress in the Hunter, because that is what matters to the people of this State.

### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN:** My question is addressed to the Premier. How is the New South Wales Government delivering improved services to small business across the State?

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I thank the member for Upper Hunter for his question and for his leadership in his community, particularly during the recent storm events. He and the other local members were outstanding in looking after their communities, which is what our time in this House is all about. It is great to see the daughter of the member for Cessnock in the gallery. I congratulate her: her father is known as a very good man; the only problem is he is in the wrong party. We have great news for the people of New South Wales, and it is even great news for the Opposition.

The good news is that we continue to be a government that supports small business. We understand small business, we understand the pressures they are under and we are doing everything we can to look after them. The Small Business Commissioner, Robyn Hobbs, is doing an outstanding job. We are doing everything we can to support 680,000 small businesses across the State, which employ 42 per cent of the New South Wales workforce and contribute more than \$250 billion to sales and service incomes in New South Wales. We have seen jobs come roaring back into New South Wales and small businesses played a critical role in that; 250,000 jobs have been created since we came to government.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Maroubra to order for the first time.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** Those opposite are very chirpy today. Maybe it is because of lunch on the last day of this sitting. We have slashed red tape and it is estimated that that has benefited small businesses by about \$815 million, which is also a benefit to the broader economy. We have also introduced 50 pieces of legislation and taken away 229: we have taken away regulations so that businesses can get on with their jobs. We have also done everything we possibly can to promote and support small businesses across the State. We have sent out the Small Biz Bus—members across the Chamber will know the great job that bus does. I note that the Small Biz Bus has been embraced by everyone in the Chamber. The member for Wyong posted a beautiful photograph of himself standing in front of the Small Biz Bus—giving it a big tick and supporting small businesses. I also have here a photograph of the member for Fairfield looking quite spectacular. He has got a bit of a Blue Steel look about him.

**Ms Linda Burney:** Point of order: The Premier is using a prop.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I have warned the Premier about the use of props, especially photographs.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** One of the great love stories in the Labor Party is where the member for Shellharbour, because she loves the member for Wollongong, has come out and said how fantastic small business is. It is great; we think it is fantastic. We encourage the Opposition to support government policy to get small business moving in New South Wales. The only risk again comes from those opposite because while they are out there promoting, smiling and "blue steeling" in front of the Small Biz Bus, they come into this Chamber and vote against the Jobs Action Plan. They do not want to take away payroll tax for business. They are not interested in reducing that taxation.



**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Maitland to order for the third time.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I could not find one for the member for Maitland. I am sure she would have smiled in front of it. We are doing everything on this side to continue to support small businesses. We understand what they do for the economy. They are the ones who drive the economy; they are the ones who have put New South Wales back to number one and leading the nation, and that is great news for the State.

**Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.**

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** It is important to note that all of us in this Chamber except the Opposition truly understand the importance of small business. We pay tribute to them. We are very proud to come into this Chamber to support the reduction in payroll tax for new jobs, to do everything we can to keep the economy moving, and it starts with small business.

### PORT OF NEWCASTLE

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP:** My question is directed to the Treasurer. Why, when there is double-digit unemployment in the Hunter, has the Government imposed restrictions on growing Newcastle port just to increase the sale price of Port Botany?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hornsby will come to order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The member for Newcastle raises an important issue regarding growth and jobs in Newcastle and the Hunter. I was extremely disappointed that when this side of the House brought in the Jobs Action Plan legislation to support more job creation in this State the member for Newcastle and every other member on that side of the House opposed that legislation.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Opposition members will come to order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I put this to the member of the Newcastle: Why is it when this side of House determined that funds from asset recycling should go back into revitalising Newcastle and the Hunter region the member for Newcastle again opposed this Government's actions to revitalise Newcastle and the Hunter?

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order: My point of order is Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Hornsby and the member for Kiama to order for the first time. Members will be heard in silence.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** It appears that the Treasurer does not know the answer to the question.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! That is not a point of order. The member is just entering into an argument and making inappropriate comments. It is up to me to decide relevance. The Treasurer has been relevant. There is no point of order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I refer the former member for Newcastle and the current member for Newcastle, the member for Maroubra and the Leader of the Opposition—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the member for Maitland that she is already on three calls to order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** —to the Government's New South Wales—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maitland will remove herself from the Chamber until the conclusion of question time.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Maitland left the Chamber at 2.34 p.m.]*

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Hornsby and the member for Kiama to order for the second time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I say to those opposite that when we came to government, after 16 years they did not have a New South Wales ports or maritime strategy. What have we done?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Strathfield will come to order. The Treasurer remains relevant.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: I ask that the Treasurer take the question on notice. The former Treasurer knows the answer to this but he will not help her.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the second time.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I say to members opposite: When the Government wants to recycle assets such as ports why do they oppose them? They now come into this House and question policies that will support growth and investment in the Hunter. I say to the member for Newcastle and the former member for Newcastle: if they care about jobs, infrastructure and growth in the Hunter region, they will support the Government's investment strategy. There is no doubt that there is a serious issue with the growth of employment in the Hunter region. That is why this side of the House is investing millions and millions of dollars in infrastructure and millions and millions in revitalising Newcastle.

**Mr Tim Crakanthorp:** Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The question was about restrictions on growing the port; it was very specific.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Treasurer remains relevant. There is no point of order.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** This is the Labor Party's hopeless attempt to win back the support of the business community in the Hunter. For the last 20 years— [*Time expired.*]

#### RESIDENTIAL STRATA AND COMMUNITY SCHEMES

**Dr GEOFF LEE:** My question is addressed to the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation. How is the New South Wales Government improving strata living for the more than two million New South Wales residents living in strata and community schemes?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I will stop the clock until members come to order. The level of interjection is unacceptable. Some members are not listening to me now. I call the member for Rockdale to order for the first time. There is a standing order about interjections and disorderly behaviour. I encourage the member to read that standing order.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** I thank the member for Parramatta for his question. We know the member for Parramatta is interested in jobs and revitalisation. Anyone who visits Parramatta can see cranes in the air and jobs on the ground. The member knows what it takes to revitalise this State and to revitalise his electorate. In fact, just recently he managed to get the Powerhouse Museum to relocate to Parramatta.

The member for Parramatta is the renaissance man of the New South Wales Parliament. He has taken Parramatta out of the political Dark Ages and into a period of enlightenment. We are lucky to have him. This Government is a reforming government—a government that is prepared to do the heavy lifting to improve the lives of people in New South Wales. Part of the heavy lifting includes improving the lives of those who live under strata schemes. At present approximately 25 per cent of people in this State—about two million people—live or work under strata.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the first time. I call the member for Bankstown to order for the first time. I call the member for Strathfield to order for the first time.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** That number is likely to increase to about 50 per cent in the State by 2040. Members might think that 2040 is a long way away, but in reality time flies. Let us cast our minds back to 2000 when the Sydney Olympics were held. That was 15 years ago but it feels like yesterday.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Strathfield to order for the second time.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** That was a great time in our political landscape when the State had its mojo.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** I am only trying to hear the Minister.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! If the member for Strathfield listened she would be able to hear the Minister.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** That mojo was quickly punctured by political inertia.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the second time.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** Members will remember that famous statement by Labor leader Bob Carr, who said in 2001, "Sydney is full."

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Canterbury to order for the first time.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** He pulled up the white flag and said, "On behalf of the Labor Government I surrender. We don't have an answer, we don't have a clue and we don't care". That is what happened but people continued to live under strata. In 2003 an issue papers stated that strata reform was needed because of the problems that were being experienced. This State was in political hibernation for 16 years—16 dark and wintry years. But in 2011 something happened and a great Government is now in office. New horizons started to emerge when the Liberal-Nationals Coalition came to office and started turning things around.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! All members will come to order. I am finding it difficult to hear the Minister's answer.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** I acknowledge in particular Minister Anthony Roberts, the former Minister for Fair Trading, who kicked off this important reform. More than 90 reform issues have been included in the strata proposals that will come before the House in the coming months—historical reforms that we have not seen the likes of for almost 50 years and which include things such as collective sale and renewal.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the third time.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** Members would be aware that many of our older buildings have concrete cancer, are expensive to maintain and are energy inefficient. Many older people, in particular, cannot afford the maintenance to or upgrades of these building. At present all strata owners have to agree to engage in a process of renewal, which is not fair for those who cannot afford to live in those buildings. This Government is proposing a mechanism that exists in First World countries right around the world—in places like New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America—to break the deadlock. Most importantly, this Government will provide protections to the vulnerable to ensure that any mechanism that is used to break the deadlock must be approved by a superior court of record, in this case the Land and Environment Court that will ensure the terms are just and equitable in all the circumstances.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Bankstown will cease interjecting.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** There are plenty of other important reforms such as defect bonds. At the moment anyone living under a strata scheme that is above three levels is not protected by home warranty insurance. This Government is introducing reforms to protect people by ensuring that funds are in place to correct those defects within the first two-year period. These big reforms will provide protection to potential owners in strata corporations. The Government is also introducing reforms relating to renovations—an issue that causes a lot of concern and angst in strata schemes, in particular if people do not know their rights.

**Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.**

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** If clarity is not provided in relation to renovations—whether they are cosmetic and minor renovations such as putting a picture hook on a wall or replacing floorboards, or whether they are major renovations, for example, waterproofing a bathroom or kitchen that will clearly impact on the lives of adjoining tenants—a clearer approval mechanism must be implemented. The Government has reformed

model by-laws to provide clarity in relation to pet ownership, smokers' drift and the important issue of overcrowding. This Government will implement better mechanisms to ensure tighter control in relation to trespassers.

At the moment, if a body corporate has common property such as visitors' car parking spaces that are used by trespassers, no mechanism is in place to remedy that problem. However, under these reforms strata bodies will be allowed to enter into agreements with councils to ensure that trespassers are fined. The Government will introduce other reforms such as proxy farming. Those opposite have a PhD in proxy farming; they know all about it. We will put mechanisms in place to curb that practice. When people participate in meetings of a body corporate they want to know that the vote has not been predetermined.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will not converse across the table.

**Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO:** We are introducing progressive reforms that will enable tenants to have a greater say and participate in strata schemes. These progressive reforms—the biggest we have seen in 50 years—will bring strata schemes into the twenty-first century. Only a mature, sensible and visionary government is able to implement such reforms.

### AUSTRALIAN RUGBY LEAGUE

**Mr GUY ZANGARI:** My question is directed to the Minister for Sport.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I cannot hear the question. If the member for Kiama interjects again he will be called to order for the third time and he will have an early mark.

**Mr GUY ZANGARI:** Should the home of rugby league be in Western Sydney or in the eastern suburbs?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Is that a question? Does the Minister want to answer that question? I am sure there is a standing order whereby I could rule that question out of order for idiocy.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** I am happy to answer the question.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! As the Minister is happy to answer the question I ask Opposition members to cease interjecting. They have asked a question and now they have to listen instead of whingeing about the fact that they cannot hear. It would be helpful if some of them would listen for a change.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** I appreciate the question asked by the member for Fairfield. Most people in New South Wales are passionate about their sport and they are proud of the sporting teams that they follow. It is not about where someone lives or which area of New South Wales owns sport as every person in New South Wales owns sport.

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

**Mr STUART AYRES:** Every person in New South Wales has an opportunity to own rugby league. This Government is working towards ensuring that we have world-class facilities in Sydney. We want to ensure that every person—from the grassroots level through to professional athletes—has the facility that he or she needs to excel. We need a network of facilities that enables all our clubs to succeed. We have to recognise that in a modern environment there are financial pressures on each of our clubs.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Is the member for Fairfield taking a point of order under Standing Order 129?

**Mr Guy Zangari:** I am.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** I have not yet given my point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I thought the member for Fairfield said it was going to be—

**Mr Guy Zangari:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, relevance.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** The question I asked was: Should the home of rugby league be in Western Sydney or in the eastern suburbs?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The Minister is being relevant. If Opposition members take time-wasting points of order I will stop the clock so that the Minister gets his full time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** This Government must be able to deliver facilities that ensure that all sports thrive. We must make sure that we have facilities that attract major events.

**Mr Luke Foley:** Why are you campaigning to bulldoze ANZ, Stuart?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Why did the Leader of the Opposition not ask a question about that? The Minister has the call.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** We need a network of assets that enables sporting events to take place in the eastern suburbs and in the central and western parts of Sydney. On top of that, we also need to make sure that we have assets that allow people in regional New South Wales to access sporting facilities. That is exactly why the Government started its Stadia Strategy in 2012, which was about ensuring that the Government directed public funds—

**Ms Linda Burney:** Point of order: East, west—which one?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Canterbury will resume her seat. I call the member for Canterbury to order for the second time. I call the member for Canterbury to order for the third time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** The Stadia Strategy involved extensive consultation with asset owners, stadium operators and content providers. We continue to work with State sporting organisations. This is about more than rugby league. It is about making sure that other sports such as AFL, rugby union, basketball and netball are given access to facilities. Netball is having a fantastic time with the World Cup being held exclusively in Sydney at the moment. It is a great event and the Diamonds are doing a wonderful job. It reflects the fact that this Government is not about picking and choosing winners between east and west. We are not in the battle over which is the better part of Sydney. We are about making sure that everyone who wants to access sport can do so at a venue that is close to his or her home and appropriate for the content provider and clubs.

Make no mistake, for too long in New South Wales there was an ad hoc approach to investing in sporting facilities. We have spent lots of money, much of which was not directed well. We have fallen behind other States on the quality of our primary infrastructure and our major tier one sporting assets. That is why we went to the election with our clear Rebuilding NSW plan that will inject the most significant investment of funds into sporting infrastructure since the Olympics. In fact, it is likely to be the most significant expenditure of public funds on sporting infrastructure in the history of this State. Whether in eastern, central or western parts of Sydney or in regional New South Wales we will continue to work with stakeholders, government bodies, the public and sporting providers to ensure that every person—athletes or spectators—can go to the sporting venue that they want in the location that they need.

**Mr GUY ZANGARI:** I seek more information from the Minister for Sport, who is also the Minister Assisting the Premier on Western Sydney.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister has completed his answer.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

**Mr MARK COURE:** My question is addressed to the Minister for Early Childhood Education. How is the New South Wales Government improving access to early childhood education?

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS:** I thank the good member for Oatley for his question and note that he has a keen interest in early childhood education, as he should. I am looking forward to joining the member tomorrow when we visit Possums Child Care Centre in South Hurstville, which is doing a great job delivering early childhood education programs.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member to Kogarah to order for the first time.

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS:** As the Premier said earlier, members on this side of the House understand small business. We also understand the vital role of early childhood education in ensuring that all children get the best start in life. The preschool funding model that we introduced in January 2014 is delivering increased funding to better assist community preschools perform their important role of supporting children's learning and development in the year before school. The preschool funding model reflects the Government's commitment to needs-based funding that ensures that all children have the opportunity to access early education in the year before school and that cost is not a barrier to access.

Under the model the Government is providing \$150 million to community-based preschools, which is a 20 per cent increase on previous funding. Since introducing the preschool funding model 95 per cent of community preschools have received increases in their base funding rate. Importantly, the highest increases have been directed to Aboriginal children and children from low-income families. Some really positive results are already being produced from the preschool funding model, which is reflected in enrolment data from the 2014 community preschool census. For example, enrolments of four- and five-year-old children in the year before school have increased by 2 per cent and enrolments of children from low socio-economic and Aboriginal backgrounds have increased by 5 per cent.

The New South Wales Government also supports choices for families. We understand that working families need different access to early childhood education and recognise that long day care is often their preferred option. Children should not miss out on the opportunity to access an educational program simply because their parents have chosen a long day care setting. On 6 July this year I announced a \$20 million fund to support long day care services that provide early childhood education in the year before school. That funding is being made available to services this year through the new Long Day Care National Partnership Grants Program.

More than 2,300 long day care services are potentially eligible for the grants, which are worth \$300 for each enrolled four- and five-year-old child at a centre. Services will be able to use the funding to purchase resources and create a program in the year before school based on the Early Years Learning Framework. The department is working closely with service providers to ensure that they are informed of the eligibility requirements and able to provide all the necessary documentation in order to receive those payments. As of yesterday—less than two weeks after providers were first contacted about the fund—the department has received completed documentation from 654 services, which accounts for about 31 per cent of identified providers. Providers are asked to complete and return their documentation before 21 August in order to receive their funding. I encourage all members to ensure that their local providers meet the deadline so that their communities do not miss out.

Grant funding will be distributed to service providers based on the total number of four- and five-year-old children enrolled across the services they operate. Recipients can look forward to receiving payments in early October this year. This program will help strengthen the provision of early childhood education programs in the year before school across a variety of settings for children and families in New South Wales. Once again, these reforms show that members on this side of the House are committed to making sure that our future generations get the very best start in life.

### **SYDNEY SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI:** My question is directed to the Minister for Sport. Given his advocacy for construction of a new 60,000-seat stadium in Sydney's east, which would sound the death knell for ANZ Stadium, is he the Minister for Sydney Olympic Park or the Minister for Moore Park?

**Mr STUART AYRES:** At least at the very beginning of his question the member for Fairfield managed to get it very right—I am the Minister for Sport. In the past couple of months the shadow Minister has been on a bit of a road trip around the State and has promised upgrades to Campbelltown stadium, Brookvale

Oval, Leichardt Oval, Kogarah oval, Penrith Stadium, Parramatta Stadium, ANZ Stadium, Allianz Stadium and Central Coast Stadium. But wherever he goes he never talks about money. Wherever he goes he has no plan. Wherever he goes he cannot actually tell anyone what he is going to do.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Fairfield will come to order.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** As I was saying in my earlier answer, one of the biggest problems we have faced around sporting infrastructure in New South Wales is the lack of a coherent plan and focused investment.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! All members who are on one or two calls to order are deemed to be on three calls to order.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** This is the distinct difference between what has happened in New South Wales, particularly in Sydney, and what has happened in other cities around the country. Currently the Western Australian Government is investing upwards of \$1 billion in Perth Stadium at Burswood. It will be a 60,000-seat stadium and the newest and probably most state-of-the-art facility in this country. The Victorian Government has had a sustained program of investing in its Olympic Park precinct, including ongoing investment in the Melbourne Cricket Ground. It built Etihad Stadium and AAMI Park, which is a rectangular stadium. Melbourne is also home to the Australian Open and has a fantastic tennis facility with three covered venues. Queensland has also invested significantly in its assets, and has rebuilt Suncorp Stadium. None of those investments have been matched in New South Wales over the same period.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129. My question was very specific: Is the Minister the "Minister for Moore Park" or the "Minister for Sydney Olympic Park"? It has nothing to do with Victoria or Queensland.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! That is the dumbest point of order I have ever heard in this Chamber. The member for Fairfield knows the Minister is the Minister for Sport. I direct the member for Fairfield to remove himself from the Chamber until the conclusion of question time. We have descended into idiocy. I ask visitors of the public gallery to restrain themselves.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Fairfield left the Chamber at 3.01 p.m.]*

**Mr STUART AYRES:** The key point is that since the 2000 Olympics other States have continued to invest in their infrastructure while New South Wales has not. It is important that we get it right. We are not Melbourne; we are not Victoria. The shape of Sydney is different. It is important that we have assets across the entire Sydney region. It is important that we have assets that can hold indoor events. It is important that those indoor facilities have the capacity to host emerging sports—particularly given our important presence in Asia—such as badminton, netball and table tennis. In fact, on the badminton world tour the event with the largest prize money is held in Sydney. Those are the types of things we must continue to consider.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Wyong to order for the first time.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** As I said before, only one side of the House has allocated funds to make sure there is a coherent plan—and it is this side.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I remind the member for Kogarah that he is on three calls to order.

**Mr STUART AYRES:** Not only that, the Government took its rebuilding proposal to the people of New South Wales. We said that for the first time in at least 15 years we would develop a coherent strategy for investing in our sporting infrastructure. If we do not do that, our premium content will be genuinely at risk. If we do not get the assets right, our franchises will be at risk. The Government will continue to work with each of those franchises and the clubs we are so passionate about. We will continue to work with the National Rugby League; we will continue to work with the Australian Rugby Union; we will continue to work with the Australian Football League; and we will continue to work with basketball, netball and tennis to make sure that we have the assets. I say to all those watching this broadcast and all those in the gallery today that there is only one side of politics in this State that is willing to invest a significant amount of money to make sure that Sydney returns to the spot it deserves—that is, the number one sporting city in the country. That is why we need to invest properly and that is why we need a coherent plan.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Wollongong will come to order. Visitors in the public gallery will restrain themselves.

**WASTE LESS, RECYCLE MORE INITIATIVE**

**Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH:** My question is addressed to the Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, and Assistant Minister for Planning. How is the New South Wales Government helping communities look after their local environment and increase recycling rates?

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN:** The New South Wales Government is leading the country in recycling policy, standing with our communities to protect their local environment. Whether it is waste, whether it is our container deposit scheme or whether it is micro plastics, the Government is driving up recycling, driving down litter and safeguarding our marine environment. I thank the member for Coogee for his question. He is a fierce advocate for action on recycling, on litter and on plastics pollution.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order. Members who continue to interject will be removed from the Chamber.

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN:** With the greatest respect to the member for Coogee, I wish this question had come from a Labor member. We have had almost 100 questions from the Opposition during question time since the election.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I direct the member for Kogarah to remove himself from the Chamber for a period of one hour.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Kogarah left the Chamber at 3.05 p.m.]*

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN:** Where is the Opposition's interest in the environment? Opposition members have not asked me a single question about it in all that time. I have had questions from my colleagues about the environment because they care about the environment. I have had questions from the member for Balmain about the environment because he cares about the environment. I have had a question from the member for Lake Macquarie about the environment because he cares. But what have we heard from the Opposition? Not a peep—nada, null, niente, nunca, nicht, nothing. All the noise pollution has gone. I know some Opposition members are doing their best to imitate the barking owl. I can assure them that barking owls are among the threatened species we will be protecting under our Saving our Species program.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Blacktown has been quiet all afternoon—just for a change—and he should not start interjecting now. He will come to order. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time.

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN:** There is one threatened species that we will not be protecting—that is, Labor members of Parliament in the inner city. Our Waste Less, Recycle More initiative is a five-year, \$465 million package that is transforming recycling in New South Wales. We are investing in new facilities.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I direct the member for Keira to remove himself from the Chamber for a period of one hour.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Keira left the Chamber at 3.07 p.m.]*

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN:** We are delivering sustainable jobs across New South Wales and we are keeping New South Wales on track to reach our ambitious recycling targets. Labor in government raised taxes on waste but pocketed the cash—taxing communities without investing enough in sustainability. So it is no surprise that Labor was way behind on its recycling targets—it kicked the can down the road. But there is more to do. Litter is a blight on our local environment. Litter does serious damage to marine animals. Litter costs Australia an estimated \$350 million every year to clean up. We are working closely with industry to phase out micro-beads from personal care products by 2016. We are not afraid of the big reforms needed to reduce the impact of litter on our environment. Beverage containers currently account for one in three pieces of litter, polluting our beaches, our parks, our roads and our waterways. In February we announced that if re-elected we would introduce a cost-effective container deposit scheme. I am pleased to report to the House that we are fulfilling our promise. We have established a committee of experts to advise us on a scheme for New South Wales.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the second time.



**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN:** This committee is chaired by the Environment Protection Authority and includes experts on the environment, recycling, innovation and litter reduction. The committee will advise on the design of a scheme that is environmentally effective and economically responsible. Our scheme will target the two billion containers from drinks consumed away from home annually in New South Wales. It will include an incentive and reverse vending machines. The committee's consultation will focus on incentives for community participation, the scope of containers to be redeemable, the involvement of local government and the recycling industry, and the location of reverse vending machines.

As we know, kerbside recycling is effective at home. But all too often the containers from drinks consumed away from home end up as litter in our environment. I look forward to engaging with the community and stakeholders throughout the consultation process. A container deposit scheme is a once-in-a-generation environmental reform. We will be implementing this scheme by 1 July 2017. I look forward to providing further updates to all members of the House as we progress towards this momentous reform.

### DISABILITY CARE HUB

**Mr GREG PIPER:** My question is directed to the Minister for Family and Community Services, representing the Minister for Ageing, and Minister for Disability Services. Given concern that non-government organisations lack capacity to provide adequate care in the community for people with the most profound developmental disabilities, will the Government reconsider withdrawing from provision of State-operated residential care and consider a plan such as that put forward by Stockton Centre supporters for the creation of a disability care hub?

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** I thank the member for Lake Macquarie for his question and for his interest in people with disabilities, but, more significantly, for all people with vulnerabilities who require us as a community to support them and find the best way forward to provide that support. Last night the member for Lake Macquarie joined me at Tom Uren Place, working on a new pop-up for Family and Community Services and housing.

**Mr Greg Piper:** Congratulations on that, too.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** I thank the member for Lake Macquarie. A lot of good work is being done by officers from Family and Community Services to try to reach out to homeless people, rather than having homeless people come to them. I understand the member's concerns. Among the group of people who make up the Government today—even when in opposition—there is a high level of concern about how best to support people with disabilities. I recollect over the years a number of shadow Ministers working extensively in this area; in fact, the member for Bega was driving a lot of work, both in opposition and in government, to ensure that individuals with disability receive a support package, rather than being effectively forced to take what the Government was handing out. He really drove in New South Wales the idea that each of those individuals should be given a financial package and allowed to choose the services that they need. That choice is very important because it led to the concept of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Of course, the National Disability Insurance Scheme—when finally it is completely operational, in 2018—will have about \$6.4 billion to spend in that area. About \$2.7 billion is currently being spent to support people with disabilities, but that funding will increase to \$6.4 billion under a partnership between the Commonwealth and the State Government. There is no question that there is a high level of bona fides on this side of the House in trying to support that concept. At the same time, we also recognise that the argument about individuals remaining in the community is important. The United Nations Convention on People with Disability has indicated that it is far better to have these people living in the community as individuals and making choices for themselves. That is what is driving the review and the work that is being done by my friend in the upper House the Hon. John Ajaka. He is doing a lot of good work, meeting with the community and trying to satisfy their concerns.

In the area that the member mentioned, Stockton, there are three large residential centres: at Kanangra, Tomaree and Stockton. Throughout the whole of New South Wales the number of people living in large residential centres is down to about 700. The Government and I appreciate, as I am sure even the Opposition would, the sensitivities of parents whose children—now not so young in many cases—have been living in large institutions for many, many years. It is a very difficult and sensitive issue, and one on which any government will need to work carefully and sensitively in applying the transition to living in the community. The member referred to the concept of the Stockton disability care hub. The Government assessed that concept. I have read it

and understand the drivers for it. I understand that there are arguments from some very concerned parents, as well as from some of the union representatives and people who work there, who are also concerned about their jobs. We understand that.

But, at the end of the day, it is about the individuals. If we believe in what the United Nations has set as our agenda—that is, to have individuals with disability out in the community—then the hub proposal just does not cut it. There have been some renovations at the Stockton Centre, but it is basically a facility that represents the middle of last century—which is not where we should be approaching the middle of this century. So I appreciate the member's interest and his speaking up on behalf of his community, and I appreciate that he has put the proposal forward so the Government can consider it. I can assure the member that the Government has considered it. We understand it is difficult as we move into those transitions plans and try to get the transition completed by 2018. I give the member an assurance that we will work with those families and staff and do everything possible to make sure it is a smooth transition that produces better outcomes for people with disability.

### ELECTRICITY PRICES

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** My question is addressed to the Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy. How has the Government's action to deregulate electricity prices delivered benefits to New South Wales families and businesses?

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** I thank the member for his question. I welcome members of the Putney branch who are in the public gallery. It is great to see them. Like all those on this side of the Chamber, the member for Ku-ring-gai is committed to ensuring that electricity prices continue to fall for every household and business in every electorate. I inform the House that on 7 April last year the Government committed to an historic reform that put the people of this State in control of their energy bills for the first time. Our deregulation of retail electricity prices from 1 July 2014 has meant that customers have more choice, greater control and lower electricity prices. This is a reform that has delivered for the people of this State, yet it was one that those opposite tried their hardest to prevent. We argued in this place that the reform would attract new retailers to the market and put downward pressure on electricity prices. We argued for this reform in the face of unyielding resistance from those opposite. When the Leader of the Opposition was in the other place he argued vehemently against lower prices for the families and businesses of New South Wales. It gives me no pleasure to inform the House of that. He said:

The deregulation of electricity prices in New South Wales will give retailers the permission they need to charge their consumers whatever price they feel is appropriate.

Yet again, the Leader of the Opposition has been proven wrong. He has been making a habit of that since his first day on the job. But let us not take my word for it.

**Ms Noreen Hay:** Yes, let's not.

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

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** I do not care what those opposite think; my cup of care is totally empty. In fact, the rest of the State does not care what they think; they are totally irrelevant as a party as well as an opposition. The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART] found that our reform is driving down prices for New South Wales families. In its review in July this year the tribunal found, and I quote—

**Ms Anna Watson:** You read this last time. You are wasting our time.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** The member for Shellharbour does not like it. I bet she has switched and saved money. Come on, she has. And so has the member for Rockdale. We will get around to that; I have the list.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** In July IPART found that:

... the New South Wales Government's deregulation of the retail electricity market was a major reason for increased competition, which is delivering savings for New South Wales customers.

And, according to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal, families are now saving on average between \$290 and \$390 a year simply by switching to a competitive market offer, as the member opposite has. Average small business customers are saving between \$360 and \$610. These are savings that those opposite actively campaigned against, holding back the people of New South Wales. They all jumped on board as soon as the deregulated cuts came into effect.

**Mr Michael Daley:** That is not true.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** Are you still on the old price?

**Mr Michael Daley:** There is a market in panels.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** So the member for Maroubra has got panels. But the member for Rockdale has switched. If an endorsement from IPART is not enough, let us see what the Australian Energy Market Commission [AEMC] has to say.

**Dr Geoff Lee:** Tell us.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** I will tell the member for Parramatta. In its 2015 retail competition review, released on 30 June this year, the AEMC singled out New South Wales. It said:

Further improvements in retail competition are expected in NSW following the removal of price regulation in 2014, with rivalry between firms increasing.

Unlike the State of Origin, this rivalry is delivering for the people of New South Wales. The AEMC said that families using the Commonwealth Government's free and independent comparison website Energy Made Easy could find a deal that would save them up to \$720 per year. Members will have used the site. It is fantastic. That \$720 would benefit many Labor branch members. Labor opposed the savings. Yet again, the Labor Party is facing a crisis of identity and a profound existential dilemma: Whom does the Labor Party stand for, now that it has abandoned its socialist objective? The families and businesses of New South Wales cannot rely on Labor standing up for them.

**Pursuant to standing order additional information provided.**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** It gives me no pleasure to once again inform the House that the Leader of the Opposition has made it all too clear that he does not support lower electricity bills for families in New South Wales. Today the Labor Party finds that its view contradicts that of another respected, expert body—that is, the St Vincent de Paul Society. What a disgrace. The St Vincent de Paul Society released its "NSW Energy Prices July 2015" report on Monday. The report found:

Customers switching from the worst electricity standing offer—

under the Opposition—

to the best market offer—

under the Government—

can save up to \$550-\$1,050 per annum ...

That amount could benefit members in two Labor branches. Either Labor is lying or it is saying that the St Vincent de Paul Society is lying. Today presents an opportunity for Opposition members to put on the record that they made a mistake on electricity deregulation. This is a defining moment for the Leader of the Opposition. He has the opportunity to admit on the record the terrible mistake he made in opposing competition in the energy market. Does the Leader of the Opposition disagree with the finding of the St Vincent de Paul Society that the average electricity retail standing offer is now \$400 less per year? Fortunately, the Government supports the families and businesses of New South Wales. They can rely on us to continue to drive down the cost of living and the cost of doing business in this State. Who has switched electricity providers? Government members have all switched. [*Time expired.*]

**Question time concluded at 3.22 p.m.**

## PETITIONS

**The Speaker announced that the following petition signed by more than 10,000 persons was lodged for presentation:**

### **Licensed Premises Trading Restrictions**

Petition requesting the Government to amend the Liquor Amendment Act 2014 to allow affected hotels to provide takeaway bottle sales past 10.00 p.m., received from **Mr Kevin Anderson**.

**Discussion on petition set down as an order of the day for a future day.**

**The Clerk announced that the following petitions signed by fewer than 500 persons were lodged for presentation:**

### **Sydney Electorate Public High School**

Petition requesting the establishment of a public high school in the Sydney electorate, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **Inner-city Social Housing**

Petition requesting the retention and proper maintenance of inner-city public housing stock, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **Same-sex Marriage**

Petition supporting same-sex marriage, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **Pet Shops**

Petition opposing the sale of animals in pet shops, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **Slaughterhouse Monitoring**

Petition requesting mandatory closed-circuit television for all New South Wales slaughterhouses, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **Plastic Bags Ban**

Petition calling on the Government to introduce legislation to ban single-use lightweight plastic bags at retail points of sale in New South Wales to reduce waste and environmental degradation, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

### **Container Deposit Levy**

Petition requesting the Government introduce a container deposit levy to reduce litter and increase recycling rates of drink containers, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

**The Clerk announced that the following petition signed by more than 500 persons was lodged for presentation:**

### **Manning Base Hospital**

Petition requesting funding for the implementation of stage one of Manning Base Hospital, received from **Ms Kate Washington**.

## WORKERS COMPENSATION AMENDMENT BILL 2015

### STATE INSURANCE AND CARE GOVERNANCE BILL 2015

#### Consideration in Detail

#### Consideration of the Legislative Council amendments.

##### *Schedule of amendment to the Workers Compensation Amendment Bill 2015 referred to in message of 13 August 2015*

**No. 1 CDP no. 1 [c2015-048]**

Page 18, schedule 6. Insert after line 30:

- (2) This clause does not apply to an amendment made by the 2015 amending Act to section 25 or 26 of the 1987 Act (or to clause 5 of this Part in its application to such an amendment).

##### *Schedule of amendments to the State Insurance and Care Governance Bill 2015 referred to in message of 13 August 2015*

**No. 1 SFP no. 1 [c2015-038B]**

Page 4, clause 9 (1), lines 15–18. Omit all words on those lines.

**No. 2 SFP no. 2 [c2015-038B]**

Page 4, clause 9 (2), line 19. Omit "other".

**No. 3 CDP no. 3 [c2015-039F]**

Page 11. Insert after line 1:

#### **27 Supervision of operation of insurance and compensation schemes by Parliamentary Committee**

- (1) As soon as practicable after the commencement of this section and the commencement of the first session of each Parliament, a committee of the Legislative Council is to be designated by resolution of the Legislative Council as the designated committee for the purposes of this section.
- (2) The resolution of the Legislative Council is to specify the terms of reference of the committee so designated which are to relate to the supervision of the operation of the insurance and compensation schemes established under the workers compensation and motor accidents legislation.
- (3) On the commencement of this section, the Parliamentary Committee designated under section 11 of the *Safety, Return to Work and Support Board Act 2012* (as in force immediately before its repeal by this Act) is taken to be the designated committee under this section.
- (4) In this section, the ***workers compensation and motor accidents legislation*** includes the following:
  - (a) the *Motor Accidents (Lifetime Care and Support) Act 2006*,
  - (b) the *Workers' Compensation (Dust Diseases) Act 1942*.

**No. 4 CDP no. 4 [c2015-039F]**

Page 26, schedule 4, lines 5–7. Omit all words on those lines.

**No. 5 CDP no. 5 [c2015-039F]**

Page 26, schedule 4. Insert after line 16:

#### **13 Review by Parliamentary Committee**

- (1) As soon as practicable after the second anniversary of the commencement of this clause, a committee of the Legislative Council is to be designated by resolution of the Legislative Council to review this Act (including the amendments made by this Act) to determine whether the policy objectives of the Act or those amendments remain valid and whether the terms of the Act (or of the Acts so amended) remain appropriate for securing those objectives.

- (2) The review is to be undertaken as soon as possible after the committee is appointed.
- (3) A report on the outcome of the review is to be tabled in each House of Parliament.

No. 6 **CDP no. 6 [c2015-039F]**

Page 52, schedule 10 [2]. Insert after line 12:

***Dust Diseases Board*** means the Dust Diseases Board established by section 5AC.

No. 7 **CDP no. 7 [c2015-039F]**

Page 53, schedule 10 [4]. Insert after line 8:

**5AC Dust Diseases Board**

- (1) There is established a Dust Diseases Board comprising the following members appointed by the Minister:
  - (a) 3 persons appointed to represent employers,
  - (b) 3 persons appointed to represent employees,
  - (c) representatives of dust diseases sufferers' support, advocacy or awareness groups or organisations,
  - (d) persons involved in research into dust diseases or in academic matters relating to dust diseases,
  - (e) health professionals,
  - (f) an independent chairperson.
- (2) The Dust Diseases Board has such functions as are conferred or imposed on it by or under this or any other Act.
- (3) Subject to the regulations, a member of the Dust Diseases Board holds office for such period (not exceeding 3 years) as is specified in the member's instrument of appointment.
- (4) Subject to the regulations, the procedure for the calling of meetings of the Dust Diseases Board and for the conduct of business at those meetings is to be determined by the Chairperson of the Dust Diseases Board.
- (5) The regulations may make provision for or with respect to the members and procedure of the Dust Diseases Board.

No. 8 **CDP no. 8 [2015-039F]**

Page 53, schedule 10. Insert after line 32:

[9] **Section 6 (2A)** Omit "board". Insert instead "Dust Diseases Board".

No. 9 **CDP no. 9 [2015-039F]**

Page 54, schedule 10. Insert after line 25:

[19] **Section 8 Certificate of Medical Assessment Panel and rates of compensation**

Insert after section 8 (1):

- (1A) The Authority is to decide whether to accept or refuse a claim for compensation within 2 working days after:
  - (a) the Medical Assessment Panel issues a certificate under subsection (1), or
  - (b) the Authority is provided with the information required by the Authority to enable the claim to be determined, whichever is the later.
- (1AA) However any decision by the Authority made after that 2-day period in respect of the claim is not invalid merely because of when it is made.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET** (Hawkesbury—Minister for Finance, Services and Property)  
[3.25 p.m.]: I move:

That the House agree to the Legislative Council amendments.

The Coalition is committed to protecting the most vulnerable in our community and is proud of its record, including on workers compensation. The Workers Compensation Amendment Bill 2015 and the State Insurance and Care Governance Bill 2015 that were passed in the other place last night introduce a package of reforms that are intended to make the workers compensation system in this State more fair, sustainable and focused on our customers. They are the people for whom the insurance and care schemes exist—workers, businesses, injured people, scheme participants and their families. The legislation is important for the people of New South Wales, and that was reflected in the debate.

This is an historic day. We have changed for the better the way in which insurance and care services will be delivered across the State. Our benefit reforms give enhanced support to those workers with the highest needs and encourage return to and recovery at work. The reforms uphold the inherent dignity of every worker and recognise the dignity of getting back to work. But we cannot do good without first doing well. These reforms have been made possible only because of the Government's superior financial management. As I have said many times before, it is not possible to have a fair scheme without having a sustainable scheme. Financial stability guarantees continued support for injured workers now and in the future. As part of the Government's broader package for businesses it now pays to be safe. Those who do the right thing and provide safe workplaces and have better return-to-work rates should be recognised and rewarded. And they will be, with premium discounts.

The bills fundamentally transform the way that insurance services will be delivered across government. That change is supported—in principle at least—by nearly everyone in this place. The creation of a single insurance service provider, a single regulator of insurance and an independent workplace safety regulator puts the person and their needs and goals at the centre of decisions, not at the end. The new structure will be far more transparent and accountable and, most importantly, will lead to better outcomes for injured workers and road users. It also responds to one of the main criticisms that have come from the various reviews into WorkCover in the past two years—namely, the in-built conflict between its regulatory and service delivery functions. The new structure meets the requirements of stakeholders as well. The reforms are about shifting from an adversarial insurance model to a person-centred and empathetic one—a move that all members should support.

I take this opportunity to thank all those who participated in the debate in a constructive way and who demonstrated faith in this significant legislation. I thank our colleagues in the upper House who debated this issue at length, in particular the Christian Democratic Party. I acknowledge the work of Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile and his contribution to strengthening the legislation through the amendments he introduced in the other place last night. I also acknowledge the numerous committees that conducted reviews over the past two years into workers compensation arrangements in the State.

I also pay tribute to the various stakeholders and the workers support groups, particularly the Bernie Banton Foundation, who have been tireless in their advocacy and dedication. I pay tribute to the Premier and everyone in the Government who has championed this cause from day one. Most importantly, I thank the people of New South Wales for trusting this Government to embark on the important issues that will ensue from this historic legislation. Today we start delivering unprecedented insurance, care and support that the people of New South Wales need and deserve. It is a new start for everyone impacted by insurance and care arrangements in this State and the way in which they are managed. Now we can start putting the person, not the process, at the centre of everything we do. I commend the bills to the House.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR** (Cessnock) [3.30 p.m.]: I acknowledge at the outset that we will not oppose any of the amendments that were passed in the upper House last night. However, a couple of important contributions were made last night that should be recognised in this place. The Minister referred to the Bernie Banton Foundation. Quite frankly, Bernie would be rolling over in his grave not only today but also yesterday and the day before. Members of the Bernie Banton Foundation have recognised that they have not seen the bill, they have not read the bill and they do not understand the bill; they acknowledge that they are not lawyers and experts in this area of the law. But the Minister made a commitment that victims would participate on a future advisory board and they were very happy with that. To that very basic, surface-level end, I agree with their decision to support that commitment. But undoubtedly they did not understand all of the other layers underlying that commitment.

I also caution the House about the speed of getting legislation such as this through both Chambers. I do not complain so much about the speed of the legislation going through this House because it was introduced last Wednesday and it was debated this Tuesday; in essence, we had six days for debate, but we were not expecting it to be rushed through the upper House quite so quickly. I sat in the upper House last night through the entire process until the debate concluded at 12.30 a.m.—I do not feel I have done anything wrong to deserve that, but there I was. I was surprised to see Police Association members in the foyer. In the past 24 hours we have

discovered that as a result of speeding through these complex, detailed bills we almost forgot to include our police, paramedics and fireys in this legislation. Their death benefits are tied to the schedules of other bills, but in this instance we were putting that death benefit into the legislation as opposed to a schedule, and we almost left them out.

Yesterday at about 4.30 p.m. Police Association members told me that they had become aware of that omission. They got on the phone and started talking to people about the need to include them and, fortunately, their concerns were addressed last night in the upper House through amendments moved by the Christian Democratic Party. But as late as 10.00 p.m. last night, after it came to my attention that Police Association members were in Parliament House to have their concerns addressed, I asked what was happening with the fireys and the ambos. The people I asked were a bit taken aback—they did not have the answers and there were lots of glazed-over eyes. I therefore caution the House about rushing through complex legislation such as this.

The workers compensation legislation going through both Houses this week, as it did in 2012, is a bit of *deja vu*. The 2012 legislation had some unintended consequences and undoubtedly this legislation also will have some unintended consequences. I am aware that the Minister has already received a briefing from the WorkCover Independent Review Office, which indicates that people who are in the 0 to 20 per cent permanent impairment category will now be required to have an independent medical expert assessment. Each one of those processes costs about \$1,000 and about 65,000 of them are done each year. Those assessments will cost the existing fund an additional \$65 million each year. I note that people will not be allowed to have a second medical assessment. I query whether we are doing ourselves a favour or whether we are bringing ourselves unstuck by moving legislation through so quickly.

Another thing I noted last night in the upper House was: Never take a committee away from the upper House. The upper House loves its committees. It moved immediately to reinstate the committee, which I believe is a good thing. Finally, I note that the terminology surrounding the Dust Diseases Board, whether it is part of the Workers Compensation Dust Diseases Board or the board of the Workers Compensation Dust Diseases Board, is very confusing. We railed in this place and in the other place to try to protect the board of the Workers Compensation Dust Diseases Board, which has included three people from employee groups, three people from employer groups and an independent Chair. Much of the power, the autonomy and the ability of that body to make decisions on compensation have essentially been removed. Listening to the comments in the upper House last night it seems that although the Government had the numbers, the authority of the board has been removed because it has not been prosecuted to the satisfaction of a large number of members of this Parliament.

I note that one of the amendments moved successfully by the Christian Democratic Party related to holding on to some structure around the board. As Mr David Shoebridge said in the other place, it is essentially the old board but it is now super light. The Hon. Adam Searle in the other place said that it is as simple as this: Yesterday that board could make decisions; today, after the passing of this legislation, it cannot. We should be mindful that we have not held on to the board; Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile has not saved that board. It might sound nice and it might be able to be put on some sort of glossy brochure, but he has failed that body. I appreciate that the language surrounding those two bodies is very confusing, but there is one very specific body known as the board of the Workers Compensation Dust Diseases Board, and it has been, for all intents and purposes, abolished. That said, we will not oppose the amendments.

**Question—That the motion be agreed to—put and resolved in the affirmative.**

**Motion agreed to.**

**Legislative Council amendments agreed to.**

**Message sent to the Legislative Council advising it of the resolution.**

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS**

### **Financial Year 2015-16**

**Debate resumed from 25 June 2015.**

**Mr LEE EVANS** (Heathcote) [3.37 p.m.]: It is very rare in this House that a member can talk plainly about his electorate. It is a great pleasure for me to speak about the fantastic things that have come out of not



only this budget but also previous budgets. The Heathcote electorate covers a large area spanning Menai and parts of Kirrawee in the north to Wombarra and north Coledale in the south. It is blessed with some of the most spectacular scenery in New South Wales, and arguably in the world. With nearly 60,000 voters, the electorate of Heathcote has a diverse demographic from small coastal villages to large residential and business hubs.

There are coastal hamlets such as Maianbar and Bundeena that are situated on the peaceful Port Hacking River system and quaint villages and communities along the escarpment, including Wombarra, Coalcliff, Stanwell Park and Scarborough. Stanwell Tops is one of the best vantage points to view the amazing engineering feat of the Sea Cliff Bridge, completed by the Labor Government in its last term. It is an iconic feature of the beautiful coastline and it is very reminiscent of some of the Italian bridges along the Amalfi coast—it is absolutely spectacular. I am very proud to have that piece of infrastructure in my electorate. For a mere \$57 million we have something that will be there for the next 100 years at least.

**Mr John Robertson:** I think we built that, didn't we?

**Mr LEE EVANS:** Yes. If the member for Blacktown had been listening and not talking he would have heard me say that it was opened in 2009. A plain, straight bridge could have been built but instead it is a structure of engineering excellence that has made a real difference not only to tourism in my electorate but also to tourism along the entire escarpment area. I am privileged to have in my electorate the Royal National Park, which was created and established in 1879; it is the second oldest national park in the world after Yellowstone National Park. The Royal National Park is only one hour's drive from Sydney and is known locally as "the Nasho". It attracts more than four million visitors per year.

People travel on the Grand Pacific Drive through the national park, Helensburgh, through the escarpment, over the beautiful iconic bridge, down the coast and into the electorate of Kiama. I mention the Royal National Park because of its World Heritage Listing. It takes a lot of time and effort to gain a World Heritage Listing. In the past couple of years the Government has done its part. It takes three or four years to get the listing in the State before it is handed over to the Federal Government. Last year application was made for appraisal by the Federal Government before sending it to UNESCO. I am putting my hand up to help present that application.

The Bundeena fire station, which was promised during the 2011 election, is now being delivered. The Bundeena ambulance station was of major concern because it was housed in a small garage, while the fire station, which was more than 55 years old, was situated next door. As a first for New South Wales, the ambulance station and the fire station are now housed in one building, with some separate quarters, but combined cooking and leisure facilities. The building houses headquarters for emergencies, as fires occur in the Royal National Park on a regular basis. Once a fire starts in the national park, it is very hard to stop. We now have a base for emergency services at Bundeena that includes overnight accommodation.

During the 2011 election I campaigned for the Heathcote pedestrian bridge, which took a long time to be delivered. I thought when coming to government that when something was promised it was delivered. Making good on that promise took several years, but on the eve of the 2015 election it was delivered. The timing of its delivery disappointed me greatly; it should have been delivered 1½ years earlier. The budget for the bridge was blowing out, but it was brought back to the budgeted \$3 million. However, problems with power, water and sewerage resulted in the total bill for the bridge being \$5.5 million. I turn now to Bulli Hospital redevelopment. In 2003 when I was the candidate for Keira—

**Mr John Robertson:** How did that work out for you?

**Mr LEE EVANS:** It did not go well. I accompanied the spokesperson for Health to Bulli Hospital where we stood in front of the then 140-year-old development and the question was asked: What are we going to do with it? The previous Labor Government had left it to rot; it had left it to wither and die on the vine. It was riddled with golden staph and had all sorts of problems. The cost to redevelop the building and fix its problems was about \$50 million or \$60 million. When I was asked, as the candidate, what should be done with Bulli Hospital I promptly said, "Bulldoze it!" The health spokesperson, now Minister for Health Jillian Skinner, nearly had a conniption. Bulli Hospital will now be bulldozed.

**Mr John Robertson:** Shame. You said you would give them an ED. What happened?

**Mr LEE EVANS:** But it will be replaced with a state-of-the-art health facility—

**Mr John Robertson:** Health facility, not a hospital.

**Mr LEE EVANS:** It will be a health facility, but there will be a medical centre attached. It will not be a hospital because there is a hospital four minutes down the road in Wollongong. If the member for Blacktown knew the area—

**Mr John Robertson:** I do know it well.

**Mr LEE EVANS:** Excellent.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Marshall):** Order! The member for Heathcote will not respond to interjections.

**Mr LEE EVANS:** If the member for Blacktown knew what he was talking about—

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Marshall):** Order! The member for Heathcote will not incite interjections. The member will continue with his contribution. The member for Blacktown will not encourage the member for Heathcote.

**Mr LEE EVANS:** IRT in the Illawarra, in a joint venture with NSW Health, will create a state-of-the-art aged and geriatric centre that will provide aged care for the over 55s and beyond, including nursing and geriatric care. The health centre adjacent to the new facility will be a brand new state-of-the-art centre. The public-private partnership is for \$115 million. The IRT project was part funded through the lease of the Port of Wollongong—that money is being utilised and is doing good in the area. Over the past 70 decades or so we have talked about the F6-M1. The corridor has been there for more than 80 years. Finally the Coalition is doing a scoping study to commence the expressway. The people of the southern suburbs have called for this expressway for more than 80 years; it has been a long time coming.

One of my proudest achievements is getting rid of coal seam gas [CSG] in water catchment areas. I regarded it as my personal responsibility, as the major dams for supplying Sydney's drinking water were in my electorate, to ensure that CSG did not enter that special water catchment area. I am proud to say that has been achieved. There are no CSG petroleum exploration licences across any water catchment areas in the electorate of Heathcote. It has been a long and arduous fight, but it has been worth it. It is important to ensure we have fresh drinking water for this generation and generations to come. I am very proud that that has been achieved.

I turn now to deal with the 2015-16 budget. As the member for Prospect would realise, this Government is very responsible with its pennies. I cannot say that the riches that have been given to the electorate of Heathcote are very exciting, but they are necessary. I will outline some of the projects that have received funding. In excess of \$18 million has been allocated for roads in my electorate. Unfortunately this week there was a terrible accident on the bridge over the Woronora River on Heathcote Road. It is classed as a two-lane bridge, but it is too narrow for a truck and car to pass. Unfortunately this week a gentleman lost his life on that bridge. For many years I have been fighting to have that bridge duplicated.

The speed limit on the approach to the bridge, which is at the bottom of a hill, is often not adhered to and that causes many of the accidents. In 2012 when the Minister for Roads and Ports was looking at the bridge a huge semitrailer nearly ran him down and killed him. At the end of the day this Government is getting on with the job. Money from the lease of the electricity poles and wires has been allocated for the southern pinch point where the bridge is. I am proud that during the next couple of years work will commence on duplication of the bridge. I join with the member for Holsworthy when I say that Heathcote Road has taken a fair toll on people's lives and it is time that it was upgraded. Under the Baird Government that will happen.

The budget will also provide funding to slip stabilisation on Lawrence Hargrave Drive at the Northern Amphitheatre near Coalcliff, which is adjacent to the Seacliff Bridge; rock fall prevention works on the M1 Princes Highway near Helensburgh; drainage repairs on Lawrence Hargrave Drive between Scarborough and Clifton; and an upgrade of the bridge over Flat Rock Creek on Sir Bertram Stevens Drive in the Royal National Park. That bridge has an odd camber. Many cyclists are often taken by surprise when they come around the corner because the camber goes in the opposite direction and they are flicked off their bikes and into the bush when they ride through the Royal National Park. The bridge has also taken many lives, so I am very happy with the allocation of those funds.

The budget will also provide funding for curb realigning of Appin Road, Cataract, to improve road safety under the Safer Roads Program; complete the upgrade of traffic signals at Alford's Point Road and New Illawarra Road, Menai; and continue early planning for a motorway link with the M1, as I mentioned earlier. The budget contains a transport allocation of \$7,443,000 for maintenance works to replace infrastructure and extend the life of rolling stock; upgrades for Loftus, Waterfall, Helensburgh and Heathcote stations; and 80 new car spaces at Engadine station. The former Government built easy access for the good burghers of Helensburgh, but unfortunately it did not build a roof. Since 2008 commuters have been walking in the mist and rain. Unfortunately Helensburgh is very cold and damp in the middle of winter so this Government is putting a cover over the bus stop, the steps and the railway station.

The Department of Family and Communities Services has been provided with \$1.2 million to continue works on various large residential centre redevelopments. The budget also provided \$118,000 to continue funding of the Northern Illawarra Aid [NINA], which is a fantastic organisation that does a lot of work in the Helensburgh local community. NINA transports people to doctors, hospitals and those types of services. It provides home care and community care support. It is a highly respected organisation based in Helensburgh that has been serving the residents for 50 years. NINA also started the Meals on Wheels Program in Helensburgh. The Land and Housing Corporation has been allocated \$440,000 for new social housing upgrades. The Heathcote electorate did not have much public housing, but it has inherited some from the former electorate of Menai following the redistribution. I am hanging on and waiting for that exciting ride.

Water NSW has been allocated \$882,000 to continue general upgrades and various metropolitan dams upgrade projects. In my electorate is the Cataract, Avon, Woronora and one other dam, all of which are essential for Sydney water. We have managed to keep coal seam gas away from them. There is also the threat of longwall mining, which we need to keep a very close eye on. I have regular meetings with mining companies to make sure that they are doing the right thing. It is not just me looking at them; other instrumentations are being used. I walked across the catchment to have a look at how it is being affected. Censors and other equipment installed at the dam will ensure that we will be the first to know if there is any change in the water catchment area. I believe that the Sydney Catchment Authority is very enthusiastic about keeping our water as fresh as it can be, and I look forward to working with it to make sure that our fresh drinking water is maintained.

The Sutherland Shire Council is upgrading our sporting fields with Astro Turf. Existing grass playing fields can take an average of 19 games a week before the grass starts to wear out, whereas Astro Turf can take 50 games a week for 10 years. It is far more cost effective to install Astro Turf playing fields in hamlets and villages than it is to spend \$400,000 to re-grass. I am very excited about the 2015-16 budget for Heathcote. I look forward to addressing the concerns of the people of the Heathcote electorate and to teasing out extra infrastructure projects for my electorate. One idea is to provide more parking spaces for the good people of the Illawarra so that when the M1 is finally completed they can park and share rides into the city, or catch the trains in the northern reaches of the Illawarra. I thank the good Assistant-Speaker Mr Marshall for his indulgence. I commend my contribution to the House.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT** (Prospect) [3.57 p.m.]: I want to talk about the failures of this Government in regard to its budget.

**Mr David Elliott:** This will be a short speech.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** I thank the Minister for Corrections for his comment, but it will take a good 15 minutes and unfortunately I will not be able to include everything. I look forward to being granted an extension of time.

**Mr David Elliott:** You took all your time in your inaugural speech.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** Indeed, I did. I hope to continue to do so more and more. I will address some of the problems in Western Sydney that this budget has thrown up; the things that this Government has failed to deliver in Western Sydney.

**Mr David Elliott:** North-west rail?

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** It is always in different areas, especially failures in health, transport, roads, education and to the multicultural community. The Government has failed to fund desperately needed

upgrades to Fairfield Hospital. The budget outlined the Government's plan to spend billions of dollars that it would receive from the sale of the State's power grid, but it will give no money, no consideration, to Fairfield Hospital.

**Mr David Elliott:** You wanted to sell it; we are leasing it.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** We are talking about Fairfield Hospital and how it is not being funded.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Marshall):** Order! The member for Prospect will be heard in silence.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** I want to know why the Government has neglected the people of Western Sydney. Fairfield Hospital needs an upgraded emergency department but the Government has failed in that respect. Patients and their families will not sleep easily at night knowing that this Government has neglected their area of Western Sydney once again. The Minister for Health has no answer. She has given no explanation why not one cent will go to Fairfield Hospital. The master plan has been agreed, which is great. I credit the Government for agreeing to the master plan and getting it going but the Government has not funded it. That makes no sense.

The Minister and the Government must deliver funding to expand the children's ward at Fairfield Hospital and to allow the hand surgery unit, which was transferred from Liverpool, to be moved from the demountable buildings where it operates without enough equipment. People come from as far away as Campbelltown and from all over Western Sydney to visit the hand surgery unit but it does not have the funding to do its job properly. It is a real shame that the budget does not deliver money for the Fairfield Hospital master plan. I would not be able to say a thing about the Government's Health funding if it had financed the master plan but, of course, it did not do that. I will now speak about the rail corridor in the north of my electorate. Once again, the budget contains no money for Pendle Hill and Toongabbie stations.

**Mr David Elliott:** You didn't read the budget paper.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** I have read the budget paper. The budget does not allocate a cent to Toongabbie station for the lift upgrades that were promised at the last election and the election before that. The people of Toongabbie will not receive a thing. Six weeks or so ago I gave notice of a motion concerning Pendle Hill station that asked the Minister to tell us when the Government would fund the station upgrade and when construction would begin. It was wonderful to see the Minister come out and say, "Yes, we have the money. We have got it there." He is right that it is in the schedule of works and I congratulate the Government on that. The problem is that the Minister will not give me a date. What date will construction begin? I am told it is just going to be sometime this year.

**Mrs Melinda Pavey:** Poor boy.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** It is great to see that the member for Oxley is awake. I am pleased to get abuse from her. We do not know of one cent that will be spent at Pendle Hill because it was not in the budget but the Government has said it will be upgraded. In that case I ask the Minister to tell me when construction will begin and what will be built. I will congratulate the Government once it has done that but as of now nothing has been confirmed. Today the member for Castle Hill said in a throwaway line that mothers with prams—such as my wife—can simply go to Wentworthville or Westmead stations. What about the disabled, elderly and frail who cannot jump in the car and do that? They cannot access Pendle Hill station. To suggest that they can go to another station is not a solution. In the south of the Prospect electorate is the Polding Street roundabout, which the Government has promised to fix. It is a dangerous roundabout where accidents occur almost every week. To its credit, the Government funded stages one and two of the upgrade but it did not complete the third and final stage because it ran out of time.

At the 2011 election the then member for the former electorate of Smithfield promised to get the money from the Government to fix the Polding Street roundabout. He did not do that. Shortly before the 2015 election some money finally came through but it was not enough and it did not offer a decent solution to make the roundabout less dangerous. Once again in this budget no money has been allocated for the final stage of works and so the roundabout will continue to be dangerous. I now turn to public housing. Within the Fairfield local government area in the south of the Prospect electorate the public housing waiting list is almost 20 years. It is unbelievable. What is the Government's solution to fix that problem? It was to build 11 new apartments in

Smithfield. A few hundred more families need housing so more than 11 apartments are needed. Money needs to be spent on public housing in my electorate but it has not happened. The Government will get billions of dollars from the electricity assets lease or sale but it is not prepared to put any money into social housing in the Fairfield area.

In addition, not a single cent in the budget will go towards the provision of social housing in the Blacktown and Holroyd areas. The 20-year waiting list will remain. Nearly every week people make inquiries to my electorate office about social housing. Sadly, I have to tell them that they are going to have to continue to wait. Many of them have been waiting for 10 years already but they will have to wait longer. What else has the Government neglected to do? Let us look at the absolutely disgraceful cuts it has made to the Community Services budget for Multicultural NSW, which is a major State government agency. As I said, the Government will receive billions of dollars from the electricity sale but it has cut the Multicultural NSW budget from last year's figure of \$700,000 to \$300,000 for community support services, which will badly hurt the Prospect community. Many people in my electorate depend on the community support services provided by Multicultural NSW. Labor promised \$300,000 to rebuild the Assyrian club that burnt down last year. In contrast, this Government will not give \$300,000 to cover Multicultural NSW projects across the entire State. Once again, ethnic communities have been well and truly left out of this budget.

I will now summarise the key areas I have addressed. In the Health budget Fairfield Hospital has been completely neglected. There is no funding for overdue upgrades to an emergency ward that is half the size it needs to be. The hand surgery unit will remain in demountable buildings and the emergency department will continue to not have a proper waiting area. Let us not forget that the planned children's emergency department will not be built even though there is a huge need for it. In Transport, as I mentioned before, it looks as though Pendle Hill station will finally get its lifts. It will be better late than never but we do not know when the work will begin or how much money has been put aside. As for poor old Toongabbie railway station, the people of that area have been told to forget it; they are not getting one cent. Even though Toongabbie station has the same access problems as Pendle Hill it will not receive any funding. In the Roads budget there is no funding for construction on Blacktown Road and the Prospect Highway. Nothing will be constructed to help stop congestion or raise and widen the road.

**Mr John Robertson:** Shame.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** The member for Blacktown is very much aware that it is a disgrace. It is absolutely shocking. The road is riddled with choke points into Wentworthville and on towards Eastern Creek. As I said, the Polding Street roundabout continues to be a major danger for the young families of Wetherill Park, Bossley Park and other places who drive to Fairfield every day. In the last few minutes of my contribution I will talk about the Education budget. Girraween High School, which is a selective high school and one of the top five best high schools in the State, experiences electricity blackouts five to seven times a day on average because the Government has not given the Department of Education and Communities enough money to upgrade the electricity supply. It is unbelievable. The top young brains in this State have to stop learning between five to seven times for between 15 minutes and one hour each day whilst the electricity is sorted out and they can turn the lights and their computers back on. I have seen photos of those children trying to do their schoolwork by torchlight from their phones.

**Mr David Elliott:** What?

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** It is absolutely appalling. The member for Baulkham Hills will get to see it soon in one of the newspapers.

**Mr David Elliott:** They are going to school at night now, are they?

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** If the member for Baulkham Hills would like to visit my electorate and have a look sometime I would be happy to show him around. I know that, as a responsible local member, he would be appalled by such things. Being a Minister, I hope that he would then lobby the Treasurer to do something about it.

**Mr David Elliott:** You've got to stop smoking the funny stuff. You've got to stop smoking so much pot.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** I ask the Minister to withdraw that last comment.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Marshall):** Order! I will maintain order. The member for Prospect can be assured of that. What led to those remarks was an exchange across the table rather than remarks being made through the Chair. The Minister for Corrections, who is at the table, will cease interjecting when the member for Prospect is speaking. The member for Prospect will refuse to entertain any interjections and will ignore them. The Chair will maintain order. Cognisant of the fact that time is running out, I bring the member for Prospect back to the leave of the question.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** The member for Baulkham Hills suggested that I am a drug user. I will not stand in this Chamber and accept that. Mr Temporary Speaker, I ask you to ask the Minister to withdraw that comment.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Marshall):** Order! I heard a remark. I did not exactly hear every word. I invite the Minister to consider the request from the member for Prospect.

**Mr David Elliott:** In the interest of brevity, I withdraw the remark.

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT:** In Education we all know the history of what is happening with TAFE and the way it has been gutted in New South Wales. The Government is gutting Granville TAFE, taking the sheet metal working school out of Granville TAFE and putting it into Wetherill Park. In a way that kind of helps those in the electorate of Prospect. But at the same time the childcare centre at Wetherill Park is getting smaller and losing staff. It appears that the Government wants it to close—even though there is a huge need for childcare places around Wetherill Park.

Finally, I turn to the multicultural community in Prospect and the fact that, unfortunately, as I mentioned before, Multicultural NSW has had its funding cut. It is an important organisation working on community engagement. It has had its budget cut by almost half—down to \$300,000. That will have a huge impact on multicultural areas and ethnic groups within Prospect and Western Sydney. I have gone through many issues in this contribution. As I have worked through these things the reactions of Government members have shown that they know this budget fails the people of Western Sydney.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) [4.12 p.m.]:** I am proud to be part of this Government and I am proud of what it has delivered for the people of New South Wales, and the people of Oxley in particular. This is the first budget that has been delivered since I am a member representing a lower House electorate. The people of Oxley are grateful for the recognition they have received after 16 long, dark years of Labor Government as the mid North Coast, regional New South Wales and Western Sydney were not given the credit and recognition they deserved. Listening to the contribution of the member for Prospect, who is newly arrived to this Parliament, I felt like I was in a parallel universe. He genuinely believed what he was saying—that for some reason everything bad or not working in his electorate that he would like to see fixed is somehow the Government's fault and should have been fixed in its first term.

The Government is doing a remarkable job of getting New South Wales moving again. It is fixing the problems. There is a most incredible statistic that points this out, and I wish the member for Prospect was still in the Chamber to hear this. In this budget the State will fund on average \$10.3 billion of infrastructure over the forward estimates. In Labor's last year in government—in 2010-11—it spent only \$6.2 billion a year on infrastructure. That is a story that needs to be told to the new Labor members who arrived in the Chamber this year. I remember that it is important as new members to have a full grasp of the history of the State and to understand the context in which decisions are made. I will not respond to interjections across the Chamber from the member for Blacktown; I would like to concentrate on the budget.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Marshall):** Order! And neither should the member for Oxley. Interjections are contrary to the standing orders. I invite the member for Oxley to continue.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** I highlight that figure as a comparison of the spending on infrastructure. I note the member for Swansea is in the Chamber. We shared a light-hearted moment the other week when she mentioned how disappointed she was with the amount being spent on infrastructure in Swansea. I was able to highlight the fact that Swansea got its Pacific Highway bypasses about 20 years ago. Oxley communities are getting theirs right now and those communities deserve it. They have waited too long. This infrastructure came about thanks to cooperation at the State and Federal level and thanks to the work of the previous member for Oxley, the Hon. Andrew Stoner. As Deputy Premier he was able to guarantee funding with Warren Truss—

**Mr John Robertson:** Albo.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** I acknowledge that interjection. "Albo the bad" was really bad—all he wanted to do was to play politics. It took The Nationals to be in government federally to get an 80 per cent commitment from the Federal Government on the Pacific Highway. Albo just issued press releases and indulged in spin. We now have the money because we have working together good conservative governments concerned about infrastructure and concerned about delivering a better quality of life for people in New South Wales. We should recognise this and be grateful that this Government is showing the discipline that is required. When I look at the member for Blacktown I think about discipline. I think about the unions and how they ran him. He was very much responsible for the bad decisions that were made in New South Wales on Labor's watch. It was a bad period for New South Wales—a difficult period for New South Wales.

We came into office in 2011 and made a genuine, considered attempt to gain control of spending. We kept public sector pay rises at 2½ per cent. That has reaped enormous dividends to fix the budget across New South Wales. So we can transform New South Wales by spending on average \$10 billion a year on infrastructure instead of the \$6 billion a year spent on infrastructure by the Labor Government. That is why for my electorate of Oxley the Government has set aside \$1.5 million this year for detailed planning of the Macksville hospital upgrade. Some \$50 million has been committed—\$15 million from the Restart NSW program and \$35 million from the capital works budget over the forward estimates—for Macksville hospital. That community rallied together like no other to demand, lobby and fight for that hospital upgrade. The local member at the time, the Hon. Andrew Stoner, as Deputy Premier took up that cause with the Minister for Health, the Hon. Jillian Skinner. The announcement was made during the election campaign. They were expecting \$15 million. But when we looked at what needed to happen we realised that \$50 million would be required. As a Government we listened and responded.

I think the saddest thing I saw during that campaign, which reflected how much Labor did not care for the mid North Coast region, aside from the very bad koala park reserve idea from the Hon. Luke Foley which was another kick in the guts for the blue-collar workers of New South Wales, was the failure of the Hon. Luke Foley to stand beside his own Labor candidate in Oxley. She was a good Labor woman who worked hard. He just left her out to dry. He would not join the Government in committing to the Macksville hospital upgrade. I felt for that Labor candidate. I thought it was a really sad day for Labor that it did not care enough about communities on the mid North Coast like Macksville to support this major upgrade. This upgrade is well deserved and so important to the networking of health services. It is a high-growth area with a very low socio-economic background. It faces a lot of challenges with an ageing population and chronic diseases. For Labor to turn its back on Oxley and its Labor candidate at that time was very disappointing.

We have also received in the budget this year \$21.3 million to complete the Kempsey Hospital stage 1. The hospital will be opened towards the end of this year or maybe early next year. The Minister for Health, Jillian Skinner, will come up to have a look at the final stages of the works. This is a very exciting time for Kempsey. Again, that project is able to be undertaken because of cooperation at State and Federal level. Federal member Luke Hartsuyker also has fought hard for Kempsey hospital. It is a great boost to the community to see the cranes on the hospital site as we speak. This is very exciting for the Kempsey community, and it is well deserved as the community has fought long and hard for this hospital.

Also, \$1.8 million has been announced for the Kempsey ambulance station. Again, it will be great for the workers, the paramedics and so on, to have a new ambulance station. Minister Jillian Skinner came to Wauchope during the election campaign and announced \$3.5 million for the Wauchope ambulance station upgrade. I was delighted to see that \$3.5 million guaranteed in the budget forward estimates for the Wauchope ambulance station. The member for Prospect was very disappointed about the number of people on housing waiting lists in his electorate, pointing out that some had been on the public housing waiting list for more than 10 years.

**Mr Christopher Gulaptis:** They were in government then.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** Labor was in government then. This Government is doing what it can to improve social housing, with \$1.27 million committed for social housing upgrades in Oxley and \$380,000 in Aboriginal housing works in the Kempsey shire alone. Those are some good projects and some real innovation in how to deliver that social housing, particularly round west Kempsey. We have done an audit of some of the properties there. Twelve houses in west Kempsey have been burnt and abandoned; that is devastating. Nine of those properties were sold by Labor about a decade ago. People bought those properties for investment purposes or to live there; but, through bad tenants and arson, those properties have been burnt out and rendered useless. That was the type of policy thinking that New South Wales had under Labor. The effect of that event on west

Kempsey, which is a very proud community, is devastating. We are looking at innovative ways to fix the problem in that area so that people will buy and live in those properties. It is a great place to live, but we need to improve that area and give confidence back to the community.

Over the next few years this Government will be spending \$3.2 billion on the Pacific Highway in the Oxley electorate. The whole of that highway from the Hastings River near Port Macquarie right up to Urunga, which is where I live, will be dual carriageway—and not a moment too soon. I note that the Parliamentary Secretary for the North Coast and member for Clarence, Chris Gulaptis, is at the table. Some exciting work has been announced as part of the budget process, in cooperation with the Federal Government, for his part of the world. The complete duplication of the Pacific Highway will be finished in about 2019. This incredibly exciting transformation is underway on the North Coast because those around the Cabinet tables federally and in New South Wales are fighting for regional New South Wales. I am very proud of the team that is doing that good work. The budget allocates \$123 million to complete the Frederickton to Eungai upgrade, \$190 million to continue work on Warrell Creek to Nambucca Heads, and \$185 million to continue work on the Nambucca Heads to Urunga upgrade.

**Mr John Robertson:** What is going to happen to Fredo Pies? Are they going to go out of business?

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** The member for Blacktown is always thinking about himself—about his stomach and his food. But, of course, we all support Fredo Pies. Fredo Pies has already been bypassed at Frederickton, yet people are still going in and buying those famous pies. The business is still there, so the member can relax; he can always go in off the highway to Fredo Pies. That is one of the challenges that we face: to ensure we have great signage so that little Sydney slickers like the member for Blacktown will drop into Fredo's and buy his pies. I note the Speaker is in the Chamber. Lots of beautiful work is happening down on the Princes Highway; but we need to make sure we have really good, innovative signs so that those driving down to Victoria or up to Queensland drop into our communities, having been reminded of those little gems in communities on the northern and southern coasts. We have also got \$90 million to continue work on the Kundabung to Kempsey upgrade, \$69 million to continue the Oxley Highway to Kundabung upgrade, and another \$9.2 million for land acquisitions.

But this Government is not forgetting about other roads. We have really important traffic thoroughfares through to the Great Dividing Range, to the electorates of Tamworth and Armidale, for example. So Temporary Speaker Marshall will be delighted to know that it will be a lot easier for him to roll down the coast and climb back up that big hill due to a \$2 million pavement upgrade east of Bellingen, \$450,000 for drainage upgrades between Bellingen and Dorrigo, and \$100,000 for Bellingen CBD pedestrian and cycling connections, intersection and pavement treatments.

A lot of money is going towards the Oxley Highway over to the Tamworth electorate: \$4 million for the route review and safety program, \$1.2 million for pavement works west of Wauchope, and \$336,000 for drainage works east of Mount Seaview—a magnificent place, with great accommodation right on Mount Seaview from which you can see the ocean. We are also trying to help them with some mobile phone access. That road is really busy and very windy, but it has great capacity to take more produce to market. With the completion of the duplication of the Pacific Highway there will be greater pressure to make the east-west routes more trafficable and better able to carry freight and fodder to help primary industries reach their markets.

This Government is also supporting our councils in a very big way: \$2 million in grants for Kempsey Shire Council, \$630,000 in grants for Nambucca Shire Council, \$512,000 in grants for Port Macquarie Hastings Council to support Wauchope; \$315,000 in grants for Bellingen shire; \$737,000 for Armidale Road projects within the Kempsey shire; \$216,000 for Grassy Head Road; \$359,000 for two Kempsey roundabouts; and \$108,000 for pedestrian improvements in Smith Street in Kempsey, which is contributing to the works there to improve the landscape and beautification of the main street of Kempsey. It has taken its guide from work done in the main street of Taree following the bypass of Taree and the beautification works that have been done there. And there is \$341,000 for Short Cut Road at Urunga, which is also part of the duplication works.

Another exciting project that was confirmed in the budget, but was announced in the election campaign by our leader, Troy Grant, in Dubbo at our campaign launch, is planning for the XPT fleet replacement, with \$7.5 million for planning for a new fleet to replace the XPT fleet. That is really good for the Mid North Coast and the North Coast. I am delighted that my leader, Troy Grant, has appointed me to head up a task force to ensure that we communicate that project and the delivery of the new fleet within our communities. We will let everyone know what is happening, but we will also have feedback into that process. This is a massive



commitment, and it will take some time to deliver. It is important that we engage, respectfully and purposely with communities—not just on the North Coast, but through to the Central West, as the XPT runs through southern New South Wales through to Victoria.

Today I had an informal meeting with the member for the area just south of Wodonga, Bill Tilley, as Victoria also would like to be kept abreast of what is happening, because that XPT service carries a lot of north-eastern Victorians into Melbourne, and vice versa. This is a great initiative. Let us be honest: the XPT fleet is at the end of its use-by date. It is important to have the latest technology to ensure that those on the XPT can do business with wi-fi comparable to the technology on the major trains in Europe, where train travel is still very much sought after. I think there is capacity for us to improve our tourism, as well as family and business travellers on the XPT.

If we promote the XPT services appropriately and communicate the message well, we will benefit from some really good potential. My electorate also received \$1.6 million for the Hastings-Macleay Community Transport program and \$1.8 million for the Coffs Harbour, Bellingen and Nambucca Community Transport program. It is a pleasure for me to be part of a government that is acting responsibly, investing in infrastructure and taking New South Wales forward. For the information of newer members I point out that when this Government won office in 2011, New South Wales was ranked at the bottom of the list in States economic performance, but today New South Wales is at the top of that list. That does not happen by chance or by luck; it happens only by hard work and adhering to commitments.

**Mr John Robertson:** It is called the dividend of the mining boom.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** That is the hard thing about being in government. One of the Treasurers I enjoyed listening to, although I did not always agree with his decisions, was former Treasurer, Michael Egan, who was regarded as one of the better Labor Treasurers. Of course, he is a member of a very small club.

**Mr John Robertson:** My favourite New South Wales Treasurer is yours.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** I acknowledge the interjection, and I am with the member for Blacktown.

**Mr John Robertson:** I have told her.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** John Robertson, thank you. Your favourite New South Wales Treasurer is Gladys Berejiklian.

**Mr John Robertson:** True.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** That is the nicest thing I have ever heard a member of the Labor Party say. The member is blushing and his Labor colleagues are looking at him askance.

**Mr John Robertson:** You have made me blush, Melinda. You have finally done it.

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** I join the member for Blacktown. The Treasurer is a fabulous and wonderful Treasurer.

**Mr John Robertson:** Is she the best?

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY:** Yes. Absolutely the best—the best we have today. We forgot Mike. We have had three of the best Treasurers in New South Wales and it is very hard to judge which one is best. This is a great government and our Treasurers work hard to maintain discipline while ensuring that regional New South Wales is not forgotten. Regional New South Wales is represented at the Cabinet table. Half our Cabinet members are from country New South Wales and many of those are members of The Nationals. That is good because the results are being delivered to regional New South Wales in a manner that was not seen throughout a very long 16-year Labor drought. I am very proud of the work of this Government in health, Pacific Highway improvements and in keeping New South Wales the number one State. During Labor's last year in office, \$6 billion a year was spent on infrastructure whereas in this Government's forward estimates for the next four-year period there will be an average of \$10 billion allocated to infrastructure. That is the difference between Labor and this Government. That is why New South Wales is number one again.

**Pursuant to sessional order debate interrupted and set down as an order of the day for a future day.**

**Pursuant to sessional order discussion on petition signed by 10,000 or more persons proceeded with.**

**SINGLE-USE LIGHTWEIGHT PLASTIC BAGS****Discussion on Petition Signed by 10,000 or More Persons**

**Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH** (Coogee) [4.33 p.m.]: It gives me great pleasure to discuss this petition today. I acknowledge in the gallery members of Plastic Bag Free NSW—the group that worked tirelessly to collect more than that 12,400 signatures on a petition calling for a ban on lightweight single-use plastic bags in New South Wales. Accompanying the group is Jeff Angel, who is the intrepid environmental warrior we have all known for many years. He has been of great assistance to me in championing the container deposit scheme for New South Wales. It is said that a journey of a thousand miles begins with taking the first step. Hopefully, this petition is the first step of a significantly truncated journey—over a distance of less than a thousand miles—that will result in single-use plastic bags banned in New South Wales once and for all.

In 2008 I visited Coles Bay, Tasmania, which was the first town in Australia to ban single-use plastic bags. As my partner and I were driving there, I felt some trepidation: The thought of doing without the essential plastic bag made me feel as though I had boarded a long-haul flight without my Nicorette patches. I wondered whether there would be border guards who wanted to inspect the car to see whether we had any single-use plastic bags and whether there would be cavity searches or the like. But the reality was that we spent a couple of days in Coles Bay and did not even notice the absence of plastic bags, which is why a ban on single-use plastic bags is a no-brainer. Single-use plastic bags are totally and absolutely unnecessary. I do not admit it very often, but I am old enough to remember when we did not have plastic bags when we went shopping. We had paper bags or reusable bags. My mum would say, "Bruce, go down to the corner shop and buy this", and no-one would leave the house without picking up the shopping bag. I would say to mum, "Well, where's the bag?"

**Mr Stephen Bromhead:** The string bag.

**Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH:** The string bag, the fibre bag or the shopping trolley. We got by, and I did not feel I had a deprived childhood because I did not have plastic bags in which to carry home the shopping. Now I have a car boot full of reusable bags to ensure I cannot possibly ever be without one when I go shopping. A ban on single-use plastic bags will be so easy to implement. In the past decade a voluntary approach was adopted by retailers to reduce the use of plastic bags. It had a significant influence on reducing the levels of plastic bags use, but as soon as that voluntary scheme was abandoned plastic bag use shot up again. What we really need is a change in behaviour and for people to return to simply carrying a shopping bag with them. It is not as onerous as one may think.

My partner, who does most of the shopping in our household, carries a reusable bag that is approximately the size of a wallet in his back pocket every single day. When he does the shopping, he fills that up and it holds much more than would a single-use plastic bag. The reusable bag is always with him. This issue is about behavioural change. I will work tirelessly to ensure that a ban on lightweight plastic bags is introduced in this State. Apart from plastic bag manufacturers, I cannot see that there will be any losers from the implementation of the ban. I frequently shop at retailers who do not offer plastic bags. I know that, and I go there prepared. This petition is the start of something big. I thank all those who are in the gallery for collecting the signatures and for entrusting me to lead this debate.

**Ms TAMARA SMITH** (Ballina) [4.38 p.m.]: On behalf of The Greens, I commend the member for Coogee for presenting this petition as well as, of course, all those who signed it. Today as The Greens spokesperson on the marine environment I express support for the community petition calling on the New South Wales Government to ban single-use lightweight plastic bags. I am glad to speak on behalf of my colleagues the member for Balmain and the member for Newtown who, like me, have received dozens of calls and emails from constituents asking us to support this petition. Few will forget the community grief last year when we learnt that Risso—a three-metre dolphin found at North Curl Curl—had died most likely from infection and injuries resulting from having ingested a plastic bag. Sadly, Risso is one of the tens of thousands of marine animals that are injured or killed by being trapped in or ingesting plastic bags. Species impacted include dolphins, whales, turtles, seals, birds and fish. Each year in Australia four billion lightweight single-use plastic bags are used and millions end up as litter, with many of those making their way into our waterways.

As a Parliament we can stop this destruction by preventing plastic bags from getting into waterways. The Greens call on the Government to support legislation to ban the use of lightweight plastic bags. The Greens made a commitment during the election campaign to introduce legislation in Parliament to achieve that aim, and we are prepared to work with the Government and Opposition to achieve that outcome. This Parliament should

follow the example of the Parliaments of South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, which have all banned the use of lightweight plastic bags in their jurisdictions. In South Australia this happened back in 2009. It is not only bags that contribute to plastic pollution in waterways and the ocean. Studies have shown that Sydney Harbour contains significant levels of microplastics. Plastic and the toxins it attracts have now entered our food chain. We are yet to understand what impact this might have on our health and the health of other species.

I acknowledge the Government's commitment to phasing out microbeads and introducing a container deposit scheme. These are important steps and they cannot come quickly enough for marine and human health. I recognise the leadership role of the Minister for the Environment in working with other State environment Ministers to reduce the impact of plastic bags on the environment, but surely we can at least catch up to other States by banning lightweight plastic bags now. I congratulate the Boomerang Alliance and the groups and individuals who gathered the signatures that have brought about this debate. I acknowledge the input of Responsible Runners, Boomerang Bags, Positive Change for Marine Life and other groups that have made it their business to clean up our mess. Positive Change for Marine Life is particularly active in my electorate. Some of these groups exist only because we as a Parliament and as a community have failed to keep plastic waste off beaches and out of the way of marine life. As an ocean swimmer I am saddened to see the amount of plastic waste on our beaches.

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN** (Cronulla—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, and Assistant Minister for Planning) [4.40 p.m.]: I thank the more than 12,400 New South Wales citizens who signed the petition requesting a ban on lightweight plastic bags in this State. I also thank the many people who have contacted me about the matter. I thank the member for Coojee for his passion and ongoing commitment to this issue. As Minister for the Environment and as a member of Parliament representing a coastal community, I am acutely aware of the significant challenge to our environment posed by plastic waste, including plastic bags. The Government is committed to addressing this challenge. In February, environment Ministers from all States and Territories agreed that New South Wales would lead work to identify practical solutions to reduce the impact of plastic bags on the environment, including in marine ecosystems.

We must adopt an effective and economically responsible model that achieves the best possible outcome for the environment and the people of New South Wales. The work has already commenced. I have asked the Environment Protection Authority to report to me later this year so that I can take all options to a further meeting of environment Ministers. A growing body of scientific evidence highlights the impacts of plastic on the environment, especially in marine ecosystems. Plastic remains in the environment for a long time, attracting contaminants and harming marine species. Last year I joined the tall ship *Yukon*, chartered by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation [ANSTO], as it sailed from Port Hacking out to sea. The vessel was chartered to sail from Hobart to Sydney to trawl for plastics. ANSTO's briefing highlighted to me the challenge of dealing with plastics in our environment.

The New South Wales Government appreciates the community's concerns about the impacts of plastic on the environment and the need to take strong action to prevent littering more broadly. In 2011 it was estimated that the annual cost of cleaning up litter across Australia was between \$300 million and \$350 million, with at least 25,000 tonnes of litter being tossed in New South Wales every year. As a result, the Government is investing \$20 million in litter prevention grants and \$58 million in combating illegal dumping over four years, as part of the five-year, \$465.7 million Waste Less, Recycle More initiative. The Government is delivering on its commitment to introduce a container deposit scheme by 1 July 2017. This commitment adds to the suite of policies and initiatives focused on reducing litter, including plastics, in our environment.

Beverage containers currently account for one in every three pieces of litter, polluting beaches, parks and waterways. A comprehensive community consultation process on the design of a container deposit scheme will be undertaken early in 2016, giving local communities a chance to have their say. An advisory committee has been appointed to advise on the design and implementation of the scheme. I look forward to working with community, industry, local government and other stakeholders to deliver this important initiative. I thank everyone who signed this petition and encourage them to remain engaged on this important issue.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON** (Charlestown) [4.43 p.m.]: In speaking in the discussion on the petition calling for a ban on single-use plastic bags in New South Wales, I recognise the tremendous efforts of the organisers of the petition, Plastic Bag Free NSW. That the topic is being debated in this place is testament to their efforts. It is a feat very few petitions achieve. The effects of discarded plastic bags on the environment are well known. More than 70 per cent of the rubbish entering our oceans is plastic. Once in the ocean,

plastic begins to break down. It is estimated that more than 100,000 pieces of plastic float in every square kilometre of ocean. Plastic kills up to one million sea birds, 100,000 sea mammals and countless fish each year.

The production of one kilogram of high-density polyethylene to make single-use plastic bags requires 1.75 kilograms of oil. In an era of rising oil prices and ever-depleting fossil fuels, this use of resources is unsustainable. While it is true that replacement bags, such as supermarket green bags, also require fossil fuels for their production, research carried out for the Commonwealth Government found that single-use plastic bags required more than three times the amount of greenhouse gas and almost five times as much energy to produce when compared with longer-lasting green bags. The member for Coogee spoke of his experience in Coles Bay, Tasmania. In my home city of Lake Macquarie the township of Toronto, which is also a Tidy Town, has a strong focus on the elimination of single-use plastic bags, in recognition of the effects of plastic on our land and waterways, particularly the beautiful Lake Macquarie.

Small towns set the example by proving that plastic bags could be banned successfully. Their experience gave larger governments the courage to implement statewide bans. South Australia was the first State to take that step, in 2009. That is estimated to have led to 400 million fewer plastic bags being used in South Australia. The South Australian phase-out of plastic bags was completed over three years and involved consultation with business, unions and residents. Ongoing consultation by the South Australian Government with all sectors involved, and an appropriate lead-in time to allow the community to adjust, led to a sensible and accepted implementation that continues to enjoy community support.

The Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory followed in 2011. Tasmania joined the ban in 2013. It is good to hear that the new Queensland Government is also considering a ban on single-use plastic bags in that State, where rates of discarded rubbish are 40 per cent above the national average. Western Australia is the only State heading in the opposite direction. There a Government member of Parliament has tried to overturn a plastic bag ban in the city of Fremantle. I congratulate the organisers of this petition and the many active campaigners who continue to push for change. By putting this issue on the agenda in this place you have advanced your cause and moved closer to your goal.

**Ms TRISH DOYLE** (Blue Mountains) [4.46 p.m.], by leave: I congratulate the member for Coogee on supporting the campaign to improve our environment and reduce our dependency on plastic bags. Similar campaigns are underway in my electorate of Blue Mountains to see towns move towards a more sustainable solution. I pay tribute to the work of Shirley Lewis, who is known throughout the Blue Mountains as "Shirley the Bag Lady". She and Marina Brown host a radio show on Radio Blue Mountains that focuses on sustainability and the environment. They have been working hard for many years to bring to the community's attention the impact of plastic bags on our beautiful local environment. I also acknowledge the efforts of Julie Roughley, Letitia Kemister and my friends on the Blue Mountains City Council, Councillor Annette Bennett and Councillor Romola Hollywood. These environmental activists are doing the hard work of talking to businesses and consumers about alternatives to plastic bags and helping us all to live more sustainably and reduce our collective impact on the environment.

On a personal level, I try to live more sustainably and reduce my reliance on plastic bags by carrying this calico bag in Parliament and at home in the Blue Mountains. I use it, instead of plastic bags, to carry my groceries. This bag was made for me by New South Wales Young Labor activists. Its design mixes an iconic image of Rosie the Riveter with the immortal words of former Prime Minister Julia Gillard: "I will not be lectured on sexism and misogyny by this man, not now, not ever." Not only can we live more sustainably without plastic bags and reduce the waste and pollution that we create but also we can express ourselves with sustainable alternatives.

We must do this because, on top of the pollution from wayward plastic bags that clog our waterways and ocean environments, the manufacture of plastic bags consumes vast amounts of fossil fuels, emitting hundreds of thousands of tonnes of carbon. I commend the more than 12,400 signatories to the petition and I encourage Plastic Bag Free NSW to continue campaigning to see changes in legislation. Reforms like this will be successful only if we bring businesses and the community along with us. I will continue to do my part, alongside Blue Mountains activists, to reduce and eliminate our dependency on plastic bags.

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH** (Sydney) [4.49 p.m.], by leave: I strongly support the petition, and I join communities across New South Wales to call for a ban on lightweight single-use plastic bags. I commend the member for Coogee for presenting this petition to the Parliament. I commend all the speakers, including the

Minister, for their contributions. Single-use plastic bags are wasteful and unnecessary. Most end up in landfill, others end up as litter and too few—only about 15 per cent—get recycled. Plastic bags are found across the waste stream, including in and adjacent to waterways where they destroy thousands of wildlife species, such as birds, whales, seals and turtles, which mistake them for jellyfish. Plastic bags also block drains, contributing to floods in heavy downpours.

In 2008 Australians consumed almost four billion plastic bags. While subsequent bans in South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory, the Northern Territory and Tasmania will have reduced this figure, consumption is unlikely to have dropped here. The year after the Australian Retailers Association voluntary Code of Practice for the Management of Plastic Bags program to reduce plastic bags by 50 per cent in 2005 ended, plastic bag consumption in Australia increased by 17 per cent. The New South Wales "Who Cares About the Environment?" report found that people were avoiding plastic bag use significantly less in 2012 than in 2009. These figures show that voluntary programs will never make the necessary long-term changes.

The four-year review of South Australia's ban showed continued strong consumer support for the ban, with high use of reusable shopping bags both for groceries and other items. Consumers also increased recycling plastic bags, and lightweight plastic bag litter reduced by almost half. More than half of all consumers supported an extension of the ban to heavyweight single-use plastic bags. There was positive feedback from retailers as well. Banning plastic bags would reduce waste and litter while saving resources, including oil. There are alternatives to using plastic bags. Reusable bags are a great alternative and can be kept in the car, handbags or drawers at work. Retailers could provide recycled paper bags for a fee in instances when shoppers do not have them.

Under a ban, plastic bin liners will still be available to buy and the cost will encourage more prudent use. Other bags can be used as bin liners, such as empty cereal and pasta packets, and people will be encouraged to compost food scraps and use worm farms. Free lightweight plastic bags have not been around forever, and I agree with the member for Coogee that we will get by without them. Retail outlets have not been distributing free plastic bags forever. They are not necessary and the community will easily adapt to life without them. A Clean Up Australia survey conducted during last year's Clean Up Australia Day campaign found that 91 per cent of people were in favour of a total ban on plastic bags from retailers. New South Wales should follow best practice and ban this unnecessary pollutant.

**Discussion concluded.**

**Pursuant to sessional order community recognition statements proceeded with.**

## **COMMUNITY RECOGNITION STATEMENTS**

### **SURF LIFE SAVING LOWER NORTH COAST BRANCH AWARDS**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD** (Myall Lakes) [4.53 p.m.]: Some outstanding individual surf lifesavers and clubs have been named as major award recipients in the 2014-15 awards of excellence for the Surf Life Saving Lower North Coast Branch. For Forster Surf Life Saving Club the award recipients were: Masters Competitor of the Year, Laura Thurtell; Coach of the Year, Laura Thurtell; Rookie Official of the Year, Sheridan Jones; Under 19 Lifesaver of the Year, Ruby Jones; Sandra Wilson Memorial Volunteer of the Year, Beth Lee; Support Operations Member of the Year, Brian Wilcox; Official of the Year, Karen Kelly; Masters Lifesaver of the Year, Gavin Williams; Open Lifesaver of the Year, Keely Quinn; and Lifesaver of the Month, Bruce Higgs and Anthony Harris. For the Pacific Palms Surf Life Saving Club, the award recipients were: Age Manager of the Year, Mel Shoesmith; and Lifesaver of the Month, Jarred Allen. I commend all those who received lifesaving awards.

### **SOUTH WEST SYDNEY ACADEMY OF SPORT AWARDS**

**Mr GREG WARREN** (Campbelltown) [4.54 p.m.]: On Friday 31 July I had the pleasure of attending the annual awards dinner of the South West Sydney Academy of Sport in Campbelltown. I was joined by more than 600 others to celebrate the achievements of the region's most talented athletes and coaches. Recipients of awards on the night included Ryan Delponte, Leanne Andaloro, Wayne Southwell, Renee Fassolis, Denise Quinn and Jacqui Heddle, among others. Dozens of awards were presented. However, I draw the attention of members to the academy's 2015 Athlete of the Year, para-athlete Jessica Cronyay. Jessica is 17 years old and

represented Australia in the wheelchair basketball team, the Gliders, at the Osaka Cup in Japan, where the Australians picked up a gold medal. Jessica also represented Australia in the under 25s Devils wheelchair basketball team at the world championships in Beijing, where Australia was runner-up to Great Britain. I ask members to join me in congratulating Gerry Knights from the South West Sydney Academy of Sport and Jessica, along with all the other award recipients from the academy.

### **WORONORA MILITARY MEMORIAL**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN** (Cronulla—Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, and Assistant Minister for Planning) [4.55 p.m.]: On 6 August I attended the official opening, by His Excellency the Governor, of Sutherland shire's new memorial to Australian service personnel and their families, the Woronora Military Memorial. The service started just before sunset, with several hundred people gathered, and concluded at 5.30 p.m. with a whistle blowing to mark the exact time the soldiers left the trenches and the Battle of Lone Pine commenced. Recognising the importance of families supporting those who fought so bravely, the memorial features an emotive bronze statue of a little boy handing a note to his World War I father saying, "Miss you, Dad".

Three Victoria Cross recipients at rest and memorialised by family at Woronora Memorial Park are also uniquely honoured by granite plaques etched with their images. These include John Patrick Hamilton, who was awarded the Victoria Cross for outstanding courage during the Battle of Lone Pine. I was honoured to present the Acting Turkish Consul-General with a lone pine and a Wollemi pine to signify friendship between Australia and Turkey.

### **SERBIAN FOLKLORIC FESTIVAL**

**Mr PAUL LYNCH** (Liverpool) [4.56 p.m.]: The twenty-ninth national Serbian Folkloric Festival was held from 7 to 9 August this year at Bonnyrigg Sports Club. The gala grand opening, which I attended, occurred on Friday 7 August at the club. Present, among others, were His Grace Bishop Irinej, Mr John Pavasovic, Mr Nikola Maric and representatives of the Serbian consulate. The folkloric festival is the largest single Serbian event held in Australia. The festival, which regularly attracts 10,000 people, aims to celebrate and preserve Serbian folkloric heritage and culture in Australia. It is a significant event in the Serbian community calendar in Sydney, and indeed Australia. It attracts support from many sponsors and volunteers. The festival also adds significantly to multicultural Sydney, especially south-western Sydney. The Serbian community has made a significant contribution to our local area and I was delighted to share this celebration of Serbian heritage and culture.

### **MACLEAN PUBLIC SCHOOL SESQUICENTENARY**

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS** (Clarence—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.57 p.m.]: I congratulate Maclean Public School on celebrating its sesquicentenary of public education earlier this year. It was a wonderful occasion, with many people travelling great distances to attend. It was particularly great to see many past principals and students proud to attend. The school has been the hub of the Maclean community since it opened, and has continued to play a pivotal role in educating our young people for 150 years. Both my sons attended Maclean Public School, and my wife and I were both active in the parents and citizens association during their schooling. I have fond memories of those days, as do my kids. I have always found the staff at Maclean Public School to be exemplary, and they should be proud of the role they have played in educating our children. I commend the principal, Sandra Armstrong, and teacher Marilyn Donelan on arranging such a special celebration.

### **TRIBUTE TO DAN HUNT**

**Ms NOREEN HAY** (Wollongong) [4.57 p.m.]: I recognise St George Illawarra prop Dan Hunt, who recently announced his retirement from the sport due to injury. Dan is a proud one-club man who has shown outstanding dedication and loyalty to the club and boasts a very successful career. The Dapto Canaries junior made his first grade debut for the Dragons in the 2007 opening round, and has played a total of 150 National Rugby League [NRL] games. The New South Wales Country Origin representative received many honours during his nine-year career with the Dragons. I congratulate Dan on his contribution to the Dragons, both on and off the field, and for the way he has positively faced his challenges over the years. I hope that he continues to remain involved with the NRL as he is an amazing role model. I wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

### **CURE BRAIN CANCER FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES** (Mulgoa—Parliamentary Secretary) [4.58 p.m.]: It was wonderful to see the community come together for the Music for Life Ball on 12 June to support the Cure Brain Cancer Foundation. Amber Sherlock from Channel 9 hosted the ball, and guests were treated to incredible performances from the stunning singing troupe the Diamonds, as well as live painter Saran Rowan Dahl. Sponsors of this worthy event included Vintage FM, Domayne Bedding, the *Western Weekender*, Penrith Panthers, 9 News, Penrith City Council, Domayne Furniture, Minuteman Press, Bank of Queensland, Annlyn Volvo, Dance Avenue, Penrith Light and Sound, Jim Aitken and Partners, PH8, Online Influence, Kingswood Florist, McDonalds Garton Group and Mitchell Angel from J and E Estate Agents.

In 2015 Music for Life raised \$45,124, which Ann Willmington presented to Emma from the Cure Brain Cancer Foundation and ambassador Marcella Zemanek. The total amount raised by Music for Life over the past five years is now a tremendous \$288,742. I congratulate Ann and Wayne Willmington and their family on their dedication over the years to raise much-needed funds, and I thank everyone involved in making the evening a wonderful success.

### **BLUE MOUNTAINS ELECTORATE SPORTS PARTICIPATION**

**Ms TRISH DOYLE** (Blue Mountains) [4.59 p.m.]: I stand in recognition of the contribution of parents in my electorate who are supporting their children to participate in sport and thereby creating our next generation of athletes. The benefits of sport to the physical and mental health of children and young people cannot be overestimated. Physically active students are more likely to engage and achieve academically. Physically active children are more likely to mature into physically active adults. The benefits of sports programs extend beyond the individual and their families. Sport helps keep young people engaged and strengthens social cohesion, ultimately building a healthier community.

I wish to recognise three Blue Mountains families: the Kemp family of Faulconbridge and children Jack and Sarah Kemp, who are swimming champions in the making and have been selected to represent New South Wales at the Pacific School Games this year; the Drew family of Blaxland and son Jed who has gone on to represent the Sydney West region in the Australian Football League [AFL]; and the Quadrio family of Lawson and daughter Darian who was recently selected for the New South Wales Swimming Development Squad and won the under 19 1,500 metre swim at the All Schools Swimming Championships. I congratulate them all.

### **NSW JUSTICES ASSOCIATION CUMBERLAND BRANCH**

**Mr MARK TAYLOR** (Seven Hills) [5.00 p.m.]: Tonight I commend the Cumberland branch of the NSW Justices Association. I congratulate the association on its recent sixtieth anniversary celebration, which was held at Lachlan's restaurant, Old Government House, Parramatta Park. It was a pleasure to attend and I am very humbled that the membership of the Cumberland branch has elected me as its patron. President Rees John has done a fantastic job in leading the Cumberland branch and I congratulate him and his executive committee on another fantastic year. The branch's community work and its commitment to improving the lives of fellow citizens are impressive and deserve commendation. On behalf of every constituent of the Seven Hills electorate, I thank the branch for its contribution to our local area. I am proud to associate myself with the Cumberland branch of the NSW Justices Association.

### **ASYLUM SEEKERS CENTRE**

**Ms JENNY LEONG** (Newtown) [5.01 p.m.]: I draw the attention of the House to the amazing collaborative efforts of The Equal Project, Create or Die art gallery in Marrickville, and Art Party for their work in organising the One Sydney event, which was held last weekend in support of the Asylum Seekers Centre. I thank the organisers and all of the amazing artists who donated their time and work to make the event a success. The event was a huge success and raised much-needed funds for the Asylum Seekers Centre. I commend the Asylum Seekers Centre, which is based in Newtown, for its work in making a positive difference in the lives of thousands of people who arrive in Australia seeking freedom and safety. A special thank you goes to those—and they know who they are—who supported my first attempt at being an art auctioneer, and I give a special shout out to those who joined in the collective bidding, demonstrating how we roll in the inner west.

**WARIALDA HIGH SCHOOL UNDER 16 GIRLS RUGBY UNION TEAM**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL** (Northern Tablelands) [5.02 p.m.]: I recognise the mighty Warialda High School under 16 girls rugby union team which recently brought home the bacon, winning the NSW Combined High Schools title for the very first time for the school—a tremendous achievement. Punching well above their weight against teams from much larger metropolitan schools, the girls claimed strong victories over Blacktown, Warrawong and Wagga Wagga high schools before downing Hunter Sports High School in the finals 15-5. Well done to the girls and coach Mr Beattie and to Katreana Byers for her work as team manager. I also wish the indefatigable Gwydir River Rats all the very best for Saturday when they tackle the Armidale Blues in the New England rugby grand final. Go the rats!

**SHAUN FARMER, NSW STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE YOUNG VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR**

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP** (Newcastle) [5.03 p.m.]: Today I draw the attention of the House to Newcastle State Emergency Service [SES] volunteer Shaun Farmer, who was yesterday named the NSW State Emergency Service Young Volunteer of the Year. During a ceremony at New South Wales Parliament House, the Minister for Emergency Services commended 17-year-old Shaun for his achievement, and, as the member for Newcastle, I too commend Shaun. Shaun joined the SES when he was 16. He has had great support from his parents, David and Megan. Shaun has gained a great deal from the experience, skills and teamwork of the SES. He is a young leader who recognises the value of community participation, hard work and camaraderie. The SES in the Hunter has more than 700 volunteers spread over 15 units, servicing some 608,000 citizens. They do a fantastic job and Shaun is a prime example of the dedication, passion and commitment of the SES in Newcastle and the Hunter. Congratulations Sean, you are an outstanding role model for your young peers—and your older peers as well. Well done.

**AUSTRALIAN REPTILE PARK ZOO AND SNOOZE**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH** (Terrigal) [5.04 p.m.]: I had the pleasure of attending the official launch of the fifth annual executive Zoo and Snooze at the Australian Reptile Park last week. The purpose of this initiative is to raise money for Coast Shelter. Money raised will go towards providing support services through its wide range of Central Coast networks such as the Coast Community Centre, women and children's refuge, young women's refuge, men's refuge, and youth refuges and cottages. Coast Shelter provides accommodation and support to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness on the New South Wales Central Coast.

Last Friday night more than 70 people slept out overnight in sleeping bags on one of the coldest nights this winter to raise awareness of homelessness. Each business had to raise or donate \$1,000 to be entitled to attend the event. As of today more than \$100,000 has been raised by people such as Laurie Maher from Coast Shelter, \$8,250; Central Coast Holden, \$7,000; Central Coast Harley-Davidson, \$4,722.50; Graeme Davies, \$4,000; and Steve Blyth, \$4,000. I congratulate Coast Shelter, the Australian Reptile Park and the organisers of Zoo and Snooze, and especially their sponsor Central Coast Harley-Davidson, for such a great event and I commend the generosity of the people of the Central Coast.

**TRIBUTE TO CONNOR MCLEOD**

**Mr EDMOND ATALLA** (Mount Druitt) [5.05 p.m.]: I congratulate 13-year-old Oakhurst resident Connor McLeod who recently took part in the 2015 City2Surf 14-kilometre marathon, completing the course in just two hours and 47 minutes. Connor was born blind and took part in the marathon as he wanted to raise money for Vision Australia—an organisation he says has given him so much. Connor made headlines earlier this year when the Reserve Bank of Australia agreed to his request to create tactile bank notes to help vision-impaired people differentiate between notes. Connor's campaign has been acknowledged by the National Braille Press in Boston, which will fly Connor to Boston in November to receive the Hands On Award, which recognises people who have made significant contributions to accessibility for the vision impaired. Connor will also be taking part in the City to the Gong bike ride in November, riding a tandem bike with his father. David Connor is an inspiration to vision-impaired children across the globe.

**VAL ANGEL AND DOREEN SCRIVEN, MUSWELLBROOK RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS**

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN** (Upper Hunter) [5.06 p.m.]: I congratulate Mrs Val Angel and Mrs Doreen Scriven, who were recently presented with long service medals for 10 years volunteer work for the



Muswellbrook Red Cross. I further congratulate Mrs Val Angel on receiving a service award, which also recognises her services to the Red Cross. I thank and applaud Mrs Angel and Mrs Scriven for their tireless volunteer work over the years for Red Cross and I wish them well for their future endeavours.

### **GASFIELD FREE NORTHERN RIVERS**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH** (Ballina) [5.06 p.m.]: Today I acknowledge the incredible work of the campaigners, protectors, farmers and environmentalists who have worked so hard in the pursuit of a gasfield-free Northern Rivers. We have seen unprecedented community opposition to the industrialisation of our region across all sectors of society—doctors, nurses, teachers, farmers and artists—all in a unanimous refrain. In particular I acknowledge the tireless efforts of Gasfield Free Northern Rivers, the Bentley protectors, the Knitting Nannas and Lock the Gate. Their commitment to our waterways and food security and the health and wellbeing of our communities is unparalleled. I also mention Adam Guise and Aidan Ricketts, who are tireless campaigners. I know that they are with me and The Greens as we continue to fight for our region to be free of this toxic industry.

### **ALBURY ELECTORATE COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Mr GREG APLIN** (Albury) [5.07 p.m.]: Congratulations go to Tumbarumba student Anna Eggleton, a young undergraduate at Charles Sturt University, Albury, who won a New Colombo Plan scholarship and has now left for Japan to commence studies at the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. Congratulations also go to Pastor Darren Wighton, his wife, Michelle, and son, Zeke, who won awards at La Trobe University's NAIDOC awards recognising Indigenous people excelling in the community. Pastor Wighton was named community person of the year; his wife, Michelle, was a finalist in the Uncle Arthur Melrose Memorial Encouragement Award; and their 16-year-old son, Zeke, was a finalist in the Youth of the Year award. What a wonderful family achievement.

Congratulations go to Len Hanel and Julianne Cox and the team at Flyfaire Wines of Woomargama, who won a gold award in the category of Tourism Wineries, Distilleries and Breweries at the Inland Tourism Awards held in Broken Hill. What a great achievement. Congratulations also go to the Quality Hotel on Olive in Albury, which won silver in the Deluxe Accommodation category, and to the Greater Hume Visitor Information Centre at Holbrook on its encouragement award.

### **CABRAMATTA ELECTORATE VESAK DAY CELEBRATIONS**

**Mr NICK LALICH** (Cabramatta) [5.08 p.m.]: I inform the House that on Saturday 23 May 2015 I celebrated Vesak Day at the Ming Yue Lay Temple in my electorate of Cabramatta. I was delighted to be joined by the Federal member for Fowler, Chris Hayes; the member for Fairfield; the chairman of the Australian Chinese Buddhist Society, Mr James Chan, and president Mr Vincent Kong; and other various community leaders to celebrate this important day on the Buddhist calendar. Vesak Day is celebrated by people of the Buddhist faith as it marks the three important states of the Lord Buddha, namely, his birthday, his enlightenment and his passing. I thank Mr James Chan for the society's kind invitation to attend the Ming Yue Lay temple to celebrate this important day.

### **PORT MACQUARIE-HASTINGS REAP FOOD RESCUE**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS** (Port Macquarie—Minister for Early Childhood Education, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Assistant Minister for Education) [5.09 p.m.]: I commend Katrina Humble and Michael Farrawell for their ongoing outstanding work with Port Macquarie-Hastings Reap Food Rescue, a food rescue organisation in our local area. Each week Katrina and Michael and their team of volunteers help to feed hundreds of local people with food rescued from various supermarkets, including Coles, Woolworths and Aldi. More than 1,000 kilograms of food is sourced each week—food that would otherwise be thrown out and go into landfill. Instead, it is helping to fill the tummies of families in need of assistance. Congratulations to Katrina and Michael and the team from Reap. On behalf of the people of the Port Macquarie-Hastings area, I thank you for your contribution to our community.

**Community recognition statements concluded.**

**Pursuant to sessional order private members' statements proceeded with.**

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

---

### INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY FOUNDATION OF ST GEORGE

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER** (Rockdale) [5.10 p.m.]: Today I acknowledge the incredible work performed by the Intellectual Disability Foundation [IDF] of St George in my electorate of Rockdale. I recently visited one of the sites operated by the St George IDF, and it was truly inspiring to see the dedication of the foundation's staff as well as the opportunities afforded to the program's beneficiaries. It is hard to imagine the loss to our community if the dedicated team at St George IDF were not there to provide the opportunities that allow so many disadvantaged members of our society to engage in productive and fulfilling work.

This program started just over five decades ago, in 1962, in response to a then Department of Education policy that left students with special needs and mental disabilities with nowhere to go after they turned 16. In response, a dedicated group of parents from the Loftus Street Special School, a forerunner of Cairnsfoot Special School which still operates today, took it upon themselves to create a program that would provide young people with special needs the opportunity to engage in society and undertake fulfilling work.

The first workshop operated by the St George IDF opened its doors in 1964, providing jobs to eight trainees. However, it rapidly became clear that there was an unaddressed need in the community for the placements being provided by the fledgling service, and in 1966 the foundation received its first government grant which allowed it to obtain premises in Arncliffe. It still occupies those premises today. Today the St George Intellectual Disability Foundation provides supported employment to 164 people across the greater St George region, as well as vital family support services that give guardians, carers and family members the best possible advice in assisting their loved ones.

I believe it is an essential part of our basic social contract that we provide a decent quality of life to every single Australian. The dignity of work is something that every person, no matter their circumstances, skills or ability, deserves to engage in. Through the Rockdale Community Nursery and the Ascalon Enterprises packaging and labelling business, the St George Intellectual Disability Foundation allows people who would otherwise find great difficulty in obtaining employment to have safe and secure jobs doing real and productive work. Having experienced the sense of purpose provided to these young people by the foundation, I cannot speak highly enough of the value and social benefit of this service.

I walked the production floor and was blessed with the opportunity to engage with the outstanding workforce as they diligently performed their duties. I reckon it should be mandatory for every member of this place to experience the work ethic at St George IDF. I am sure it would inspire greater outcomes for the people of New South Wales. The fantastic work done by chief executive officer Michael Price and his team makes a real difference in the lives of so many people, their families and loved ones across the St George region. I would encourage all my parliamentary colleagues from southern Sydney to take the time to visit the facilities and see firsthand the incredible results. I sat with Mr Price and his colleague Bill Dunn for an extended period and discussed the long-term wellbeing of the young people in their care. It was evident from my conversations with them that they had a genuine and profound concern for the future interests of their workforce, especially in regard to their housing needs.

Michael Price and his team take a comprehensive approach to the complex needs of their workers, which goes well beyond the factory floor and extends into their home and family lives. This sort of multifaceted approach makes a true difference in quality of life and should be replicated across the disability sector. It is hard to imagine that just a few short decades ago this kind of service was virtually non-existent, or certainly not supported to an adequate degree by government. I encourage all those in this place to advocate for this and similar services to ensure they continue to receive sufficient funding into the future. In this way, community providers like the St George Intellectual Disability Foundation can continue to make our society a better place.

### SYDNEY JEWISH MUSEUM

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON** (Vaucluse—Attorney General) [5.15 p.m.]: On Sunday 2 August, I visited the Sydney Jewish Museum to attend a ceremony to open its newly refurbished auditorium. The refurbishment of the auditorium, with its new carpet and seats, was funded by a \$28,157 New South Wales Government grant through the Community Building Partnership program. The Sydney Jewish Museum is a place many members have visited. It is a place of reflection and remembrance for the lives lost in the horrors of the Nazi regime

before and during the Second World War. The museum's purpose is to commemorate those six million Jewish people who were murdered before and during the Second World War and to ensure we never forget the horrible crimes committed against that community.

Inside the museum are artefacts, including items from across time: immigration papers of people who fled Europe, children's toys, Torah scrolls and important memorabilia that tells stories about Jewish people. After the new auditorium was opened I was lucky to have the opportunity to see the museum's archive room and to look at some of these precious items. The museum is located in Darlinghurst, in the former Maccabean Hall which was built to commemorate Jewish men and women from New South Wales who served in World War I. The Maccabean Hall was opened on Armistice Day in 1923 by Sir John Monash, one of Australia's best-known military commanders, before being formally opened as the Sydney Jewish Museum in 1992 by then New South Wales Governor Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair, AC.

I have visited the museum on a number of occasions. My first visit was before I became a member of Parliament, when I was given a tour by Holocaust survivor Eddie Jaku. It was a burnishing experience. Eddie spoke compassionately and forgivingly of experiences he had had at the hands of the Nazis during the war. He is an example of a person who can be an inspiration to many because he has looked beyond that experience of pain and suffering to tell of a broader experience of humanity and hope at the end. I was moved by his stories and every time I return I hear more such stories of survival and read about them in the museum displays.

In our last term of Government, as the chair of the New South Wales Parliamentary Friends of Israel, I joined with committee members on a visit to the museum. The museum often hosts talks and film screenings, and that experience will now be improved following the refurbishment to the auditorium. It includes very comfortable new seating, which we tested that Sunday. It was wonderful to hear from renowned writer Alan Gold, famous for his many published works exploring history and Judaism. He talked about the role of museums in our understanding of humanity. Alan Gold is known for his frequent columns in *The Australian* and *The Spectator*. I really enjoyed his address which had us laughing and yet understanding the importance of the museum in appreciating Jewish culture and history in Australia.

I addressed the gathering and commended the leadership and management of the museum for their very good work with the local Jewish community and beyond. I congratulate the Sydney Jewish Museum's president, Professor Gus Lehrer, vice president Roma Shell, chief executive officer [CEO] Norman Seligman and the board for their important work. I also thank Aviva Wolff, manager of Events and Public Programs, who played an important part in organising the ceremony.

I thank the museum's curator, Roslyn Sugarman, for her tireless work. She explained the museum's archive and showed me a number of pieces that are part of the museum's collection of Jewish culture and heritage. I commend the archivist tour to anybody who wants to see an important part of Sydney's history. I also acknowledge the advocacy of Rob Schneider, who approached me for advice on opportunities available for funding from the New South Wales Government. I commend the member for Sydney, in whose electorate the museum is situated, who supported the application for this funding. I recommend to all members of this House a visit to the Sydney Jewish Museum for the unique perspective on humanity it presents.

### CONNECTED COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

**Mr KEVIN HUMPHRIES** (Barwon) [5.20 p.m.]: The Connected Communities program commenced at the beginning of 2013 in 15 schools across the State. At that time 10 of those schools were in the Barwon electorate. The ethos behind Connected Communities is to look at the education of Aboriginal students in a new light. The program was established because the traditional schooling system in parts of the State was leaving Aboriginal students behind. The truancy rates were high while the literacy and numeracy rates were low. The program uses the principle that it takes a village to raise a child, allowing for Aboriginal elders, with the support of local members, to be involved in the operation of the school and ensure that Aboriginal culture is a core part of the school's system.

The community is an integral part of the school, and a high level of consultation with key stakeholders ensures the vision for the school is shared and owned by the entire community. Across Connected Communities schools we are seeing improved results. The children are interested and engaged in their education, and have the support of their parents and carers. These are some statistics from one Connected Communities school in the Barwon electorate: In 2013 no students in K-2 were meeting appropriate literacy outcomes; at the end of 2014

many students achieved beyond the expected outcomes for their grade. In 2014 more than 90 per cent of kindergarten students attained end-of-kindergarten levels or beyond on the literacy continuum. In 2014 students in years 1 and 2 improved greatly from their starting point in 2013.

In the National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy [NAPLAN] testing in 2014 in reading, 78 per cent of students in year 9 scored greater than or equal to the expected growth from their year 7 reading score. The State average expected growth for year 9 in 2014 was 60 per cent. These results are from Walgett Community College. Unfortunately when we open some newspapers to read an article about the college these are not the facts we are told. We hear only the negative stories, reported extensively by Sydney-based journalists who are not interested in the effect of the publicity on students, particularly those in the Walgett community. The harm this type of journalism causes to students and the wider community is significant.

The problems at Walgett Community College are no secret, nor are we shying away from them. A number of local and State groups are working together to solve issues and have been doing so for some time. Recently I spoke to the students while on a visit to the college and they have so much more to talk about. They do not want to be shackled by the pessimism around the college when they have come so far in the past two years. They have so many more stories to tell; about the veggies they grow in the agriculture plot—they have done a great job—the games they play in the police citizens youth club [PCYC] clubhouse after school, the songs they sang at the National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee [NAIDOC] ceremony or the star they received for writing their first sentence unassisted.

These stories will help students succeed and they should have a chance to tell them. It is the Government's duty to ensure the structure is in place for their success and that is why I commend the Connected Communities program to the House. I urge journalists, particularly the one or two who might be named outside of this place, to get on board with what is happening at the college and in the Walgett community and to encourage some positive reporting because fundamentally that is what the students, the staff and the community want.

### SMART AND SKILLED REFORMS

**Mr RON HOENIG** (Heffron) [5.25 p.m.]: I bring to the attention of the House my deep concern about the Government's attacks on TAFE in New South Wales and my serious apprehension about the future of skills and employment in my electorate and in this State. I will give the House an example of one constituent who is severely impacted by government policy. I remember when TAFE in New South Wales was not only respected on a national scale but also on a global scale as one of the eminent trades and training centres in the world. But since the Coalition came to power in New South Wales following the 2011 election we have seen 83,000 fewer students enrolled in TAFE, with 43,000 fewer enrolments this year alone since the introduction of the Government's Smart and Skilled policy. That includes 5,000 fewer students with disabilities in the past year and almost 3,000 fewer Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander students.

At mobile offices in my electorate I hear stories from members of my community who struggle to enter TAFE to acquire the skills they need to succeed and become productive members of the workforce. I know this drop in enrolments is not because fewer people want to develop their professional skills or enter a trade, and so do members of my community. This shocking decline in enrolments is a direct result of the policies implemented by this Government and its endless crusade against TAFE in New South Wales. The Government's current TAFE policy is entitled Smart and Skilled. I ask the House rhetorically: What is smart about closing TAFE campuses across the State? How will firing 2,600 skilled TAFE staff since 2012 create a better skilled and more productive workforce in this State? How will instigating tremendous rises in course costs make the workforce in New South Wales smarter and more skilled?

Let there be no doubt about the reason that enrolments have declined: The Government is responsible for the cruellest of fee hikes. For the average student completing his or her first TAFE course, fees have risen between 40 per cent and 198 per cent. In extraordinary circumstances TAFE fees have spiked to an unbelievable 6,900 per cent. It is no wonder that the lowest number of apprenticeships since 2010 have been completed. We are headed for a fatal skills crisis in New South Wales. The Government is pricing students out of trades and training opportunities and, by extension, the Government is pricing people in New South Wales out of a job. The Minister for Skills in New South Wales is reported in the Fairfax Media on 23 June 2015 as stating:

The NSW Government's policy is to invest in qualifications that directly lead to jobs.

With respect to the Minister, where in this year's budget was that investment contained? I had a look but all I could find was more than \$1 million worth of cuts to this year's TAFE funding. I mentioned earlier in my remarks that I had discussed this issue with residents in my community at mobile offices. I share with the House a story about a remarkable woman in my electorate whom I met earlier this year in Centennial Park before I was forcibly removed from Robertson Road by the ranger. This community member is in her sixties and not only is willing to re-enter the workforce but also is excited about the prospect of returning to work. Unfortunately she has been unemployed since 2013 when she was retrenched from her last two jobs and relies on Newstart payments to make ends meet.

At the start of this year she intended to enrol for part-time study at Randwick TAFE, but quickly discovered that she would be forced to pay \$5,140 upfront in course fees. This did not include the massive cost of textbooks required to complete the course. She was informed that she was not eligible for vocational education training [VET] fee assistance and, as a result, has not been able to acquire the skills she needs to re-enter the workforce. She is a member of my community who wants to get off Newstart, wants to study so she can work, wants the pride of an honest day's work and wants to be able to support herself.

Our older citizens are being encouraged to work until later in life, not to rush into retirement, but we deny them the opportunity. People in my electorate and across the State are being denied opportunities to train and enter the workforce. At least the Government does not discriminate against who its careless policies are harming. Young people and older people alike are being hurt by the Smart and Skilled policies of this careless Government. There is nothing smart or skilled about a cruel policy that prices members of our communities out of the opportunity to train. There is nothing smart and skilled about a cruel policy that prices members of our communities out of the workforce. If the Minister wants to know who I am talking about as an example, I am happy to provide him with the detail. [*Time expired.*]

#### ULLADULLA MARINE RESCUE BASE

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK** (South Coast—The Speaker) [5.30 p.m.]: I am pleased to inform the House that this Saturday I will be attending and officially opening Ulladulla's new Marine Rescue base. Tragically the unit's former base was completely destroyed by fire due to an arson attack on the October long weekend in 2013. Therefore, the new base has been a long time coming. That tragedy was especially difficult because it came so soon after the unit opened new office premises and training facilities. I attended the commissioning of the new vessel, *Ulladulla 3-0*, just four months earlier.

The reaction of the volunteers to this terrible situation was nothing short of incredible. By the time the first boats were heading out on the water just hours later, the unit had moved its radio service offshore to operate from the back of the rescue boat in the harbour. Their professionalism ensured that they remained operational in the most difficult of circumstances. The unit had lost everything—radios and equipment, records, charts, awards and its history. It is at times like this that a close community like Ulladulla comes together. The Ulladulla Game Fishing Club was quick to offer use of its premises as a temporary home. Work on a replacement building began immediately with the hard work of Unit Commander Ken Lambert, the late and sadly missed Deputy Commander Clive Millen, former Commander and Director Doug Musker, Commissioner Tannos and the Marine Rescue Board.

I was pleased to be able to assist in driving the project because it looked as though it would take some time to complete. We had to plough our way through the bureaucracy to ensure it progressed. I particularly thank the Mayor of Shoalhaven, Joanna Gash and her fellow councillors for providing assistance with the development application process, which we drove extremely hard. I also thank the local businesses that helped Marine Rescue Ulladulla, including Coates Hire, Bendigo Bank, Super Cheap Auto and Telstra, along with the local community for their ongoing support and assistance. I ask members behind me on the Government benches to be quiet.

**Mr Andrew Fraser:** You are not the Chair now.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Bruce Notley-Smith):** Order! I am and members will afford the Speaker the courtesy she deserves.

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK:** Thank you, Mr Temporary Speaker. The new facility was purpose designed and built by TDK Constructions at a cost of \$1.4 million. I turned the first sod and have been to the base many times since. It is an amazing facility on the best site in Ulladulla. It is a modern search and rescue

coordination centre with a high-tech operations centre, dedicated training space, amenities and equipment storage. It is equipped with the latest generation electronics, including an enhanced radio system for monitoring marine radio transmissions.

Of course, the New South Wales Government is always proud to support Marine Rescue NSW in its work to save lives on the water. Our emergency services volunteers are among our State's finest citizens. The people of Marine Rescue Ulladulla selflessly work to serve their community and the thousands of visitors who come to the area in their thousands every year. The volunteers have shown their resilience over the past two years working in extraordinarily difficult circumstances. They have been down and depressed about the loss of their building and their equipment. However, they have bounced back now that they have a new building. I have always told them that there would be light at the end of tunnel, and there has been. I congratulate all of the volunteers on their efforts over a long period. I look forward to the official opening of the new premises on Saturday. I am honoured to conduct the ceremony.

I am extremely proud of Marine Rescue Ulladulla. It has the overwhelming support of the local community. Ulladulla is one of the smallest communities in my electorate, but it attracts more visitors than many other areas. Most people have probably visited the town and enjoyed its beauty. However, it is also where people set out to sea in sometimes dangerous conditions. Of course, Marine Rescue's highly trained volunteers are there to assist them if they get into difficulties. I often tell the volunteers that Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service volunteers are very visible in the media during storms and bushfires, but no-one notices Marine Rescue volunteers out at sea. The cameras are not there to record the many rescues they perform out from Ulladulla. Sometimes people take them for granted and those they have saved think they are paid for what they do. They are not paid for the service they provide. They devote an extraordinary amount of time to the community. I most sincerely thank them and all the other emergency services personnel in my electorate. I am looking forward to Saturday.

#### **GLOUCESTER AND GREAT LAKES RURAL FIRE SERVICE MEDAL RECIPIENTS**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD** (Myall Lakes) [5.35 p.m.]: I draw the attention of the House to the Gloucester and Great Lakes Rural Fire Service national and long service medals presentation that I attended on Saturday 1 August 2015. I commend the recipients for their dedication, commitment and service to their local community. I put on the record my support of the Rural Fire Service and commend its members for the great work they do in our communities. The 17 medal recipients had a combined total of 344 years of service. I also acknowledge the support that Great Lakes FM Radio offers to the Rural Fire Service.

Robert Wangman received a National Medal for 13 years of service. Bob joined the Pacific Palms Brigade in 2002 and worked his way through the ranks, holding the position of deputy captain from 2004 until 2009, after which he was captain for six months. Bob also joined the Community Engagement Brigade in 2004 and later became a dual member of the Catering Brigade, to which he still belongs today. Graeme Wilson received a National Medal for 18 years of service to the Rural Fire Service. Graeme joined the Limeburners Creek Brigade after he moved into the area. He was the deputy captain in 2002 and senior deputy captain in 2004, and he is now the captain.

Winifred Wilson received a National Medal for 18 years of service to the Rural Fire Service. Winnie joined the Limeburners Creek Brigade with her husband Graeme in 1997 after moving to the area. She quickly became involved in the management of the brigade, holding the position of secretary/treasurer from June 1999, a position she still holds today. She is also the senior deputy captain alongside her husband, who is the captain. Graham Winn received the National Medal for 18 years of service to the Rural Fire Service. Graham has been a reliable deputy captain of the Pindimar/Tea Gardens Brigade for the past 18 years. He is also a member of the State Emergency Service. He is certainly a glutton for volunteer punishment.

Alan Witt received the National Medal for 37 years of service to the Rural Fire Service. Alan joined the Allworth Brigade at the beginning of his Rural Fire Service life until a new brigade was commissioned at Limeburners Creek. He became one of the original members in 1988. He was captain for 11 years from 1994 until 2005 and has been a permit officer for as long as anyone can remember. Bruce Wilde of the Pacific Palms Brigade, who has been a member of the Rural Fire Service for more than 50 years, received a bar to his National Medal.

Long Service Medals were awarded to Kathryn Massey for 12 years of service to the Rural Fire Service as a member of the Booral Creek Brigade, to Evette Winn for 13 years of service as a member of the

Pindimar/Tea Gardens Brigade, to Stephen Harris for 13 years of service as a member of the Stroud Brigade, to Pamela Linsley for 13 years of service as a member of the Booral Brigade, to Craig Moore for 13 years of service as a member of the Stroud Brigade, to Leslie Cook for 15 years of service as a member of the Pindimar/Tea Gardens Brigade, to Robert Colgan-Gore for 15 years of service as a member of the Stroud Brigade, and to Gary Knight for 29 years of service as a member of the Catering Brigade.

Iris Graham received a clasp for her Long Service Medal for 20 years of service as a member of the Communications Brigade. Sir Charles Degatardi received a Long Service Medal and clasp for 34 years of service as a member of the Pacific Palms Brigade. Sir Charles started as a member of the Rural Fire Service with the Pacific Palms Brigade and then moved to the Jenolan Caves Brigade. He has now returned to the Pacific Palms Brigade. The Gloucester and Great Lakes brigades will hold a training day this Sunday, and Sir Charles is engaged in its organisation.

Once again I congratulate the Rural Fire Service on the fantastic job it does. It plays a vital role in our communities, particularly in regional areas. Given the wet winter we have experienced and the imminent El Nino, we could be facing an extremely dangerous bushfire season. We all saw what happened a few weeks ago in the Blue Mountains. Brigades across the State are gearing up for a hot and dangerous summer by holding training days and preparing their equipment.

### NEED A FEED AND CARESOUTH

**Ms NOREEN HAY** (Wollongong) [5.39 p.m.]: I congratulate Need a Feed, a Wollongong charity that offers support to local families in times of need. Founder Shaz Harrison-Shaw set up Need a Feed in December 2012. The service provides food to those most in need of assistance. She has recently received a CoAct Local Heroes award from CoAct ambassador and Olympic swimmer Matthew Cowdrey and also a Westfund Health Hero award. The charity is now working with CareSouth to distribute food and personal care items to disadvantaged families in Berkeley, a suburb in the heart of my electorate. Together the two charities reached one of their biggest food distribution days, handing out more than two tonnes of food to more than 100 families. For a \$5 donation, each family received parcels containing non-perishable food, fruit and vegetables, bread, personal items and school supplies. Forty bags were also delivered to Warrawong Community Centre, 20 to Berkeley Neighbourhood Centre and stationery was given to CareSouth for its homework hub. Without the help of charities like Need a Feed and CareSouth, many struggling families would go hungry.

It is sad that there has been an increase in the number of families that are struggling. I always ask the Government to invest in the Illawarra, to transfer government departments or to put in place job-creating projects as families in the Illawarra are struggling. Charities in the Illawarra and Wollongong areas are magnificent. I support St Vincent de Paul but there are many smaller charities that help people with food parcels and personal items that they decide to go without because of their scarce financial resources. These groups have wonderful dedicated and committed volunteers who make a difference to the families that are struggling.

"Holly", a young lady in my electorate received help from Need a Feed and CareSouth in Berkeley. I will not refer to her by name as I do not think she wants me to mention her name in Parliament despite it having been published in the *Illawarra Mercury*. I was impressed and moved by Holly's positive attitude. She received a parcel to help supplement food for her partner and three children and said it was "awesome". She said, "It is not like we go without, but stuff like this is a top-up." Holly received support from CareSouth as her family was doing it tough as do victims of domestic violence or those with mental health issues or drug and alcohol problems. Holly said, "I am a recovering addict and I have been clean for two years." I congratulate her on getting her life back on track. Holly did not feel sorry for herself; she is getting through each day and is managing. Basically, the assistance she was given was the icing on the cake, which is fantastic.

Brighter Futures family worker Helen Delaney said that distribution day was fabulous for families and for those in need of help. I congratulate both Need a Feed and CareSouth on this incredible initiative. It is a shame that their services are required but they are helping others who are less fortunate than them, which is fantastic. On behalf of the beneficiaries of such generosity I thank all those organisations and charities in Wollongong and the Illawarra for their dedicated work.

### COFFS HARBOUR ELECTORATE EVENTS

**Mr ANDREW FRASER** (Coffs Harbour—The Assistant-Speaker) [5.44 p.m.]: I congratulate two groups in my electorate that have organised special events for the weekend. Shearwater Lodge, which is

celebrating its tenth birthday, was organised by a group of people through Rotary and enlisted the assistance of Lions. I pay special tribute to Neville Hillenberg who has driven Shearwater Lodge for the past 10 years. Shearwater Lodge is located at the Coffs Harbour Health Campus and provides accommodation for cancer care patients when they are undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy at the Cancer Care Unit at Coffs Harbour Hospital.

When the unit was opened, Rotary saw the need for accommodation that had not yet been provided. I am sad that the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme does not permit people to claim for overnight stays at Shearwater Lodge as that could provide the means for diverting funds back to the lodge that could be used for more facilities at the hospital. Over the past 10 years Neville Hillenberg and his team have done a phenomenal job maintaining the lodge that provides accommodation for patients needing treatment for cancer and short-term accommodation for specialised nurses at the Coffs Harbour Health Campus.

I acknowledge the generosity of the community in assisting Shearwater Lodge to get off the ground and continue to operate. In particular, I acknowledge the generosity and leadership of the Rotary Club. I know that Lions backed this proposal and the Woolgoolga Lions made a donation to get the lodge going. Over the past 10 years a number of people such as Neville have assisted the lodge. I look forward to helping it celebrate its tenth anniversary.

Legacy is holding its inaugural Legacy Ball in Coffs Harbour. For many years Legacy has done a phenomenal job in Coffs Harbour and right across the State. In this 100<sup>th</sup> year of Anzac it is important to make special mention of the great job that Legacy has done in the Coffs Harbour electorate. When I was first elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly my electorate extended from Macksville right through to Coffs Harbour. Legacy provided units at Bellingen, Nambucca, Coffs Harbour and across the board to widows and family members of servicemen who had served this country and who were in need of accommodation. Legacy maintained the properties and looked after the widows and children of returned servicemen and it still does so today. It is an unfortunate fact of life that servicemen who are still returning to Australia after serving our country are in need of Legacy's assistance.

The Coffs Harbour Legacy Nursing Home is a phenomenal building. Some years ago I was disappointed to learn that the old hospital site had been sold. I approached Craig Knowles to hand over to Legacy the old maternity unit that was located next door that would have been an ideal dementia unit. Unfortunately at that time the Government was not receptive to my proposal and the services that Legacy provided at the nursing home were restricted. On behalf of the Coffs Harbour community and the wider New South Wales community I thank Peter Happ and that great group of people who work tirelessly to provide these services for their fantastic work in providing for the needs of servicemen, and the widows and children of servicemen. I congratulate both groups on providing a great service to our community.

**Dr GEOFF LEE** (Parramatta—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.48 p.m.]: I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for his kind words about the service organisations in his electorate. I congratulate the Council of Indian Australians Inc. on its great work in the Australian Indian community. It looks after the less fortunate, raises money for charity and organises networking. I commend all its office bearers and members. Speaking about Indian Australians, I wish everybody with Indian heritage all the best for Independence Day on 15 August this year. We celebrate and wish all our Indian Australians all the best for their independence.

**The ASSISTANT-SPEAKER (Mr Andrew Fraser)**: Including the Sikhs in the Coffs Harbour electorate.

#### **PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL FUNDRAISER**

**Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH** (Coogee) [5.49 p.m.]: A few months ago I visited the Prince of Wales Hospital Foundation. Many would know Lulu and Wendy Farrow who run a terrific enterprise in raising money for such a nationally important medical institution. When I was there I met Professor Zoltan Endre, the head of the nephrology department at the Prince of Wales Hospital. He said, "We would love you to come to our function in August where we are celebrating 50 years since the first kidney transplant in New South Wales." In fact, the first kidney transplant took place on 5 August 1965 at the Prince Henry Hospital, which is now part of the Prince of Wales Hospital. It was with pleasure that I attended the celebratory dinner just over a week ago, at which we heard from some of the pioneers of kidney transplantation not only in New South Wales but also in Australia.



I was struck by the fact that there were two people there who had achieved a world first—the transplantation of a kidney into an infant under the age of 12 months. In other parts of the world, many have tried and failed to do that, and because they could not perform the technique correctly a number of infants perished. It was Dr John Frawley, ably assisted by Associate Professor Bob Farnsworth, who carried out this feat in the mid-1980s. If members have ever hung around the Prince of Wales Hospital for long, they would have run into Associate Professor Bob Farnsworth, who is quite an institution. What impressed me most was that we were able to achieve this world first life-saving operation for infants with renal failure by getting the technique right for the transplantation of kidneys at the Prince Henry Hospital.

At the event at which we celebrated the 50 years since the first transplant I was fortunate enough to sit next to the ABC journalist Mark Colvin—many would know Mark Colvin from *PM*, et cetera. He was the recipient of a kidney transplant in 2013. Mark is doing very well at the moment, yet he had been sick for many years. It was one of those strokes of luck—or misfortune on somebody's part. The person who donated the kidney—I believe Mary-Ellen Field is her name—was somebody he met whilst doing a story on the phone hacking scandal in the Murdoch press in England of which Mary-Ellen had been a victim.

Mark had interviewed her about it and they had become good friends. When he became ill, she said, "You can have one of my kidneys." And to this day he is doing very well, and in fact so is she. She is a wonderful woman. What a compassionate and loving thing to do—to donate one of your kidneys. We would understand with relatives—it would almost go without saying—but to reach out to a friend, and one that you have not known very long, is a wonderful thing. I congratulate the staff of the Prince of Wales nephrology unit. I wish them continued success in the future.

**Mr MATT KEAN** (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [5.54 p.m.]: I note the contribution of the member for Coogee which is particularly timely, given that last week was organ donation week. This year alone 1,600 Australians will require an organ transplant. The sad reality is that there will not be enough organs to meet the growing demand. The shameful fact is that Australia has one of the lowest organ donation rates in the Western World, and New South Wales shamefully has the lowest rate in the Commonwealth. It is time to change this. That is why I believe we need to move from a system that requires people to opt in to become organ donors and to move to one that presumes consent—when people opt out should they not wish to be an organ donor. We cannot keep doing things the way they are being done. It is time for change. On the back of organ donation week and the private member's statement of the member for Coogee, I start the call for change to move towards a system where we opt out and thereby increase the availability of organs for those who most need them.

### DISABILITY SERVICES

**Mr GREG WARREN** (Campbelltown) [5.55 p.m.]: On 10 June this year, in cooperation with the member for Macquarie Fields and my friend Anoulack Chanthivong, we welcomed the Hon. Sophie Cotsis, MLC, shadow Minister for Disability Services, to Campbelltown for a roundtable discussion with many local disability service providers. During the meeting, disability service providers from the Macarthur region voiced their concerns and identified several issues they currently face, in particular their concerns with the transition process and the funding model of the National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS]—another great Labor social reform that has been implemented by Liberal governments, both State and Federal.

Uppermost of their concerns was the severe lack of clear and understandable information available to people with disabilities and their carers regarding the transition process as part of the funding model changes. In particular they were concerned that governments, both State and Federal, were not doing enough to provide information about disability services to the community in a format that was truly accessible for people with a wide range of disabilities. Local service providers are greatly concerned with the confusion surrounding the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Service providers, carers and people with a disability at the roundtable were all under a cloud of confusion regarding the way the NDIS will affect their current care arrangements as well as about the subsequent changes with the funding model. Another matter of concern was the backlog that they find themselves confronting with their clients and local families. I call on my fellow members to join me in urging our Federal counterparts to lift their game and to provide clear information to service providers, carers and people with disabilities about how the rollout of the NDIS will affect their current care situations.

Another critical issue raised at the roundtable was the lack of support available when the housing needs of a person with a disability have reached utter desperation. One in four people with a disability lives below the

poverty line. It is therefore vital that the Government does everything in its power to provide appropriate and accessible social housing options for people with a disability as this is a concern that is growing in the electorate of Campbelltown and other communities throughout New South Wales.

However, perhaps most concerning to me was the recurring issue raised by several service providers: the massive backlog of children with disabilities on assessment waiting lists. These huge waiting lists are creating long delays in diagnosing children with a disability, which means these children and their families are missing out on funding that could assist in their care and drastically improve their quality of life. As representatives of our great State, the key message we can take from all these issues is quite simple: Communication is the key. These disability service providers support some of the most vulnerable members of our society, and if government, be it State or Federal, can assist them in doing so by providing clear and accessible information that is something we simply must do.

I call on the Government and all members to hold community forums to begin an engagement process in cooperation with service providers to ensure that families are well informed about the funding model during the transition to the NDIS and to ensure the sustainability of service providers. I thank the Hon. Sophie Cotsis, MLC, for helping me make the discussion happen. Most importantly, I thank the disability service providers, carers and advocates who participated in the eye opening and incredibly informative discussion. I look forward to continuing to fight for the government support and services that people with a disability deserve and desperately need.

As members travel around our electorates we meet people with all sorts of challenges. Without doubt those with a disability face the greatest challenges to sustaining a high quality way of life. I am sure all members share my view that we must always pursue prosperity for people with a disability so that they can have the same standard of lifestyle that people without a disability currently enjoy. I urge my colleagues to take this matter into consideration in their electorates and I urge the Government to give it due consideration. I also encourage members to lobby our Federal counterparts to ensure that the correct processes are in place in the funding model for the transition to the NDIS and, most importantly, that people with a disability get the attention and care they require.

## DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Mr GREG APLIN** (Albury) [6.00 p.m.]: I recently read the following statement in the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

Of the seven domestic violence murders in NSW this year, five have been women allegedly killed by intimate partners, according to police data.

While fatalities gain the publicity, it is the sheer numbers of domestic violence incidents that are confronting. In the first six months of this year more than 200 victims of domestic violence were contacted by a support and accommodation agency based in Albury. A further 60 had knocked on the door of the women's refuge in a time of personal crisis. Statistics collected by the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics for the local government areas within the electorate of Albury are revealing. Over the past five years the shires of Greater Hume, Tumbarumba, Urana and Jerilderie showed no change in their rates of reported domestic violence incidents, Corowa is stable but Albury had a five-year trend increasing by 5.9 per cent per year over that period. The rate of domestic violence incidents per 100,000 of population is 395.4 across the State.

In Albury it is 561.9. A year ago the Albury rate was 628.3, while five years ago it was 446.4 against a State rate that has increased by less than 10 per cent over those five years. There have been some signs of improvement but domestic violence is clearly a serious problem in the area and it is trending in the wrong direction. I sense that our society is gradually steeling itself to face the challenge. The language we use is changing too with the introduction of words such as "epidemic", "crisis" and "urgent". As part of the new push for action I am pleased that the New South Wales Government has helped provide financial support for community forums, including at Albury, under the title "Domestic and Family Violence—It Stops Here". It is an important community initiative that provides up-to-date information through guest speakers, workshops and a question and answer panel. Domestic violence has long been an area of my work on the border and some progress is being made.

I can say that the Albury Local Area Command now has a domestic violence police officer and is contemplating the need for another specialist. Police numbers for the Albury Local Area Command have risen

under this Government. The New South Wales Government has appointed its first Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. The Minister has come out strongly, promising to radically shift the Government's focus to preventing violence rather than, in her words, "picking up the broken pieces after a tragedy".

The Government is setting out to deliver key reforms such as the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme and ensuring the integration of the work of a number of agencies such as Health, police, Family and Community Services, and Justice. This week the Government announced that the NSW Sentencing Council will undertake a comprehensive review of the sentencing of domestic violence offenders. The New South Wales Government is leading the way through its historic "It Stops Here" reforms. For the first time in the State's history representatives from front-line government agencies and non-government organisations are meeting together and sharing information on victims to manage their cases effectively.

No longer do victims have to continuously retell their story. The New South Wales Government is also committed to a pilot of the United Kingdom Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, commonly known as Clare's Law, to provide people with the opportunity to find out if their partner has a violent past. Empowering individuals with the truth of their partner's violent history will be a significant step towards preventing horrendous cases of abuse. The consultation period closed on 19 June.

New breakthroughs in the way our society processes domestic violence incidents have emerged in the way we gather and present evidence to court. On 1 June the Criminal Procedure Amendment (Domestic Violence Complainants) Act 2014 came into force. In New South Wales courts, video statements can replace written statements in certain circumstances. As a result, victims will spend significantly less time having to discuss and, undoubtedly, re-live their traumatic experiences in the presence of the person alleged to have assaulted them. With the victim's consent, New South Wales police can now film the victim's statement as soon as possible after attending an alleged incident of domestic violence. It is hoped that initiative will help deal with the problem of a perpetrator placing pressure on their victim to change their testimony or withdraw their complaint. From this month Albury police will be taking video evidence at the scene of domestic violence incidents.

Perhaps the next step of the reform process will be to find a way to prevent the situation in the Family Court in which an alleged perpetrator who is acting without legal representation can cross-examine their victim. A number of organisations have lodged submissions on this and other matters with the Royal Commission into Family Violence, which is underway in Victoria and scheduled to provide its report and recommendations by 29 February next year. As I said, some progress is being made but we would all like to see more done and a more dramatic escalation of response. I thank TAFE NSW Riverina Institute, the Albury Wodonga Family and Domestic Violence Committee and the Diploma in Community Services Work students for their efforts in putting on the community forum in Albury. Let us keep the momentum going.

**Mr MATT KEAN** (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.05 p.m.]: I thank the member for Albury for raising the important issue of domestic and family violence. None of us is immune to instances of domestic violence in our communities. The rate of violence against women and children is a national disgrace and we must do everything we can to prevent it from occurring. It is important that we continue to support groups such as those the member for Albury mentioned in their important work. This Saturday night I will be attending the Hornsby Women's Shelter fundraiser in my electorate in support of victims of domestic violence. One instance of domestic violence is one too many. As a community we need to band together regardless of our political badge or our level of government involvement and take a stand against this terrible scourge. Domestic and family violence must be eradicated once and for all.

#### PORT OF NEWCASTLE

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP** (Newcastle) [6.06 p.m.]: Since 2013 the city of Newcastle has been waiting—waiting for an answer from the Government, waiting for the benefits of the \$1.75 billion sale of the Port of Newcastle to come home and be invested into the new future for our harbour city. More than two years later we are still waiting and it has been revealed that that will become the status quo because the Government does indeed have plans for the port, they just do not involve investing in Newcastle.

**Mr Gareth Ward:** You don't want it, though.

**Mr Matt Kean:** We're building you a tramline, aren't we?

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP:** In fact, you gave us \$400 million in the last budget and you took it away this year. How about that? Shame.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Bruce Notley-Smith):** Order! The member will be heard in silence.

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP:** This week in the *Newcastle Herald* the topic was reignited when it was rumoured that the private operator of the Port of Newcastle may have been looking at a container terminal for Newcastle, the first project proposed by BHP as the replacement for the steelworks. Journalist Ian Kirkwood has shared my interest in the topic over the years. On Tuesday last he attended a lunch with the Port of Newcastle executive manager of trade and business development, Peter Francis. He wrote that when Mr Francis was asked about the potential for containers in the port he said: "... the challenge for containers is being able to get the inbound container trade into Newcastle given that the majority of NSW container freight is consumed within the Sydney basin area; that becomes a bit challenging." That comment was as close as anyone has come to admitting that the way the State Government had leased the Port of Newcastle restricted or effectively prohibited Newcastle from building a major container terminal.

This discussion has been coming for a long time. In the late 1990s BHP's major parting gift to the region was a plan to convert the steelworks site into a multipurpose terminal that would compete with or rival Botany as the State's premier container port. But it never happened. Longstanding caps on the size of Botany Bay were lifted and then scrapped altogether and Newcastle lost its place as the next container port to Kembla. The development of a container terminal at the Port of Newcastle would give the city and surrounding Hunter area a massive economic boost. Industry has left the city of Newcastle with the closure of the steelworks and the downturn of the coal industry. Manufacturing is closing with Goninan and EDI Downer begging for the Sydney train contracts, and Forgas is hanging in the balance if it does not get more Federal defence contracts. Our city needs growth. It needs jobs and it needs the support of the Government to do it.

Under this Government we have had our poles and wires and our port proceeds flogged off. The Government also cut our mass public transport network to the central business district. Enough is enough. It is now time for our fair share and it is the best time for the Government to make a contribution to the unemployment epidemic. If Newcastle was granted the development of a container terminal a new distribution hub could be created and it could utilise the existing heavy rail freight network to service the Hunter region. Although Newcastle is a major coal port, developing a container terminal would supercharge local job opportunities, improve linkages across the State and provide new commercial opportunities. The Baird Government stopped this happening before it could start by making an anti-competitive decision to impose a cap on the number of containers moving across Newcastle wharves.

The Government's ineptitude regarding this matter was made abundantly clear today in question time when the Treasurer was asked by the Leader of the Opposition: "Why has the Government imposed constraints on the growth of container movements?" The answer from the Treasurer was abysmal. I then asked the Treasurer, "Why, when unemployment has reached double digits in the Hunter, has the Government imposed restrictions on growing the Port of Newcastle just to increase the sale price of Botany?" The answer was even more abysmal and prompted *Newcastle Herald* journalist Michelle Harris to tweet: "Govt's farcical efforts to avoid giving an actual answer on port container cap questions reaches new low in QT today." What a disgrace.

Worse still are intimations that should Newcastle ever exceed its meagre cap, the owners of Port Botany will be financially compensated. This makes the development of a container terminal at Newcastle very difficult. Restricting port activity in Newcastle protects the container monopoly at Port Botany from facing competition. Preserving the monopoly at Port Botany is how the Government inflated its sale price—it fattened the pig when it was privatised. Restricting activity at Newcastle and protecting Botany's monopoly is market rigging by the New South Wales Government at the highest level. Ports are strategic assets for open trading economies like ours. Many of the goods we consume arrive in containers. The port should be freely competing for sea trade cargo. I want Newcastle to be a vibrant, smart city that nurtures creativity and innovation that attracts investment. Premier Baird must be held accountable for hurting Newcastle and its prospects.

**Mr MATT KEAN** (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.11 p.m.]: I appreciate the member for Newcastle has passion for his community but while he is entitled to his own opinions, he is not entitled to his own facts. The reality is that the proceeds from the sale of the Port of Newcastle are going exactly where the member for Newcastle wants them—back into Newcastle. In addition to the \$120 million allocated by the Government for the revitalisation of the Newcastle central business district, proceeds to the value of \$340 million is being allocated for the project. The only flaw in the argument made by the member for Newcastle is that he voted against the money going to Newcastle in the first place.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Bruce Notley-Smith):** Order! The member for Newcastle will restrain himself.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** I appreciate that the member is advocating for his community and that he is passionate about achieving the best deal for it, but the money is flowing back to Newcastle for its revitalisation. It is long overdue because it was put on hold by the former Labor Government.

#### **NARELLAN ROTARY CLUB**

**Mr CHRIS PATTERSON** (Camden) [6.12 p.m.]: I will use my time allocated to Private Members' Statements positively and speak about the Rotary Club of Narellan. The club recently held its annual Friends of Rotary Charity Ball. The club is to be congratulated for another successful year. Vicki and I shared a wonderful evening with my great mate Russell Matheson and parliamentary colleagues such as my fantastic friend Melanie Gibbons, and the member for Campbelltown and the member for Macquarie Fields. I thank Jim Marsden, another great mate of mine, and his wife Marion, for hosting our table. A fabulous evening was had by all. I am sure the recently elected President Andrew Moyle will continue to oversee the fantastic work that the club does in supporting many local charities. The evening is the club's major fundraiser for the year and the club has the support of many local businesses.

**Mr Gareth Ward:** Name them.

**Mr CHRIS PATTERSON:** I will. Chairman of the Ball Committee Tony Ross did an outstanding job presenting a memorable night. I thank the businesses that contributed to the evening and that have continually supported events during the year.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Bruce Notley-Smith):** Order! I remind the member for Kiama and the member for Hornsby that they are on three calls to order.

**Mr CHRIS PATTERSON:** The businesses are: Bob Ingham Family, Harrington Grove Estates, Perich Group, UrbanGrowth NSW, Regal Innovations, Adco, Narellan Town Centre, Bradcorp, Douglas Partners, Freedom Foods, Dart West Developments, a2 Milk, Camden Hire, TRN Group, Nepean Engineering, Masterton, Wisdom Homes, Cameron Brae, MainVue Homes, Gunlake Concrete, Glenfield Waste Services, Macarthur Automotive, Clintons Toyota, Kelly and Partners Accountants, Marsdens Law Group, Oran Park Town, Perfection Landscape Services, Fairmont Homes, Roy Mammone Development, Fowler Homes, Design and Planning, Liverpool Catholic Club, Mercedes-Benz Macarthur, Mainbrace Constructions, Eden Brae Homes, Calibre Consulting, Sydney Truck and Machinery, Firststyle Homes and Tulich Family Communities. The event is well supported. Since 1992 the Rotary Club of Narellan has supported many deserving charities.

**Mr Lee Evans:** Name them.

**Mr CHRIS PATTERSON:** I will. The following organisations have been grateful for the ongoing support they receive: CareFlight, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Royal Rehab, Ingham Institute, Breast Cancer, Stellar Violets, Lifeline Macarthur, Egtober Foundation, Miracle Babies Foundation, University of Western Sydney, Mater Dei School, Camp Quality, Karitane, Kids of Macarthur Health Foundation, Ladies Lipstick Luncheon, Kiss Goodbye to MS, Christmas in Narellan, Youth Solutions, the Rotary Foundation, Rotary International and Relay for Life. These organisations contribute a great deal to the Macarthur region. Most members know the majority of them and will be familiar with the assistance they offer to many people, including conducting research into many diseases, counselling for mental health and the rural doctor services.

One recipient, the Ingham Institute, a not-for-profit organisation located in Sydney, was established to undertake medical research that specifically addresses the needs of and can be applied to the local population and wider Australia. The Ingham Institute is located at Liverpool Hospital and has been changing the way medical research is conducted in Australia. Across its six research centres, it is transferring research into practice on a day-to-day basis. The board of the Institute, headed by Chairman Terry Goldacre, is to be commended for its ongoing support for medical research. I acknowledge the other board members: Dr Teresa Anderson, Ms Robynne Cooke, Professor Peter J Smith, Tim Bryan, Tony Perich, AM, Professor Annemarie Hennessy, Arnold Vitocco, David Hazlett, Debbie Killian, Jim Marsden, OAM, Professor Jeremy Wilson, John Hexton, John Ingham, Professor Michael Barton, OAM, and Amanda Larkin. Collectively these people have a wealth of experience in all walks of life which adds to the fabric of the institute.

The Rotary Club of Narellan is not considered to be a large club, but it is an active club and its members work hard to ensure that no-one is left out. On the evening the club raised more than \$1 million for local charities and institutions. I commend Tony Perich, AM, his brother Ron and their families who donated \$500,000 towards robotic trials for Liverpool Hospital. I congratulate the club on another successful night and wish them well for the coming year.

**Mr MATT KEAN** (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.17 p.m.]: I thank the member for Camden for bringing to the attention of the House the outstanding work of the Narellan Rotary Club. He spoke of the enormous difference the club is making to the community of Camden by raising much-needed funds for outstanding local charities, which are also doing exceptional work in the community. All members in this House would have a similar story about the Rotary clubs operating in their electorates. I include the members in the Chamber—the member for Kiama, who is a passionate supporter of Rotary, the member for Charlestown, the member for Menai and the member for Heathcote, who is wearing his Rotary badge. For more than 100 years Rotary has made a difference to communities in New South Wales, Australia and throughout the world. We are better off for the difference they make every day of the week. I commend the member for Camden for raising the important work that the Narellan Rotary Club continues to do in his community.

### HUNTER MANUFACTURING

**Ms JODIE HARRISON** (Charlestown) [6.18 p.m.]: The Hunter has a proud history of manufacturing. The manufacturing sector has played an important role in the development of the Hunter mining industry as well the development of other sectors of the local economy. BHP certainly played a central role in the development of greater Newcastle—including my electorate of Charlestown—as New South Wales's second-largest city and an economic powerhouse of the State. Although BHP no longer has a presence in the area, manufacturing continues to dominate the local economy. According to the Hunter Research Foundation, manufacturing accounts for 9 per cent of employment in the Hunter—which is higher than the statewide average, and almost double the number of jobs in the region's mining sector.

The quality of manufacturing in the Hunter is put on display each year at the Hunter Manufacturing Awards. Past winners of those awards include BAE Systems, Mortel's Sheepskin Factory, Downer EDI and OneSteel. Nationally, almost 900,000 people are employed in some form of manufacturing. Based on the last census, around 3,000 residents—or 8.6 per cent of the Charlestown electorate—work in manufacturing. They join thousands of others from the Hunter region who share their workshops and factories. I was very sad to hear today of the announcement of the closure, by 2018, of the Cooranbong Sanitarium Health Food company site. Sanitarium has had a presence in the region for 115 years and 185 jobs will be lost from the area.

Manufacturing is vital to the future prosperity of the Hunter region, but it does not get the support from government that it deserves. Across New South Wales, manufacturing jobs have fallen by 6.6 per cent over the past five years, leaving 20,000 skills employees out of work. In Melbourne recently, I was delighted to see trams with "Made in Melbourne, for Melbourne" stamped on the side. There is popular support for governments investing in local jobs and it is great to see the Victorian Labor Government investing in local manufacturing jobs. I compare this with Hunter bus manufacturer Volgren, which invested \$18 million in its factory in Tomago in 2010, but had to lay off 85 staff when this Government decided to send the State's bus contract to Queensland instead of supporting jobs in New South Wales.

Downer EDI and UGL have supplied high-quality trains for this State and have the skilled and experienced workforce needed to build the next fleet of intercity trains for New South Wales. These companies have been involved in building trains not just for Australia but also for overseas governments, including the MTR trains in Hong Kong. Both these companies have struggled as this Government delays the tender process again and again, creating economic uncertainty for these businesses and forcing them to lay off hundreds of workers. The actions of this Government show that it is cut from the same cloth as the Abbott Government, which has caused great confusion in the shipbuilding industry with its contradictory statements about submarine and shipbuilding contracts in Adelaide that provide flow-on contracts in the Hunter.

I ask the Minister: What percentage of local content was included in recent projects in the Hunter, such as the Hunter Expressway? What percentage of local content has been included in projects funded by the Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Fund? What percentage of local content was involved in the Wyong to Newcastle Freight Rail Development? I also ask the Minister: What local content provisions are in place for the rebuilding of Hunter Sports High School in the Charlestown electorate? These projects are key examples of where the State Government has the opportunity to let local manufacturers contribute to the region. Last week I sat down with

manufacturing workers and heard their stories. I listened to workers who had been retrenched when contracts ran dry, and heard from others who had seen their mates walked off the site because there was not enough work. These workers spoke frankly about the mental health impacts of losing a job—a blow made worse by knowing it was not their fault.

It is a false economic argument to say that the Government should consider only the cheapest purchase price when awarding a tender. Governments should consider the lifetime cost of the project, from construction to maintenance to disposal, as well as the flow-on benefits to the State from keeping these jobs local. The jobs multiplier effect and flow-on social benefits of a project should form part of the consideration of government contracts. Not only will those skilled workers continue to be consumers in the local economy, but local investment will also prevent the negative health and social costs borne by government for treating the issues associated with unemployment. I urge this Government to support local jobs and insure that local companies can compete for these tenders.

**Mr MATT KEAN** (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.23 p.m.]: I thank the member for Charlestown for the significant contribution she has made to her local community over a number of years, both as a local government official and, more recently, as the State member for Charlestown. The Hunter region is the State's largest regional economy, and manufacturing plays an important role, not just for the Hunter region but for the rest of New South Wales. Manufacturing in the Hunter region benefits us all. As Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer, I will take the member's message directly to the Treasurer. Rest assured, the Government's procurement process does not rest solely on lowest price; it considers a number of factors, including quality. I believe the enormously qualified and talented people in the Hunter region who are involved in manufacturing will always be able to deliver high-quality products. It is up to the Government to put in place the supports to enable that to continue. I will take the issue up with the Treasurer.

#### **KIAMA STUDENT LEADERS FORUM**

**Mr GARETH WARD** (Kiama—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.24 p.m.]: I inform the House that on Thursday 6 August 2015 I held the fifth Annual Kiama Student Leaders Forum at New South Wales Parliament House. Students from eight schools across the region participated in the forum, including Nowra Anglican College, Kiama High School, Bomaderry High School, Edmund Rice College, St Joseph's Catholic High School, Nowra Christian School, St John the Evangelist Catholic High School and Nowra High School. I acknowledge each of the 46 students who participated and represented their schools with such pride and distinction. Starting with my old high school, Bomaderry High School, I acknowledge Caitilin O'Connor, Jak Kiely, Renata Bonner, Leonie Foggo, and Gabrielle Bamber. From Nowra Anglican College, I acknowledge Lloyd Herron, Callum Mackay, Thomas King, Jesse Heslehurst, India Shepherd, Ailsa Schreurs, Naomi Johns, and Jemima Morgan. From Kiama High School, I acknowledge Ned Wilkinson, Eliza Skorulis, Tasman Fredericks, Tiarne Doughty, Darcy Lawton, and Bryce Humphries.

From Edmund Rice College, I acknowledge Justice Malfitano, Joseph Fernandez, and Jack Shaw. From St Joseph's Catholic High School, I acknowledge Nicholas Marin, Heather Burton, Anthony Gaggero, Brie Graham, Maddie White and Laura Markowski. From Nowra Christian School, I acknowledge Lakeisha Pilt, Kate Tasker, Chelsea Williams, Joshua Parsons, Cohen Perry, and Terry Staples. From St John the Evangelist Catholic High School, I acknowledge Sarah Lawrence, Lauren Moore, Emma Smith, Jonah Pedro, Chantelle Gauci, and Bodie Baker. From Nowra High School, I acknowledge Milly Bristow, Jennifer Spark, Rhianna Tuckerman, Sian Gilmour, and Mikayla Barnes.

I thank the Hon. John Barilaro, MP, Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business; the Hon. Adrian Piccoli, MP, Minister for Education; the Hon. Pru Goward, MP, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Medical Research, Assistant Minister for Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; our Speaker, the Hon. Shelley Hancock; and the member for Northern Tablelands, Adam Marshall, for addressing the students on the day about their respective roles. The student leaders were also treated to a tour of the Parliament and question time in the bear pit to see one of the many ways in which the Government is held to account.

During the day, students also watched a debate on the floor of the Legislative Assembly about the Shellharbour Hospital redevelopment. This upgrade is essential to provide for the healthcare needs of our region, and I was pleased that student leaders could see some of the work I do on their behalf for our electorate—in this instance, securing a \$251 million hospital upgrade. My favourite part of the forum is hearing from the student leaders on the issues that matter to them. The forum raised issues such as drug and alcohol

awareness and rehabilitation; public transport; improving the gender balance in Parliament and in the workforce; greater mental health services, particularly for young people; catering to different learning styles in the education system; and reducing homelessness. I also acknowledge my friend the member for Hornsby. He instituted a mental health forum in his electorate and I was able to establish a similar forum in my electorate last year. In my inaugural speech in this place, I said:

The challenge of the leaders is to create more leaders—not more followers.

It is not the easiest objectives to achieve but it is one that all members of this House must strive for. This is why I have held this forum every year since being elected in 2011, and will continue to do so into the future. The young people of our communities need to know that their representatives care about their views and opinions. Whilst these young leaders may not be able to vote, they are the custodians of our future communities. Members of Parliament are here to represent our communities. The youth of our communities far too often go unrecognised for their great works and achievements. I profoundly understand the importance of listening to our young people, giving them a voice in government and developing the next generation of leaders. This is something in which all responsible members of Parliament must be engaged.

I was pleased to see the student leaders debate many issues after being asked what they would do if they were Premier for a day. I have no doubt that any of the 46 students who attended could be Premier in the future, as they engaged in discussion about serious issues with intelligence, awareness, and compassion. I must also take time to thank my staff and volunteers who organised this event. I thank Mr Paul Ell, who began organising this event before departing my office after more than four years of service, for bigger and better things at Russell McLelland Brown Lawyers. I thank Mr Sam Tedeschi, who took on this forum after Paul's departure, Mr Zachary Fitzpatrick, Mr Jasper Brewer and Mr Rowan Cravey, who so ably assisted on the day.

The forum would not have been the success it was without each of their efforts and hard work on the day. I take this opportunity to commend all the student leaders who participated; they certainly are the leaders of tomorrow. I commend the idea of a student leaders forum to all members of Parliament. It is important that we listen to young people and give them a voice. This platform is one that they can share with us. They are the leaders of tomorrow and it is important that we listen to them today.

**Mr MATT KEAN** (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.29 p.m.]: I congratulate the member for Kiama on his outstanding initiative in hosting the Kiama Student Leaders Forum. The role of all leaders is to develop more leaders, and that is exactly what the member for Kiama has always been committed to doing. I have had the great pleasure of knowing the member for 16 years now.

**Mr Gareth Ward:** Sixteen long years.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** He will remember when I had a full head of hair; he is responsible for the loss of much of it. The member for Kiama got involved in public life because he wanted to make a difference. I cannot think of a better way to make a difference than by developing the hope of the side—the leaders of tomorrow, who can be the leaders of today. We need them now more than ever. We have threats to face, kids to educate and diseases to cure, so now is the time to encourage our best talent to come forward. I commend the member for Kiama for continuing to develop those who will take us into the next century.

### EDUCATION WEEK 2015

**Ms ELENi PETINOS** (Miranda) [6.30 p.m.]: Tonight I acknowledge the success of Education Week 2015, which occurred between 27 and 31 July. Education Week is an event that recognises the efforts and achievements of our students, teachers and support staff. It highlights the culture of excellence in learning and the ethos of personal accomplishment that is fostered in our public schools. This year's Education Week was particularly special for my electorate, with the statewide launch occurring at Jannali High School and showcasing so much talent from the Sutherland shire. The theme for Education Week 2015 was "Celebrating Local Heroes". This celebrated those members of the community who have inspired and touched the lives of those in our local public schools and also the wider community. There was no better way to encapsulate this for our local students than through the presence of the Governor of New South Wales, His Excellency General the Hon. David Hurley, AC, DSC (Retired), New South Wales Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione and six-time paralympian and London gold medallist Liesi Tesch, AM.

As the local member, it was deeply satisfying to see our students representing the community with great aptitude and creative brilliance. I was particularly proud of the local talent on display throughout the



launch, with dancers from the Jannali High School taking to the stage and performing to *Uptown Funk*, impressing all those in attendance. I take this opportunity to congratulate the talented dancers who performed on the day: Lara Ballantine, Natasha Phillips, Elyssa Dunn, Hayley Bernardi, Chelsea O'Reilly, Sarah Hoareau, Carla Hoffman-Smith, Abbey Hobden and Amelia O'Reilly. I also commend teacher Ellen Clifford, who coached the dancers, and music teacher Bronwyn Baker, who assisted with the lighting, sound and staging. It is appropriate at this time to acknowledge the selflessness and sacrifice of our State's teachers and support staff, particularly those within my electorate. I note that teachers are local heroes too and have an immeasurable impact on their students' lives.

In the spirit of Education Week, I returned to the Jannali High School on 28 July to engage with the student leaders. I thank school principal Mr Warren Finn for his invitation and for the nurturing and yet stimulating environment he has created for the students of my electorate. The student leaders discussed issues relevant to our youth within Miranda, as well as offering some pertinent observations about ways that young people can use their school as a medium through which to engage with the broader community. It would be an understatement to say that I was inspired by their enthusiasm and ideas. The way in which the school leaders carried themselves is a demonstration of their keen awareness and acute intellect. My thanks go to school captain, Tim Maher, and year 11 senior leaders Kathryn Murry, Maddie Phair and Adam Stephanou for engaging in such dialogue with me.

I turn now to Port Hacking High School, which I had the pleasure of attending on 29 July to observe the year 12 dance students as they performed a showcase of their routines. The skill and passion that the students demonstrated is a testament to the hard work and dedication that the girls invested in their routines, in preparation for their final performances for the Higher School Certificate. I congratulate the following year 12 students on a successful showcase and well-deserved media coverage in the *Daily Telegraph* on 1 August: Rachel Cowan, Elyssa Kostopoulos, Emily Liberato, Ashleigh Sunderland and Tamara Winstanley. Commendation must also go to the girls' superb teacher, Ms Casey Hadfield, for the support and guidance that she provided to her students, and will continue to provide in anticipation of the upcoming Higher School Certificate exams. The girls are worthy role models and ambassadors of Port Hacking High School and our local community, and I know their efforts will inspire other students to strive for personal excellence.

In concluding, I return to this year's theme of Education Week, "Celebrating Local Heroes". As with all things, the theme is subject to interpretation and locally was related to the role of our police officers, firefighters, paramedics, volunteer emergency services workers, teachers and parents—just to name a few. I pay tribute to all those people who have immeasurably shaped the lives of our local students and our community forever.

### MAX POTENTIAL PROGRAM

**Mr DAVID HARRIS** (Wyong) [6.35 p.m.]: Tonight I inform the House of the great work done by Max Potential students in my electorate of Wyong and by Joshua De Lore from Green Point Christian College. The Max Potential program in the Wyong shire offers personal leadership development for young people over a 22-week program. Young adults from local schools are supported by community volunteer coaches to help them maximise their potential. Successful completion of Max Potential will also qualify all young adult participants to a Certificate I in Active Volunteering. The certificate, customised specifically for Max Potential in partnership with the New South Wales Centre for Volunteering, builds on the basic generic skills required by all community-oriented organisations that enable volunteers to participate effectively in the organisation and undertake their community service work using basic practical skills required for the job.

Certificate I in Active Volunteering is a nationally accredited qualification from the Community Services Training Package designed especially for volunteers for their community service through Max Potential. The qualification is designed for Max Potential young adults to recognise their new or updated skills, run their community service project effectively and gain a qualification that provides a pathway to other vocational qualifications and improves their employability skills. Because much of the assessment is done in conjunction with their community service project, Max Potential participants must be able to demonstrate that what they have learnt in Max Potential is supported by their community service. The training is logbook based. The young adults and coaches discover the ability to lead their own lives effectively, to lead others in a team and to make a difference in their community. This program occurs during the final years of school and provides young people with tools and techniques that can be utilised far beyond their school years. The program encourages engagement with the local community by defining, planning and delivering a project that benefits others around them while focusing on the Max Potential principles.

Recently, I had the privilege to attend a Youth Q and A forum organised by Gosford Max Potential student Joshua De Lore at Green Point Christian College with Brisbane Water Local Area Commander Superintendent Daniel Sullivan, Gosford Mayor Lawrie McKinna, Senator Deborah O'Neil, Coast Shelter executive officer Laurie Maher and Federal member for Robertson Lucy Wicks. This event is a true credit to the great work the Max Potential program achieves with students on the Central Coast. I take time now to thank Joshua for his invitation to the Central Coast Youth Q and A forum and I thank students from the schools neighbouring Green Point Christian College for their questions and attendance.

At the end of the community projects the 22 students involved in the Wyong Max Potential program hold a community presentation event, which I had the privilege to attend at Mingara Recreation Club. All 22 students from the Wyong shire local government area presented their community projects as a group with their adult mentors on 29 July 2015. It is worth noting that the Max Potential program is supported by local clubs on the Central Coast and Clubs NSW. I pass on my thanks to Clubs NSW for its continued support of Max Potential on the Central Coast and in our community.

It was wonderful to catch up with so many hardworking students from across my electorate of Wyong to speak to them about each of their community projects, along with their adult mentors, who helped them along the way. It was also good to have Karen McNamara, who is the Federal member for Dobell, to present awards to the students while I presented awards to their coaches. We were both very impressed with what we saw in each of the stands. Mr Temporary Speaker, as you know, no community group can function without its volunteers and organisers, who are the lifeblood of any group. As I have said in this House previously, I firmly believe that every volunteer and event organiser should be recognised by this House for their efforts and achievements.

I take this opportunity to thank all of the students' mentors and coaches for their hard work and efforts over the past six months or 22 weeks. I especially thank Julie Stevens, who is the leader of the program and who single-handedly makes sure that students and mentors across the whole length of the program are getting together, working out their projects and presenting their final package. It was certainly impressive to see young people working at such a high level. It is an inspiration to everyone in our community to know that in the future we will be in such good hands.

**Mr MATT KEAN** (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.40 p.m.]: I thank the member for Wyong for discussing an initiative that is important in his electorate. I know that, as an educator, he has been passionate about improving opportunities for young people and ensuring that they realise their potential. It is great that he continues in that role as the member for Wyong and is following on with his previous role as a school principal in the Central Coast region. Max Potential is a great program that is supported by ClubsNSW and is involved in developing young leaders right across the State. The program provides leadership skills, develops potential in young people and gives them the confidence they need to go on and make a difference later in their communities. I will conclude my remarks where I began by thanking the member for Wyong for his continued interest in and support of young people in his community. He has dedicated his life to educating young people. I am glad that he continues to support them in his role as the member for Wyong in this House.

### **CALNA CREEK BRIDGE**

**Mr MATT KEAN** (Hornsby—Parliamentary Secretary) [6.41 p.m.]: I thank the Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, and Assistant Minister for Planning, Mark Speakman, for recently visiting Hornsby to join me in opening the new Calna Creek Bridge. The Calna Creek Bridge is located along the Great North Walk that connects Sydney to Newcastle by 250 kilometres of bushwalking trails. The path was constructed in 1988 as an Australian Bicentennial project. It has become a popular attraction for many scouting groups, bushwalkers, and tourists who want to experience close to Sydney some of our State's most stunning scenery and native bushland. In early 2013, the Great North Walk was cut into two separate sections after the ageing Calna Creek Bridge was badly damaged when the signposted two-person weight limit was exceeded by a group of visitors. That caused the path over the small Calna Creek in the Berowra Valley National Park to be inaccessible.

Many bushwalking and scouting groups contacted me to emphasise the need for a replacement bridge to restore the damaged section of the trail. However, replacement and removal of the old timber bridge would prove to be a difficult task. The old twin log bridge was constructed in 1980 by Crown Lands with the help of the Australian Army and the use of a Chinook helicopter which dropped two extra-long timber telegraph poles as the main horizontal supports. The telegraph poles were placed side by side on top of the concrete and stone abutments on both banks. Timber decking was added to span the 20-metre wide section of the tidal creek.

The remote and challenging location is a 1.5 kilometres walk north of Crosslands Reserve and is surrounded by thick bushland, with steep terrain meaning that no road access was available. Replacement of the bridge would require a creative solution. I thank the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service team, particularly their leader Tom Bagnet who was exceptional throughout the process. I place my personal thanks to him on the public record, particularly for his patience and planning in relation to this challenging project.

The decision was made to float the building materials in on a barge along the shallow and tidal Calna Creek. The cost and manpower required to build a new bridge required a sizable investment by the New South Wales Government. I was delighted to work with key community leaders such as Matt McClelland, Bob and Annette Salt, Richard Mason and Noel and Rae Rosten to lobby for funding and make replacement of the bridge possible. I am pleased to say that the former Minister for the Environment, Rob Stokes, backed my plan and provided the funds and resources that the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service needed to replace the bridge. I also thank Minister Speakman for following through on the New South Wales Government's commitment to deliver the \$250,000 bridge upgrade project on time and on budget.

Following an environmental assessment, building works were undertaken and completed late last month on a new steel structure, which will last the community for generations to come. This project would not have been possible had it not been for the continual efforts of the Friends of Berowra Valley National Park and local Hornsby resident Matt McClelland. Matt is a community-minded father of two, who has a keen interest preserving and investing in environmental projects. Matt is the author of several bushwalking guide books, including one on the Great North Walk. He runs two websites named Wildwalks and *bushwalk.com*, which serve approximately 5,000 people each day and encourage visitors to get out and explore the natural environment by bushwalking, hiking or camping.

Like many other community groups, Matt would promote the Great North Walk as one of the Hornsby shire's recreational attractions through his own website and social media platforms. Matt was one of the first community members to contact me upon discovering the damage to the Calna Creek Bridge in 2013. He wrote several letters to the New South Wales Government and sought support from local environmental groups and the wider community to take action and fix the problem. Matt's efforts inspired other residents like Nick Makil, David Noble, Rob Scott, Mike Cuming and Duke of Edinburgh students at Northholm Grammar School, including Mike Cusack, who also was a great advocate for this project. Together with the community's assistance, we were able to achieve a big win for the local community.

The Calna Creek Bridge may be a relatively small section of the Great North Walk but its importance to the community was not underestimated by the New South Wales Government, which took only five months to finish the project after I announced the funding had been secured in March. Each year the Great North Walk receives 40,000 visitors, with many of those also crossing the Calna Creek Bridge. This is a great environmental achievement that will allow bushwalkers to cross Calna Creek Bridge for the first time in almost two years without becoming wet. I am very proud to have delivered on this important link in our Berowra Valley National Park. The installation of a new bridge will mean bushwalkers and school groups can again enjoy the historic Great North Walk without having to walk across the creek and get wet.

The Calna Creek Bridge is more than a bridge: It is an important link to help the community enjoy this stunning and ancient landscape. The construction of this bridge will help lots of people to get out and enjoy that amazing place while also protecting a nearby endangered ecosystem. The Berowra Valley National Park is one of the most spectacular natural places in Sydney. There are not many places in the world where people can get off a train and walk along natural waterways, through deep gorges and through native forests like that. It is a place that every Sydneysider should visit. I am proud to have been able to obtain the required protections to turn the area into a national park.

**Private members' statements concluded.**

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 6.47 p.m. until  
Tuesday 25 August 2015 at 12 noon.**

---