



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament
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Thursday, 4 August 2016

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 4 August 2016

The SPEAKER (The Hon. Shelley Elizabeth Hancock) took the chair at 10:00.

The SPEAKER read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[Notices of motions given.]

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the gallery parliamentary interns who are working with members of Parliament this week.

Bills

SECURITY INDUSTRY AMENDMENT (PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS) BILL 2016

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Troy Grant, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Deputy Premier, Minister for Justice and Police, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Racing) (10:13): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The amendments in the Security Industry Amendment (Private Investigators) Bill 2016 serve to transfer the regulation of the private investigation industry to the Security Industries Act 1997. This bill provides for the private investigation industry to be regulated as a security activity alongside other activities already regulated under the Security Industries Act 1997. This is a sensible amendment that will provide synergies to police in their regulatory and compliance activities and reduce red tape that comes from police managing two different but similar schemes at the same time.

The changes outlined in the bill provide certainty to the private investigation industry and the New South Wales community that private investigators will continue to be regulated effectively and in a way that reflects the risks and sensitive scenarios licensees regularly engage in. While the majority of work carried out by this industry relates to the investigation of insurance claims on behalf of insurers who outsource investigations into claims, private investigators are also employed by other large corporations and government departments and can work directly for members of the public.

A private investigator may assist the legal profession to locate evidence or interview witnesses, assist businesses to undertake investigations of employees or potential employees, or undertake investigations on behalf of individuals into issues such as partner fidelity. Also, as I have mentioned, a great deal of private investigation work involves assisting insurers to investigate claims. This type of work carries privacy and integrity risks that mean it is appropriate for government to continue to closely regulate this industry. Risks associated with the work of private investigators include illegal access to confidential information, breaches of confidence, misrepresentation, impersonation, trespass, harassment and inappropriate use of surveillance equipment.

Police also receive complaints in relation to alleged fraud, harassment and unethical conduct. These risks often are compounded because most private investigation work is done discreetly. There can be little visibility to the Government and the people being investigated as to the lawfulness of their activities. Given these risks, it is quite right for the public to expect that all private investigators continue to be subject to a robust regulatory scheme. The Security Industries Act is such a scheme. It will continue to apply ongoing probity compliance checks before private investigators are permitted to engage in the work.

I want to make clear that this bill will enhance the regulation of the private investigation industry in New South Wales by aligning it with the established regulatory framework of the Security Industries Act 1997. Current activities regulated by the Security Industries Act 1997 include bodyguards, crowd controllers, locksmiths and people who advise on, sell or install security services. As with private investigation, these activities pose a level of risk to the public because of the intrusive nature of their activities. Therefore, it makes sense to stop managing private investigators and the security industry under separate but similar legislative schemes. I note that

by regulating private investigators alongside the security industry New South Wales will join with most other Australian jurisdictions which already implement a similar approach. We know that national consistency, also known as harmonisation, in licensing and regulation is important for the private investigation industry and this bill represents a step forward by New South Wales in that regard.

I turn to the detail of the bill. A key feature of schedule 1 of the bill is that a definition of private investigation will be included in section 4 of the Security Industries Act 1997. This sets out that a private investigator is a person who is employed or engaged to investigate the business or personal affairs of a person or to carry out surveillance of a person. This definition draws from the definition of a private inquiry agent under the Commercial Agents and Private Inquiry Agents Act 2004. In practice, the "investigation of persons" arm of the definition encapsulates the inquiries that these agents make about a person, which often involves using open source material and interviewing the person, or others, about that person's personal or business affairs.

The second arm of this definition, that of "surveillance of persons", includes activities such as following a person or surveilling places that they are known to frequent, such as their residence or place of employment, to identify their movements, activities or associates. Schedule 1 of the bill amends section 4 of the Security Industries Act 1997 to set out that a person who acts as a private investigator or acts in a similar capacity is carrying out a security activity when it is done in the course of conducting a business or in the course of the person's employment. By specifying that it is a security activity, the Security Industries Act 1997 will require persons to carry a licence issued under that Act. The licencing approach for security activities under the Security Industries Act 1997 is similar to the existing master licences or operator licences that are currently required for private inquiry agents under the Commercial Agents and Private Inquiry Agents Act 2004.

Under this bill, a master licence will still be required for a person to run a business as a private investigator. The bill also creates a new technical class of licence under the Security Industry Act 1997, a class 2E licence, for a person to undertake work as a commercial private investigator. Under the Security Industry Act 1997 the holder of this licence must be employed by a master licence holder unless they hold an individual master licence of their own. This is similar to the operator's licence currently issued for private inquiry agents. Under this bill a person who wants to make an application to become a private investigator will go through many of the same steps as they had previously.

The Security Licensing and Enforcement Directorate within the NSW Police Force State Crime Command currently manages the applications for security licences and private inquiry licences, and this arrangement will continue under this bill. Currently there are more than 3,400 private inquiry agent licences on issue in New South Wales. Since 2010, New South Wales police have received, on average, 800 new licence applications per annum. Applicants will still need to make an application through the police if they wish to become a licensed private investigator. Similar requirements will continue to apply to age, criminal history and competency. Licence fees will also be applicable and, while these fees will now be set under the provisions of the Security Industry Act, they are generally comparable to similar licence fees applicable under the Commercial Agents and Private Inquiry Agents Act.

The criminal history requirements will continue to ensure that persons convicted of a range of serious offences are not licensed as private investigators. This is an important feature of limiting the risk associated with the industry. Types of offences that prevent a person being granted a licence under the Security Industry Act currently include offences relating to firearms or weapons that would disqualify the person from holding a licence under the Firearms Act 1996; offences relating to prohibited drugs; offences involving assault where the penalty imposed is imprisonment or fine of \$200 or more, or both; offences involving fraud, dishonesty or stealing that have a maximum penalty of imprisonment for three months or more; offences relating to terrorism; and offences involving robbery, affray, riot, stalking or intimidation.

While the major aim of this bill is to transfer private investigators to a different regulatory scheme, there is a range of additional benefits that will flow from that as a matter of consequence. I will briefly outline them. First, private investigation activity will now be subject to the offence and penalty regime under the Security Industry Act 1997. Many of those offences are similar to those that apply under the Commercial Agents and Private Inquiry Agents Act 2004, such as failing to produce a licence when demanded by a police officer. However, an offence that will now apply under the Security Act 1997 is the offence of misrepresentation. This offence, in section 33 of the Security Industry Act 1997, directly addresses false or misleading activity relating to the engagement of security activities. Applying this offence to the private investigation industry will strengthen the integrity of the industry and will increase alignment with the way in which the security industry is regulated.

An additional benefit of this bill is that probationary licences for private investigators will now be abolished. We know that the current probationary licences scheme, which requires first-time private investigators to spend their first 12 months under the direct supervision of a more experienced private investigator, is viewed

as creating a barrier for new entrants to the industry and as creating unnecessary red tape. It also contributes to undesirable situations where prospective applicants could choose to become licensed in another jurisdiction to avoid the probationary period.

A provisional licence scheme was removed for all other security licences in 2011. It makes sense to align the approach for the two industries. Private investigators will also benefit from service delivery improvements that have been introduced to the security industry regulatory scheme in recent years. They include the ability to renew licences quickly and easily online. Finally, the greater enforcement powers and resources of the NSW Police Force in regulating the security industry will enable rogue private investigators to be dealt with more quickly and effectively, to the benefit of all industry members and, importantly, the community.

Schedule 1 to the bill also sets out savings and transitional provisions to provide for the transition of persons who are currently licensed, or seeking to be licensed, under the Commercial Agents and Private Inquiry Agents Act 2004 to those persons being licensed, or having their applications for licences determined, under the Security Industry Act 1997. The savings and transition provisions in the bill are intended to provide that current licensed private investigators can continue under their existing licence, including any condition the licence has been subject to. There are also provisions that provide for the Commissioner of Police to deal with pending applications without requiring a new application to be made.

In regard to the other industry regulated by the Commercial Agent and Private Inquiry Agents Act 2004, the commercial agent industry, this bill is the first stage of the Government's move to transfer regulation of that industry to the Office of Fair Trading. This action follows a statutory review undertaken in 2008 and the 2014 inquiry of the Legislative Assembly Legal Affairs Committee into Debt Recovery in New South Wales. I acknowledge that the Parliamentary Secretary who served on that inquiry is in the House.

In response to the inquiry by the Legislative Assembly Legal Affairs Committee, the New South Wales Government decided that the regulation of private investigators should remain with the NSW Police Force due to the higher risk profile of private investigators. The Government has also decided that the regulation of commercial agents would be better placed in the Fair Trading portfolio as this industry is considered to have a lower risk profile, and Fair Trading already handles complaints about debt collectors and breaches of consumer laws.

Separate to this bill, the New South Wales Government intends to bring forward a further standalone bill to regulate commercial agents and repeal the Commercial Agents and Private Inquiry Agents Act 2004. That separate legislation will affect the transfer of the regulation of commercial agents from the Police portfolio into the Fair Trading portfolio. The NSW Police Force will work with the Office of Fair Trading to facilitate this change. The Government's intention is that the current bill and future bill will commence at the same time. For that reason, this bill will commence on a date to be proclaimed. This bill is about transferring regulatory arrangements for private investigators so that they are regulated as part of the security industry. This is a sensible approach to managing the criminal and privacy risks presented by this type of work in New South Wales. This bill will also reduce red tape and improve efficiencies for police in licensing and regulating the private industry. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

TECHNICAL AND FURTHER EDUCATION COMMISSION AMENDMENT (FUNDING GUARANTEE FOR TAFE) BILL 2016

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 23 June 2016.

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (10:28): As shadow Minister for Skills I resume debate on this important bill, and I am proud to do so. The Labor Opposition is proud of the Technical and Further Education Commission Amendment (Funding Guarantee for TAFE) Bill 2016 because it is about protecting one of the great public institutions of New South Wales. That institution has been one of our State's greatest equalisers for more than a century. It is the vehicle by which thousands of students have gained the skills they need to put them on the right path. It is the institution that so often has put our young people, and in turn the families and communities around them, on the road to a better life. I speak of the TAFE Commission of New South Wales.

This bill will ensure the future health of TAFE in this State. At its heart it acknowledges one inalienable fact—that it is and should be the role of government to ensure a strong, affordable and accessible public education system. The bill proposes to do this by capping contestable public funding for private education providers at a maximum of 30 per cent. This is a guarantee that TAFE, as the public provider, will receive a minimum of 70 per cent of public funding, and potentially more. Clause 3 of the bill inserts in the principal Act, the Technical and Further Education Commission Act 1990, a TAFE funding guarantee. That will not only deliver

the guaranteed minimum 70 per cent funding for vocational education and training to the TAFE Commission but also ensure that the TAFE Commission receives, in each of its institutes, not less than 70 per cent of the funding allocated to vocational education and training courses.

Let us look at why a bill such as this is so desperately necessary. This year's budget was yet another reminder of what this Government is in the process of doing to our great TAFE system. The numbers in the Government's budget, in black and white, cannot be interpreted as anything else. They are there in plain sight for all to see. The forecast for 2016-17 shows that there will be 126,000 fewer students enrolled in TAFE than there were in 2012. I repeat: 126,000. Of that incredible number, 14,500 will be students with disabilities. That number is a disgrace.

The budget reveals that 5,200 teachers and support staff have been sacked. In an unbelievable insult to hardworking TAFE teachers and their students, the budget papers reveal that while the Government is sacking staff, cutting course hours and increasing fees, it spent a total of \$314 million less than it promised to last year. In budget week, when the Treasurer was asked about these sobering statistics during question time, she said that she was proud of what the Government was doing to TAFE. What an insult. That tells us everything we need to know about this Government's approach to TAFE. These are not the actions of a government that believes in TAFE.

Some months ago in Tamworth I had the privilege of speaking with a group of hearing-impaired students, through an interpreter, for whom the impact of a TAFE education had been nothing short of transformative. They were students whose classroom teachers and support workers had given them opportunities to acquire the skills they needed to contribute to the workplace and the community. They were given these opportunities through one of the features that makes TAFE unique: specialist support to help them realise their potential. The New South Wales Government thought it a good idea to remove that specialist support, rolling those jobs into generalist support and leaving students with disability without that vital link to a better future. They were angry, and why would they not be? I asked them what they would say to the Premier if he were there. Their answer was simple: "Pick on someone else." After much media attention and scrutiny, and following the revelation that TAFE NSW is appointing 14 new highly paid executive managers in head office, it now seems that the proposed changes to the Disability Services Unit will not occur. It is a small victory in the face of an ever-increasing assault on TAFE. It is obvious that it should not take desperate students and their families going to the media to stop cruel cuts to their education.

I turn to our hardworking, passionate and highly skilled TAFE teachers. As shadow Minister it has been a real pleasure for me to meet many of them in the past few months. They care so much about the futures of their students. They are experts in their industry and they love TAFE. They have seen what it can do. They have seen lives transformed before their eyes. More than 5,000 support worker and learning consultant positions have gone since 2012. What government would find that acceptable? It is this Government. The Government heckles Opposition members in this Chamber every sitting week because we care about TAFE teachers. Yes, we do—and we wear that badge with pride. TAFE teachers teach TAFE students; it is not brain surgery. The *Sydney Morning Herald* recently revealed that many of the teachers being shown the door are teaching core trades such as building, carpentry and plumbing in institutes that are geographically placed in the middle of the Sydney building boom. Every other day we hear Ministers crowing about housing approvals and infrastructure. The question is simple: Who on earth will build the homes and infrastructure when the Government is hell-bent on sacking the teachers who teach those trade skills? It is madness.

In addition, we have witnessed the chaos caused by the Education Business System [EBS]. Last week the Minister announced that the Government was finally ditching its shocking computer enrolment system. The thousands of lost enrolments and wasted hours for teachers will never be recovered. Following disaster after disaster, this was a humiliating backdown. The EBS has been responsible for thousands of students being unable to enrol or graduate, locking them out of the jobs market. In December the inquiry convened in the other place recommended ditching the software. As I have visited TAFE colleges I have heard endless stories about problems caused by the EBS: apprentices unable to graduate, graduation ceremonies cancelled, students being told electronically that they had not passed a course when they had, and people ending up with someone else's transcript. The Auditor-General was unable to verify TAFE's accounts and \$6 million was given to KPMG for a crisis audit. More than a few teachers have told me that they have come to use the TAFE acronym differently. To them, the "T", "A" and "E" stand for "Try And Enrol". The "F" stands for something unparliamentary.

The Government must urgently rule out making further cuts to teacher and support staff positions to pay for this bungle. The Opposition is most worried about the fact that, during the Minister's live streamed announcement that the EBS would no longer be used, he flagged a "move away from the bricks and mortar", raising the prospect that more TAFE campuses will be sold to pay for this debacle. That will disturb many people in communities across New South Wales, especially in the context of the leaked Cabinet document from last year

that pointed to the sale of TAFE campuses. A replacement enrolment system will not be in place until 2018. That means frustrated teachers and students will be forced to cope with the old system for a further 18 months.

They have been run off their feet, scrambling to enrol students using this substandard enrolment program, and now they are stuck with it for another year and a half. I call on the Minister to ensure that teachers are consulted so that the new system can be used effectively and does not become a further drain on their teaching time. This is a Government that recently used its own commissioned report to compare TAFE to a disgraced college that had been raided by the Australian Federal Police and investigated for fraud by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. The Government held up that college as a standard to which TAFE should aspire. The chief executive of that college said:

When it comes down to it, it's a lot cheaper to train students who don't turn up to class than it is to train students who do. Every other week a private college goes to the wall, leaving students in the lurch and often forcing TAFE to pick up the pieces. This bill caps the amount of public money available to the private market. This is about stopping the drift to private colleges we have seen in other States while we still can, before it is too late. Over the past few months, talking to students and teachers at TAFE colleges has taught me a lot about the irreplaceable value of TAFE in New South Wales—hearing from students in Tamworth and apprentices who cannot graduate; listening to teachers who fear the closure of their campuses because they have been whittled away and are dying a slow death by a thousand cuts. I even went to a town with the local member, the member for Shellharbour, where the Government closed a TAFE, opened a shopfront in its place and then claimed it would be okay because it had free wi-fi.

Before I conclude I acknowledge the tireless work by my predecessors from the Opposition in this portfolio—the member for Wyong for making this bill a reality and the member for Keira who is almost solely responsible for this being the Opposition's policy. I know how many students and teachers he connected with and to whom he listened. Opposition members stand proudly in this Parliament today with a plan to guarantee funding for the future of TAFE in this State, to ensure that 70 per cent of vocational education and training funding will go directly to it, and to put a cap on contestable funds.

TAFE is being ripped apart by the Baird Government. It is not broken but the funding model is, with teachers sacked, courses cut and hours slashed, and fees increased, all without any evidence whatsoever that the race to the bottom to privatise our training system will be good for anyone. No amount of Baird spin will cover up the facts. Generations of people will not get the skills they need if this is allowed to continue. This Government will go down in history as the Government that ripped apart our TAFE colleges. There is no better way for me to finish than with what I learnt at Tamworth from the deaf students at the TAFE college. They turned into the teachers that day and this is what they taught me: Stop TAFE cuts.

Debate adjourned.

PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS PROHIBITION BILL 2016

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Tamara Smith, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (10:42): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to bring before the House this bill to ban plastic shopping bags and protect marine life. I speak as The Greens NSW spokesperson for marine environments. My office drafted this bill. This legislation delivers on The Greens commitment during the 2015 State election campaign to introduce a bill to ban single-use lightweight plastic shopping bags in New South Wales by the end of 2017. The ban would apply primarily to single-use, lightweight, grocery-style shopping bags which are designed to carry away groceries and other goods bought from retail outlets such as supermarkets, takeaway shops and newsagents.

It is estimated that more than four billion plastic bags are used in Australia each year. The lightweight plastic shopping bags provided by retail outlets are often referred to as "single-use" in that once supplied they are typically not taken back to a retail store by the consumer for refilling. They are a one-off convenience but they have many lifetimes of impact on our environment. These bags are mainly made of high-density polyethylene less than 35 microns thick and they are used for carrying items such as groceries, all manner of retail goods and loose, unpackaged items purchased at convenience stores and general stores.

These bags are normally disposed of after only one use: 5 per cent are recycled, 20 per cent are reused as bin liners and the majority—around 75 per cent—are sent directly to landfill. These lightweight bags are susceptible to being blown from bins or garbage trucks during transport to landfill and from landfill areas, and often end up in waterways and eventually the ocean. Tens of thousands of marine animals die each year from ingesting plastic bags which look like jellyfish and other food often consumed by dolphins, turtles, whales and other marine life.

The objects of this bill are to minimise the number of plastic bags entering waterways and the marine environment and reduce harm to marine animals; to reduce the consumption of plastic products; to encourage more sustainable packaging solutions using reusable and biodegradable alternatives to plastic; to support the community's aspiration to improve environmental sustainability; and to reduce the visual impact of plastic bag litter. I turn to the detail of the legislation. The Greens Plastic Shopping Bags Prohibition Bill 2016 is modelled on current legislation in South Australia and Tasmania banning polyethylene shopping bags with a thickness of less than 35 microns from being handed out or sold by retailers to carry away goods. The bill proposes a transition period of 12 months. The phase-in period would enable retailers and consumers to adjust to the new legislation and use existing plastic bag stocks. During this time retail outlets would be required to provide an alternative option for customers to encourage consumers to prepare for the changes.

Not all bags would be affected. Plastic bags of less than 35 microns would be banned. This includes lightweight, single-use plastic bags such as grocery bags with handles and other lightweight bags used to carry away products from retailers. The following bags would not be included in this legislative ban: barrier bags such as the type dispensed from a roll to hold items such as loose fruit and vegetables; heavier style retail bags such as those usually used by clothing and department stores; sturdy bags designed for multiple uses, such as green bags; biodegradable compostable bags that meet the Australian Standard; paper bags; bin liners for purchase; ziplock storage bags; plastic bags that are an integral part of the packaging of bread, frozen foods, ice or bait; and reusable plastic bags.

The Greens would like to see an expansion of the legislation in the near future that could include a phase-out plan or ban on the following plastic bag types: barrier bags other than those that meet compostable standards, bin liners other than those that meet compostable standards, heavier retail bags and plastic bags used in packaging. A penalty regime for retailers found to be providing or selling plastic bags of less than 35 microns to a customer for the purpose of carrying goods is proposed to be in line with those of other jurisdictions which have fines of between \$5,000 and \$7,000. The scheme would be administered by the Office of Environment and Heritage with enforcement being the responsibility of the Environment Protection Authority.

With this ban New South Wales has the opportunity to join many countries and other States and Territories within Australia. South Australia, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory have all banned plastic bags. It is high time that New South Wales did the same. The Australian Capital Territory banned plastic bags on 1 November 2011. An interim report a year later stated there had been a 41 per cent decrease in plastic bags and a 31 per cent decrease in plastic material to landfill. The report also stated there was high retail compliance and high community acceptance. The Australian Capital Territory Government and stakeholders gave 13,700 reusable bags to the community for free.

Nearly four years of South Australian experience has resulted in a significant reduction of plastic bags in its litter stream. South Australia's ban has saved our environment from at least 400 million plastic bags, and South Australians love it. Ireland introduced a 15¢ charge on plastic bags in 2002, which led to the same results as a ban. An estimated 90 per cent of consumers switched to bringing their own bags within a year of the charge being introduced. France has just introduced a ban on plastic bags in a bid to reduce the five billion plastic bags that are handed out every year in that country.

Single-use plastic bag numbers have dropped by more than 85 per cent in England less than a year after the introduction of a 5p charge per bag. England was the last region of the United Kingdom to introduce a bag charge. Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have been charging for plastic bags for years, with corresponding decreases in plastic bag consumption. Other countries that have reduced their reliance on single-use plastic bags, either through bans or levies on bags at point of sale, include Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Belgium and Italy.

Debate adjourned.

ROADS AMENDMENT (TRANSPARENT TOLLING) BILL 2016

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 5 May 2016.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (10:51): Before the interruption to this debate I had been making the point that this Government has a strong record of delivering infrastructure. In the 2015-16 budget—the first after our re-election—the Government announced an historic \$7.5 billion investment to upgrade critical road, maritime and freight networks. In the next 10 years the New South Wales Government plans to invest more than \$30 billion in roads alone. Currently more than 4,000 infrastructure or maintenance projects are underway in New South Wales—a number that will increase as the investment in infrastructure surges in years to come.

One way in which we are delivering this infrastructure investment is through encouraging private investment, including through tolling agreements. Tolls allow motorway corridors to be built faster as the investment is initially absorbed by the private sector and recouped through tolls across an agreed contract period. The community has more than 20 years experience with road pricing on selected high-volume links and an acceptance of tolls when they give good value for money and provide the immediate benefit of reduced travel times. It is important to note that alternative routes exist for all tolled roads.

As outlined in the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan, the Government is committed to investigating a consistent distance-based tolling regime for the Sydney motorway network. That is very important for my constituents in Riverstone and is one way of helping to deliver high-quality roads and transport infrastructure in New South Wales. I note that the artificial constraints this bill would add to the process would make such an objective much harder to achieve. New or improved toll roads are already rigorously assessed to ensure that they are in the public interest and to make sure that they deliver value for money for taxpayers. I believe that the appropriate body for determining the public interest is this one: the elected representatives of the people of New South Wales. This is where decisions of public interest should be made.

In addition to measures such as detailed business cases, independent assurance, competitive tendering and gateway reviews for major procurement, tolling agreements are also published under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and contracts are audited by the Auditor-General and tabled in Parliament under the NSW Public Private Partnerships Guidelines. These arrangements provide sufficient scrutiny and transparency around tolling. The Government therefore does not support this bill. In fact, if this bill were to be enacted it would build in a risk premium so that any future infrastructure projects would be more expensive as well as delivered more slowly and therefore unable to meet the needs of the people in an efficient and timely manner. I do not support the bill.

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (10:53): I make a brief contribution to debate on the Roads Amendment (Transparent Tolling) Bill 2016. This bill will amend the Roads Act 1993 and ensure that we have a transparent approach to tolling agreements in New South Wales by allowing an independent pricing regulator to approve all future toll agreements. This will ensure that motorists are subject to a fair pricing system and will not be slugged with unfair fees to travel on roads. This bill will also allow information to be published to demonstrate that public and consumer interests are being protected. In addition, no future tolling agreements will be allowed above the consumer price index [CPI]. Increases and tolling agreements are to be reviewed by the Auditor-General.

The Baird Liberal Government has conducted dealings for several toll road contracts. These deals will cause private motorists and commercial road users to pay billions of dollars in tolls over future decades. This Government conducted these negotiations in private, with no independent scrutiny or accountability. We know this Government loves to do deals in secret. The M4 was made toll free under the Labor Government in 2010, but now this Liberal Government wants to reintroduce a toll for 7.5 kilometres of the M4. How can this Government justify slugging motorists \$4.21 each way for a journey on an existing road for which the public has already paid? This Government promised that it would not place a fee on roads that were already paid for.

This plan will hit the pockets of motorists in Western Sydney and in my electorate of Cabramatta by more than \$2,000 a year. People using this road are travelling to their jobs, which is what they do to make ends meet. This Government wants to make it harder for them to do that. The toll concession term on the M4 will be 43 years, meaning it will expire in 2060. Even worse, the tolls on the M4 will increase by at least 4 per cent a year or by the CPI, whichever is greater. This will mean the tolls will get more expensive. The Government will also be placing a toll on the M5 East, which is also currently free. The Labor Opposition has a positive plan and Labor will create a fair tolling system for all road users. As I said earlier, this bill will ensure motorists' interests are looked after, tolling agreements are reviewed by the Auditor-General and no future tolling agreements will allow increases above the CPI. That is why I commend the bill to the House.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (10:57): On 5 May 2016 the member for Keira introduced a bill to amend the Roads Act 1993. The purpose of the Roads Amendment (Transparent Tolling) Bill 2016 is to prevent tolls on any new private sector toll roads as well as any new or existing government-operated tollways, bridges, tunnels and road ferries from being set or amended until the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART] has completed a review and found the proposal to be in the public interest. The purpose of the bill is to also limit any of those prices increasing by more than the consumer price index [CPI]. Additionally, it would require the Auditor-General to undertake a performance audit of any new or amended tolling agreement or tolling order. It is for those reasons that the Government opposes the bill.

We are already suffering congestion across Sydney that is costing us \$5 billion through lost productivity. That cost to the economy will increase to \$8 billion by 2020 if nothing is done. That is why this Government has invested so heavily in road projects such as WestConnex at a cost of around \$16 billion or \$17 billion. It is the

reason that we will invest in a private sector joint venture to build NorthConnex at a cost of many billions of dollars. It is also why we are investing a record amount of almost \$20 billion in the Sydney Metro Northwest, formerly known as the North West Rail Link, and the Sydney Metro Southwest. Those projects will link the rapidly growing area of Rouse Hill with the city and south-western Sydney.

It will provide improved public transport connectivity through a metro rail line with the capacity for trains to leave stations at four-minute intervals in peaks and it will almost double the current capacity of heavy rail—currently almost 28,000 people are moved on heavy rail per hour but the metro line will have the capacity to move almost 43,000 people per hour. That is why the Government is investing in road, heavy and light rail and increased ferry services. Since we came to office in 2011 we have invested in 4,000 additional services right across our public transport system. We understand the importance of improving the connectivity on behalf of not only our current population but also the expected increase in population. Indeed, we have used the date of 2031 because it has been suggested in planning terms that we will see an increase in population of 1.4 million people over the next 15 years.

An improved public transport system will improve not only connectivity but also social aspects on behalf of families. For example, this morning on my way to Parliament House I sat in traffic for many kilometres with many other motorists who had left early but who probably ended up running late—as I almost did—in getting to work. This congestion also applies to their return journeys each day when they could be spending more time with their families. For the people of Western Sydney that is an important consideration. The opportunity to toll the end user to pay for this infrastructure allows roads and tollways to be constructed sooner. If we sit back and wait until the Government accumulates the money then the cost of infrastructure will increase. The ability to charge the end user—namely, the motorists and transport carriers—allows those roads to be constructed sooner and provides the outcomes on behalf of all of those users.

When talking about tollways one immediately thinks about the people travelling in motor vehicles but we should also remember that 400,000 tonnes of freight is transported on our road networks every year—that figure is expected to increase to 800,000 tonnes in the not too distant future. That freight, which is coming from our farming and other production areas and helps to get goods in and out of this country via our ports et cetera, provides jobs for many involved in those areas. It also allows goods to be moved from our ports and distribution centres more quickly. This will be coupled with the implementation of intermodals at Moorebank and those to be established at St Marys and provides important connectivity for the transportation of freight. This Government has taken the view that we need to invest not only in toll roads but also in improving the flow of traffic in many areas and the way in which produce and freight is delivered. If I can take one small example of the Labor Party's approach to road policy—

Mr Mark Coure: They want a congestion tax.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: I note the interjection of the member for Oatley. One way the Labor Party has approached trying to improve the flow of traffic across Sydney is by increasing taxes on behalf of road users. Labor members complain about the costs of tolls but they are happy to increase taxes. So there is a great contradiction in that policy initiative of those opposite. When I first entered this place in 2007 the upgrade of the M2 was firmly on the table. At that time you, Mr Assistant Speaker, a learned and veteran member of this House, will recall that Transurban, the company that operates the M2, was going to invest \$500 million to \$600 million to build two additional lanes—eastbound and westbound—on the M2. That has now been completed. Indeed, I was happy to join the Minister for Roads, the Hon. Duncan Gay, at the official opening of that upgrade.

In 2007 the member for Epping, the member for Castle Hill, the member for Baulkham Hills and I were invited by Transurban to one of the good clubs at Epping to view those plans—I believe the environmental impact statement [EIS] and many aspects of that plan had been completed—and I was delighted to see the approach being taken by Transurban. It provided not only an improved corridor on behalf of the people of Western Sydney, and north-western Sydney in particular, but also improvements for public transport. Mr Assistant Speaker well knows that now the only public transport provided from the north-west is our bus system and it uses the M2. Those plans were firmly in place in 2007 but it was not until late 2010 that the Labor Government approved the upgrade. It would not have cost that Government one cent nor would it have imposed a one cent cost on the taxpayers of this State, because it was financed by private investment. But it took the Labor Government 3½ years to make a decision and say, "Yes, go ahead." I repeat, at not one cent cost to the taxpayer; it was a private investment. *[Extension of time]*

One can imagine what the considerable cost to a private company will be if a government takes 3½ years to say yes. I can remember the roads Minister at the time standing up in this place—

Mr John Sidoti: What was his name?

Mr RAY WILLIAMS: I cannot remember his name; there was a list of them. In fact, there was a conga line of roads Ministers and Premiers in 2010. I well remember the delight of the roads Minister as he informed the House that they had just approved the upgrade to the M2—all they had to do was say yes. It was not coming at any cost to the Government or the taxpayer. There are severe deficiencies in the argument put by those opposite when one compares the policy of the Labor Party in taking so long to approve the upgrade of a road like the M2 to its policy today in which it says, "We want to take a closer look at the way it is funded." That does not come as any surprise to those on this side of the House but it is certainly worthwhile noting in this debate. Infrastructure reform and investment is crucial to ensuring that we meet the challenges posed by a growing population and to take advantage of the opportunities improving and building new infrastructure brings in greater productivity and economic growth. That is why the NSW Government has undertaken the largest road infrastructure program in this State's history.

In June 2014 the Government announced Rebuilding NSW to invest \$20 billion in new productive infrastructure, including a second harbour rail crossing and a third harbour road crossing. As I said earlier, they are all part of Sydney's south-west and north-west metro and extensions of the WestConnex project. The New South Wales Government, with support from the Federal Government, continues to progress key investments, including WestConnex, completing the Pacific Highway upgrade, road connections to support Sydney's second airport and a range of upgrades on the Newell, New England, and Great Western highways.

In the 2015-16 budget the Government announced an historic \$7.5 billion investment to upgrade critical road, maritime and freight networks, for the reasons I have stated. In the next 10 years the Government plans to invest more than \$30 billion in roads alone, which is a massive investment. Currently more than 4,000 infrastructure or maintenance projects are underway across New South Wales, and that number will increase as investment in infrastructure surges in years to come thanks to the Liberal-Nationals Government. One way in which we are delivering this infrastructure investment is through encouraging private investment, including through tolling agreements. Tolls allow motorway corridors to be built faster as the investment is initially absorbed by the private sector and recouped through tolls from the end user, motorists, across an agreed contract period.

The community has more than 20 years' experience with road pricing on selected high-volume links and has shown an acceptance of tolls when they provide the immediate benefit of reduced travel times. Importantly, alternative routes exist for all tolled roads so people have a choice to use a toll road, an untolled road or a public transport system. As outlined in the New South Wales Long Term Transport Master Plan, the Government is committed to investigating a consistent distance-based tolling regime for the Sydney motorway network, which would be one way to help deliver high-quality roads and transport infrastructure in New South Wales. New or improved toll roads are already rigorously assessed to ensure that they are in the public interest, and to make sure that they deliver value for money for taxpayers.

In addition to measures such as detailed business cases, independent assurance, competitive tendering and gateway reviews for major procurement, tolling agreements are also published under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, and contracts are audited by the Auditor-General and tabled in Parliament under the NSW Public Private Partnership Guidelines. These arrangements provide sufficient scrutiny and transparency around tolling. The Government therefore does not support the bill.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (11:12): I refer to the Roads Amendment (Transparent Tolling) Bill 2016. To put it simply, we have exposed Labor again. Labor wants to tear up the lease agreements of many of the roads and tollways across the State. Labor wants to copy the Daniel Andrews Government in Victoria which tore up the East West Link agreement which cost taxpayers not millions—gone are those days—but billions of dollars of compensation. This bill is a backdoor to a congestion tax, which has already been talked about by those opposite, on every man, woman and child in this State. It will be not only for those who use the Harbour Bridge or the tunnel, the M5 or M4, but for every person in Sydney and throughout New South Wales. This amending bill provides a backdoor to a congestion tax. Each and every member of the Opposition supports a congestion tax, which was talked about before the last election, and that is what this bill provides.

The purpose of this amendment bill is to prevent tolls on any new private sector toll roads as well as any new or existing government-operated tollways, bridges, tunnels, roads or ferries from being set or amended until the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal has completed a review and found the proposal to be in the public interest. It will also limit increases in any of those tolls to no more than the consumer price index. Additionally, it will require the Auditor-General to undertake a performance audit of any new or amended tolling agreement or tolling order. The Government opposes this bill.

Already congestion costs Sydney \$5 billion per annum and this will grow to \$8 billion per annum by 2020 if nothing is done. Infrastructure reform and investment is crucial to ensuring we meet the challenges posed by a growing population and take advantage of the opportunities that improving and building new infrastructure brings in terms of greater productivity and economic growth. That is why this Government has

undertaken the largest road infrastructure program in the State's history—that is, WestConnex, which is a 33 kilometre and \$16 billion program which is opposed by the Opposition. If Bill Shorten had been elected four weeks ago he would have torn up the WestConnex contracts today. He is on the record as wanting to do it, along with his mate Albanese.

In June 2014 the Government announced Rebuilding NSW to invest \$20 billion in new productive infrastructure, including a second harbour rail crossing and a third harbour road crossing. This Government, with support from the Federal Government, continues to progress key investments including WestConnex, which every member of the Opposition opposes and wants to tear up; completing the Pacific Highway upgrade; road connections to support Sydney's second airport, something the Opposition talked about but this Government started; and a range of upgrades on the Newell, New England and Great Western highways. How can we forget that?

Mr Greg Warren: You can't: Labor built them, that's why we can't forget them.

Mr MARK COURE: Stop interjecting and you might learn something. In the 2015-16 budget the Government announced an historic \$7.5 billion investment to upgrade critical road, maritime and freight networks. In the next 10 years the Government plans to invest more than \$30 billion in roads across New South Wales, not just Sydney. We are getting on with the job, something members of the Opposition failed to do in 16 years in Government. Currently more than 4,000 infrastructure or maintenance projects are underway across New South Wales, a number that will increase as the years go by as the investment in infrastructure surges ahead.

Mr John Sidoti: Name them.

Mr MARK COURE: I take that interjection on board. If I had all day I would mention every one of those 4,000 projects but I only have four minutes. One way in which we are delivering this infrastructure investment is through encouraging private investment, including through tolling agreements. I know that is a foreign concept to many members of the Opposition. Tolls allow motorway corridors to be built faster, on time and under budget as the investment is initially absorbed by the private sector and recouped through tolls across an agreed contract period. Again that is something that members of the Opposition cannot comprehend. The community has more than 20 years' experience with road pricing on selected high-volume links throughout Australia and has shown an acceptance of tolls when they provide the immediate benefit of reduced travel times.

As outlined in the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan, the New South Wales Government is committed to investigating a consistent distance-based tolling regime for the Sydney motorway network. That is one way of delivering high quality roads and transport infrastructure in New South Wales. New and improved toll roads are already assessed in a high manner to ensure they are in the public interest and deliver value for money to taxpayers.

Mr Ryan Park: Finished yet?

Mr MARK COURE: No, I have just started.

Mr Ryan Park: But wait, there's more.

Mr MARK COURE: But wait, there is more! In addition to measures such as detailed business cases, independent assurance, competitive tendering—something those opposite do not understand—gateway reviews for major procurement, tolling agreements are published under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009. Contracts are audited by the Auditor-General and tabled in the Parliament under the NSW Public Private Partnerships Guidelines. These provide scrutiny around tolling. Therefore, the Government does not support this bill.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (11:20): In reply: I thank all members who have contributed to this debate. Members opposite have incorrectly spoken of ripping up contracts. This week debate in the House has focused on literacy levels. One does not have to read too far into the bill, only about halfway down on the first page, to reach the subheading "Overview of the bill". I note there is a member of The Nationals in the House. The Liberals can normally read the heading, but a little further down the page are the requirements imposed by this bill including, "only apply to future tolling agreements and tolling orders".

I have worked in a Minister's office. Although I should not share staffer tricks of the trade, it is known that you send in your weakest link to deliver the last speech. I can only imagine that the Minister was rushed and decided that the speech "will do". I advise those opposite that despite government members purporting to be friends, sometimes they will be sent into the Chamber with a speech that is not heavy with detail or factually correct. Therefore, they should attempt to read at least the first page of the bill. That is a reasonable start. If a member can read past the overview of the bill, that is better. For those who are worried that the Labor Party proposes to rip up contracts, I can tell them that that will not happen.

Mr Mark Coure: You are generations from leading your party.

Mr RYAN PARK: The member for Oatley and the member for Kiama will get there one day. The member for Oatley should calm down. The member should focus on the voice training that Minister Skinner has been receiving this week.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! I draw the member for Keira's attention to Standing Order 73.

Mr Adam Crouch: It is relevance.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: No, it is not relevance. Standing Order 73 relates to imputation as to the motives of members of this House or another House. If the member wishes to make comments such as he just made he should do so by another route. The member will cease making imputations about other members.

Mr RYAN PARK: I did not wish to raise those imputations. Government members mentioned a number of infrastructure projects and I thank them for acknowledging the work that Labor has done. About 95 per cent of the roads and public transport in place today was built by Labor governments.

Mr Mark Coure: Lane Cove tunnel, bankrupt.

Mr RYAN PARK: Sorry?

Mr Mark Coure: Cross City Tunnel, bankrupt.

Mr RYAN PARK: Sorry?

Mr Mark Coure: Where do we go? Do I just keep going?

Mr RYAN PARK: Do I hear airport rail line? No, I do not. That was one of the Government's finest achievements. Do I hear Port Macquarie hospital? I thank those opposite for their ill-informed contribution. I thank the Minister's office for providing these detailed speeches. It was one of their best efforts. They have sent out D-grade on Thursday. I thank the member for Cabramatta for his contribution to the debate. I look forward to using parliamentary time. The Government has been busy. There is a detailed legislative program this week. The Government has returned from the six-week recess and is cracking the whip. The legislative agenda is clogged up. I have heard public servants remark that they cannot keep up with the workload and will need another rostered day off. They are flat out responding to demands for legislation.

Mr Mark Coure: Point of order: The point of order is relevance. I ask that the member to speak to the bill.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Keira will return to the leave of the bill. This is not a place for the member to attempt to impress his fellow members by disparaging other members of the House.

Mr RYAN PARK: The bill is critically important for transparency in future tolling agreements for those of us who use the toll roads each day and for those of us who continue to see rising toll costs across Western Sydney, the Eastern Suburbs and across the north and south. This is very important legislation and I am proud that Labor has introduced and debated this bill.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

The House divided.

Ayes33

Noes45

Majority..... 12

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J
Car, Ms P
Crakanthorp, Mr T
Doyle, Ms T
Harris, Mr D
Hoenig, Mr R
Lalich, Mr N (teller)
McKay, Ms J
Park, Mr R
Robertson, Mr J
Washington, Ms K

Atalla, Mr E
Catley, Ms Y
Daley, Mr M
Finn, Ms J
Harrison, Ms J
Hornery, Ms S
Lynch, Mr P
Mehan, Mr D
Parker, Mr J
Smith, Ms T
Watson, Ms A

Barr, Mr C
Chanthivong, Mr A
Dib, Mr J
Greenwich, Mr A
Haylen, Ms J
Kamper, Mr S
McDermott, Dr H
Minns, Mr C
Piper, Mr G
Warren, Mr G (teller)
Zangari, Mr G

NOES

Aplin, Mr G
 Berejiklian, Ms G
 Constance, Mr A
 Davies, Ms T
 Evans, Mr L
 Grant, Mr T
 Hazzard, Mr B
 Humphries, Mr K
 Lee, Dr G
 Notley-Smith, Mr B
 Pavey, Ms M
 Roberts, Mr A
 Skinner, Ms J
 Taylor, Mr M
 Ward, Mr G

Ayres, Mr S
 Bromhead, Mr S (teller)
 Coure, Mr M
 Dominello, Mr V
 Gibbons, Ms M
 Gulaptis, Mr C
 Henskens, Mr A
 Johnsen, Mr M
 Maguire, Mr D
 O'Dea, Mr J
 Perrottet, Mr D
 Rowell, Mr J
 Speakman, Mr M
 Toole, Mr P
 Williams, Mr R

Barilaro, Mr J
 Conolly, Mr K
 Crouch, Mr A
 Elliott, Mr D
 Goward, Ms P
 Hancock, Ms S
 Hodgkinson, Ms K
 Kean, Mr M
 Marshall, Mr A
 Patterson, Mr C (teller)
 Provest, Mr G
 Sidoti, Mr J
 Stokes, Mr R
 Tudehope, Mr D
 Williams, Ms L

PAIRS

Foley, Mr L
 Hay, Ms N
 Mihailuk, Ms T
 Smith, Ms K

Baird, Mr M
 Piccoli, Mr A
 Upton, Ms G
 Petinos, Ms E

Motion negatived.

HURLSTONE AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL SITE BILL 2016

Second Reading

Debate resumed from 12 May 2016.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (11:35): The member for Macquarie Fields has introduced private members' bill Hurlstone Agricultural High School Site Bill 2016. In October 2015 the Cabinet Standing Committee and Expenditure Review [ERC] approved subdivision and sale of the majority of the Hurlstone Agricultural High School site as part of the Department of Education asset disposal program and reinvestment strategy. The sale of the majority of the existing Hurlstone Agricultural High School site is expected to raise a couple of hundred million dollars. The proceeds from the sale will be used to provide school infrastructure that addresses student enrolment growth in Western Sydney and south-western Sydney. Let us get to the crux of this issue. The Minister—who is on leave and is not in the Chamber—is looking forward to speaking on this bill next week and he will expose it for what it is. Members may remember that the shadow Minister displayed in the Chamber the Opposition's education plan for New South Wales. It is written on the back of a beer coaster, which is a bit upmarket for the Opposition. It is the education plan for New South Wales, not Hurlstone.

Mr Mark Coure: Exposed again.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: Exposed again. This is not about grandstanding, this is not about making bad decisions; it is about making the best decisions for the people of New South Wales so we can ensure that resources are used to the best of our ability, that education standards are the best, and that each campus and each school provides the required expertise to ensure that our young adults—the leaders of the future—

Mr Lee Evans: Name them.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: I have only 10 minutes, but I will be back next week. Members must know the key aspects concerning the sale of the agricultural school. The Government is working hard to provide the students of Western Sydney with new and updated learning facilities. The people in Western Sydney were neglected by the Labor Government—I hate saying it, because it is a cliché—for 16 years. Education Minister Adrian Piccoli, who is a friend of Western Sydney, has opened more schools in my electorate than have been opened anywhere else in the State. Our students should be getting the same opportunities as those in other areas of the State.

This Government's Innovative Education, Successful Students initiative will focus school infrastructure investment on innovative uses of technology and flexible learning spaces. The investment will drive improvements to in-classroom practices and student learning. This is not the grandstanding that the member for Macquarie Fields thinks it is. I do not know how the Labor Party works. I do not know whether that view has come from the Leader of the Opposition or the Labor think tank or caucus, but nobody in their right mind could oppose this Government's provision of services. Sorry, member for Macquarie Fields, but there is more in the Macarthur region than one electorate. This is for the good of the region. The view of the member for Macquarie Fields appears to have been endorsed by the member for Auburn and his team.

I return to the merits of the Government's initiative. New and redeveloped schools will provide more opportunities for group work and project-based learning to better prepare students for jobs. Government has the responsibility to prepare students for work, to give them every opportunity to succeed and grow. We do that through our schools. As part of the Innovative Education, Successful Students initiative, design has commenced for major school projects in Parramatta: the redevelopment of Parramatta Public School and Arthur Phillip High School. As a result of the sale of excess land, more than \$100 million in capital investment will deliver two new schools in Parramatta.

A new high-rise school for up to 2,000 students will be developed on the site of the existing Arthur Phillip High School. A new multistorey primary school for up to 1,000 students will be developed on the site of the existing Parramatta Public School. The new facilities will incorporate future-focused, flexible teaching spaces with adaptable or movable furniture and room configurations. Not only is the Government looking after students in Parramatta, our future leaders, but as a result of the sale of excess land the Government has committed to significant works in the broader Western Sydney region. The 2016-17 budget provides for an upgrade to the selective high school in Glenfield. Is Glenfield in the electorate of Macquarie Fields?

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: It sure is.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: It is, so I am sure that next week members will be thanking the Minister for Education for the upgrade to that selective high school. Today there is silence from the Opposition. This Government is providing infrastructure in the electorate of the member for Macquarie Fields that the Opposition failed to provide. There is no money tree in the backyard. We must make good economic decisions and make the best use of the resources available, which then provides the opportunity to upgrade and build schools in the Western Sydney region.

The 2016-17 budget also provides for the development of a new primary school at North Kellyville and additional teaching spaces at Oran Park Public School. I am very proud of that. Oran Park Public School was delivered by the O'Farrell-Stoner Government but planned by the Labor Government before it—half a school was planned. The Government delivered and opened it. In this year's budget the Government has allocated 500 new places for Oran Park Public School. Oran Park is the fastest growing region in the State, if not the country. More than 120 people move to the Camden electorate every week, and the majority are in the northern sector. Minister Piccoli and former Premier O'Farrell opened Oran Park Public School in 2014, I think. The Government has opened so many schools in the electorate that it makes my head spin. I am happy to see so many new schools.

On Monday the Premier will be in my electorate to open another new school, Spring Farm Public School. That is a very good story. As I have said before, the Minister for Education is a fantastic friend to my electorate. He attended a sod-turning ceremony in my electorate last year for the brand-new school in my electorate that will be officially opened on Monday. Donovan Jance, the founding principal, has done an outstanding job. The students of that school were formerly housed in the old Hope Christian School, which was an annex of Narellan Public School. Why is that relevant? It is relevant because the Hope Christian School was a private school that closed down. Nobody ever likes to see that.

I will always remember a chance conversation with the Minister's former chief of staff and former general manager of Camden Council, Sheridan Dudley, who is a great friend of mine. She made a tremendous contribution to education during the five years that she worked for the Minister. A chance conversation with Sheridan revealed that the school site opposite Narellan Public School would soon be on the market. I do not know what transpired behind the scenes, but the site was bought by the New South Wales Government. That land might have been lost to the private sector. That school will open in the near future. It will be a special school, serving the people of my community.

The budget provides for additional teaching spaces to be built at Rosehill Public School, again serving the people of Western Sydney. I now turn to a matter of importance of which I hope will not be lost on the member for Macquarie Fields. What will happen as a result of the sale of the access land at Hurlstone? A new agricultural science, technology, engineering and mathematics [STEM] boarding high school will be built, in partnership with

the Hawkesbury campus of Western Sydney University. It will employ world's best practice and be a first for the region. Adrian Piccoli and the Baird-Grant Government are delivering that for the people.

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: It should be in south-western Sydney.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: I acknowledge the interjection. Hawkesbury is close and accessible to the people of Western Sydney, by car or by public transport.

Let us not ignore the scare campaign being run. Hurlstone Agricultural College is not being closed down. With the money that is being invested, Hurlstone will cater for up to 2,000 students in an upgraded facility that is world's best standard. There will also be a partnership with the university. I am happy for a member to correct the figure, but the Federal Government is contributing, I think, \$30 million—big darts. I do not want to mislead the House, but millions of dollars are being invested to ensure that our students have the best opportunity to study at this college and carry on the agricultural tradition of this State and country. We need to be realistic and acknowledge that as a result of the sale of the excess land—

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: At Glenfield.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON: The member for Macquarie Fields keeps saying, "At Glenfield." Glenfield Selective High School is being upgraded—no ifs or buts. This is about the education of our children, our future leaders, and giving them every opportunity. It is not a political football. It is about making the best decisions for the future. The Government makes no apologies about providing the best possible facilities for our young adults and leaders of the future. Unfortunately, the Government has to make tough decisions. The harsh reality is that in government hard decisions have to be made for the good of the whole community.

With the indulgence of the House, I divert for a moment as I acknowledge the wonderful Minister for Local Government, who will be in my electorate on Sunday to open a new \$40-million council chamber, which will be world's best. I acknowledge and thank the Minister, who is a tremendous friend of our electorate. We welcome the Minister to the electorate on Sunday. I look forward to showing him around the progressive council area and electorate. We thank him for his support of the electorate.

In addition to the \$330 million over two years to address priority maintenance needs in schools—including almost \$95 million for schools in Western Sydney, a third of the maintenance budget in 2016-17—more than \$28 million has been allocated to 13 schools in Western Sydney. I am almost embarrassed to accept this outstanding support of the Baird-Grant Government and of Ministers such as Minister Toole and Minister Piccoli. We are getting a big bite of the cherry; but I make no apologies for that. I am glad the member for Campbelltown and the member for Macquarie Fields are in the Chamber—

Debate adjourned.

Motions

AUSTRALIAN 2016 OLYMPIC TEAM

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (11:54): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the athletes selected for the Australian Olympic Team who will represent Australia on the highest sporting stage at the Rio de Janeiro 2016 Olympic Games.
- (2) Wishes the entire team success in Rio, particularly recognising the contribution of athletes from New South Wales and the thousands of hours of preparation that has gone into achieving selection.
- (3) Acknowledges the contribution of the NSW Institute of Sport and the 81 athletes from the institute that are competing in Rio.

The Rio Olympic Games will see 10,500 athletes from across 28 sports come together to compete in 306 events over 19 days. This year's games represent 120 years of Australian participation in the Olympics. The Australian team will be aiming for a top five finish. I speak today as a representative of the New South Wales Parliament showing our support for the 2016 Australian Olympic team, which is made up of 420 athletes and more than 300 officials. Of these 420 athletes, an impressive 140 were either born in or live in New South Wales and 81 NSW Institute of Sport athletes have been selected for Rio.

This year's team is the fifth largest from Australia that has qualified for an Olympics—behind teams for Sydney, Athens, Beijing and Atlanta. This is also the first time at a Summer Olympic Games that Australia will be represented by more women than men. There are 214 women and 206 men on the Australian team. On behalf of the New South Wales Government, I acknowledge all the hard work and commitment that goes into the preparation for the Olympic Games by athletes, coaches, officials and support staff and their families and friends.

So much time and effort goes into getting our athletes to this point and they should be commended for their achievements so far.

I give special mention to two Australian athletes from my local area. Tyler Martin will be looking to add "Olympic medallist" to his list of credentials when he makes his Olympic debut in Rio for the Australian water polo team. Born in Toronto, Canada, Tyler moved to Australia at an early age and took up water polo as a 12-year-old with the Drummoyne Devils. Just seven years later at the age of 19 he was named in a national water polo league all-star team. Tyler has played professionally in France, Italy, Hungary and Brazil. Since becoming an Australian Olympian for the Sharks, Tyler and teammate Nathan Power lived in Rio de Janeiro for three weeks at the end of 2015. He made his international debut for Australia in 2010 and the following year won silver at the Volvo Cup in Hungary and bronze at the Italian cup—both excellent achievements. He made his world championship debut in 2013, when Australia placed eighth in Barcelona.

Chloe Logarzo, a Rhodes local, took up football as a five-year-old with her dad as her coach. He is a shining example of the commitment and support afforded to our athletes by their families and communities. Chloe will live out her Olympic dream at Rio after a strong 2016 saw her fight her way back into the Matildas. Chloe got her W-League break when she signed with Sydney Football Club in 2011 and played four seasons in the sky blue. Chloe captained the Australian under-20 side before she made her senior international debut in late 2013. Soon after, she headed to the United States of America to play for the Colorado Pride, where she relished the challenge and won the league's Rookie of the Year award. After a three-year absence from the national team, Chloe moved to play with the W-League's Newcastle Jets for the 2015-16 season in a bid to get more time on the pitch and caught the eye of coach Alen Stajcic who gave her another chance to shine on the international stage. New South Wales has also supplied Australia's youngest athlete at the games, the Matildas' Ellie Carpenter.

The young defender left her home town of Cowra in rural New South Wales to move to the western suburbs of Sydney, where she attended Westfield Sports High. A multiskilled athlete with a second talent for athletics, Carpenter chose to focus on football when she was 12. That decision has well and truly paid off. She played for the NSW Institute of Sport before signing her first W-League contract when she lined up for the Western Sydney Wanderers in the 2015-16 season. Ellie caught the eye of the selectors with her impressive play at the back. She became the first millennial to play for the Australian side when she performed outstandingly in the Rio 2016 qualifiers. I also note the brilliant Matildas, who played their first game this morning. Unfortunately, they lost two goals to nil to Canada, but we know they will come back strongly.

It is also important that this House acknowledges the support that the New South Wales Government has given to our athletes. On 3 March 2013 the Premier opened the new office of the Australian Olympic Committee and the New South Wales Olympic Council at the Museum of Contemporary Art. The Government contributed \$100,000 towards the cost of moving and maintaining the Australian Olympic Committee and the New South Wales Olympic Council's presence in New South Wales. On 6 August 2014 the Premier launched the Team Appeal at Parliament House, Sydney, and announced a donation of \$500,000 towards the appeal. These funds are used for the Australian Olympic team's preparation and participation in Rio.

Since 1996 the NSW Institute of Sport has supported Australian athletes to become the world's best through coaching, performance and emotional support, and the provision of innovative training environments. Our team of scientists, coaches, performance specialists and sporting experts has contributed to some of Australia's greatest sporting moments. I must mention Jessica Fox, who will be aiming for her second Olympic medal after securing the single K1 canoe slalom spot for the 2016 Rio games with her victory in the second Australian nomination trial at the Oceania Championships in Penrith earlier this year. On behalf of the Government I wish all Australian athletes competing at the games the best of luck, in particular our athletes from New South Wales. Australia prides itself on being a sporting country. We love our sport and we are great at what we do.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (12:01): I congratulate the athletes selected for the Australian Olympic team who will represent Australia on the highest sporting stage at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. On behalf of members on this side of the House, I wish the entire team success in Rio. I particularly recognise the contribution of athletes from New South Wales and the thousands of hours of preparation they have put into achieving their selection. I also acknowledge the contribution of the NSW Institute of Sport and the 81 athletes from the institute who are competing in Rio.

Quite a number of athletes from the Lake Macquarie and Charlestown area are representing our country in Rio. Richie Campbell will be competing in the water polo. He studied at St Joseph's Primary School and St Pius X High School. I am sure Richie will ably represent us. Katie Rae Ebzery has been selected in the basketball team. Katie attended St Paul's Primary School and St Mary's High School at Gateshead in my electorate. Thomas Fraser-Holmes will be competing in the 200 metres freestyle, the 200 metres individual medley, the 4 x 200 metres freestyle relay and the 400 metres individual medley swimming events. Thomas studied at St Joseph's Primary School—commonly known as St Joey's—and St Francis Xavier College, or SFX, in Hamilton.

Ben Haradine is one of our well-loved characters from the Hunter and is representing us in athletics and discus. He attended Warners Bay High School in my electorate. That wonderful school also has a great performing arts section. Iain Jensen and Nathan Outteridge will be competing in sailing. Iain attended Rathmines Public School and Merewether High School. He and Nathan spent their formative years sailing on Lake Macquarie. That put them in very good stead for representing us at Olympic level in this past and will do so again this year. Nathan Outteridge attended St Joseph's Primary School and St Paul's High School. We obviously have some wonderful athletes in the Lake Macquarie and Charlestown area. That is partly because we have some fantastic facilities, including the Northern NSW Football training centre at Boolaroo, which was established recently and built with support from Lake Macquarie City Council. I also recognise the input of the New South Wales Government in building that facility.

Mr John Sidoti: Thank you.

Ms JODIE HARRISON: Credit where credit is due. We also have the Hunter Regional Sports Centre, which is a fantastic facility that was established several years ago and has one of the leading gymnastics training facilities in the country. I believe it has the most members of any gymnastics club in Australia. A lot is happening in the development of sport in the Hunter region. That is how we have managed to provide some great representatives for the Rio Olympics that will take place over the next couple of weeks. I am sure that we will win medal after medal. I wish all the competitors the very best. I certainly hope they bring home the gold, silver and bronze.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (12:06): By leave: I move that the motion be amended as follows:

Leave out "Australian Olympic Team" in paragraph (1) with a view to inserting instead "Australian Olympic and Paralympic Teams".

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Bruce Notley-Smith): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Mr MARK COURE: I will talk about the Paralympic team in more detail during a private member's statement in the near future. I wish both the Paralympic and Olympic teams travelling to Rio in 2016 all the very best. The Olympics begin on Saturday. The 2016 Australian Olympic team is made up of 420 athletes and more than 300 officials. Of the 420 athletes, an impressive 140 were either born in or currently live in New South Wales and 81 NSW Institute of Sport athletes have been selected. Behind the teams for the best Olympics in decades if not a century, the Sydney games, followed by the teams for Athens, Beijing and Atlanta, this year's team is the fifth largest from Australia to have qualified for an Olympic Games.

This Olympics is important to me because a good friend of mine and his partner are representing Australia in table tennis. Only six weeks ago I travelled with Chris Xin Yan to his homeland in China. On behalf of my community in particular, I wish him and Sally Ziyu Zhang all the very best in representing Australia at the Olympics. Chris was born and grew up in Xi'an, China, where he took up the sport of table tennis at just nine years of age. He moved to Australia at the age of 20 to study. After being encouraged by a friend to push for selection, Chris realised that his dream was to head off to the games in Rio. Chris and Sally live in Hurstville in my electorate. Chris made his Commonwealth Games debut in Glasgow in 2014, when he lined up alongside current Rio 2016 teammate David Powell to finish ninth in the men's doubles, fifth in the team event and seventeenth in the mixed doubles.

Sally will make her Olympic debut for Australia at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. She was born and raised in Hubei in China—just south of the location of Beijing 2008 Olympic Games—and moved to Australia at 19 years of age. Sally played a major role in helping Australia secure a bronze medal in the team event at the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. She won two singles matches and combined with four-time Olympian Miao Miao in the doubles to ensure that Australia claimed a 3-1 win over India. Chris and Sally have been my friends for many years. They got engaged in 2015 and will get married sometime later this year in Sydney after competing at Rio de Janeiro.

The Rio 2016 Paralympics will be held from 7 to 18 September 2016. This will be the first time in the history of both the Olympic and Paralympic movements that the Olympic Games have been held on the South American continent. The 12 days of Paralympic competition will see more than 4,350 athletes from 160 nations participate in 22 sports, including the debut of para-canoeing and the para-triathlon. On behalf of many in my electorate I wish the Olympic and Paralympic teams all the very best in Rio, including my good friends Chris and Sally.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:10): It is with much pleasure that I speak in support of the motion of the member for Drummoyne and the amendment moved by the member for Oatley to include mention of the 2016 Paralympic team. Sport is an integral part of Australian culture and I am glad that we are

once again coming together to cheer on our athletes competing in the 2016 Olympic Games in Brazil. This year more than 10,500 athletes from across the globe will compete across 306 events. Australia will send its fifth largest team to these games—larger than our representation at the 2012 London Olympic Games. New South Wales is a powerhouse of sport. Indeed, 58.3 per cent of the Australian Olympic team were either born or live in New South Wales and, for the first time, more women than men will make up our team. In my electorate we are particularly proud of our local Olympians, who are representing not only Australia but also their homes and communities in the south-west.

Athletes from the Holsworthy electorate include Safwan Khalil from Lurnea, representing Australia in the men's 58-kilogram taekwondo event; Chloe Esposito from Casula, representing Australia in the individual women's modern pentathlon; and Max Esposito from Casula, representing Australia in the individual men's modern pentathlon. This will be Safwan's second Olympic Games—he competed at the 2012 London Olympic Games. In 2011 he made history when he became Australia's first ever Universiade gold medallist in taekwondo. At that event, which is open to university students from around the world, he won the 58-kilogram division by defeating Iran's Hadi Mostaan in Shenzhen, China. Although Safwan just missed out on a bronze medal at the 2012 Olympics he has worked hard and now has his sight set on a win at the Rio Olympics.

Chloe Esposito and her brother Max come from an athletics-based family. Their father, Daniel Esposito, competed in the modern pentathlon at the 1984 Summer Olympics. Although this is a huge event for Chloe and Max, they are no strangers to this level of competition. Chloe previously represented Australia in the same event at the 2012 London Olympic Games, when she finished seventh. That made her the first Australian modern pentathlete since 1964 to finish in the top 10 at an Olympics. Max has also represented Australia at an international level, winning gold at both the 2013 Oceania Championships in Kazakhstan and the 2014 International Youth "A" Championships in Great Britain. We have other attendees from south-west Sydney in the men's 80-kilogram taekwondo, women's team pursuit cycling, men's 10 metres air pistol shooting and women's football. So some real sporting talent has been developed in south-west Sydney. In fact, Olympic legend Ian Thorpe was born and raised in south-west Sydney, and for a short while he lived at Voyager Point in my electorate.

This Government is dedicated to developing our future athletes. We are investing in sporting facilities and opportunities for children and communities through initiatives such as local sports grants and investments in the NSW Institute of Sport. Finally, I am proud of our athletes, who I am sure will do their best to make south-west Sydney, New South Wales and Australia proud. On a personal note, the Paralympics are of particular importance to me. Proudly, my uncle, Bourke Gibbons, OAM, was a Paralympian in bocce at the Seoul and Portugal games. I know what it feels like to follow family members as they compete. I commend the motion to the House. Aussie Aussie Aussie, Oi Oi Oi!

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (12:15): I congratulate the athletes who will be representing Australia, in particular the two athletes representing my rapidly growing electorate, at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. The two athletes to whom I refer are Fabrice Lapierre from Kellyville Ridge, who is representing Australia in the men's long jump—I will reminisce shortly about my performances in long jump many years ago, which no doubt set the Olympic standard—and Jacob Hansford from Quakers Hill, who is representing Australia in the 4 x 200 metres men's freestyle relay. Fabrice and Jacob, like all the athletes who are going to Rio, have worked hard to achieve the pinnacle of their performance—namely, the opportunity to represent their nation on the world stage—and I congratulate them. To be selected to represent one's nation is clearly no small feat. It is a magnificent achievement and they deserve every congratulation on their efforts, persistence, focus and energy and the commitment they have shown to reach this point. Naturally we would like them to go one step further and perform even better in Rio. Indeed, they have the support of everyone back at home to achieve their very best in that forum.

As I said, Fabrice is competing in the men's long jump. No doubt many of us competed in Little Athletics years ago and had the opportunity to take part in the long jump. Probably more often than not we failed in our run-up and missed the jump. No doubt for many the best jump was often the one they fouled on, so it was never recorded. But Fabrice has the tense, nerve-wracking challenge of getting it right on the day. We certainly hope that his nerves hold and he produces his best jump when it really counts—we are behind him all the way. I met Jacob at the Riverstone Sports Person of the Year awards, where he was the guest speaker. This impressive young man has also been working hard towards this goal. I congratulate him on being part of the very hot 4 x 200 metres freestyle relay team. Jacob may or may not make the final team because they select more than four swimmers to get through the rounds. I hope that he is able to achieve at his peak when he has the opportunity to represent his country because he has worked so hard and committed so much.

The sportspeople who go to the Olympic Games represent all that is good about our community and our world. The very notion of the Olympic Games is to bring people from all over the world together in peace to compete openly, honestly and fairly in good spirit with each other in a way that builds friendship and bonds around the world and reduces the likelihood that people will be in conflict in future. That is the essence of the Olympic

dream. I hope that the two young people from my electorate and all of those who represent Australia are part of building that dream. Good luck to Fabrice and Jacob.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (12:19): I support the motion moved by the member for Drummoyne relating to the Australian 2016 Olympic team. I wish all members of our Australian Olympic team every success at the Rio Olympics. Everyone in the Northern Tablelands electorate will have their eyes fixed on Georgina Morgan during the Olympics. Georgina, who is 23 years old, is a very talented hockey player. For decades our Hockeyroos squad has had tremendous success in world championships and in many Olympic Games. I wish Armidale's Georgina Morgan all the best.

Ms Melinda Pavey: Go, Georgina.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: I note the interjection of the member for Oxley who wished Georgina all the best. Georgina is currently studying for a Bachelor of Applied Science (Exercise Physiology) degree at the University of Sydney. Georgina hopes to take up a clinical position in physiotherapy down the track. I am sure she will be equally successful with that as she is at her chosen sport of hockey. Georgina has always been destined to represent Australia. When she was in year 6 she helped the new primary school become joint State title holders. In high school she led Duval High School, Armidale, in the State final but it lost that year.

From year 8 through to year 12 Georgina represented the north-west in the New South Wales Combined High Schools [CHS] championships at State titles and also at Australian championships. Such was her talent that in year 12 at Duval High School she was named in the Jillaroos under-21s national women's team. Cricket is a passion of mine. Georgina is also a talented cricketer and represented Duval and also Armidale in the Walter Taylor Shield, showing the boys how it was done by scoring many runs before turning all her full-time efforts towards hockey.

It will be great for Georgina to represent Australia for the first time at the Olympics and to have the wonderful support of her family. Her dad, Mark Morgan, an eye specialist in Armidale, and her mother, Liz, are at Rio now along with Georgina's sisters, Adelaide, Lily and Edwina, who will watch every game and support her. It is not the first time Georgina has represented Australia. She has proven herself worthy of the green and gold playing in the Australian team at the 2015 World League final. Her signature drag flick also led to a 1-0 victory against China in the opening round of that tournament, and to a victory over Argentina.

Georgina first represented Australia at the age of just 17 when she was selected to tour Asia with the 2010 Australian All Schools team. She made her international debut appearance for the Hockeyroos during a test series against New Zealand in 2014. The following year she helped Australia win gold at the Oceania Cup and the Hawke's Bay Cup, both in New Zealand, as a very talented defender. As I said earlier, this will be the first time she is representing the Hockeyroos at an Olympic Games. I congratulate Georgina and wish her and the Hockeyroos and all Australian athletes success at the Olympic Games. My family and I and everyone in Armidale and in the broader Northern Tablelands region will be watching Georgina and cheering her on with great gusto. Good luck, Georgina.

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (12:23): By leave: I appreciate this opportunity to make a brief contribution to debate on this motion of support for the Australian 2016 Olympic team—in particular, the Hunter Olympians. As a former swimmer I am looking forward to seeing how well our team will do on the weekend. I know that our swimmers are extremely disciplined and that their behaviour has improved, which I am sure will reap dividends. I refer in particular to Thomas Fraser-Holmes from the Hunter who will swim in the 200 metres and 400 metres. This morning when I arose at 4.10 a.m. I was surprised to learn that Canada had already scored a goal against our Matildas. Canada went on to score two goals against our Matildas, but there is hope yet for our wonderful Matildas and all our soccer teams. I wish all our Hunter athletes and, in particular, our swimmers all the very best. I look forward to seeing some gold medals and wins. I know that they will have a wonderful time and that the Games will be a wonderful memory for them. They have the support of the New South Wales Parliament.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (12:24): By leave: I support the motion moved by the member for Drummoyne relating to the Australian 2016 Olympic team. It is part of the Australian ethos to support sports men and women in their endeavours on the ovals, in the swimming pools, on the cycling tracks and in many other sporting disciplines. I support all the great men and women from the 93 electorates in New South Wales who will be participating in the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. We are immensely proud of them. I am sure that as we watch events there will be a lot of bleary eyes not only in this place but also across our great nation.

I refer to a couple of Olympians who come from the great electorate of the Tweed. Matthew Abboud, formerly from Kingscliff and who now lives in Canberra, will participate in the 4 x 100 metres relay and the men's 50 metre swimming races. I wish him all the best. Bodi Turner who lives in Tweed Heads is in the cycling and

the BMX individual men's events. I know that Bodi has competed for many years, as he is regularly seen on the training tracks. I also mention Paralympian Bill Chaffey, a retired policeman from Tweed Heads, who is in the paratriathlon team. I wish those competitors all the best.

I congratulate all the friends and families of our athletes on their hard work. Athletes do not just become Olympians; it takes many years of dedication and training. Their mums and dads have to get them to the pool or to the training track in the wee hours of the morning, read a book or talk to other parents while the athletes train and then take them home. When the athletes are a little older their parents have to put their hands in their pockets to support them financially in their pursuit of sporting excellence. I salute the mums and dads, friends and families of all our athletes, as they have contributed countless hours, both financially and physically, to support them. I know that they will be immensely proud of them as they watch these great events. This is the first time that more women than men are in the Australian team. I wish the female athletes all the best. I know that they have the support of the people in the Tweed. Well done, and make us proud.

Ms MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (12:28): By leave: I thank the member for Drummoyne for moving this motion relating to the Australian 2016 Olympic team. I join my colleagues in this Chamber in supporting our Australian Olympic team as the athletes head to Rio. Representing one's nation at the Olympic Games would be a most incredible experience. It is something that those who love sport would be proud to have on their resume. The journey of these talented athletes from training to attaining a position on the Olympic team is inspiring. Whilst no athletes from the Oxley electorate are competing in Rio de Janeiro, people from our district are celebrating the athletes' wonderful journey. I attended basketball at the 2000 Olympic Games and watched my hero Lauren Jackson competing against the United States in the silver medal match. It was a difficult proposition, but it was a great day and something I will always remember.

Liz Cabbage moved from the United Kingdom to the mid North Coast and played for a short while in the local basketball association. Ms Cabbage is spearheading the Australian women's basketball team, the Opals. I am proud of the fact that she came back to the community recently. My daughter is almost my height but she had to look into the sky to see Liz Cabbage, who is six foot eight inches tall. Liz, an incredible athlete and woman, is half Nigerian. Her journey to lead the Opals team is inspiring and she is doing it brilliantly. James Magnussen is from the electorate of Port Macquarie. He has been honest and open about some of the challenges and pressures he felt at the last Olympic Games. We wish him well in the 4 x 100 men's freestyle team all the way to gold. I am impressed by the chef de mission leading the team. She is a wonderful athlete from equestrian to running. She is taking a different approach and managing the team in a way that is a little more grounded, genuine and supportive of the athletes. Many of the athletes are young and brilliant.

I acknowledge the New South Wales Government's support of the regional academies. It is important to help families. The families are the unsung heroes in this process. Parents want to do what they can to help their children achieve that elite level, yet many do not have the means to do it. I send a shout-out to country communities who find it hard to be in a representative team and to reach the elite level. They have extensive travel expenses. The Government supports regional academies by providing \$10 million to the NSW Institute of Sport. That funding is increasing by \$2 million over the next four years. That has been the result of hard work by The Nationals members and, in particular, the member for Northern Tablelands. It is something I genuinely support. Have a great time. Bring home the gold, silver and bronze and all the beautiful memories.

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (12:33): By leave: I offer heartfelt good wishes to all our Australian Olympians. These men and women make extraordinary sacrifices in the pursuit of excellence. As non-competitive athletes we cannot comprehend the personal sacrifice and the sacrifice of families and friends for those whose goal is to represent their countries, their communities and their families. Many athletes give of their utmost and achieve their personal best but they will not be in medal contention. But that is not what the Games are about; they are about giving one's best. I wish each and every athlete well. Even if they do not bring home a medal, their commitment to training for four, eight or 12 years is inspiring. They have trained for many years and we hope that they achieve their best.

Tomorrow night I will attend a dinner for the South West Sydney Academy of Sport. Athletes from Camden, Wollondilly and Campbelltown will attend, and those young achievers have dreams of representing their country. I hope that they achieve their dreams. I remind members of when Sydney hosted the games and won a record number of 16 gold medals. Members will remember Ian Thorpe winning gold in the 400 metre freestyle, gold in the men's 100 metre relay and the men's 200 metre relay. Susie O'Neill, Madam Butterfly, won the 200 metre freestyle, the equestrian team won gold in the three-day event, and Michael Diamond won gold in the men's trap shooting. He went on to win multiple gold medals over multiple Olympics. The women's beach volleyball team won gold on the beautiful sands of Bondi.

The men's 470 class sailing made an outstanding effort on Sydney Harbour. The men's madison cycling made a tremendous effort to win gold. Simon Fairweather won Australia's first gold medal in archery. No-one

will forget Cathy Freeman winning the 400 metre sprint in a full bodysuit. She stopped the world as she ran around the stadium with both the Indigenous and Australian flags. Australia was not outclassed in the women's 470 class sailing; Grant Hackett took the mantle from Kieren Perkins in the men's 1500 metre freestyle; and Lauren Burns was outstanding as a competitor in the 49-kilogram tae kwon do. Our women's hockey team and the women's water polo team also brought home gold. There were 16 gold medals. Never before have we done so well. We wish our athletes all the best. Thank you and good luck.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (12:37): In reply: I thank the members representing the electorates of Charlestown, Oatley, Riverstone, Northern Tablelands, Tweed, Oxley, Holsworthy, Wallsend and Camden for their contributions to debate on this motion. We are as one in this Chamber in wishing our athletes all the best. I cannot wait for the opening ceremony of the Rio de Janeiro 2016 Olympic Games. I wish the athletes, coaches and officials the best of luck and good fortune and I hope that their training pays off.

The winning Olympic bid led by Bruce Baird and the success of the 2000 Olympic Games left a lasting economic legacy for the people of Sydney. The capability of Australians to successfully stage the summer games brought the world's attention to the capabilities of Australian companies and individuals in a way not otherwise possible. In addition, the Sydney Olympics led to the creation of a world-class major events precinct which has enabled Sydney to host a number of major events such as the Rugby World Cup and the World Masters Games. The facilities within Sydney Olympic Park have enabled Sydney to attract major entertainment and convention exhibition events. I am advised that the Olympic cauldron at Sydney Olympic Park will be lit on Saturday between 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. to officially mark the start of the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. Let the Games begin.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): The question is that the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

TOONGABBIE RAILWAY STATION LIFTS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (12:39): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that Toongabbie railway station does not have lifts.
- (2) Notes that the Government has not constructed lifts, a new station concourse and footbridge, new stairs and platform canopies, and family accessible toilets at Toongabbie station in its previous term.
- (3) Notes that the large number of young mothers with prams, aged and disabled people who use this station struggle with access to public transport.
- (4) Notes that the Government has failed to allocate specific funding to install lifts at Toongabbie railway station.
- (5) Urges the Minister for Transport to fund lifts at Toongabbie railway station.

Once again I raise the issue of Toongabbie railway station. The notice of motion talks about many important things that the people of Prospect, Seven Hills and surrounding areas have to deal with. I am thankful that after all the promises the Government has made it has finally started work at Pendle Hill train station. However, the budget does not mention that lifts or major upgrades are scheduled for Toongabbie railway station. The budget speaks about money being spent on projects for the Toongabbie line, which is great, but commuters living in Prospect and Toongabbie need to know when there will be lifts at this station. Toongabbie was one of the first settlements in Sydney and the station has been around for 136 years. It has had a link on the rail system since that time. Throughout the 2011 and 2015 election campaigns the O'Farrell Government promised that lifts would be built at Toongabbie station, but that has not happened. Once again, this Government has broken its election promises.

No funding has been allocated for construction of the lifts. All we need from this Government is a commitment to allocate money for the work and a proposed start date. In April 2016 Transport for NSW commenced action on Toongabbie station after a strong campaign by local residents as well as strong representation in this House that lifts be provided. However, all that has happened is the consultation process. I raised this issue in Parliament last year and I remember having a discussion with the member for Castle Hill, Ray Williams, who suggested that struggling commuters could catch a taxi to Westmead station or Seven Hills at an average cost of \$21.15. I note that the member for Seven Hills has entered the Chamber. He is also concerned that there are no lifts at Toongabbie station. Commuters will soon be slugged with an extra \$959 a year fare hike—or 48 per cent—for using the train. As many members know, this is strongly opposed by Labor and the local community. The average income in Toongabbie is \$608 per week so having an extra \$959 in fares is a huge hit. Direct mail was sent out by my office to residents and we received a strong response. It was clear that the

community is angry with the Baird Government for prioritising North Shore stations and upgrades ahead of Toongabbie.

Mr Mark Coure: That is not true.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: I do not think the member for Oatley read the letters; I know what the residents said. Transport for NSW is currently working on stage two of a five-stage plan to upgrade Toongabbie station. Three of the five stages are about receiving and reviewing submissions. We have been arguing since 2011 that this station needs lifts and a major upgrade. It must be done. A document prepared by Transport for NSW entitled "Toongabbie Station Upgrade Review of Environmental Factors" claims that construction will commence in late 2016. I commend the Government if that is the case, but no dates for construction have been mentioned.

I have asked the Minister and other members of the Government constantly when construction will start. The submission stage is needlessly long. We know what has to happen at Toongabbie station just as we knew what had to happen at Pendle Hill station, but at least work has now started at Pendle Hill. The Baird Government appears to be stalling construction until the next budget, at which time there might be some funding allocated. By the time the Toongabbie station upgrade is complete—if it is completed—the O'Farrell-Baird Government will have been working on it for eight years. It is clear that Toongabbie was always a low priority for the Liberal Government and it is no wonder it keeps losing elections in Toongabbie.

Ms Tanya Davies: What did you do for 16 years in Government?

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: We completed upgrades and spent more money than this Government has. Members opposite can throw their spears and try to pretend we did not do anything, but we did and we did not have to flog off all of our assets to do it. We all know this Government will flog off all our assets and the money it receives. The only way it will be able to upgrade the infrastructure it is building now is if it raises taxes or finds other means. Crumbling infrastructure is the future of New South Wales because of this Liberal Government. The people of Toongabbie need access to adequate transport around the clock because, unlike the belief of the Baird Government, the majority do not have desk jobs in Martin Place. The people of Toongabbie work in health care, manufacturing, retail, construction and trades. Those industries often involve using public transport to travel to all corners of Sydney.

Hardworking parents with young children, who make up 15 per cent of Toongabbie's population, also need lifts. Toongabbie is home to nearly 1,000 young children under the age of four who cannot walk over more than 100 metres up ramps and their parents cannot keep lifting prams and strollers over stairs. They need lifts. Toongabbie is also home to many elderly people who often are refugees who are rebuilding their lives. Approximately 11 per cent of the Toongabbie population—1,500 people—are over 65. They need lifts. The lifts must be built quickly if these people are to maintain any hope of independence.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (12:46): It is a great opportunity to speak on the Transport Access Program. Members on this side of the House have a long, proud history of delivering many station upgrades and community car parks throughout Sydney, many of which are in the St George area. While the member for little prospect or no prospect is appearing on Sky News or stacking branches against Chris Bowen, members on this side of the House are building local railway stations and commuter car parks. The New South Wales Government recognises the importance of delivering high quality transport infrastructure—Opposition members might learn something—to all customers, including those with disability or limited mobility and parents with prams and strollers.

In 2012 the New South Wales Government announced the Transport Access Program, which is delivering accessible, modern, secure and integrated transport infrastructure where it is needed most. This includes station upgrades, better interchanges, ferry wharf upgrades and commuter car parks. The Transport Access Program allocated more than \$770 million over four years. On 23 June 2015, the Government announced a significant increase to the Transport Access Program with \$890 million to be invested over four years. This includes accessibility upgrades such as lifts and ramps, improved interchanges and new commuter car parks. Those improvements make it easier for customers to use public transport and provide a more comfortable travel experience. Since the Transport Access Program was launched in April 2012 more than 450 projects have got underway or have been completed. The Transport Access Program is one way in which the Government is working to improve access to transport and increase compliance with the Federal Disability Discrimination Act and accompanying disability standards.

It is important to note that, as part of the program, the New South Wales Government has committed to delivering a major accessibility upgrade for Toongabbie station. The proposed improvements include new lifts and stairs, extension of the platform canopies for weather protection, improvements to bicycle and interchange

facilities, new wayfinding signage, lighting and closed-circuit television security surveillance, and three new family accessible toilets.

Dr Hugh McDermott: Why is it taking so long?

Mr MARK COURE: Labor had 16 years to deliver it. The Government is delivering it in four or five years. There will also be new accessible parking spaces on Wentworth Avenue and new kiss-and-ride facilities on both sides of the station.

Ms Melinda Pavey: Kiss?

Mr MARK COURE: That is right. There will be an extension of the taxi rank on the adjoining street. Transport for NSW has consulted closely with local authorities throughout the concept design process. Has the member for Prospect seen the design process?

Dr Hugh McDermott: I have.

Mr MARK COURE: Then why has the member moved this motion? Consultation with stakeholders, but clearly not with the member for Prospect, will continue throughout the detailed design and construction period.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): The member for Prospect will come to order.

Mr MARK COURE: As part of the project, Transport for NSW has prepared a review of environmental factors. It is getting on with the job of rebuilding this local railway station—something Labor had 16 years to do. Those who are listening to this via podcast or watching on the internet may be interested to hear about the easy access upgrade projects that have begun since 2015. For the benefit of people watching this across New South Wales, Australia and the world, places like Ingleburn, Artarmon, Waterfall, Bankstown, Redfern, Yass Junction and Arncliffe are being upgraded. I have good news: The upgrade at Oatley station will open very soon. We are excited in my electorate about the easy access program. The Government is getting on with the job of rebuilding and upgrading local stations, including those in my electorate. The 11 projects in construction include Broadmeadow, Croydon, Flemington, Heathcote, Marrickville, Museum, Pendle Hill, Wentworth Falls and Wentworthville.

The nine projects in the detailed design phase include Berala, Harris Park, Homebush, Jannali, Lurnea and Panania. In my electorate—oh, they are excited in Narwee!—Narwee station is being upgraded as well. The brief also includes Toongabbie and Victoria Street. The two projects in planning at the moment are Edgecliff and Rooty Hill stations. That is a lot of stations. Out there in Western Sydney people are seeing their stations and commuter car parks being upgraded. It is sad that they waited 16 years for the Opposition to upgrade these stations. For 16 years Labor was asleep at the wheel. There are two additional station upgrades on the way that will improve accessibility, at Penrith and at Tamworth. Of the 307 stations that service 84 per cent of customers across the rail network, 152 are currently wheelchair accessible. Actions speak louder than words. We on this side of the House are upgrading stations and commuter car parks. The community believe us. They do not believe the Opposition. Labor had 16 years to do it.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): The member for Prospect will come to order.

Dr Hugh McDermott: And you will come back here and apologise for Toongabbie when the upgrade does not happen.

Mr MARK COURE: If anyone needs to apologise it is the member for Prospect and his party.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (12:53): It is an absolute pleasure to speak in debate on this motion today and to inform my community of the great work being done by this Government. I will take this opportunity to make a promise to my good friend on the other side of the Chamber the member for Prospect. I promise him that when the upgraded Toongabbie station is open I will drive him down to the kiss-and-drop and let him out of the car. The member can then use the improved facilities to access the station and catch the train. I do not know what the member for Prospect has been doing, but he certainly has not been wandering around his own community and looking at what has been going on there. Great work is being done at Pendle Hill railway station.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): Order! The member for Seven Hills has the call.

Mr MARK TAYLOR: Construction is underway. Lifts are being constructed and closed-circuit television [CCTV] is being installed. Better interchange facilities and bicycle facilities are being built by the New South Wales Government. Let us go one step down the line, to Wentworthville.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): The member for Prospect will come to order.

Mr MARK TAYLOR: What is being done there? Nothing was done for 16 years. The Baird-Grant Government is upgrading Wentworthville station. Lifts are being built. Car parks are being built. Better access is being provided. It is all there for the great commuters of Western Sydney. My friend the member for Prospect would know that on 2 May this year customers were asked to provide feedback on the proposed design for the Toongabbie station upgrade, with planning documents on public display. The upgrade will include new lifts, new stairs, widening of the concourse, new family accessible toilets, improvements to bicycle facilities and interchange areas, better lighting and CCTV surveillance.

It sounds very similar to what is happening at Wentworthville and Pendle Hill. Information provided at the time said that the project team would consider all feedback received during the display period and include it in the design. Where was that information displayed? It was on display in the member for Prospect's electorate. That information could be seen at Holroyd City Council, 16 Memorial Avenue, Merrylands. The member for Prospect could also have popped over to Parramatta City Council or to the Wentworthville Branch Library to look at the design and have his say.

Most importantly for my constituents, the improvements will provide better access for elderly people, people with a disability and parents with prams. That is better infrastructure for the people of Western Sydney. Feedback was received on the displayed information and incorporated into the design. On 28 June the tender for the design and construction project was released, with a contract to be chosen. The member for Prospect should look at this year's budget, which was handed down very recently. In fact, I have a copy here for him to look at. It says that the RailCorp Transport Access Program "provides a better experience for public transport customers by delivering accessible, modern, secure and integrated transport infrastructure where it is needed most".

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): The member for Prospect will come to order.

Mr MARK TAYLOR: The member for Prospect, instead of looking at himself in the mirror, needs to get out into the community and look at what is going on.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (12:57): I will make a brief contribution to debate on this motion. I note that this Government allocated \$770 million in the four years prior to 2015 for the Transport Access Program. In 2015 the Government announced that the following four-year period would see \$890 million spent on that program. That is a lot of money spent on a lot of projects to improve transport access for people across the network. This Government takes its responsibility seriously. We on this side do not just talk; we do. A long list of upgrades have been completed, are underway or are planned for the future. They are being progressively addressed by a government that is serious about meeting people's needs.

There are two projects currently underway in the electorate of the member for Prospect, at stations adjoining Toongabbie. The people of his electorate know that the Government is fair dinkum. The upgrades are really happening. They can see it. They know the truth. They know that the motion moved by the member for Prospect is a stunt. The member for Prospect is whingeing now, but he knows that the Government is delivering exactly what he is talking about. For the 16 years prior to this Government being elected what happened to Toongabbie railway station? I listen, but I hear nothing. The answer is that nothing was done to Toongabbie railway station for the 16 years prior to this Government being elected. But, lo and behold, the member for Prospect discovers suddenly that there is a need for something to be done.

Dr Hugh McDermott: We have been pushing this for six years.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY: Six years? Since the Labor Government was in power in 2010? I do not think so. I did not hear of it being done then. In fact, in the five years that this Government has been in office the Transport Access Program has completed upgrades at Canley Vale, Clarendon, Ingleburn, Mulgrave, Picton, Riverstone, Tahmoor and Windsor, and commenced projects at Pendle Hill, Wentworth Falls and Wentworthville. Commuter car parking facilities have been completed at Baulkham Hills, Blacktown, Canley Vale, Fairfield, Glenbrook, Granville, Kingswood, Macarthur, Mount Druitt, Padstow and Revesby. A commuter car park is under construction at Holsworthy and commuter car parks are in the planning or the detailed design stage at Campbelltown, Carlingford, Rooty Hill, Prairiewood, West Pennant Hills, Marayong, Merrylands, Pendle Hill and Penrith. It is a fairly substantial list of projects completed or underway.

I draw attention to the announcement the Government made just last week that an extra 60 car parking spaces will be delivered at Schofields station because of a grant to Blacktown council of \$2.75 million from the program to help to provide parking at that location. This is all happening. This is real action, continuing with committed funds over the rolling four-year program to ensure that other stations on the lines, transport hubs, intersections and so on around the place are addressed progressively over time. We know that there are many hundreds of railway stations on the network and many of them are very old. In fact, the Riverstone railway station is probably an 1860s construction. It has been the beneficiary of an easy access upgrade in recent times.

Dr Hugh McDermott: You finally got one—before us.

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY: Indeed we did, because of this Government. It did not happen under the previous 16 years of Labor. It happened during the O'Farrell and Baird Government period, as have many of these projects. As the program rolls out over the next couple of years many more will be addressed because the Government has committed the funds and prioritised the work to make sure that the needs of the community are met.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (13:02): In reply: I thank the members who have contributed to the debate—the member for Oatley, who I always find entertaining; and the member for Seven Hills, my neighbour to the north. We have a lot of common interests in this area and it is very important that this motion is carried. I also thank the member for Riverstone—a bit of a ring-in, but I think him for coming in. His comments were good.

Mr Mark Speakman: He is a neighbour.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: He is a neighbour, but not one of mine. I clarify that Wentworthville is not in my electorate—it is next door—but a lot of people from Prospect go down there, so it is a good acknowledgement. This station has needed an upgrade for many, many years, under this Government and previous governments. It is great that it is finally in its final processes and stages. I am pleased that the Government has got us to this point. It is a shame, after the 2011 election when it promised to start the process then, that it has taken until 2016 to do it. I look forward to a date being given when we will finally know when construction will start. The member for Seven Hills has told us how they have finally got out there for the contractor to do the work. Let us find out when it is actually going to be done.

I would also like to know how much money will be spent on the upgrade. It is great that we have Pendle Hill. It took a lot of lobbying, a lot of embarrassment for this Government and a lot of petitions and other things to finally get it up and going. It is great. Of course there are problems with the plan. We know Pendle Hill will have major issues for people in wheelchairs, the elderly and people with prams while they go through the construction stages. The answer for those people is normally, "If the lifts are broken,"—when they are finally in—"you can always ring a cab or walk all the way around the other side," which is simply not acceptable.

I am pleased that we are perhaps finally in the final stages, but until this Government gives me an actual date and commits money to getting an upgrade at Toongabbie we will not know exactly what is going on. The people of Toongabbie should know this. The people of Seven Hills on that side of Toongabbie need to know it, too. The member for Seven Hills should be pushing for that date as well. I would be quite happy for him to pick me up and drop me off at the kiss and drop. That is great, but it will be a few years until that happens. The way it is going in Western Sydney at the moment for the Liberal Party I would be very concerned as to whether he will be in this place by the time the station is done.

Mr Gareth Ward: Point of order: I remind my friend the member for Prospect to direct all his comments through the Chair and not across the table, as he is doing.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): I uphold the point of order.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: I thank the member for Kiama; I will do that. As I was saying, I hope the member for Seven Hills is still here—kind of—although I believe there will be a good Labor candidate that may change that. Either way, I am happy to pick him up and drop him down there if I am still the State member for Prospect if he is not in the Parliament with the rest of us. We will see. We never know. I also note the comment of the member for Oatley about "no Prospect"—oh, it is so original. The first person who said that was Andrew Rohan—and where is he today? I do not know. He is probably still running his printing business out of his garage.

Mr Mark Coure: Point of order: It is relevance. This motion is not about how good Andy Rohan is or how good I am. It is about Toongabbie railway station.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): There is no point of order. The member for Oatley will resume his seat. The member for Prospect has the call.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: The member for Oatley has wasted 20 seconds of my time already and, as members heard, his interjections were of no relevance. Just give us the date when the station will be finally upgraded and when the lifts will be finally put in, and tell us how much it will cost so that we can tell the people in Toongabbie. Those opposite should stop hiding behind their secrecy.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): Order! The member for Oatley will come to order. The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes33
 Noes43
 Majority..... 10

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J	Atalla, Mr E	Barr, Mr C
Car, Ms P	Catley, Ms Y	Chanthivong, Mr A
Crakanthorp, Mr T	Daley, Mr M	Dib, Mr J
Doyle, Ms T	Finn, Ms J	Greenwich, Mr A
Harris, Mr D	Harrison, Ms J	Haylen, Ms J
Hoenig, Mr R	Hornery, Ms S	Kamper, Mr S
Lalich, Mr N (teller)	Lynch, Mr P	McDermott, Dr H
McKay, Ms J	Mehan, Mr D	Minns, Mr C
Park, Mr R	Parker, Mr J	Piper, Mr G
Robertson, Mr J	Smith, Ms T	Warren, Mr G (teller)
Washington, Ms K	Watson, Ms A	Zangari, Mr G

NOES

Aplin, Mr G	Ayres, Mr S	Barilaro, Mr J
Berejiklian, Ms G	Bromhead, Mr S (teller)	Brookes, Mr G
Conolly, Mr K	Constance, Mr A	Coure, Mr M
Crouch, Mr A	Davies, Ms T	Dominello, Mr V
Elliott, Mr D	Evans, Mr L	Fraser, Mr A
George, Mr T	Goward, Ms P	Gulaptis, Mr C
Henskens, Mr A	Hodgkinson, Ms K	Humphries, Mr K
Johnsen, Mr M	Kean, Mr M	Lee, Dr G
Maguire, Mr D	Marshall, Mr A	Notley-Smith, Mr B
O'Dea, Mr J	Patterson, Mr C (teller)	Pavey, Ms M
Perrottet, Mr D	Provest, Mr G	Roberts, Mr A
Sidoti, Mr J	Skinner, Ms J	Speakman, Mr M
Stokes, Mr R	Taylor, Mr M	Toole, Mr P
Tudehope, Mr D	Ward, Mr G	Williams, Mr R
Williams, Ms L		

PAIRS

Foley, Mr L	Baird, Mr M
Hay, Ms N	Piccoli, Mr A
Mihailuk, Ms T	Anderson, Mr K
Smith, Ms K	Petinos, Ms E

Motion negatived.

WOMEN'S REFUGES

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (13:13): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that nearly 50 specialist workers attended the Blue Mountains domestic violence roundtable hosted by the member for Blue Mountains with the shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.
- (2) Acknowledges that Government funding cuts have left women's refuges with much less capacity to provide services, and women and children are being turned away.
- (3) Calls on the Government to urgently allocate funding to existing services and programs, and ensure that Safer Pathways and the It Stops Here recommendations are fully funded.

On 9 February 2016 I hosted a domestic violence roundtable in Springwood in the Blue Mountains. The event provided an opportunity to hear firsthand about the impact of the Going Home Staying Home reforms and other changes in government policy. It also examined service responses to domestic violence in the Blue Mountains and outer Western Sydney. Those in attendance consisted mainly of professionals engaged in working with

women and their families affected by domestic violence. At no other time in modern history have we witnessed such a groundswell and willingness to address this issue and to say that enough is enough: Domestic violence is never okay.

As politicians we cannot take credit for this seismic shift in public opinion. Services such as the NSW Women's Refuge Movement, women's health centres, rape crisis centres, and victims and survivors groups were and still are at the fore of this struggle and the campaign to eliminate domestic violence and other forms of violence against women. I pay my respects to all of the brave, persistent and valiant women who have gone before. Service providers have told me that the growing community awareness of the problem has resulted in increased demand for services, yet the system simply does not have the capacity to respond. It is not good enough to encourage women to seek safety and support and then tell them that they have to wait eight weeks for help. Access to suitable emergency accommodation continues to be the number one priority.

Even if the Government will not admit it, it is widely recognised in the community that the Baird Government's funding cuts to women's refuges across this State have dramatically reduced their capacity to provide safe accommodation and support services. As a result, women and children are being turned away every day. Whilst the Government has repeatedly claimed that not one refuge has been closed in New South Wales, according to Save Our Services at last count there were only 14 specialist domestic violence refuges left. In my area we lost Blue Gum Women's Housing, which previously provided exit housing to women and their children who had escaped domestic violence and needed somewhere to stay.

A few months ago an elderly Aboriginal woman—I will call her Lois—contacted my office seeking emergency accommodation. She was homeless following a lifetime of domestic and family violence. Sometime in the week before she made contact she had called the Link2home 1800 number. She was referred to a shelter. Upon arrival she discovered that in fact the shelter was not a women's refuge but a men's hostel. She was extremely traumatised by the experience. That is not good enough. I believe that, post the reforms, staff from that major referral service did not have any domestic violence [DV] training.

I was able to refer Lois to a local specialist domestic violence service, West Connect Domestic Violence Services, which provided her with accommodation and support. Fortunately, West Connect won the tender for the Blue Mountains, Nepean and Mount Druitt areas. For nearly 40 years it operated as Penrith Women's Refuge. Since the reforms the service has been running an Aboriginal women's refuge without any funding. Aboriginal women continue to be some of the most at-risk groups, yet West Connect continues to negotiate with Family and Community Services to get its funding for Aboriginal women like Lois.

Domestic violence does not keep business hours, yet so many services operate only nine to five. Women's services activist Roxanne McMurray explained that approximately 33 of the 78 government and non-government refuges have 24-hour, on-call support. Some have it for only existing clients. We believe that 24-hour, on-call support at every refuge is necessary. The Government believed that setting up a 24-hour domestic violence hotline would be better than on-call staff, but it is not. Out-of-hours refuge staff are much more effective and appropriate people to speak to than a hotline.

With the current crisis in homelessness and massive underinvestment in social housing, exit housing for women and children leaving a refuge is the biggest barrier to safety. What happens to a woman and her children once she is out of the crisis stage? Where does she go? With 10 years-plus waiting lists for social housing, where will she go? The lack of system capacity does not end with refuges. A local Staying Home Leaving Violence project worker explained, "We have more women recently engaging in the Staying Home Leaving Violence project than want a support plan to leave safely. This is an important option for women, yet there are only two of us in this specialist role in this local government area. We simply can't meet this most urgent need."

Our women's domestic violence court advocacy services are desperate for increased funding. Last year they received an additional 20 per cent funding for six months only. This does little to address the massive increases in demand for service provision that has occurred with the introduction of the Domestic Violence Justice Strategy. From July to December 2015 there was an increase of 89 per cent in client contacts. In the same period referrals made on behalf of clients also dramatically increased by 61 per cent, yet funding has only been provided for six months. The voice of children is frequently neglected and there is a distinct lack of funding for child-focused services, including therapy, counselling and mental health services. There has to be an investment in the safety and health of children if they are to recover from these childhood experiences and build a future free of violence. If we are serious about addressing this issue, we must listen to the voices of women and children, and to those who are committed to providing support and sharing their expertise—the specialist domestic violence services and their staff.

Ms MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (13:21): Many members were deeply moved by the inaugural speech of the member for the Blue Mountains where she talked about what she had gone through as a child. I am fortunate

not to have experienced her situation but my mother bears those scars inflicted upon her family by my grandfather. Importantly, we have reached a stage where we are having the appropriate conversations around domestic violence. This Government has doubled the funding to domestic violence services across the State. I acknowledge and thank the member for bringing experts and others together at the Blue Mountains domestic violence roundtable. However, I indicate that the Government will not be supporting this motion. We are committed to addressing this issue but by taking a different approach. If the figures keep going up, it is not appropriate to keep doing the same thing.

Minister Goward, who is present in the Chamber, has been a champion in this area. I am very proud of the announcements of Minister Goward and the Deputy Premier, Minister for Justice and Police, the Hon. Troy Grant, in this area and what they are trying to achieve on the ground. The New South Wales Government is leading the nation in tackling this terrible scourge. For the first time in New South Wales, rather than a patchwork of services the Government is creating a domestic and family violence system that responds in a consistent and effective way. Every year too many people experience violence. In the 12 months to March 2016, more than 29,000 incidents of domestic violence-related assault were recorded by police in this State. Police in my electorate have told me that they are encouraged by these increasing figures because it means that people are coming forward and are able to access the support services. It is a good thing that this issue is no longer kept under the covers and that we are talking about it.

As I said, the Government recognises the work of specialist workers in the Blue Mountains. The 2016-17 budget doubles the investment in specialist domestic violence initiatives to more than \$300 million over four years. The Government has announced \$53 million over four years to expand the Safer Pathway program across New South Wales, with 21 new sites to commence and two existing sites to expand in 2016-17 in addition to the six locations where it currently operates. Safer Pathway is a key part of It Stops Here, a new approach to victim safety assessment, referral and service coordination, which was launched in September 2014. Under Safer Pathway, services work together and share information to create a coordinated, holistic response to victims and their children. We are trying to move away from the silo mentality that has been a part of governments for too long. Victims are offered tailored support to meet their safety, health and wellbeing needs. Safer Pathway ensures victims receive a consistent and integrated multi-agency response to secure their safety and support recovery.

Women's refuges play an important role in responding to women escaping violence. However, they are just one pathway of support. They are not the answer for all women experiencing domestic violence and not all women choose to go to a refuge. The New South Wales Government has invested record funding in the 2016-17 budget for stable and safe housing for families leaving domestic violence, more than doubling its current funding for the Start Safely Private Rental Subsidy program. That includes \$25 million over four years for the Staying Home Leaving Violence program to help women to stay in their own home or live in a home of their choice while the violent family member is removed.

The Staying Home Leaving Violence program will expand to four new sites, including Coffs Harbour, Inverell, Orange and Clarence Valley, bringing the total number of sites to 27 across the State. The funding also includes \$100 million over four years through the Start Safely housing programs to help victims secure accommodation so that they do not have to return to a violent situation. Funding has been doubled and includes \$43 million over four years in base funding and \$57 million over four years under the Future Directions reform of social housing. The Safe Home for Life program focuses effort on delivering targeted services and support to vulnerable children, young people and families impacted by domestic and family violence. The Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services program works with victims and perpetrators through a flexible, needs-based approach, focusing on case work support and education.

The Government has also committed \$6.6 million over four years to continue to fund the Domestic Violence Assistance Line, a 24-hour statewide service providing crisis and short-term counselling, specialist advice, information and referral services; and \$34 million over four years for the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program. There is an office behind my electoral office at Kempsey; I know that it is a great program and makes a difference. The Government has also committed an additional \$6.3 million over four years to meet unmet demand to respond to police referrals. This is another example of the great work of Minister Goward and Deputy Premier Grant to encourage communication across agencies. It is all about stopping the silos. We have to do things differently to make it work. The Government has also committed \$13 million over four years to improve risk assessment and services for male victims, such as gay men or fathers and sons suffering family violence, through expert non-government organisation support.

The Premier's priority is to reduce the rate of domestic and family violence reoffending within 12 months by 5 per cent by 2019. That is a big goal. By setting a target, our key performance indicators can be checked. That shows that this Government is committed to achieving its goal. The Government is providing this funding to get the rate down, and the Premier has the strong support of the Cabinet in this regard. In tackling this situation,

I applaud the Premier for making our goals transparent. This Government is investing money in these programs. It wants to get rid of the silos and for everyone to work together. As I indicated, the Government will not be supporting this motion but we on this side do fully support programs to prevent domestic violence across New South Wales.

Debate adjourned.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Melanie Gibbons): I will now leave the chair and the House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery Miss Sue Litchfield, chair of the Cooma Hospital Advisory, Monaro Committee for Cancer Research, farmer, and all-round community treasure, guest of the Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business and member for the beautiful electorate of Monaro. I also welcome 13 students from Al Sadiq College and their teacher, guests of the member for Lakemba. I welcome former Manly rugby league captain Jason King, guest of the member for Hornsby. It is a great rugby league team, but I switched to the Illawarra Dragons when I moved down that way.

Ministry

REPRESENTATION OF MINISTER ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS

Mr MIKE BAIRD: I advise that the Minister for Early Childhood Education, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Assistant Minister for Education will answer questions today in the absence of the Minister for Education.

Question Time

THE HON. JILLIAN SKINNER, MINISTER FOR HEALTH

Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:19): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Given the Premier's comments today that the Government needs to refresh with new ideas, new energy and new talent, why not take the hint and resign?

Mr Chris Patterson: Point of order: It is common courtesy and decency—

[*Interruption*]

The SPEAKER: The question contravenes every standing order. Does the Minister wish to answer this question? If not, I will rule it out of order.

Ms JILLIAN SKINNER (North Shore—Minister for Health) (14:21): I am happy to take the question.

The SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order.

Ms JILLIAN SKINNER: Everything that I have done and spoken about this week has been about patients. My primary concern is about patient care and making sure that patients are looked after. That is my number one priority. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to crucify me I will stand aside, but it is about patient care. It is not about me; it is about patients.

[*Interruption*]

The SPEAKER: If members continue with this behaviour, they will be removed from the Chamber immediately. I will not allow the same level of personal attacks and interjections as have occurred previously this week. Members will be directed to leave the Chamber without warning. The question was out of order, but the Minister chose to answer it. Members who do not know why the question was out of order should read the standing orders.

[*Interruption*]

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear the member for Upper Hunter. Members will come to order.

REGIONAL JOBS GROWTH

Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (14:22): I have a genuine question for the Premier. Will the Premier inform the House how regional New South Wales is helping to consolidate its position as the nation's best performing economy?

Mr MIKE BAIRD (Manly—Premier, and Minister for Western Sydney) (14:22): I thank the member for his question. He is a great advocate for regional New South Wales and for his electorate. Regional New South Wales needs a strong health system and this Minister for Health is doing an outstanding job.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn Opposition members that I will use my discretion to remove them from the Chamber if they continue to interject.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: The shadow Minister is laughing in the gallery and the Leader of the Opposition is smiling. This has been a difficult week. The circumstances of these incidents are tragic. The Minister for Health and I are heartbroken and furious, and we will do everything to ensure it does not happen again. That is what the Minister is doing. The Minister's performance compared to that of Labor when in government is chalk and cheese.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Maitland to order for the first time. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the first time. Government members will cease interjecting.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: I live in regional New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: Order! What is the member's point of order?

Ms Yasmin Catley: My point of order is Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member will resume her seat. I call the member for Swansea to order for the first time.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: What this Government has built in regional New South Wales has helped to increase jobs growth. The health system has delivered in towns such as Parkes, Forbes, Dubbo, Wagga Wagga and Port Macquarie.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: Hospitals promised by Labor have been delivered by this Minister for Health.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: We all know that regional New South Wales was not in a very good place under Labor. This Government has turned things around and regional New South Wales is not only thriving but leading the nation. During the winter break a number of reports were published. I know the shadow Treasurer looked at them all. Those reports included CommSec state of the State report, the ANZ report and regional labour force figures. All of these reports confirm what we know: that New South Wales is number one in economic growth, job creation and building infrastructure in the Crane index. It is a good thing.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Keira to order for the first time. I call the member for Port Stephens to order for the first time. I call the member for Cessnock to order for the first time. Members will cease interjecting. Opposition members will come to order.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: The economic momentum is continuing and this Government will do everything possible to ensure that it continues. Over 117,000 jobs have been added in the 12 months to June. This is an incredible number.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: Of those, 56,500 have occurred in regional New South Wales. Some of the highlights include Richmond Tweed as the best performer, with an increase in jobs of 15 per cent. The Hunter Valley is up 9.6 per cent. The Central Coast is up 8.1 per cent.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: The Illawarra is up by 7.5 per cent. Jobs are increasing everywhere.

The SPEAKER: Order! Opposition members will cease interjecting.

Mr Luke Foley: Like hell he got a new job.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time.

Mr MIKE BAIRD: You will have a new job soon enough.

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

Mr MIKE BAIRD: The member will be shadow Minister for animal welfare in the Minns-Haylen Opposition. I note that it is the last day for the member for Wollongong and it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge her contribution in this place. I look forward to her final speech, notwithstanding our differences. The member never got her exhibition centre. She tried and served her community well. She put her heart and soul into it. She had enemies within her own party, but she put her best into serving her community. That is what this Government continues to do. It will look after regional New South Wales. The good news is that under this Government it is back to number one.

THE HON. JILLIAN SKINNER, MINISTER FOR HEALTH

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:27): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. How can the Minister claim to act with any sort of authority to protect patients in the New South Wales health system given that her days as Minister for Health are well and truly numbered?

The SPEAKER: Order! I rule the question out of order. The member should know better. He should read the standing orders.

COST OF LIVING

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (14:28): My question is addressed to the Treasurer. How is the New South Wales Government working to ease cost of living pressures for households across the State?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:28): I am pleased to receive that question from the member for Heathcote. The member cares about and appreciates, as do other members, the policies that need to be in place to ensure residents of this State have eased cost of living pressures. This Government understands how important that is. It is important for us to grow jobs and ensure New South Wales is leading the nation when it comes to our economic indicators. Let us talk about some of the success our Government has had in reducing cost of living pressures on households. This is an example of what they say in opposition and what they failed to do in government. That is the key difference. Recently I was pleased to announce, with the Minister for Water, that residents of Sydney, Blue Mountains and Wollongong now have the lowest water and waste water prices than any region and capital city in Australia.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: This is but one example of how our Government is making sure that we relieve the cost of living pressures. It is interesting because we know that under those opposite water prices in Sydney, Blue Mountains and Wollongong went up by more than 50 per cent.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for The Entrance to order for the first time. Government members will come to order.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We know that under Labor utilities and many other cost of living pressures were the enemy of the hip pocket. The facts speak for themselves. I was interested to hear during the parliamentary recess that the shadow Treasurer started talking about a housing affordability policy. He said it was about easing the cost of living pressure. Under this Government we know how important it is to increase the supply of housing. In fact, in the past 12 months we have ensured that there were more than 70,000 approvals for dwellings. The Minister for Planning and I are thrilled with that result. We know this puts down the pressure on housing prices. What was the response of the shadow Treasurer on housing affordability? We know the shadow Treasurer has a problem distinguishing between public money and private money. We know he has a challenge distinguishing between recurrent and capital spending and now we know he cannot distinguish between an active policy and a dumped policy because he resurrected a policy on housing affordability that was twice dumped by the Labor Party.

The SPEAKER: Order! I know Opposition members want to be here at 4.30 p.m. for the valedictory speech of the member for Wollongong, but I will remove Opposition members from the Chamber if they continue to interject.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: A few short weeks ago the member for Keira said that the best way to reduce the cost of housing or to improve housing affordability is to defer stamp duty payments. The problem with that is that his party twice dumped that policy. The first time his party dumped that policy was in 1998 when Treasurer Egan said that the Labor Party would dump that policy because it would push up prices for new home owners.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Kogarah to order for the first time. I call the member for Kogarah to order for the second time. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Even more recently, during the election campaign on 10 March that man of principle over there had a policy to defer stamp duty payments at sunrise and by sunset he had withdrawn it because it was a failure. The article stated:

Foley's stamp duty folly. House prices could rise 5.5 per cent and struggling first-time home buyers would face additional interest charges...

[Extension of time]

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation coming from Opposition members.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Labor dumped the policy in 1998, in March the Leader of the Opposition dumped the policy within 24 hours of releasing it, and now the shadow Treasurer re-announced it in July. The Labor Party's response to reducing the cost of living pressures is to rehash policies it has dumped twice before. We know that they have no idea when it comes to housing affordability, the cost of living, health and education. I call on the Leader of the Opposition today, that man of principle, to say whether this policy—which he dumped in March and which the shadow Treasurer rehashed last week—has any status. The people of New South Wales know that whether we are dealing with utilities, concessions, or fees and charges, not only are we building the infrastructure we need but we are also ensuring that the people of this State have the services they need to have a good quality of life. Those opposite say a lot but they do not know what they are talking about and this latest policy attempt is a stark example of that.

CANCER TREATMENT AT ST VINCENT'S HOSPITAL

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (14:35): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. In her press conference on Tuesday she said that St Vincent's Hospital had lied to her and to patients. What policy steps have been put in place to ensure that accountability is taken for these lies?

Ms JILLIAN SKINNER (North Shore—Minister for Health) (14:35): Underdosing or flat dosing at St Vincent's Hospital was the subject of an extensive review by Professor David Currow, who is the Chief Cancer Officer in New South Wales and head of the Cancer Institute NSW. He is a well recognised expert in the treatment of cancer. He put a number of recommendations together and St Vincent's Hospital has adopted all of them. As I said on Tuesday, we are allocating an extra \$6 million to fast-track and upgrade the electronic management system for cancer treatments. We are also making sure that treatments deviating from protocols are flagged with the multidisciplinary teams. I believe that the measures that have been put in place, which are essential for patient care, should be a priority. I commend the review by Professor Currow, which is on the NSW Health website. All members should read it.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMALGAMATIONS

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (14:37): My question is addressed to the Minister for Local Government. How are the State's new councils getting on with the job of improving services for their local areas?

The SPEAKER: Order! The interjections and behaviour from Opposition members are ridiculous.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Local Government) (14:37): I thank the member for Albury for his question and for his ongoing support of local government reform. He understands that we need a modern system of local government in New South Wales and he understands that we need strong councils that deliver for their communities. That question is timely today because this week is Local Government Week. I have had the opportunity to visit councils and I will end Local Government Week by visiting the electorate of the member for Camden, Mayor Lara Symkowiak, and opening a \$40 million building.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I point out that it has been three months since we created 19 new councils in this State. I am pleased to report that those councils are successfully getting on with the job of improving services to local communities. By sharing resources, reducing duplication, getting rid of red tape and negotiating new contracts, those councils are delivering for their communities. They are providing more services and more infrastructure.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: They are making savings that are being invested back into their communities.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Blue Mountains will come to order. The member for Summer Hill will come to order.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I will share with the House some of the benefits that councils have experienced so far. I recently visited the Canterbury-Bankstown council, where the customer service sections have been brought

together. That means that residents across the area can go to any council office to pay their rates or lodge their development application, no matter where they live in the local government area.

The SPEAKER: Order! All members who are on calls to order are now on three calls to order. The member for Summer Hill will come to order or be removed from the Chamber for the remainder of the day.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Several councils have saved tens of thousands of dollars—some councils have saved hundreds of thousands of dollars—by consolidating their insurance. The Northern Beaches Council has saved almost \$1 million.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 74. The Minister shows by his comments about councils that he has no idea. Elected members know what the problem is.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member for Maitland will resume her seat. The Minister has the call.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: The member for Maitland should talk to her council and see what it is doing for Local Government Week.

The SPEAKER: Order! A large number of members are now on three calls to order, including the member for Cessnock.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: At Georges River the additional pensioner rebate that was in place in the former Hurstville City Council area, on top of the mandatory statutory rebate, has been extended to the former Kogarah area, meaning that all pensioners in the area now will enjoy that benefit. This week I visited the new Cumberland Council, which has put in place an independent hearing and assessment panel, giving the community confidence in the transparency of planning decisions. Recently I visited the new MidCoast Council.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: At the former Gloucester Shire Council there was only one engineer. Every time the engineer went on leave the council had to place an advertisement in the paper saying that no projects or development applications could be considered during that period. I am happy to report that that is no longer the case. I am also happy to report that the former Gloucester Shire Council engineer can now take leave for a period of more than two weeks. At Gundagai Council there has been an improvement to the animal management system.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber from members who are on three calls to order.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: The expanded workforce of council rangers has seen an additional 140 animal registrations since the new council was created and more than 200 updates to the animal register.

Mr Clayton Barr: Point of order—

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

Mr Clayton Barr: Madam Speaker, that does not mean I cannot take a point of order. You cannot refuse me.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will hear the point of order.

Mr Clayton Barr: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 73. The response from the Minister is embarrassing. If he deems it fit to take this course on his own imputation and reputation then he should do it by substantive motion and move that motion against himself.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order. The member for Cessnock will resume his seat. Has he heard some of the interjections from Opposition members?

Mr Clayton Barr: I could not hear them. Government members were making too much noise.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock will resume his seat. I refer the member to the *Hansard*. Members who are ordered to leave the Chamber will be removed for the remainder of the day. The Minister is granted an extension of time.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: The Opposition might not like it, but these small examples are making a real difference in communities. They are improving the quality of life for people in those areas. At Western Plains Regional Council a staff member is now available to assist community groups across the area to apply for grants. The Snowy Monaro Regional Council is running a new radio advertising campaign to encourage visitors to the area to visit the significant Bombala platypus reserve. That did not happen previously because the council did not

have the funding or the capacity to initiate it. This only scratches the surface of the benefits. I have not mentioned the New South Wales Government's \$10 million Stronger Communities Fund.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Macquarie Fields will come to order.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Right now communities in new council areas are having their say about the projects that they would like to see funded.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maitland is on her last warning. I call the member for Mount Druitt to order for the first time.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I have given just a few examples. I know that members opposite do not like hearing this. Labor is the do-nothing party. Opposition members do not want to change anything in local government. They want local government to look the same as it did more than 100 years ago. They want people to travel around council areas by horse and cart. They do not want to modernise the system of local government.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Mount Druitt to order for the second time. I call the member for Mount Druitt to order for the third time.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: We on this side of the House are committed to making sure that there are strong councils in this State. We want strong councils performing for their communities.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: We are improving services and building more infrastructure, and we will continue to do so.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Rockdale to order for the first time. Members will come to order. There are now 16 Opposition members on three calls to order.

Mr Luke Foley: How many from the Government?

The SPEAKER: None.

Mr Luke Foley: You do not hear any from over there, do you?

The SPEAKER: No.

HOSPITAL CHEMOTHERAPY TREATMENT

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (14:46): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Has the Minister contacted the 21 patients at Macquarie University Hospital who received an underdose of chemotherapy at the hands of Dr John Grygiel?

Ms JILLIAN SKINNER (North Shore—Minister for Health) (14:46): I thank the member for her question. As I indicated in my response on Tuesday to a question about the treatment by Dr John Grygiel, those cases are still under review. There will be a report into further treatments in September.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will cease interjecting.

Ms JILLIAN SKINNER: I thank the member for Maitland for asking the question because it gives me an opportunity to talk about the fantastic things happening in health in her electorate. I am very proud of the doctors and nurses who work at Maitland Hospital. As at the first quarter of this year, patients were able to be seen by the emergency department—

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question was specifically about whether the Minister has made contact with those patients.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister has answered the question. There is no point of order. The member for Strathfield will resume her seat.

Ms Jodi McKay: The Minister did not answer the question. She indicated that the cases were under review. She did not indicate whether she had made contact.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. The Minister has the call.

Ms JILLIAN SKINNER: In the first quarter of 2011, when the Labor Government was last in office, 66 per cent of patients were seen within four hours in the Maitland Hospital emergency department. In the first quarter of this year there was a 10 per cent increase—76 per cent of patients were seen within four hours. That figure is replicated across the health system. The Opposition asks how the health system is going. It has vastly improved since Labor was in office.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister remains relevant to the question. The member for Maitland will resume her seat. Members will come to order.

Ms JILLIAN SKINNER: This Government has committed to a new Maitland Hospital. The site has been purchased and \$400 million has been allocated. Again, that situation has been replicated throughout the system. There is a huge increase in investment in recurrent terms. There has been a more than 30 per cent increase since the Government came to office. There has been a huge investment—\$10 billion over two terms—in upgrading our hospitals. There has been a huge increase in the number of doctors and nurses. There has been greater devolution so that they have a much better workplace. The promotion of core values ensures that they feel engaged and supported. That is the contrast between the Opposition and us in government.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. I asked very specifically whether the Minister had contacted patients.

The SPEAKER: Order! Under the standing orders I cannot direct the Minister to answer the question. The Minister remains relevant to the question. The member for Maitland will resume her seat. Members will come to order.

SYDNEY METRO NORTHWEST

Mr DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Epping) (14:49): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. What progress has the Government made in delivering Australia's biggest public transport project?

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE (Bega—Minister for Transport and Infrastructure) (14:49): I thank the good member for his question about the world's best metro. We have an infrastructure program of some \$73 billion of which \$40.5 billion has been dedicated to public transport and roads. If you consider that over the next 12 months New South Wales transport cluster spending is more than that of every State and Territory combined, is it any wonder we have the global interest we do in this incredible project? I am happy to report to the House that the north-west metro is progressing at an enormous pace. In fact we have now laid 3.5 kilometres of track. The stabling facilities out in the north-west at Cudgegong Road are proceeding incredibly quickly. Work is happening on stations. Very soon I will be unveiling the designs for Rouse Hill and Castle Hill, which are on the Skytrain.

The project is very much on track, ahead of budget and, as we saw with the tunnelling, months ahead of schedule. Very pleasingly, overnight I was also able to list, following market sounding, two joint ventures that are going to be putting up bids for preferred tenderer for the next stage of tunnelling. This tunnelling will commence late in 2018. I am very pleased with the interest that has been shown in the tunnelling on the second stage. It will be a complex tunnelling program because we have to go under the harbour, which means that we will require different forms of tunnel boring machines to do so. This 15.5 kilometre tunnel will extend from Chatswood to Sydenham. It is an incredible project if you consider that it will take some 30 million car trips off the road.

The travel time between Chatswood and the city will be only 15 minutes—an 11-minute improvement on the current train travel time between Chatswood and the city. We will also see some 6,200 jobs associated with the project. It is an absolute gem of a project. This is a step-change project that will transform Sydney and the State. It is the project that will ensure people get out of their cars and back onto the train network. It delivers enormous capacity into the city through the morning peak when some 150,000 additional commuters will be travelling into town. During the morning peak there are some 120 trains into the city. The metro will take it to 200 trains, which means that increased capacity is delivered across the entire network.

We have an environmental impact statement [EIS] out at the moment. We have received submissions, and I thank those who have contributed to that process, regarding the stage that will extend from Chatswood to Sydenham. As part of the second stage we are building seven new stations that will extend from Chatswood to Sydenham and then out to Bankstown. We will upgrade some 11 stations as well. Later this year we will produce the EIS for the Sydney Metro Southwest project, which will extend from Sydenham to Bankstown. Not only was I disappointed that we heard ridiculous statements from the member for Maroubra about this project being uneconomic but also I was somewhat surprised that the Leader of the Opposition now opposes the metro project because the Canterbury by-election is coming up—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Cessnock is on his final warning.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: —and we might have to disrupt commuters whilst we metro-fy the line from Sydenham to Bankstown. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to make that a by-election issue, he can go right ahead. I am happy to fight him every day of the by-election campaign. I am metro-fying the line between

Sydenham and Bankstown. I am happy to take him on about his stupidity in relation to that project. This is a vital project for our State. Those opposite think it is uneconomic. We have heard repeated opposition to WestConnex, metros, light rail—

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the member for Cessnock to remove himself from the Chamber for a period of one hour under Standing Order 249A. I am reintroducing that standing order just for the member for Cessnock.

Mr Clayton Barr: Table any one of your cost-benefit reports.

The SPEAKER: Order! If the member does not cease interjecting he will be removed for the day.

Mr Clayton Barr: Table any one of them. Infrastructure NSW says you should table all your reports and you have not tabled one of them.

The SPEAKER: Order! I direct the Acting Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Cessnock from the Chamber. He may return in 24 hours.

[The member for Cessnock left the Chamber accompanied by the Acting Serjeant-at-Arms.]

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is granted an extension of time.

Mr ANDREW CONSTANCE: As I was just saying to my peers on the front bench, there is no doubt that the excitement about the metro is phenomenal amongst members who represent Western Sydney electorates. In fact, the Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy and I were just saying how excited Western Sydney members are. Even the member for Prospect is excited. But he is not excited about the metro; he is excited about the Olympics and all those medal presentations. There are two weeks of medal presentations coming up—gold, gold, gold! I know that, like other members from Western Sydney, the good old member for Prospect is overjoyed about the metro project.

BUSINESS TOURISM

Mr CHRIS PATTERSON (Camden) (14:56): My question is addressed to the Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events, and Minister for Sport. How is business tourism supporting jobs and investment in New South Wales?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events, and Minister for Sport) (14:56): I thank the member for Camden for his question. He knows how important tourism is to his local community. He also knows how important business tourism is right across the State. Business tourism is immensely important to growing the State's economy and making sure we hit our target of doubling overnight visitor expenditure. In fact, in the year to March 2016, Sydney has welcomed more than 355,000 business visitors from overseas and interstate who have stayed more than 3.2 million nights in Sydney.

They have injected a massive \$665 million into our economy. Business visitors make up more than 10.7 per cent of the overall visitor spend. They also underpin the important knowledge economy that is driving our State. The Government understands how important it is to invest in infrastructure to continue to drive this. We are seeing before our eyes a revolutionary change across the Darling Harbour precinct with the development of Darling Harbour Live. At the cornerstone of that is the billion-dollar International Convention Centre [ICC]. This convention centre is the envy of cities and states all over the world.

The SPEAKER: Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. Members who wish to have private conversations should do so outside the Chamber.

Mr STUART AYRES: It is an international best-practice build. It is also driving significant business events. The Business Events Sydney organisation is driving more and more events. We note also the importance of business tourists, who generate more than 4½ times more spend than any other type of tourist. The investment in the ICC is also generating further investment in New South Wales.

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

Mr STUART AYRES: More than 7,500 hotel rooms are either under construction or planned for development by 2020. And it is not just the central business district that is benefiting from those hotel developments; it is places like Parramatta, Bella Vista, Mascot, Chatswood and Macquarie Park. Places like Blacktown and Campbelltown are also seeing renewed interest in investment in hotel stock. It is about supporting small businesses across our communities.

Business Events Sydney, which is considered to be one of the best convention bureaus in the world, is doing an outstanding job making sure that business events keep coming to our fantastic State. In 2015 Business

Events Sydney attracted more than 65 large-scale business events that generated more than \$176 million in visitor expenditure for our State. We have also booked more than 40 events into the ICC before it has even opened. That shows how much demand there is from people around the world wanting to come to Sydney. We have captured the world's momentum and focus on the innovation agenda with world-class organisations such as OpenStack choosing to come to Sydney in 2017. This is not just about what is happening in Sydney.

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

Mr STUART AYRES: It is also about recognising the important work that is happening in our regional areas. The recent reforms to Destination Networks across our regional tourism areas have generated a regional conferencing unit that will drive more business events to our regions. While we are talking about major events driving activity it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the fantastic work of many people from across New South Wales towards one of the world's largest events, the Rio Olympics. Earlier today it was great to hear so many members from both sides of the Chamber talk about the fantastic work of New South Wales athletes from their electorates who will represent our State and country at one of the world's great events. I take this opportunity to recognise one of Australia's great athletes of whom everyone in this Chamber should be proud.

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many conversations across the table.

Mr STUART AYRES: Kurt Fearnley is leading Australia's Paralympic team in his final Paralympic Games. The man is the epitome of the term "champion". Anyone who has the opportunity to talk to him will be blown away by his courage and determination. He is a fitting leader.

The SPEAKER: Order! This is not a good time for the member for Swansea to interject.

Mr STUART AYRES: Kurt is just one of many athletes. The member for Camden has representatives from his electorate going to the Olympics. Warren Potent is a fantastic shooter who has great prospects of winning a medal. More than 81 athletes from the NSW Institute of Sport will be representing us at the Games. [*Extension of time*]

The NSW Institute of Sport has provided more than 81 athletes to the Australian Olympic team. That is the largest number of athletes from any institute in the country and we should be very proud of their work. We also have fantastic regional athletes. I know the member for Tweed is very happy to see Matthew Abboud in the Olympic team for the first time. He missed out on being in the London team by 0.02 of a second. He will be as proud as punch when he represents Australia at the Olympics in Rio. I cannot miss this opportunity to recognise the fantastic work of Jessica Fox from my electorate of Penrith. At the age of 18 she was the silver fox in London after winning the silver medal. We will all be up watching her K1 canoeing event and hoping that she, like many other athletes, brings home gold. I know I speak for everyone in this House regardless of their political colours who will be cheering for every one of our athletes representing this State and nation with pride at the Rio Olympics.

CENTRAL WEST CANCER PATIENTS

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (15:02): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. What steps is the Minister taking to help patients and families in Orange and Bathurst who will have to wait up to eight weeks to know the consequences of the underdosing of Central West cancer patients?

Ms JILLIAN SKINNER (North Shore—Minister for Health) (15:03): Patients are at the forefront of everything we are concerned about. I can assure the member that the hospital and local health district is taking their wellbeing into account, as they always should. I take this opportunity to thank the wonderful doctors and nurses throughout the health system for their fantastic support of our patients no matter what treatments they are receiving. Whether we are talking about the millions of inpatients in our hospitals every year or the emergency patients receiving help in our emergency departments, there has been dramatic improvement across the system over the past five or six years. I can assure the member that will continue to be the case.

LIQUOR LAWS REVIEW

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (15:03): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. How will the Government improve the safety and vibrancy of the inner city's nightlife following the Callinan review and the nightlife roundtables?

Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Deputy Premier, Minister for Justice and Police, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Racing) (15:04): I thank the member for Sydney for his question and his obvious interest in this matter. I commend him for the wonderful work he is doing in his electorate. Clearly, his electorate is most significantly affected by the CBD and Kings Cross plans of management and the measures that have been put in place there. I acknowledge that there has also been real and direct interest from residents in the surrounding

electorates of Vacluse, Coogee, Heffron, Newtown and Balmain. I am aware that constituents from all of those electorates have strong views on this issue. With the member for Sydney they have taken the opportunity to make submissions to the review so that the Hon. Ian Callinan, AC, QC, has a clear understanding of the diverse and wide range of views on the matter, which will help him to advise the Government on the way forward.

We know that Sydney is a global city and an entertainment precinct that people from across the State and indeed the world come to enjoy. It is its distinct dynamic as a global city that has led to behaviour in the area severely deteriorating over time and ultimately ending in a tragic loss of life. I am sure the member for Sydney and every member joins me in acknowledging the incomprehensible level of grief of a family who was directly impacted by that deterioration as they bury their second son today. The violence that took place in the area was so unacceptable to the community that this Parliament was recalled and supported bipartisan changes to our alcohol laws. As originally intended when those laws were brought into place, we now have a review well and truly underway. It is very close to being finalised at the end of this month by the Hon. Ian Callinan, AC, QC.

The Government is expecting to receive the Callinan review by the end of August with no expected delays at this stage. After it goes to Cabinet we will release the review to the public in full. Mr Callinan is conducting a full and lengthy inquiry and has already made submissions available publicly online for anyone who is interested in hearing another point of view. I do not know what the findings of the Callinan review will be. As the Minister responsible, I eagerly await that review; however, every bit of evidence that I have seen in commentary about the review and from my previous experience as a licensing sergeant in the police force has led me to believe that different components under review will be considered as to their effectiveness and the like. It has certainly been my experience that the 3.00 a.m. last drinks measure in this regime that has been replicated in liquor accords across the State has been the most effective measure to address alcohol-related violence.

Alcohol-related violence is a significant and important issue that deserves full public debate. With the benefit of the Callinan review, that is exactly what it is getting. Over the past five years a range of measures have been introduced to address alcohol-fuelled violence. It is no small task that Mr Callinan is undertaking. Whenever government introduces measures we must ensure that we get them right for the community, industry and everyone affected. We also need to ensure that everyone who is affected has buy-in and the opportunity to make a contribution to the debate. That is why at the time of the Callinan review we held a series of safe and vibrant Sydney nightlife roundtables. They have been completed and today I have released the findings of those roundtables. Those findings have also been made available to Mr Callinan to include in his report. Measures that are not the subject of Mr Callinan's review of our lockout laws at the roundtables which need to improve include better public transport late at night. [*Extension of time*]

They also include clearer defined rights to live music venues in our planning system and a greater role for arts and cultural endeavours to contribute to our night-time economy. In my capacity as the Minister for the Arts I am keen to see what measures can be adopted in this area and all these issues will be considered by the respective portfolio Ministers from the roundtables. I note that my arts department is already looking at how it can better partner with the City of Sydney and cultural institutions to ensure that people enjoy excellent cultural offerings and opportunities in a safe and secure Sydney late at night. I look forward to the review being completed and I thank the member for his question.

Committees

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES

Membership

The SPEAKER: In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2) I advise the House that on 3 August 2016 Kevin Francis Conolly was elected Deputy Chair of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services.

Business of the House

VALEDICTORY SPEECH

Order of Business

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: I move:

That the Business of the House be interrupted at 4.30 p.m. to permit the presentation of a valedictory speech by the member for Wollongong.

Motion agreed to.

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED**

The CLERK: I announce that the following petitions signed by fewer than 500 persons have been lodged for presentation:

Powerhouse Museum Ultimo

Petition requesting the retention of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo and the expansion of museum services to other parts of New South Wales, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Surry Hills Light Rail Station

Petition calling on the Government to build a second light rail station in Surry Hills at the Wimbo Park-Olivia Gardens site, using appropriate landscaping to minimise visual and noise impacts and provide a quality park for the local community, received from **Ms Jenny Leong**.

Route 389 Bus Services

Petition requesting more reliable 389 bus services, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

Social Housing

Petition requesting that the Sirius building be retained and its social housing function be continued, 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**.

Pet Shops

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

*Committees***COMMITTEE ON THE OMBUDSMAN, THE POLICE INTEGRITY COMMISSION AND THE CRIME COMMISSION****Report: 2016 Review of the annual reports of oversighted bodies**

The SPEAKER: The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (15:12): Today I speak to the report of the Committee on the Ombudsman, Police Integrity Commission and Crime Commission tabled on 23 June 2016. The committee's statutory oversight responsibilities require it to monitor and review the work conducted by the bodies it oversees. We do this by reviewing annual reports and other publications and holding public hearings with oversighted bodies. This report contains the annual report reviews for the past two reporting periods for all the bodies that the committee oversees—namely, the Police Integrity Commission [PIC], the Inspector of the Police Integrity Commission, the NSW Crime Commission, the Inspector of the Crime Commission, the Information and Privacy Commission, the Inspector of Custodial Services, the NSW Ombudsman, and the Child Death Review Team. Together these agencies play a critical role in maintaining the integrity of the New South Wales public sector.

This year we have continued to improve the way that we report to Parliament on our statutory functions. Key themes and common issues that came up during our hearings with oversighted bodies have been identified and dealt with in each chapter. The themes considered included reforms to the oversight of police and the Crime Commission; complaint trends and systems, operational changes at the Crime Commission, measuring the performance of the Crime Commission, governance issues and staffing and resources. Following the review of police oversight by Mr Andrew Tink last year, the Government accepted Mr Tink's recommendations for a single civilian oversight body for the NSW Police Force and Crime Commission. This new body will be known as the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission [LECC].

The LECC will take over the PIC's role of detecting and investigating serious police and Crime Commission misconduct. It will also take over the Ombudsman's functions under the Police Act, which include receiving complaints and overseeing the NSW Police Force's handling of complaints about police. This reform will have a significant impact on the work done by this committee as it will lead to the Police Integrity Commission, the Inspector of the Police Integrity Commission, the police division of the Ombudsman and the Inspector of the Crime Commission being abolished. The committee questioned the agencies involved about these

upcoming changes and learned that there had been preliminary discussions with a LECC implementation group. These discussions had focused on staffing and information technology systems. There were also outstanding issues that needed to be settled such as transitional arrangements for the transfer of work and staff. It is important that the enabling legislation covers these issues and the committee will continue to monitor developments in this area.

We were pleased to hear that all of the agencies had been working well with the implementation group to ensure that the handover of operations to the LECC is as smooth as possible when it occurs. I place on record our appreciation for the work done by current and former staff in the PIC and the police division of the Ombudsman. Similarly, I acknowledge the service of current and former commissioners of the PIC and inspectors of the PIC and Crime Commission. These officers have helped to combat corruption and serious police misconduct, and have improved complaint-handling practices within the NSW Police Force. The report also highlights ongoing changes at the Crime Commission due to the 2012 changes to the governing legislation. After completing certain administrative arrangements the Crime Commission is now focusing on operational issues. The Crime Commission intends to concentrate less on drug offences and more on reducing the incidence of organised and other serious crime in accordance with the changes introduced in the Crime Commission Act 2012.

Criminal groups have diversified and it is critical that the Crime Commission adapts accordingly to continue to disrupt their activities. One way that the Crime Commission has responded to the changing environment is by developing an Organised Crime Disruption Strategy. Through this strategy the Crime Commission will focus its attention on more senior figures in the criminal fraternity in order to cause maximum disruption to their activities. This new focus should also give the Crime Commission more opportunities to exercise its special powers to greater effect. The commissioner also mentioned the work done in partnership with the Australian Crime Commission to combat domestic terrorism.

The NSW Crime Commission is a member of the Joint Counter Terrorism Team, which is an interagency collaboration. The commissioner has proposed more effective ways in which the Crime Commission can use its powers to help investigate domestic terrorism. In addition to exploring the themes I have discussed, the report also drew attention to specific agency projects, including the NSW Ombudsman's work on Operation Prospect, the Child Death Review Team's progress towards preventing childhood injury and disease, and the Information and Privacy Commission's report on the operation of the Government Information (Public Access) Act. [*Extension of time*]

I will briefly outline the work undertaken by the Child Death Review Team. This team's role includes identifying trends and patterns in child deaths and they are focusing on the links between serious injury and child deaths. It was pointed out that for every child death there may be a significant number of serious injuries. The team commissioned a report on childhood injury and disease prevention infrastructure in New South Wales. This report found that whilst there were many highly effective stakeholders in this area there was a lack of coordination in existing prevention initiatives. As such the team will endeavour to identify gaps in prevention efforts and response strategies for the protection of children in New South Wales. Projects such as this demonstrate the important work undertaken by the agencies the committee oversees. In closing I thank the oversighted agencies for their participation in the annual report review. I also thank the committee members and their staff.

Report noted.

Personal Explanation

MINISTER FOR HEALTH

Ms JILLIAN SKINNER (North Shore—Minister for Health) (15:19): By leave: I want to correct a statement I made earlier today in question time in relation to cancer patients treated at Macquarie hospital. In fact, Macquarie is a private hospital that is conducting its own investigation into the treatment Dr John Grygiel afforded those patients. I understand it will also form part of the investigation by the Health Care Complaints Commission.

Committees

COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

Report: Review of the Health Care Complaints Commission Annual Reports 2013/14 and 2014/15

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that the House take note of the reports.

Ms MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (15:29): As Chair: In my capacity as Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission I refer to its review of the commission's annual reports for 2013-14 and 2014-15. I note also the presence in the Chamber of one of my committee colleagues, the member

for Port Stephens. The committee has an interesting make-up with the shadow Minister for Health in the Legislative Council, the Hon. Walt Secord, and the member for Terrigal. It has been my pleasure to chair the committee over the past 12 months and we have had quite a lot of work to do catching up on two financial years.

Under section 65 of the Health Care Complaints Act the committee is required to examine all reports of the commission and this is the principal means by which the committee exercises its oversight responsibilities. This is the committee's first review of the Fifty-sixth Parliament. Due to the expiration of the Fifty-fifth Parliament in 2015, and the process of reconstituting the new committee for this Parliament, the committee's consideration of the reports was delayed. The committee's report examined trends and issues over the two-year period of the reports rather than examining the two reports separately.

During the reporting period the commission saw an increase in the number of complaints received and it is expected that this trend will continue. The committee notes the commission's commitment to a continuing high level of achievement in its core business despite the annual increase in the number of complaints. With the commission's increasing workload the committee will continue to monitor the time it takes the commission to resolve complaints. It was identified during this period that New South Wales has Australia's leading healthcare complaints process, of which we should be very proud. Victoria is constituted within the Commonwealth system, and Queensland is actually starting to replicate the New South Wales system. We should be proud of the commission's work and that we are at the forefront of best practice in Australia with our Health Care Complaints Commission.

Whilst there has been an increase in the number of complaints, that is also sign that the Health Care Complaints Commission message is getting out there and consumers who have a complaint, no matter on what side of the health process, are coming forward. It is a positive thing and, in some respects, an increase in medical literacy. I note that the Minister has strongly urged that if people have complaints it is imperative that they refer them to the Health Care Complaints Commission so it can investigate them. The committee is pleased to see how the commission has continued to develop and extend its outreach activities, particularly its increased focus on identifying vulnerable and isolated groups within the community.

Delivering targeted information ensures that the needs of the most vulnerable members of our community are addressed. The commission's website is now established as the primary source of information for all those interested in the work of the commission. While there is an increased emphasis on electronic communication, the committee notes that the commission continues its efforts to ensure the widespread distribution of its printed material, ensuring that those without access to digital resources are not disadvantaged. I also note that another of the committee's members, Ms Jan Barham from the Legislative Council, has urged very strongly during our meetings that as much information as possible should get out to consumers.

As members of Parliament it is really important to recommend very strongly to our constituents the pathway to the Health Care Complaints Commission. The importance of communication is a point reiterated several times during the committee's review of the annual reports. Not only is communication important in publicising the role and functions of the commission but it is also a vital tool in the effective management and resolution of complaints about treatment—such complaints are very often the result of poor communication by practitioners in the first instance.

The public hearing on 11 March 2016 was Commissioner Sue Dawson's first formal appearance before the committee since taking up her appointment in December 2015, having been appointed by the Minister for Health, the Hon. Jillian Skinner. It is a very strong appointment and Ms Dawson was very quick to get across the brief and has the support of the committee. There are a number of important areas that the commissioner nominated as requiring future work. The committee welcomes the commission's intention to examine complaint trends in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas; the strengthening of feedback mechanisms for complaints referred to professional councils for resolution; the identification of support services which may assist vulnerable complainants; and the gaining of efficiencies through the more timely use of early resolution techniques. I would like to see more of those early resolutions particularly in health services in our local health districts to bring a quick resolution and closure to some of the problems that arise because of lack of communication.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the achievements of Commissioner Dawson's predecessor Kieran Pehm, and the hard work of Acting Commissioner Karen Mobbs. I also thank the hardworking staff at the commission, whom we met during an important briefing session, for their professionalism and dedication. Working in a heated environment such as health care and with an increasing workload can take a toll on staff. The committee welcomes the commission's focus on staff welfare and training, in particular the commission's focus on resilience training for staff.

I thank committee members for their interest in and contributions to this review. I also thank the committee staff for their support and assistance, especially during my first term. I acknowledge David Hale from

the committee staff. Finally, it should be noted that the increasing number of complaints is not necessarily indicative of failure within the health system. The people of New South Wales can be assured that their healthcare complaints system is working and working well. People know that they have the right, and are increasingly exercising their right, to question medical practitioners: that is healthy. They are using the health care complaints system to good avail as the legislature intended.

Report noted.

COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT, INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Report: Management of Sharks in New South Wales Waters

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

Ms MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (15:27): As Chair: In my capacity as Chair of the Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development I refer to the committee report on the management of sharks in New South Wales waters which was tabled in the House on 23 June 2016. This is the committee's first report since it was established in May 2015, and I have to say I was a Johnny-come-lately as the work was done under the previous chair, Kevin Anderson, and I had the task of finishing it. The inquiry investigated a number of fatal shark attacks along the New South Wales coastline, examined the management of sharks and the economic impact of shark attacks on local communities.

Sharks and fear of encountering them elicit strong emotional reactions. The committee found that while there is a public perception that shark populations have increased, there is no scientific evidence to support such a claim. While shark-related incidents are rare, their effect on communities can be traumatic, not just for survivors of an attack and families who may have lost a loved one but also for the wider community—I note, in particular many of our surf lifesaving volunteers who are regular beachgoers and intervene to help deal with trauma. The committee's report combines historic and scientific information about sharks in New South Wales waters, with details of the Government's shark management strategy. The strategy is a world-first integrated approach to the management of sharks and the protection of beachgoers. As the strategy's lead agency the Department of Primary Industries also has responsibility for tagging and monitoring shark populations.

The shark tagging and monitoring program provides important information about shark behaviour and populations, but more research is required to further our understanding of sharks. I note the work of the Hon. Niall Blair in the other place. His leadership, together with that of the Premier, put new strategies in place in a timely fashion. The Minister is committed to tagging so we can understand the populations, numbers and behaviour. He has done a tremendous job. The report's 13 recommendations build on the actions of the Government's Shark Management Strategy. A particular focus of the recommendations relates to increasing people's awareness of beach safety, including awareness of sharks. This will ensure that shark safety information is part of general beach and water safety information for beachgoers.

Through the development of the Department of Primary Industries' SharkSmart webpage and app, information is available to water users about the ways they can minimise the risk of encountering a shark. The committee was pleased to hear that in addition to the SharkSmart webpage there is widespread dissemination of water and shark safety information by numerous water safety organisations. Beach safety information programs including: Surf Life Saving NSW and the distribution of information through its Coastal Accommodation Network; the BeachSafe website and app produced by Surf Life Saving Australia; CoastalWatch website and app produced by surfing organisations; and MyBeachInfo produced by local councils on the North and mid North Coast of New South Wales, provide a wealth of information.

The committee found the information on the Department of Primary Industries' SharkSmart webpage to be particularly impressive but recommends it follow the example of Western Australia's SharkSmart website and develop a separate shark safety website. This will make the information more effective and the website can be easily linked to the other beach and water safety organisations. The committee considered that the effectiveness of all the websites would be maximised if they were linked to each other. The report's emphasis on making shark safety information available from all water safety organisations is to ensure that water and shark safety messages are widely available so that beachgoers can make informed decisions when undertaking water-based activities.

Other recommendations by the committee support the continuation of research and monitoring of shark behaviour and the trialling of new and emerging shark detection and deterrent technologies. During the inquiry, the committee also heard evidence that shark-related incidents can impact on local economies. We need further information and research to better manage this issue. As a surf lifesaving volunteer I am keenly aware of the contribution Surf Life Saving NSW, and indeed all surf lifesaving organisations, make to protect beachgoers at all patrolled locations. The Government's Observation Tower Grant program is well received by surf lifesaving

clubs and local councils. The committee's recommendation that this program be expanded aims to ensure that surf lifesavers are provided with additional resources to protect beachgoers.

The committee received submissions from a range of interested parties including residents from the North Coast describing how the spate of shark incidents in that region impacted on their community. I note that the member for Ballina is present in the Chamber. She was a member of the committee. There has been pain and fear on the far North Coast. The member's work was welcomed by all committee members. Submissions were also received from environmentalists and scientists. The committee was particularly pleased to hear from internationally renowned expert Dr Barry Bruce from the CSIRO, who provided an insight into the ongoing research and monitoring of white shark populations and behaviour.

I thank all the members of the public and stakeholder organisations who made submissions. The committee is especially grateful to all those who participated in a public forum held in Ballina in November 2015 and to the witnesses who appeared before the committee at the formal public hearings. I would also like to thank the members of the committee for their work and contributions on this inquiry, and my parliamentary colleague, the member for Tamworth, Mr Kevin Anderson. Mr Anderson was chair of the committee until recently, and initiated this inquiry. We wish him well in his new role. Finally, I acknowledge the work of committee staff and thank them for their assistance in preparing this report.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (15:33): I will contribute to the take note debate as a member of the committee. I commend the work of the Investment, Industry and Regional Development Committee, both chairs and the committee staff for their significant work on the shark inquiry and the subsequent report. I congratulate the member for Tamworth as an impeccable chair and I am sure the member for Oxley will fill his shoes nicely. Between 2014 and 2016 there were two shark-related deaths and two serious injuries in the Ballina electorate. I acknowledge the measured and proactive response of leaders in my community and in this Parliament to those deaths and terrible shark encounters.

I am proud that my community called for an approach to shark management that seeks to protect both ocean users and our marine biodiversity rather than to cull sharks. On behalf of my community I thank the Minister for Primary Industries and the Premier for listening to us and for providing the resources to trial non-lethal deterrents. My sincere appreciation goes out to every surf lifesaving volunteer, jet boat rescue crew member and marine rescue worker who continues to serve our community no matter what the conditions. I recognise the family and friends of Paul Wilcox and Tadashi Nakahara and all those who have been touched by their shark-related deaths.

I also recognise the thousands of people who gathered around those in recovery from shark encounters—the community support for Matt Lee and Sam Morgan was remarkable. I commend the efforts of the NSW Police Force, in particular the chair of the Ballina Shark Mitigation Advisory Group, Detective Inspector Cameron Lindsay. I congratulate Ballina Mayor David Wright for his relentless work in speaking out on action for shark encounters in our area on behalf of the community. As the chair noted, there has been an impact on tourism and on the psyche of swimmers and surfers on the far North Coast. Many tourist ventures gave feedback to the inquiry to that effect.

Ballina Lighthouse and Lismore Surf Life Saving Club estimated that membership had fallen by 15 per cent, in part because of the fear members had of responding to a traumatic shark bite. I therefore welcome recommendation 2 of the committee, that Destination NSW conduct further research to determine the impact of shark attacks on tourism and related industries such as surf lifesaving. The New South Wales Government's own study into nonlethal shark mitigation strategies, the Cardno review, recommended shark spotting as a best practice strategy. I am pleased that as a committee we have made recommendation number 5, that the Department of Primary Industries trial a shark spotters program where local conditions are appropriate.

After recent consultation with NoSharkCull, Sea Shepherd and the Cape Town Shark Spotters, the Byron Shire mayor and I are funding a feasibility study for shark spotting at Wategos later this year. This will be the first feasibility study for shark spotting anywhere in Australia. I am also supporting a group called Shark Watch, which is conducting shark spotting trials in the area between Ballina and Lennox Head. I welcome the committee's recommendations to promote and disseminate SharkSmart information to the public. I also welcome the recommendation to continue monitoring the outcomes of research and development of shark surveillance and deterrent technologies.

Smart drum lines are a technology the Greens and environmentalists will continue to monitor closely. They are designed to capture sharks in a non-lethal way but must be used with care and with a response team available to tag the shark within a very short space of time. As the New South Wales Greens spokesperson for the marine environment I will hold the Premier and Minister to their word, that the trial of smart drum lines in the State will be transparent and guided by science and that if successful may lead to the removal of shark meshing

at beaches in New South Wales. I look forward to continuing to work with the Ballina Shark Mitigation Working Group and the Government to ensure the roll-out of trials and other programs on the North Coast deliver the best outcomes for the protection of our marine life and the safety of the public in my electorate and more broadly.

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (15:38): I was a member of the committee and I place on the record my appreciation of the former chair, Mr Kevin Anderson, and congratulate the new chair, Melinda Pavey. The member for Oxley will no doubt contribute to the important work being done by that committee. I note the member for Ballina and her particular interest in this subject. As a member of the committee who does not have a shark in his electorate I was surprised by this inquiry.

Mr David Elliott: There are a few sharks in this place.

Mr JAI ROWELL: There are a few sharks in this place. I learnt a lot and I could empathise with the impact on tourism of various circumstances. In Picton we had a storm that devastated the main street, homes and 111 businesses. I can only imagine what a shark attack would do in relation to the economy along the coast. I commend all the recommendations in this report and encourage all members who might not have a shark in their electorate, and there are a fair few of us, to read the report.

Report noted.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS

Report: Inquiry into the Final Report of the Expert Panel-Political Donations and the Government's Response

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (15:39): As Chair: I thank the House for the opportunity to comment on the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters report entitled "Inquiry into the Final Report of the Expert Panel—Political Donations and the Government's Response". The Premier asked the committee to examine the recommendations made by the expert panel, chaired by Dr Kerry Schott, in its Political Donations Final Report from December 2014. The committee also reviewed the response from the Government to the recommendations of the panel. The work of the panel in reviewing the election funding, expenditure and disclosure system in New South Wales is excellent. The committee agrees with the majority of the recommendations of the panel and the response from the Government.

I will highlight three of the panel's recommendations that the committee supports and four that it either does not support or to which it suggests some changes be made. The committee strongly supports the first recommendation of the panel, which is that the Government immediately review the Election Funding, Expenditure and Disclosures Act 1981. The committee heard from a broad range of inquiry participants that this is an urgent priority because existing legislation is complicated and difficult to understand. In 2013 the committee recommended a review of this legislation, along with the Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act 1912. While the committee acknowledges that the Government has commenced work on this project, stakeholders have emphasised that the implementation of many of the recommendations of the panel is contingent on this comprehensive review being completed in a timely manner. The committee urges the Government to plan for the new legislation to commence at least 12 months before the March 2019 State election.

The Committee supports the panel's recommendation No. 7, which is important. The panel suggested introducing caps on political donations for local government. The committee believes this will enhance consistency between the rules applying to State and local government. Local government is instrumental in making decisions about various issues, particularly planning and development matters. The committee is of the view that introducing caps on political donations for local government will minimise the potential for corruption in critical decisions. Recent Government announcements relating to local government shows those recommendations will go a long way to addressing those concerns.

The committee also agrees with recommendation No. 31, that the cap on electoral expenditure by third party campaigners be decreased. Third party campaigners play an important role in our democracy and can provide members of the public with a valuable mechanism to have their voices heard and to ensure the protection of their interests. While the committee supports third party campaigners having the right to spend a reasonable amount of money to present their arguments properly, the committee agrees with the panel that this should not be to the same extent as candidates and political parties. The current cap is more than \$1 million. The panel has recommended that the cap on expenditure by third party campaigners should be \$500,000 and the committee supports the cap being reduced. However, before reducing the cap, the Government should determine whether a third party campaigner could reasonably present its argument with an expenditure budget of \$500 million.

While the committee agrees with some of the recommendations of the panel relating to public funding for political parties and elections, the committee does not support the model proposed by the panel in

recommendation No. 14 for future elections. The 2015 State election was conducted on a dollar-per-vote funding model, whereas the panel would like to revert to the previous funding model linked to electoral expenditure. The panel thought minor parties would be disadvantaged by the dollar-per-vote model. However, the smaller parties that gave evidence to the committee said that they preferred this system. Therefore, the committee recommends retaining the dollar-per-vote model.

The committee does not support the panel's recommendation No. 18 to reinstate the model for calculating entitlements from the administration fund prior to the 2014 amendments to the legislation. Instead, the committee strongly recommends that the current administration fund entitlements be retained. The committee heard from a diverse range of stakeholders that the earlier model of administrative funding would result in a decline in funding, which would make it difficult for political parties to adequately pay for critical expenses, including those relating to compliance and regulatory requirements, staff accommodation and other expenses. The committee does not agree with the panel's recommendation No. 42 to establish an independent body to approve changes to the levels of public funding for any purpose, including election campaigns and administration. The committee received evidence that any such independent body would be ineffective from a legal point of view as the Parliament cannot abdicate its legislative power to any other individual or entity. The committee suggests that the Government should not pursue that recommendation.

The panel's recommendation No. 37 calls for the removal of the current requirement for double auditing of disclosures of political donations and electoral expenditure, and claims for payment of public funding. The panel also suggests that the New South Wales Auditor-General be responsible for auditing disclosures and claims for all political parties that receive public funding for administration expenditure. The committee agrees that double auditing should be abolished as it is burdensome and counterproductive. However, the view of the Committee is that the New South Wales Electoral Commission rather than the New South Wales Auditor-General should be responsible for auditing disclosures and claims for political parties that receive public funding through administration expenditure, given that the responsibility of the New South Wales Auditor-General in this area may lead to more complexity and confusion. The committee believes that the New South Wales Electoral Commission is better placed to carry out this role, particularly given that the commission has recently reviewed its auditing function and will take a risk-based approach to future audits.

On behalf of the Committee I thank all those individuals and organisations who made submissions or gave evidence at the committee's public hearing. Their assistance has been invaluable to the committee in grappling with the relevant issues and formulating recommendations. I thank the committee staff—Jason Ardit, Jessica Falvey, Derya Sekmen and Vedrana Trisic—for their hard work and enthusiasm. I also thank my colleagues, Deputy Chair the Hon. Robert Borsak; Mr Adam Crouch, the member for Terrigal; the Hon. Ben Franklin; the Hon. Courtney Houssos; Ms Melinda Pavey, the member for Oxley; the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps; the Hon. Peter Primrose; Mr Mark Taylor, the member for Seven Hills; and Ms Anna Watson, the member for Shellharbour. The comments and recommendations in the committee's report, along with most of the panel's recommendations, will strengthen the election funding, expenditure and disclosure framework, and increase transparency and accountability in this area. I commend the report to the House.

Report noted.

Matter of Public Importance

LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEEK

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (15:47): I note the importance of Local Government Week, which is being celebrated across New South Wales this week with communities recognising the importance of our third level of elected government. It is this level of government that is most closely connected to the communities that we represent in this place. I recognise the worthy mayors and councillors across the State who have only the interests of their communities in mind when they seek election. Particularly, I recognise the many mayors and councillors who no longer formally hold their roles and who have been unceremoniously sacked by this State Government. I note that many hours go into being a councillor, not only time in council meetings and briefings, but also time on weekends and evenings that is spent attending community events and functions, taking phone calls and dealing with emails at all hours.

It is through this valuable work that these councillors gain a unique insight into their community, and it is no surprise that the connection to their communities and the concern they have for their communities leads a number of councillors into this place. Many Labor members in this place have served and are currently serving their community as councillors, including the member for Summer Hill, the member for Charlestown, the member for Macquarie Fields, the member for Heffron, the member for Granville, the member for Cabramatta, the member for Campbelltown, and the member for Bankstown who have served as mayors in their communities. Those members know how important local government is to the people of New South Wales. It is this level of

government that people interact with so frequently through roads and rubbish services, parks and public space, libraries and civic leadership.

Most councillors help to set the agenda for their region and are champions for their communities. I say "most councillors" because we know that local government is not immune to those who seek to serve their own agenda rather than put the interests of their communities first. Too often we have seen scandals in local government, from the walking automatic teller machine mayor in Newcastle who caused the resignation of several Government members, to scandalous Auburn councillor Salim Mehajer. It is clear that local government is in need of reform to ensure its long-term success and to ensure that it continues to serve our communities, and that those communities can have confidence in their local government.

The Opposition has outlined a number of measures that it would be happy to progress with this Government, including restricting property developers serving on councils, mandating popularly elected mayors and capping spending on campaigns during council elections. Instead, the Government has set its own course for local government reform, some of which was addressed in the speeches on the second reading debate on the Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Bill 2016 this week. It was very clear from that debate that the Government's definition of good governance is very different from that of the Opposition.

I was appalled to hear the Minister's comments today about the supposed success of the amalgamation process to date. Gloucester residents are meant to be happy that there are now two engineers in council—an improvement on having only one. The elected councillors of that council were unceremoniously sacked. I recently joined many members of the Gloucester community at a rally against the sacking of councillors and the forced amalgamation of council. Their council became part of the MidCoast Council. The rally heard from former mayor Councillor John Rosenbaum, who expressed his utter disappointment at having been sacked. He was not upset at the loss of his job; he was upset because his community, which he loves, lost its voice.

Under this Government democracy has gone out the window, with the appointment of a former State member for The Nationals as the administrator of the newly formed MidCoast Council. That is not a success for that community. My community sits under the shadow of a looming amalgamation. We do not know whether we are merging with Newcastle or Dungog. The enormous number of volunteer organisations, the 355 (c) committees, fear that they will be sacked by the administrator whenever that person is appointed, as has happened elsewhere across the State. Everyone is resigned to the inevitable. We believe the endgame is the appointment of an administrator to a new Hunter Coast council covering Port Stephens and Newcastle.

Why is that the endgame? Because it is gerrymandering. This Government is trying to get a hold on Newcastle by diluting Labor's influence on Newcastle through development friendly Port Stephens. The true endgame for this Government is the control of Newcastle by the appointment of an administrator who will then be able to tick all the Government's boxes on its plans for Newcastle. Those plans go against the interests and wishes of many in the community. In Local Government Week I urge the Government to start listening to the community, to put an end to the chaos and to cease all future proposed forced mergers.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (15:51): Local Government Week is a time to celebrate local government and the important role it plays in strengthening communities. That is exactly what this Government has done recently: It has made local government stronger, to deliver better services and more infrastructure to communities across New South Wales. Who is standing in the way of that? It is Captain of the Outrage Police, the member for Port Stephens. Is she ever happy about anything? No. Today is yet another example of that. Where was the member for Port Stephens when the previous Labor Government merged 44 councils into 22? Was she at the picket line expressing outrage? She was nowhere to be seen. This is political opportunism at its worst. Labor wrote the playbook on council amalgamations. To the member for Port Stephens I say, "Hypocrisy, thy name is Labor." We are about strengthening local government.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The member for Heffron should take a seat. Standing Order 53 requires members to be seated.

Mr MATT KEAN: One thing that I agree with the member for Port Stephens on is her claim that local government needs reform. Does it ever! The other day we saw a story on Channel 9 about Ku-ring-gai Council, where a small cabal of senior public servants are using ratepayers' money to defend their positions, perks and privileges. The mayor has spent \$900 on floral arrangements for her office. She has bought herself a new Audi. She has travelled to Byron Bay and all over Australia. Perhaps the residents of the electorate of Port Stephens like to see that kind of thing happening.

The majority of New South Wales residents think that it is absolutely outrageous. Local government reform is about making local government work for the community that it serves, unlike the example of Ku-ring-gai that I cited, where the council thinks it exists to serve itself. We want local government to focus on the community,

to make community stronger. That is exactly what Minister Toole supports. I note the claims made by the member for Port Stephens about Gloucester Shire Council. She claimed that the former mayor of Gloucester had been cut out of the process. My understanding is that the former mayor of Gloucester is now on the local representative committee [LRC].

Ms Kate Washington: You should go to a community rally.

Mr MATT KEAN: I will go to a community rally. I will go to any rally that the member for Port Stephens wants me to. I am very happy to be out there supporting local government reform because I believe in making local government stronger. Unlike the member for Port Stephens, I believe in delivering better services and more infrastructure at lower cost to residents across the State. If the member for Port Stephens wants to deprive her community of that then she should say that to them honestly at the ballot box. The result will be a resounding rejection of her view. We believe in local government reform.

There are so many examples of why local government reform is good. The Northern Beaches Council has saved \$900,000 in workers compensation insurance payments. Georges River Council has saved \$250,000 by tendering for a roads re-sheeting program as a single entity. The City of Canterbury Bankstown Council has consolidated its customer service staffing, office and approach, enabling residents from across the area to conduct business at any of the outlets of former councils. How is making local government more accessible and user friendly a bad thing? That is exactly what reform is about.

The MidCoast Council now has a specialist coastal engineering staff to assist with coastal issues in the former Greater Taree City Council area. Previously no specialist staff were employed to address such issues. Marrickville Council, which is now part of the Inner West Council, is known for running campaigns to block investment in Israel, which is of no relevance to any resident in any part of New South Wales. Instead of focusing on rubbish, roads, footpaths and better parks, it is trying to ban investment in Israel. What a disgrace. As a result of local government reform that council has saved \$1.5 million per annum through redeploying back office staff and \$450,000 on councillor remuneration, expenses and meeting costs. That is another example of the reason for local government reform.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: What does "redeploy" mean?

Mr MATT KEAN: It means putting people on the front line where the community want them and where they should be. The member for Port Stephens is all about protecting her mates in the union, lining public servants' pockets with gold and using foul language from time to time. We are about making local government work for communities to deliver better services and more infrastructure at a lower cost for every resident of the State. The member for Port Stephens stands against that; we will fight for it.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (15:57): In Local Government Week I am delighted to contribute to this matter of public importance to recognise the outstanding work that the third tier of government does for the people of New South Wales. The theme of Local Government Week this year is "Our Council, Our Community". It reflects the closeness of the third tier of government to the community. It is a pity that, in this week that celebrates the contribution of local government to the people of New South Wales, discussion in this Chamber descends to political point-scoring.

The matter of public importance is designed to ensure that we recognise the very good work that councils do in the community. Traditionally, councils managed rates, rubbish removal, roadworks, city planning and things of that nature, but they have always done far more than those basic tasks. Councils are responsible for a variety of social outreach programs. They work with seniors and the disabled. They hold multicultural events to promote inclusion. They involve themselves in addressing domestic violence. They celebrate local achievements. They promote and subsidise local sporting events and the arts. Councils are also more than the people we elect to represent us. The hardworking and community-minded staff work with local schools, senior citizens, the disabled and a variety of other community groups.

Councils are the heart of the suburbs where we make our home. Local Government Week celebrates their contribution. One of the things that makes local government the third tier of government and derives so much interest from the community is that the town hall generally is just around the corner and the councillors—who are not much more than volunteers—are in the next street from the constituents. Bearing in mind the services local governments provide to New South Wales, I have always regarded them more as a village government than a bureaucracy, but they are essential to the strength of our community. It is fitting that Local Government Week and this House recognise their dedicated and most important service to our State.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:00): In reply: I thank the member for Heffron, during Local Government Week, for highlighting the very important work undertaken by our local councils. I also thank the member for Hornsby for at least agreeing that reform is needed in local government—we have one thing in

common. Local Government Week is worthy of recognition because of the very hard work performed by many people for their communities over a long time. Throughout the forced council amalgamation process, the extent to which communities, particularly regional communities, are connected with their local councils has become very clear to me.

I congratulate and thank the many people across New South Wales, including those in my electorate, who have come together to oppose the forced amalgamations being imposed by this Government. Communities want and deserve to be represented by people they know and elect. They want their council to understand their particular needs. They even want them to know where they live. This is why councils that are close to their communities are very important to communities. Communities also deserve councils in which they have confidence. We need the appropriate legislative framework to ensure that there is no longer corruption in local government. We do not want the flimsy, flawed reform proposed by this Government, which will not give our communities the confidence they sorely need. In Local Government Week, I again urge the Government to rethink its reform of local government in order to ensure that our communities are represented by those they deserve—people who will keep their communities at their heart.

Community Recognition Statements

KINGSFORD COMMUNITY

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:02): I recognise the outstanding passion and hard work of members of the Kingsford community who in recent months have joined together to protect their local streets and fight against a development which has threatened their neighbourhood. Community activists are often born in response to a challenge to their community; many have never been activists before. So it was that members of my community, like Francene Symonds, Kim Reddin, Natalia Laban, Lisa Walpole and Stuart Miles, came together to oppose the construction of a monstrosity on their beautiful residential street. Their hard work, thoughtful opposition and tireless belief in their goal has resulted in a huge win. At times they were despondent and thought of giving up but their passion for their community and its preservation kept the fight alive. I extend my gratitude and congratulations to these members of our community who never gave up and won against all odds. I am proud to have stood with you.

STEP UP FOR DOWN SYNDROME

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:03): On 25 October last year Step Up for Down Syndrome, a major contributor to the Down Syndrome Association of NSW, organised its second annual walk in Picton Botanical Gardens. The Step Up for Down Syndrome walks are organised to promote awareness of Down syndrome, to educate the community on the challenges of looking after people with Down syndrome, and to create a caring environment for them to live in. Anne Herne and her husband should be praised for the considerable effort that they put into the 2015 walk, organising the event and raising an amazing \$1,789.77. Ms Herne achieved all of this while looking after her 19-year-old daughter who has Down syndrome, whom I have met on many occasions—she is a lovely girl. Anne has done an incredible job of educating the community on the condition. I look forward to a successful Step Up for Down Syndrome in 2016.

PATCH PROGRAM

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:04): On Tuesday 26 July 2016 I was delighted to attend the graduation ceremony for the parent graduates of the Parents as Teachers and Classroom Helpers [PATCH] program from Lansvale, Cabramatta and Canley Vale public schools. The PATCH program aims to develop skills in parents to enable them to assist in classrooms and with their own child's learning. The program involves weekly professional learning for the parents and time working in the classroom. Congratulations to all the parents on their commitment towards assisting the education of their children at school and at home. Special thanks to the schools' principals, Mr Ben Mathews, Mr Mark Diamond, Mr Scott Davidson and Mr Anthony Pitt, for their continued support of adult education and community harmony.

TURRAMURRA ROTARY AWARDS

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (16:05): Lifeline has done exceptional work, but none of it is without the efforts of the people who keep its lights on. Lifeline volunteers and employees are often the unsung heroes of our community and provide to our community valuable services in suicide prevention, crisis support and emotional assistance. Rotary's Pride of Workmanship award recognises outstanding employees for vocational excellence and strives to publicly recognise the outstanding qualities of approach, attitude, dedication and commitment in their line of duty. Those who are nominated set a high benchmark of expectation in their work ethic, initiative and sense of responsibility. The award is presented by the Rotary Club of Turramurra, which believes that the sense of responsibility to do a job once, do it well and build a better Australia is one of the greatest intangible assets in our community.

Setting that high benchmark is Angela Dodd of Westleigh. Angela is one of four Hornsby locals who were honoured with the Pride of Workmanship award in June this year. As the finance manager for Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury, Angela has demonstrated a high level of dedication and support to the organisation. The management and distribution of funding is a fundamental necessity in the management of Lifeline's services. None of that would be possible without Angela. Today I am honoured to recognise such an outstanding member of the community and thank her for her dedication.

SCHOOLS SPECTACULAR 2016

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (16:06): I congratulate our region's fantastic public school students who will be participating in this year's Schools Spectacular. In particular I congratulate this year's featured performers, the very best students in our State, who will be sure to put on a great show in November. It was a particular pleasure to see so many Western Sydney students selected as featured performers, showcasing their singing and instrumental talents for the State. In particular I congratulate Connie Bunting from Tregear in my electorate who has been selected as a featured performer for this year's Schools Spectacular. Connie has been performing contemporary and ballet dancing since the age of four and she should be congratulated on her selection. It is a great honour to be selected to represent one's school in any field. I wish Connie all the best in her future endeavours. Well done, Connie.

MANNING VALLEY BUSINESS CHAMBER AWARDS

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:07): I inform the House that the Manning Valley Business Chamber recently held its annual business awards. I was pleased to be able to attend the gala evening at which a number of the Myall Lakes businesses were duly awarded for their outstanding work within our communities. I take this opportunity to congratulate Forster businesswoman Debbie Hopper of Life Skills 4 Kids who was named Business Leader of the Year. I also pay tribute to Alan Small of Taree Camera House who was inducted into the Hall of Fame. I also pay tribute to David and Gay Embury of Taree company Bamboo by Logan Leigh. The company took out the evening's top award of Business of the Year on top of picking up awards for excellence in environmental sustainability and excellence in innovation.

PROSPECT ELECTORATE OLYMPIANS 2016

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:07): I congratulate the Olympic athletes who are either residents of the Prospect electorate or who went to school in Prospect. There are seven Olympians from Prospect this year: Ellie Carpenter for soccer is from Pemulwuy and attended Westfields Sports High School; Mitch Emery for water polo is from Greystanes and attended Greystanes High School; Alanna Kennedy for soccer attended Westfields Sports High School; Fabrice Lapiere for long jump also attended Westfields Sports High School; Warren Potent for shooting and 50-metre rifle attended Greystanes High School; Dani Samuels for athletics, discus, attended Westfields Sports High School; and Brandon Starc for high jump attended Hills Sports High School. Congratulations to these seven Olympians, all great members of the Western Sydney community.

LUCAS GOURLAS, LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL LITTLE HEROES AWARD

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (16:08): Today I congratulate Lucas Gourlas, an 11-year-old student from St Christopher's Catholic Primary School, on receiving the Liverpool City Council Little Heroes Award. The award ceremony was held at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre and recognised many people who have positively contributed to the Liverpool City Council area. This award was presented to Lucas by the Mayor of Liverpool, Councillor Ned Mannoun, and Deputy Mayor of Liverpool, Councillor Tony Hadchiti, to celebrate his act of selflessness for participating in the 2016 World's Greatest Shave in memory of a fellow classmate who, sadly, lost his battle with cancer earlier this year. Lucas was aiming to raise \$2,000 but ended up smashing his initial goal and raising a total of \$3,200 for the Leukaemia Foundation. That is a monumental effort by Lucas, one of which he should be proud. Once again, I congratulate Lucas on raising these substantial funds for a worthwhile cause and wish him all the best for his future.

ST ELIAS CHURCH, GUILDFORD

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:09): I recently joined the congregation of St Elias Melkite Church in Guildford to celebrate the Feast of St Elias. The mass was led by the Bishop of Melkite Eparchy, His Grace Bishop Rabat. It was a special celebration as it was the last mass to be held in their beloved old church and included the ordination of sub-deacon Mark Scotto. The congregation began worshipping at St Elias 25 years ago and it rapidly grew. The beautiful church with its traditional eastern icon paintings is now far too small for the congregation, which swells to 1,500 for Palm Sunday and Easter services.

His Beatitude Gregorios III Laham, Patriarch of Antioch and of All the East, of Alexandria and of Jerusalem of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church came from overseas and put in the cornerstone in 2002. His Grace

Bishop Darwiche, the former parish priest, commenced construction of the new church in 2007. The last part of the construction will now commence and be completed by the end of next year. I congratulate Mark Scotto on his ordination and extend my best wishes to the entire congregation for the construction of the new church.

1ST WINSTON HILLS SCOUT GROUP

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (16:10): Last week I spent a fantastic evening visiting the 1st Winston Hills Scout Group. Nestled in the heart of the Seven Hills electorate, the scout group is located near the great Third Settlement Reserve. There is no more patriotic organisation in my community than the Scouts, with their active participation in Australia Day ceremonies a highlight. I had the privilege of explaining my role as the local member of Parliament to these committed young members of my community. I have no doubt that they are our future leaders and many will have the chance to pursue a future in this place should they be so inclined.

The scouts came from across the local electorate, including from Toongabbie, Seven Hills, Pendle Hill and Wentworthville. These smart young minds asked some difficult questions, showing great enthusiasm for the political process. I say well done to James Brush for receiving a merit badge. It is a fine achievement for James and reflects both his hard work and bright future. With talented community participants like these scouts, I am very optimistic about the future of the Seven Hills electorate.

SAVE ASHFIELD PARK

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (16:11): This past weekend the Save Ashfield Park group held an action at Dobroyd Parade, Haberfield, to highlight the destructive impacts of WestConnex on Reg Coady Reserve. Reg Coady Reserve is a small but much-loved park on the banks of Iron Cove Creek and is being razed by WestConnex. The reserve will be used as a truck turning bay for the Wattle Street construction sites. There has already been the destruction of mature trees and the loss of green space, which is at a premium in the inner west. Trucks will travel down Wattle Street, do a U-turn in Reg Coady Reserve and then head back up Wattle Street to Parramatta Road. That is just ludicrous when trucks could instead easily exit directly onto Parramatta Road. Again the Government has failed to listen to local voices. Simple logic could have saved our park. I congratulate the Save Ashfield Park group on taking a stand and working so hard to hold this Government to account for its vandalism of the inner west's cherished green spaces.

BRITTANY O'BRIEN, OLYMPIAN 2016

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (16:12): She was resigned to watching her beloved diving disciplines at the Rio Olympic Games from her lounge room at home while surrounded by textbooks and studying for her Higher School Certificate. But that has now changed for a Pymble Ladies College [PLC] student who at the weekend got the phone call of a lifetime—a call to join the Australian Olympic diving team in Brazil. Unfortunately, it came about because of a shoulder injury to her friend Brittany Broben, who has had to withdraw from the team. Eighteen-year-old Brittany O'Brien will compete in the 10-metre platform diving competition in Rio from 17 August, giving her just over a fortnight to travel to Rio and become familiar with her surroundings. Brittany began her love of sport as a gymnast but switched to diving eight years ago—a decision she no doubt celebrates, as do her supportive family and her proud school, PLC. We wish Brittany every success and most of all we encourage her to enjoy the experience. It sure beats doing the trial HSC with the rest of her year.

LITTLE FREE LIBRARIES

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:13): I commend the newly established Blue Mountains sub-branch of the Children's Book Council of Australia [CBCA] NSW Inc. for its work in making children's literature accessible in the Blue Mountains. Last November I had the pleasure of attending the launch, which featured a Dragon Detective Quest. More recently they launched the Little Free Libraries. The aim of Little Free Libraries is to encourage children, and parents, to read by providing ready access to books in public places. Readers are encouraged to browse, borrow and return a book, or replace it with a similar book if they wish to keep it. Four locations have been established: the Gingerbread House in Katoomba, Rust and Timber in Lawson, Wayzgoose Cafe, and Gifts 'n Things in Leura. Little Free Libraries hopes to expand its network over time. I congratulate Sheryl Cootes, President of the CBCA Blue Mountains sub-branch, Tom and Wendy Whitton from Megalong Books and organiser extraordinaire Narelda Joy on this wonderful initiative.

CHARLESTOWN LOCAL ABORIGINAL STUDENT OF THE YEAR

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:14): I congratulate the Charlestown electorate Aboriginal Student of the Year, Elizabeth Brydon, who attended yesterday's Aboriginal Emerging Leaders Forum at Parliament House. Elizabeth is a model student at Kotara High School both as a dedicated learner and proactive community member, excelling in English, history and geography. Elizabeth has demonstrated leadership skills that promote Indigenous culture within her school community through advocacy and celebrations such as painting

of the Aboriginal mural, NAIDOC Day activities, Aboriginal-based project learning and excursions to local Indigenous sites. Elizabeth has also been an eager participant in Aboriginal-led initiatives, including the Gulawa tutoring program and Yakka Day. She has twice been selected to participate in the Wingara Mura School at the University of New South Wales. It is this, alongside Elizabeth's bright, optimistic, kind and respectful personality, that has earned her recognition as a local Aboriginal Student of the Year. I wish Elizabeth all the best for a very bright future.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT PHIPPS

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (16:15): With the member for Hawkesbury, Dominic Perrottet, I inform the Chamber of the very sad passing of the principal of the Hills Grammar School, Robert Phipps. I can personally say that Rob was a great leader and a great friend. He was the third principal of Hills Grammar, giving a remarkable 21 years of service. Simply put, Rob's values inspired thousands of children, who knew him as a friendly and compassionate principal with a ready smile. Students remembered how at the end of a school day he would stand out the front asking everyone how their day was, what they had learnt and say goodbye. Sadly, on Friday 22 July, we said our goodbyes at a touching memorial service with the entire Hills Grammar community. I join with the member for Hawkesbury in sending our sincere and heartfelt condolences to Rob's wife, Jenny, his daughter, Elizabeth, and his son, Ben, as well as the school community. They have lost a much-loved husband, father, teacher and thoroughly good man. His legacy will live on in our community. Vale Rob Phipps.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT PHIPPS

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Minister for Finance, Services and Property) (16:16): I echo the sentiments of the member for Castle Hill, Ray Williams, with regard to Robert Phipps. I had the pleasure of knowing Robert Phipps during my time as the member for Castle Hill and continued the relationship as the member for Hawkesbury. Rob was a man of great integrity and a community leader who was driven and selfless. He was known for his passion for education and vision for the Hills Grammar School. Rob has left an incredible legacy for all the students he taught at Hills Grammar over the past 21 years. I am sure the fruits of that will continue to flourish over time. Leadership is practised not so much in words as in attitudes and actions. From his hand-delivered birthday cards to taking the time to get to know each and every student with a smile on his face, Rob inspired many members of the community to follow his legacy. Along with the member for Castle Hill as well as on behalf of the Hills District and Hawkesbury areas I pass on my sincerest condolences to Rob's family, friends, colleagues and everyone who has been touched by that exceptional leader and loving man. Vale Robert Phipps.

NSW FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LANGUAGES

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (16:17): Multicultural Australia is something we pride ourselves on, and we are distinguished by the diversities we embrace. I have always found that an understanding of their rich heritage is essential for our young people to appreciate, understand and form their identity. Languages in particular provide a platform to break down boundaries and stereotypes. They help one to get to know the other and, perhaps more significantly, one's better self. The consistent dedication and effort that the NSW Federation of Community Languages displays is testimony to the value of that. On 4 June I attended the annual community languages dinner to commemorate the efforts of so many dedicated individuals.

I congratulate all those associated with the NSW Community Languages Schools program and especially thank the teachers, who are the lifeblood of these schools. As a former student of Saturday school, I understand the struggle of waking up on a Saturday morning but I also appreciate the benefits that I reap today as a result of it. I acknowledge the efforts of Alex Di Prinzio, Albert Vella, Michael Christodoulou and their team for their passionate commitment towards community languages. I am proud to belong to the party with a long track record of supporting language development and that has made a policy commitment to support the teaching and learning of secondary languages.

STAN SWAN, MOREE BOARS RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (16:18): I pay tribute to Moree Boars Rugby League Club hooker Stan Swan, who last Sunday in the clash against the Inverell Hawks celebrated his 100th first grade game with the club. Stan Swan started his career in 2009 with the Moree Boars in the under-18s. During that time he won the most prestigious award, the Moree Champion Under 18s. In 2010 he joined first grade. He played half a hooker in both positions and excelled in all. He is an excellent goal kicker as well. Stan represented group 19 in the 2015-16 season and his ability is such that all clubs warn their players not to let him run too hard from dummy half. Stan is a great player, excellent citizen of the Moree community and a lovely family man. His behaviour on and off the field is an example to all players young and old. In the eight years Stan has played with the Boars he

has played 100 first grade games, one reserve grade and 17 games for the under-18s, scoring a total of 59 tries, 139 goals and one field goal. I congratulate Stan Swan.

TILLIGERRY HABITAT

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:19): Recently I was delighted to join with my community to celebrate the Tilligerry Habitat's twentieth birthday. The Tilligerry Habitat State Reserve Trust was gazetted in 1996 and the Tilligerry Habitat Association was appointed as the trustee to look after an area of nine hectares. Over its 20 years the Tilligerry Habitat Association has invested thousands of volunteer hours into projects to restore and preserve this valuable community land. Through its efforts an old sand mine was turned into one of Port Stephens hidden gems, with an environment centre and boardwalks which wind their way through ferned gullies sitting alongside the beautiful waters of Port Stephens. The history of the Tilligerry Habitat has been diligently recorded in Jean Olley's new book, *The Story of the Tilligerry Habitat: The first ten years (1993-2002)*, which was launched at the event. Sadly, Jean passed away shortly prior to the recent celebrations. I recognise Jean Olley for her significant contribution to the Tilligerry Habitat and thank the many, many volunteers—particularly current president Fran Corner—who have worked so hard to create an absolute treasure.

KIAMA ROTARY

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:20): On Monday 20 June 2016 I was pleased to attend the annual changeover dinner of the Rotary Club of Kiama at the Kiama Leagues Club. I congratulate the incoming president and director of the Rotary Foundation, Dave Chambers, president elect Lloyd Chatfield, immediate past president Marilyn Jarret, secretary Carol Jagger, treasurer Trevor Phillis, and fellow directors Jim Henry, Heather Martin, Carol Johnson, Talia Barnes and Bruce Johnson on their service to Kiama Rotary, which is one of the many outstanding service clubs in my electorate.

AUSTRALIAN ALLY CONFERENCE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:21): In June I had the honour of attending the inaugural Australian Ally Conference, which brought together universities from across Australia to discuss issues affecting people from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer and asexual [LGBTIQA] community, particularly staff and students at universities. These issues included things like sexual violence, bullying, harassment and educational disadvantage. It also examined broader concerns such as the plebiscite on marriage equality and homophobic and transphobic violence. These are all really important issues. This conference, which was organised by the University of Western Sydney, was successful in creating an ongoing platform for discussion and policy development in this area. I make special note of the tireless work and efforts of the conference organisers, particularly the convenor Dr Sev Ozdowski, AM, and director of the academy and co-convenor of the Ally network Mr Luce De Buitelir Andrews. I also thank the Hon. Trevor Khan, MLC, and Dr Shannon Spriggs-Murdoch for their amazing contributions.

TRIBUTE TO TANYA WHITEHOUSE

Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:22): Wollondilly resident Tanya Whitehouse was conferred with the 2016 Justice Medal by the Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales. Ms Whitehouse was given this honour as a result of her devotion to helping women and she has also suffered domestic abuse. Currently Ms Whitehouse is the chair of the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service in this State, which assists women who suffer from domestic abuse and helps them get court assistance. This is an extremely important method in combating domestic abuse across New South Wales and Australia. Services such as these allow domestic abuse victims to know that there are routes they can take to be safe and receive help. In her capacity with the advocacy service she also serves as coordinator of the Macarthur branch. Ms Whitehouse has done an amazing job in assisting women across New South Wales. On behalf of the Wollondilly community and the State, I thank her for her service.

GOUGH WHITLAM PLACE

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (16:23): On Saturday 30 July 2016 I had the great pleasure of attending the opening of Gough Whitlam Place in Cabramatta. A monument was unveiled to honour the great former Labor Prime Minister who improved the lives of Australians both within the electorate and across the nation. It was a great pleasure to see the recognition of an important man in our nation's history, a former Cabramatta resident and a former Federal member. I was particularly delighted to see this memorial constructed in Cabramatta in view of his unrelenting dedication to the area throughout his life. His son, Nicholas, and his family attended the ceremony. Nicholas spoke of his father's many achievements and how the area had changed as a result of multiculturalism made possible through his hard work. I thank everyone involved in the planning and construction of the memorial to a giant of the Labor Party.

MEND AND MAKE DO

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:24): I inform the House of the wonderful community work being undertaken by Mend and Make Do. In 2014 the group commenced operating and has since taken on the role of gathering and distributing toiletry kits for the homeless in Clarence, Lismore, Tweed and beyond. They also hand-make bags for the kit from recycled materials. So far around 2,000 kits worth about \$20,000 have been distributed, using a network of organisations throughout the region. Ursula Tunks started the group after battling her own experience with depression. She created a group that aimed to give people a feeling of belonging and purpose, starting with personal hygiene and dignity. Making use of everything that can be saved and recycled is how the Grafton group Mend and Make Do are helping combat the homelessness problem in the area.

TRIBUTE TO MARJORIE MARGARET WOODROW

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (16:25): Marjorie Margaret Woodrow recently passed away aged 93 years. She was an avid advocate and warrior for Aboriginal rights who fought for the stolen wages of all Aboriginals forced into work and never paid what they earned. She was a well-recognised and respected elder and aunty to all. Marjorie lived and worked all over Australia sharing her culture with schools and communities, and was well known in the prison system. Marjorie, who was born to a Barkandji woman from central western New South Wales on 28 May 1926, was a victim of the Stolen Generation. She was taken from her mother at the age of two along with her siblings. She was a survivor of the infamous Cootamundra Girls Home and Parramatta Girls Home where abuse was rife and the inmates treated like animals. Marjorie was a mother of eight children and grandmother to her many loved grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. I had the honour of knowing Aunty Marjorie and sat with her to discuss a wide range of issues when she resided in Wadalba in my electorate. Marjorie Woodrow is much loved and missed.

PETE DUDDING SOLO EXHIBITION

STUDIO A

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (16:26): From 250 artists only 20 were chosen for their works to be displayed at Woolloomooloo's Firstdraft Gallery, and no-one is more deserving of this than Pete Dudding. But that is not all: Our Pete is breaking down barriers in becoming the first artist with an intellectual disability to be displayed at Firstdraft. Pete's first solo exhibition is entitled "Pig Dog" and has been curated by Paul Williams who has been working beside Pete at Studio A since 2015. "Pig Dog" was a remarkable success, with half of Pete's paintings sold by the close of the exhibition. As part of the challenge Pete also participated in the Artist Talk Program where he had the opportunity to present the artistic process in action to a very lucky audience. Pete says he "felt like a superstar" and Hornsby is very proud to have its very own Picasso.

For people who are unfamiliar with Studio A, it is an initiative of Studio ARTES Northside, which is an organisation that provides creative programs in the areas of arts, recreation, training, employment and equity, and social skills. Pete is an artist of Studio A, which is a studio space equipped with specialist materials and support staff to help tackle the barriers that artists with intellectual disability face in accessing conventional education, professional development pathways and opportunities required for becoming a renowned visual artist. It is an invaluable program and a pillar in our community. I congratulate Pete on the success of "Pig Dog" and thank all those who support him.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE FIONA DUNCAN

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (16:27): I ask the House to acknowledge Detective Senior Constable Fiona Duncan of the Campbelltown Local Area Command for being named the Macarthur district Officer of the Year for 2016. Detective Senior Constable Duncan was awarded the honour for her work in a domestic violence case, preventing a catastrophe at Katoomba police station, and the hunt for two violent criminals on the State's most wanted list. Her tireless efforts in working for the NSW Police Force helped to catch these violent criminals and ensured that they could do no more harm to the community. Her quick thinking also stopped a suicide from occurring at Katoomba police station and prevented a domestic violence case from getting out of hand. Detective Senior Constable Duncan's efforts are a testament to the high standards of the NSW Police Force and the hard work officers put in each and every day to keep our community safe. I ask the House to congratulate Detective Senior Constable Duncan and join me in thanking every police officer in the Campbelltown Local Area Command and the NSW Police Force for the work they do in keeping our communities safe.

NSW AMBULANCE SAVIOUR AWARDS**MERITORIOUS EMERGENCY SERVICES MEDAL**

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:28): I inform the House of five men from Taree who recently received NSW Ambulance Saviour Awards after saving the life of a mate. While playing a friendly game of tennis 57-year-old Rod Yarnold collapsed and suffered a cardiac arrest. His tennis partner Daniel Jackson administered cardiopulmonary resuscitation [CPR] before being joined by David Lawler, Alan Steber, Brian Alexander and David Coleman. The quick thinking of these gentlemen saved a life and they have been duly recognised. The men were nominated by Rod's very grateful wife, Rhonda. Since the incident the men have reunited to assist their local Rotary clubs in launching a CPR program.

I also inform the House that John Lynch from Forster-Tuncurry Marine Rescue was recently recognised with a Meritorious Emergency Services Medal. Volunteering is nothing new for Mr Lynch, who has been contributing to his community in some regard for more than four decades. Mr Lynch joined the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol, now Marine Rescue NSW, in 1995 after serving in the navy for more than 30 years. He has served in numerous roles over the years, including time as the Mid North Coast Regional Director on the Marine Rescue NSW Board in 2011, 2013 and again in 2015. I offer my sincere congratulations to Mr Lynch and thank him for his long service.

THREE VENICES

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:29): On Sunday 24 July 2016 I had the pleasure of attending the Reformation Function of the Three Venices, otherwise known as Le Tre Venezia, at Club Italia in Lansvale. All Venetian associations from Sydney, Canberra, Wollongong, Adelaide and New South Wales strive to preserve language and culture. The function also raised funds for the Cancer Centre at the Children's Hospital at Westmead. I congratulate Venetian association members and organisers from the region of Venice who successfully re-established the 20 associations under the umbrella of the Three Venices.

CAMERON CLARK, OLYMPIC GAMES RUGBY MEN'S SEVENS TEAM

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (16:30): Many people think of Ku-ring-gai as God's country and we all know rugby is the game they play in Heaven. I am pleased to report that one of Ku-ring-gai's own is about to embark on the journey of a lifetime, representing not only Ku-ring-gai but also Australia in the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Knox Grammar School old boy Cameron Clark is part of Australia's rugby sevens squad about to compete at the games. Now 23 years old, Cameron made his debut in the green and gold back in 2012 and quickly made his presence felt, so much so that he was named in the World Rugby Men's Sevens Team of the Year in the 2013-14 season. Our team's job is a tough one in Brazil from the outset. It has South Africa, France and Spain in its pool group, the top two teams to advance, so it will have to be on form from the opening whistle. Australia has both men's and women's rugby sevens competing in Rio, so I know both teams will be giving each other huge support. Go hard, go well, to the Aussie rugby sevens.

MEMBER FOR WOLLONGONG RETIREMENT

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:31): Before the member for Wollongong delivers her valedictory speech I want to pay tribute to a friend and an opponent, but also a warrior, a colourful character, somebody who I think everyone in this place has a story about but somebody who I know we all respect. I say to the member for Wollongong that she leaves this place as someone who has done a great amount for her city. She came to this country with nothing but her grit and determination. She represented some of the poorest workers and rose through the ranks to be their leader as a member of the cleaners' union. She entered Parliament in 2003. She is somebody who I can say I call a friend and I have learnt a great deal from. I have enjoyed working with her. I know that this House will be perhaps a little quieter for her absence, but no doubt a little less colourful. I know I will miss her. I know members on this side will miss her. On behalf of all members of the Government we wish her and her family all the best for their future. I know she is looking forward to spending time with her great danes, her grandchildren and her husband, Lee. I wish her the very best for her future.

Members

VALEDICTORY SPEECH

The SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Wollongong—and I will try not to cry—I congratulate her on 13 years of passionate and committed service to the people of Wollongong and New South Wales. The member for Wollongong and I have sparred across this table many, many times—

Ms Noreen Hay: I won!

The SPEAKER: It was never about winning with the two of us; it was about two members of Parliament feeling passionate about our communities and our electorates—and that is what you have been. I will miss you immensely. I am so sad that you are leaving. We have had some great times, some great evenings together and shared some great stories. I think you have a book in you, haven't you?

Ms Noreen Hay: A trilogy.

The SPEAKER: A trilogy? I look forward to proofreading that for you and to getting plenty of legal advice for you before it is printed. All the best for the future. I know that you and I, along with the member for Heathcote and the member for Kiama, will catch up, as we do. We will see more of you. My sincere congratulations on what you have provided for the people of Wollongong over a long time.

Ms NOREEN HAY (Wollongong) (16:33): I much prefer it when members on the Government side are nasty.

[Interruption]

Thank you, that's more like it! It helps me because I am less likely to fall into the emotional wreck that the member for Rockdale almost had me in a moment ago. Today is my father's birthday—Tadg Herlihy. As I said in my inaugural speech, my parents were my inspiration growing up and the reason I have such staunch labour values. And so I choose this day to end my parliamentary career. In 2003, the same year as you, Madam Speaker, I became a proud member—unlike yourself—of the Carr Labor Government, as the first female representative of the electorate of Wollongong.

The SPEAKER: I can't even put you on a call to order!

Ms NOREEN HAY: The sense of pride and privilege representing my constituents did not fade, and I have never forgotten the historic importance of the New South Wales Parliament to the political drama of our time. Sometimes the theatrics of the bear pit can seem quite overwhelming. I, however, have enjoyed the challenge—and will acknowledge that those opposite did not really challenge me that much! When I look back on my first speech in this place I can honestly say that I have accomplished much, but not all, of what I set out to achieve. My commitment to be a strong voice for the electorate of Wollongong and a good local member of Parliament never wavered, but my ability to deliver on many of those things was impacted by politics, personalities and the move to the Opposition benches.

As an example, one only has to look at the Labor Government's commitment to the easy access lifts at Unanderra which were half completed when Labor went to the Opposition benches. In spite of the current Governments' commitments, they are yet to be completed—although I have called for it on almost a daily basis. I have endeavoured to represent the unique wants, needs and aspirations of those in my electorate. I have been blessed to have been able to work with and represent such a multicultural electorate. I have made many relationships within the Greek, Italian, Macedonian, Serbian, Philippine, Maltese, Chilean, Turkish and Chinese communities. I am truly grateful to all of them for their friendship and support. I have worked tirelessly to promote our region both domestically and internationally, and I worked hard to encourage business to invest in Wollongong thereby creating more and better jobs.

A case in point was the relocation of Pillar Superannuation Administration, which grew from approximately 300 employees to 700 employees. Sadly, however, it is yet another break in commitment by the current Government not to privatise, with recent tenders being called. My commitment to pursue issues such as increased investment in health services is highlighted by the \$83 million expansion of the Wollongong Hospital elective surgery unit, the \$5.8 million expansion of the Wollongong Hospital emergency department and the \$5.3 million for the older person mental health unit. I helped deliver a purpose-built renal unit, a detox unit, \$15 million for a 24/7 rescue helicopter, upgraded cancer care services, a psychiatric emergency care unit and dementia care unit, to name but a few.

I am especially proud of the \$1 billion investment in mental health services by then Premier Morris Iemma. It was at that time the biggest ever investment in mental health services, which was my number one priority on entering Parliament. I will be forever grateful to Morris for recognising and investing in this long-neglected area of health, which affects one in five people in our communities. Other issues that I am proud to have pursued were the increases to investment in our schools and education highlighted by the introduction of a new trade school and the upgrading of facilities at TAFE. There has been no greater supporter of TAFE than NSW Labor in recognising the importance of educational access for all.

There was also a \$25.8 million investment in the building better schools plan. As part of this plan there was a new sports stadium at Illawarra Sports High School and a new science centre at Warrawong High School, to name a few. I was happy to support the establishment of the Innovation Campus in my electorate, which

included a number of investments by the State Labor Government including the \$20 million contribution to the multimedia and design training centre. The Innovation Campus has been a great success story for the University of Wollongong and the broader community. Access throughout Wollongong to the university, beaches, hospitals, shopping and railways has been greatly improved for all including the aged, disabled, youth, students and parents with strollers by the introduction of the free shuttle bus service.

It has been an unprecedented success story, moving around 7,000 passengers a day. This has resulted in a reduction in car movements and traffic, which in turn has had a positive effect on the city and the environment. Supporting the reduced number of cars on the road is the \$11 million multistorey free commuter security car park at Wollongong railway station. Freedom of movement for people from the outer suburbs was improved by their being able to leave their cars at home, catch a train to the city and access the free shuttle service via one of the easy access train stations in Wollongong. The Bob Carr-Michael Egan decision to channel car imports through Port Kembla assisted Wollongong and the Illawarra region through economic benefits and the creation of thousands of jobs. Additional employment was generated for mature-age workers in relocating the cars from the ships to wharf-side holding bays. Following negotiations further jobs were created through an agreement that car detailing would be carried out in Wollongong as well. The port became a victim of its own success and was privatised by the current Coalition Government—yet another breach of agreement with the community.

There are those who would suggest that Eric Roozendaal was not an easy Treasurer to prise money out of. I found him to be an absolute pushover in obtaining more than \$30 million for the new Western Grandstand at WIN Stadium. Yes, it would seem that some people involved with the construction of the grandstand neglected to take into account that, being next to the ocean, it might get a bit windy—as became apparent when they watched in dismay as the roof blew off. I am still not sure what the problem was but we cannot blame Eric. I will be forever grateful to Eric Roozendaal for delivering what is today the home of the St George Illawarra Dragons and a venue of international quality that is utilised by other sporting codes and for many other functions. I am still waiting to see the establishment of an Illawarra home for football, also known as soccer. I encourage all local teams to strive to emulate my Chelsea. I was part of the Labor team that delivered the internationally renowned tourist attraction, the Sea Cliff Bridge. My thanks to Carl Scully, Morris Iemma and the Labor team for what is now an icon of the region.

As you can see, I am proud of what I have been able to achieve as the member for Wollongong and as part of the Labor team. These are just some examples of the success and progress in Wollongong. There is so much more that it would take too long to list. During my time as the member for Wollongong it has been essential for me to keep faith and trust with my community. Their support has never wavered. That is demonstrated by the greetings and well wishes I receive when I walk through the electorate. I thank the people of Wollongong for that trust and confidence. I am proud that I have held the electorate for Labor for four terms. I am proud that when the landslide against Labor occurred in 2011, and no-one gave me any chance of defeating a high-profile Independent candidate, I was able to retain the electorate for the Labor Party. I did it at a time when safe Labor seats were falling across the State and in the face of a very nasty and negative campaign by my opponents. As well as being the first female to represent the electorate of Wollongong, I am proud to have been the first female chair of the Public Accounts Committee, the Parliamentary Secretary for Health, the Parliamentary Secretary for State and Regional Development and, last but not least, the first female Whip in the New South Wales Parliament.

There are many people I would like to acknowledge and thank. I begin by acknowledging two of the most decent people I have ever known and whom I consider friends to this day, Jan and Peter Primrose. If I do not mention someone today, I apologise in advance. Everyone is special. I thank the Australian Labor Party members who supported me in each of my preselections. I especially thank Peter Holz, Reg Jago, Maureen Stapleton, George and Vania Harrison, George Houssos, Micha Zelinski, Bill and Nagibe El Bacha, Peter and Julie Liddle and their family, Lindsay Stoddart, Boris and Lena Dimevski and their family, Judy Matich, Alysha Oliver and family, Tom Samaras, John Papacosmos, John Tambarkis, Tom Ward, Bob Turner, Chris Agno and a number of others.

I thank all the branch members and community workers who contributed to my election and re-election over the past 13 years. These include Alex and Dianne Macleod, Louis Parnis, George Bartolo, Raz Dema, Lou Ristov, Bevan Fermour, Peter Taylor, Terry Corby, John Stone, Elizabeth Stone and Nina Gana. Today I think particularly of Bill Dwarte, who recently lost his wife, Joyce. My prayers go out to you and your family. I thank my staff past and present for their professionalism and their loyalty: Kiley Martin, who was with me for 12 years; Susan Greenhalgh; Tina Filippi; Jonathon Liddle; Julie Anne Brown; Varnan Ganeshapillai; Jessica Murdzevski; Ray McMurrich; Greg Harris; and Colleen Symington.

I thank the staff of Hansard for reporting what I say—as difficult as that has been at times. I assure you that I am speaking English. I would also like to thank the parliamentary general staff, including security, cleaners and catering. Also, my many thanks to the clerks of the Parliament for their dedication and advice, and to all the

staff in the Parliamentary Library. I thank the New South Wales emergency services, police, paramedics, ambos and fire services for always being on hand during a crisis. I thank my family and friends for their unfailing love and dedication. I have the unwavering support of my husband, Lee Lawler, my children, Mark Christopher Hay and his wife, Suzanna Hay; Leah Hay; Alison Kelly and her husband, Darren Kelly; and Daniel Hay and his wife, Heather Hay. Their commitment to me and my career choice has provided me with the solid foundation that is so vital to survival in this place. I know that I could not have spent 13 years in this Parliament without their support.

Much has changed since my inaugural speech, in that I now have seven grandchildren: Ellie Hay, Ronan Dumbrell, Cameron Lovett, Nora Hay, Seamus Hay, Chelsea Hay, Bridie Hay and a great-grandson, Anton Gourdeas. This Parliament has provided me with many older, as opposed to mature, and new friends. One of the things about change is that people come and go. Hopefully you hold on to some of the lessons in life and the relationships. I acknowledge all those with whom I served in the previous Labor Government as well as Jamie Clements; Chris Minns and his wife, Anna; Steve Kamper and his wife, Magda; Tania Mihailuk; Guy Zangari; Ron Hoenig; Nick Lalich; Greg Warren; Edmond Atalla; Courtney Houssos; Shaoquett Moselmane, Greg Donnelly; Trish Doyle; Ernest Wong, Dr Hugh McDermott and all my parliamentary Labor colleagues, including Jihad Dib, who joins our caucus as a Muslim member of Parliament and friend. I thank them for their friendship and support. I give a special mention to Kathy Smith, who is in my thoughts and prayers. I extend that recognition to all my parliamentary Labor colleagues—that I have not mentioned them today does not make them unimportant.

I acknowledge the guidance and advice I have received over the years from the Australian Labor Party head office, in particular general secretaries Stephen Loosley, John Della Bosca, Eric Roozendaal, Mark Arbib, Karl Bitar, Matt Thistlethwaite, Sam Dastyari, Jamie Clements and Kaila Murnain, who is the first female general secretary. Madam Speaker, I also acknowledge those on your side of the House: lazy, lazy, lazy. While I do not agree with one word that any of you utter, I acknowledge that many of you are trying to do a good job for your electorates—although that may be a contradiction in terms. I acknowledge that the Premier has always treated me with respect and that many of your members have taken it in good humour when I have told short people to stand up, loud people to speak up and most of your side to give up. I acknowledge Madam Speaker, Shelley Hancock, and the kind words you said at the outset of this discussion. Lee Evans and Gareth Ward I now consider friends. I believe that will continue and that one day you will agree with everything I say.

I publicly thank Gareth Ward for the kind words in his recent statement. I acknowledge the member for Dubbo because I never thought he would make it; the member for Drummoyne, who should never have made it; and the member for Myall Lakes, who we think made it but we are not quite sure because he tried to slip into the shoes of the former member for Murray-Darling. Bring back John, I say. He is probably sleeping in his pasture somewhere out there.

Mr Thomas George: He is watching.

Ms NOREEN HAY: John, wake up. I will always be grateful to the NSW Nationals and Kevin Humphries for inviting me to be the first Labor guest speaker at their inaugural former members' dinner and for inviting me to deliver the welcome to country speech. I also place on record my admiration for the former member for Ballina, Don Page; the former member for Murray-Darling, John Williams; and the former member for Kogarah, Cherie Burton, for their rock and roll prowess on the last day of their parliamentary terms in this Parliament. I thank the member for Bathurst, Paul Toole. He needs a bravery award for his pursuit of forced council amalgamations. I acknowledge the member for Castle Hill and the member for Tweed for being great travelling companions. I acknowledge the member for Tamworth for his love of country music and guitar-playing skills, and the member for Wagga Wagga for being an all-round nice guy. I add to that Thomas George, who is always very quiet yet very nice. As strange as it may seem, I thank the member for Goulburn, Pru Goward, for her attention to detail in the letters to my constituents and for her non-combative attitude outside the Chamber. Madam Speaker, if any members on your side of the Chamber ever see the light, they should join the Australian Labor Party.

While I am determined not to speak about the media treatment I have been subjected to over the past 13 years, I make mention of the price paid by those associated with me, which I consider to be unfair and uncalled for. My children have been the subject of media harassment for no reason other than their connection to me. I am unaware of this kind of attention being applied to the children of any other member of Parliament. I place on record now that I am extremely proud of each one of them, particularly for their values and their determination to assist those less fortunate than themselves. I see Susan Greenhalgh in the gallery. Susan, I am sorry that you too have been pursued by the media because of your association with me. I am sorry and saddened that, contrary to your rights as a citizen, there are those who have refused to acknowledge and honour the presumption of innocence that you are entitled to. I want the world to know that my decision to retire has nothing whatsoever to do with your case. I wish you well and hope that justice prevails. [*Extension of time*]

You lot have always loved being beaten up. The one thing I know about the common Australian voter—certainly those who live in the electorate of Wollongong—is that they do not like negative politics. They do not like the Donald Trump school of politics, where smear, gossip and rumour-mongering are substitutes for policy and a positive agenda. I am living proof that hard work and a positive agenda will trump negative politics every time. As a proud unionist, member of the Labor Party and someone who was born to be Labor, I congratulate Bill Shorten on his magnificent achievement at the Federal election in such a short time. I believe the Labor Party is on the right track with its determination to increase grassroots involvement and to increase representation by women.

To do that, however, the obstacles that deter women from putting their hands up need to be removed. The party needs to apply its rules fairly and impartially across the board. For example, if party members who refused to support the endorsed Labor candidate in Newcastle are expelled, then the same should apply to party members who refuse to support the endorsed Labor candidate in Wollongong. Newcastle, like Wollongong, has a proud Labor, industrial and union history, and factionalism should not apply. It appals me to hear that a union secretary signed a letter to condemn a Labor member of Parliament for an inaugural speech they did not like, yet a leave of absence was given to a union leader to run against an endorsed Labor candidate, former union official and female representative in an election where the conservative Government was running a privatisation platform. "Has someone lost the plot?" I ask myself.

NSW Labor has a wealth of talent. Certainly we have come a long way from the 20 of us who returned after the 2011 election. We must build on that through genuine relationships that encourage new, talented women—not celebrity candidates but community candidates—to run for office. They should be encouraged and supported, particularly against character assassination and criticisms based on their looks and age. After all, many male members of Parliament would not be in Parliament today if the same criteria were applied to them. I am going to resist the temptation to retaliate against those who would bring into question my integrity and honour. For those people there is an adage about glass houses and stones that comes to mind. Over the past 13 years I have been determined to do as Michelle Obama said, "When they go low, we go high"—as difficult as that has been on occasions. I have been the beneficiary of support by Left and Right faction members in the party because I believe at the end of the day it is always Labor versus all comers.

Over my 13 years in this Parliament I have met wonderful people from both sides of the House—intellectual giants and women who leave you in awe. It is imperative that people retain respect for the institution of Parliament and for each other. It is not important that you like the individual; it is essential, however, that you respect the office they hold. We are a privileged few out of millions in New South Wales who are called on to serve our communities. We should not fall into the rut of accepting the disrespect and character assassination of those who have been elected to speak on behalf of their electorates. We are entitled to argue philosophy and ideology; that is democracy at work. We should not forget that we are the elected ones who are required to answer to those unelected, which, on occasion, is an example of the tail wagging the dog.

I will miss the banter, humour and camaraderie, the theatre of the bear pit, and the interactions across the divide. Today, at the time of my choosing, I say goodbye to my colleagues and to those opposite. I leave with my honour, my integrity and, most importantly, my self-respect intact. I look forward to pursuing other interests and to spending time with family and friends. I wish all members of Parliament the very best with the work that remains to be done in continuing to improve this great State of New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Wollongong. Her popularity is evidenced by the presence of many members from both sides of the House, especially Coalition members.

Members stood in their places and applauded.

Private Members' Statements

TERRIGAL ELECTORATE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:02): Before she leaves the Chamber, I again pay tribute to the fantastic and indomitable member for Wollongong. She will be greatly missed. The start of question time will never be the same again. We wish her well. She is always welcome in Terrigal. In the early 1800s settlers discovered the land north of Sydney now known as Erina, in the electorate of Terrigal, which was once home to the Guringai Aboriginal tribe. Their land stretched from northern Sydney, through Pittwater, to the Brisbane Water and the southern end of Lake Macquarie. We know this because of historic Aboriginal rock engravings and relics.

The name "Erina" comes from the Aboriginal word "Yerin" or "Gerrin", believed to mean "an object of fear". The area is thought to have been used in initiation ceremonies. It is interesting to note that the bushwalking trails used today were once trails linking Aboriginal tribes, their shelters and waterholes. An 1864 road survey from East Gosford to Wamberal Lagoon showed an area called Black Town, located on Erina Creek. That term

was used back then for Aboriginal encampments. Maps from the 1860s show several huts located at Black Town, which makes it more likely that sawyers lived there. Sawyers logged trees and worked the timber.

In the early 1800s large tracts of land were granted to people of distinguished background. One such person was Willoughby Bean, who, upon his arrival in Sydney in 1825, was granted 2,000 acres at Erina. The land covered the Wamberal and Terrigal lagoons to Erina Creek. Willoughby Bean was originally from Hampshire, England. His father fought in the Napoleonic wars, was captured by the French and remained imprisoned in the city of Amboise in France until the war was over. Willoughby named his land at Erina "Amboise". In 1826 Willoughby Bean was appointed magistrate of Brisbane Water. Unfortunately, he struggled to make a living from his land and was forced to sell his property to David Maziere in 1829, losing his house and his status as a landed gentleman. He stayed in the area, managing other properties for wealthy landowners. In 1837 Willoughby married Harriet Battley, the sister of another settler. Two years later the couple went to live in the Hunter Valley.

In the ensuing years there was confusion over land ownership. The land grants system in New South Wales was in disarray. Following the collapse of the Bank of Australia and the advance of the Depression of the 1840s, Amboise was sold again to Edward Cory for the paltry sum of £50. With the land left unoccupied for some time, squatters moved onto the Amboise property. It was 1832 when Henry Donnison arrived at Brisbane Water and occupied the Amboise property with his wife, Margaret, and daughters, Hannah and Laura. Henry made his fortune from logging the timber on Amboise and the surrounding leased but unoccupied lands. Bullock teams would drag the felled timber to Erina Creek and a barge would carry it down the Brisbane Water to Sydney.

Henry Donnison had 50 convicts assigned to his property as pit sawyers. He was a hard man, not well liked in the area for his violence and hard business dealings. Henry had a history of quarrels with his neighbours. He was accused of stealing cattle, and charges were brought against him. He was eventually acquitted and compensated. He tragically died when a tree fell on him in 1847. His wife, Margaret, died five years later, leaving the running of the property to their daughters, Hannah and Laura. Both Henry and Margaret Donnison are buried at Point Frederick cemetery near East Gosford. Today Donnison Street is the main street of the Gosford central business district. Both daughters, Hannah and Laura, finally claimed the land legally after 30 years of not being challenged on the ownership of Amboise.

Running parallel to Amboise was a 600-acre property called Runnimeade. It stretched from the entrance of Erina Creek, the punt bridge across the mangrove swamp, to where the business centre of Erina stands today—and where my electoral office is located. In 1883 William Hobbs purchased the 2,000-acre property Amboise from the Donnison daughters for £5,000, only to sell it on to land agents Boyd and King for £6,000. In 1885 the land agents advertised their subdivision of the land. Despite the promotion of the railway to Gosford, land sales were slow. In 1888 the Runnimeade estate subdivision was advertised for auction. The area was surveyed and streets were formed in the layout we know today as the business centre of Erina.

MOLLYMOOK BEACH BASKETBALL FACILITY

Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (17:07): I inform the House that on Saturday 18 June 2016 I joined with Mayor Joanna Gash, Milton Ulladulla Basketball Association President Bruce Hughes, past President of the Rotary Club of Milton-Ulladulla Clive Cross and Councillor Patricia White and others to cut the ribbon at the opening of the much-anticipated Mollymook Beach community basketball facility, overlooking Mollymook Beach. Unfortunate weather conditions did nothing to mar the celebration. The facility was officially opened by four exhibition games. Milton Ulladulla Basketball Association representative players from the junior girls and boys and senior men's and women's divisions faced off in six-minute games to test the new court and hoops as Mollymook locals watched on. The three-quarter length National Basketball Association approved court took only two months to construct, yet it involved two years of community fundraising, lobbying and volunteering to see the project launched and completed.

The driving force behind the project was the Milton Ulladulla Basketball Association, which learned of the need for a new court from its young basketballers. The young players had felt the loss of school basketball courts that were no longer available after hours or over the weekend for them to practise and play on. The use of other courts in the area was also limited, with the nearby Milton indoor court costing \$20 an hour and tightly scheduled. The Burrill Lake court ring was not to official height standards. The Milton Ulladulla Basketball Association worked tirelessly to garner first council and then greater community support. It raised the initial funds that started the ball rolling. It then sought financial assistance from Shoalhaven City Council, the Rotary Club of Milton-Ulladulla and the Veolia Mulwaree Trust.

I am incredibly proud to say that the Baird-Grant Government also came on board. It saw the value of this wonderful community facility and allocated \$28,000 towards the project. The estimated cost of the project

had initially been \$45,000, which would just cover the construction of a rudimentary concrete half court. However, thanks to the generosity and dedication of everyone involved, a grand total of \$61,500 was donated and raised, resulting in a three-quarter length, state-of-the-art, wheelchair accessible regulation court that is available to the public and those young basketballers 24/7.

Many members of the local community were instrumental in seeing plans for the court come to fruition. Retired lawyer Richard Nesbitt from the basketball association took on the job of project manager. The surveyor, civil engineer and other contractors also contributed substantially in kind. Two Saturday working bees were organised at which a total of 50 people, mainly young players from the basketball association and Rotary members, volunteered to help with the landscaping and spent hours and hours laying turf around the court. This endeavour has brought together many groups in the South Coast community and highlights that every piece of the puzzle counts.

The Mollymook Beach community basketball facility is now the pride of Mollymook. Located near the surf club, the court has spectacular ocean views and has seen constant use since its completion. Its three-quarter length makes it perfect for a game of three-on-three pick-up basketball. The shortened length of the court dictates that the game must be skills focused, with less running involved. This also reduces the susceptibility of players to injury. Furthermore, Budawang School has begun using the basketball facility in its weekly lessons. Classes take excursions on which they are taught how to follow school rules such as "stay with the group", "be safe" and "follow instructions" while walking around the block, playing in nearby parks and shooting hoops at the new court.

To further enhance the use of the court, the basketball association is now working towards securing funding for the instalment of lights and seats for spectators and parents supervising children. I thoroughly encourage them to do so. The basketball association also has plans to establish a competition that will run over the summer using the new facility. I congratulate everyone in the electorate of South Coast who contributed time, money, advice or labour to ensure that this wonderful piece of community infrastructure was completed. I also thank the young Milton Ulladulla Basketball Association players who are responsible for this fantastic idea and who helped throughout the entire process. I commend Joanna Gash, mayor of Shoalhaven City Council—now and hopefully in the future—and the council for their support and guidance, and the Baird-Grant Government for its wonderful financial assistance. I look forward to watching a game or two at the Mollymook Beach foreshore in the near future.

WILD HORSE DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional Development, Minister for Skills, and Minister for Small Business) (17:11): This evening I acknowledge the many hundreds of people who travelled far and wide to attend the Save the Brumby rally that was held in Sydney on Tuesday this week. Many of them travelled from the alpine region of the Monaro, leaving home at about 3.00 a.m. to attend the rally that was about saving the iconic brumby, a wild horse that many former members for Monaro have spoken about in this House, predominantly in their inaugural speeches. We often recite *The Man From Snowy River*, one of the great pieces by Banjo Patterson.

For the people of my region—generations of stockmen and stockwomen from families that have a connection to that region—the brumbies have been part of their story and their heritage. For more than 180 years we have had the brumbies in Kosciuszko. For more than 180 years they have been included in local stories and folklore. They have served this nation during times of war and peace. They represent what our region is all about. They are part of the region's story from a tourism perspective. Tourism marketing that has occurred over the past 180 years has always been around the wild brumbies. That is why it is important for people from my region to raise their concerns and their voices about the draft management plan.

I have spoken in this House about the draft wild horse management plan from the National Parks and Wildlife Service [NPWS] that is currently out for consultation. It is of concern that that plan talks about bringing the numbers down from an estimated 6,000 horses currently in the park to a final total of 600 over the next 10 to 20 years. That amounts to eradicating these horses from the park, which is unacceptable to me. I do not support that and I have been quite vocal about it. I have been vocal about the fact that the intent of the National Parks and Wildlife Service has always been to get rid of these horses from the mountains and from Kosciuszko National Park. Many within the NPWS do not believe that the horses have a right to be there or that they have any heritage value or connection to the region. I disagree with their view.

During consultation about the management plan the perception in the community has been that the consultation process was designed with the endgame in mind to get rid of these majestic horses from the mountain, which is disappointing. When governments consult with communities they should be confident that the process is unbiased and that it will lead to the best outcome for those communities, which I do not believe is the case. I have

been critical of the process and of individuals from the NPWS who headed up consultation and the work to date. They said publicly that they believe the horses have no right to be in the park and that they are no different from any other pest animals. Those same people do not have the same zeal in relation to the pigs, deer, rabbits and dogs that are also pest animals in the park. The NPWS decided to pick only one category—the wild horses or brumbies.

The draft management plan refers to a number of initiatives or tools that the NPWS wants to use in managing brumby numbers. Thank goodness that we ruled out aerial culling. Members will recall what happened in Falls Creek many decades ago. That cannot be repeated. I thank the previous Minister and the current Minister for ruling out aerial culling. We must be mindful of the fact that the community does not support going into the park, shooting those horses and leaving their carcasses to rot on the forest floor. Only 20 per cent of the horses are being rehomed. There is an opportunity to do this well. We accept that we have to manage the horses and protect the environment but they can exist side by side in the mountains. We have to look at all the available opportunities for rehoming. We have to look at some of the traditional ways that were used to trap. We also have to look at ways of minimising the impact of these horses. However, I do not accept that these horses should be shot. I thank Peter Cochran and Lisa Caldwell, who spent two days in Sydney at the rally, for putting a spotlight on this issue. They now have the support of the broader community.

TRIBUTE TO KATHY MARVELL, OAM

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (17:16): Today I inform the House of the sad passing earlier this year of Kathy Marvell, OAM, a dear friend and community servant. Kathy first started volunteering during the 1960s when working at Concord Repatriation General Hospital as an admissions officer. During her time at Concord she noticed a group of very sick veterans coming in regularly but not seeming to get any better. After investigating she found that these patients were undergoing kidney dialysis on large, non-portable machines, which was time consuming for them and their families, and most uncomfortable. Kathy started to sit with these patients on a regular basis during their dialysis treatment, talking and reading to them and just being someone to whom they could talk. The families of these veterans would call Kathy and thank her for spending time with their loved ones. Other hospitals started to hear about the great impact that Kathy was making with the patients and their families, so she and representatives from these other hospitals formed the Renal Association of NSW.

The mission of the Renal Association is to support patients with all forms of renal failure and their families, friends and carers. Anyone undergoing dialysis at the time had no choice other than to undergo treatment in hospital and that made it hard for them and their families to enjoy the simplest of life's pleasures, especially family holidays. The association asked Kathy and her husband, Ken, to find them a suitable property on the Central Coast where the patients and their families could holiday and take with them their dialysis machines. The house in Beachcomber Parade, Toukley, still operates today as a retreat for renal patients and their families.

When Kathy finally retired to the Central Coast 20 or more years ago she found she had more time to volunteer and was involved with a number of community groups in the Wyong shire. Some of the groups included Legacy, Toastmasters and Toukley Torch Bearers, the fundraising arm of Legacy. Kathy was also the welfare officer for the Toukley RSL Sub-Branch and became a celebrant officiating only at funerals, and most of those were for veterans. Toukley Torch Bearers formed in 1986 and raised more than \$1 million for veterans and their families. Kathy organised the annual Harry Moore Charity Golf Day and was the matriarch and master of ceremonies at the Gathering of the Clans Festival. Each fortnight when she was able to do so she visited war veterans and widows who were in Wyong Hospital to ensure that they had everything they needed.

Each fortnight when she was able she visited war veterans and widows who were in Wyong Hospital to make sure they had everything they needed. Kathy and her late husband, Ken, formed the Happiness Club to help veterans and widows stay connected by taking them on picnics for morning tea and then on to a local club for lunch. Kathy cooked all the morning teas and Ken drove the bus. Kathy was the driving force behind the Central Coast Gathering of the Clans. She was a short but powerful Scottish lady. The Gathering of the Clans will this year celebrate its twentieth anniversary. Kathy was a proud Australian and very proud of her Scottish heritage. Kathy and Ken were part of the Toukley RSL Pipes and Drums, and the Gathering of the Clans is a celebration of all things Scottish. Kathy was the master of ceremonies most years and always recited the Lord's Prayer in her native Scottish tongue. This year's event will be poorer without her.

Kathy was very committed to her community. One of her final acts of charity was to donate \$1,000 of her own money to help purchase an important defibrillator for Soldiers Beach Surf Life Saving Club. Kathy received many accolades over the years, including an Order of Australia in 1997 and an Australia Day Medal for all of her great work as a volunteer. Kathy loved volunteering and helping those in the local community who needed assistance, whether at the Toukley Markets or the Legacy Fete Day. Kathy ran the housie at the fete and was always talking on the microphone and trying to get money off people for very good causes. Volunteering kept her busy and gave her the opportunity to make a difference to people of all ages and backgrounds.

On a personal note, I knew Kathy for more than 10 years. She was a wonderful human being who always put everyone else before herself. Kathy and Ken devoted themselves to the welfare of others. Rest in peace, Kathy Marvell. She was a wonderful member of our local area who will not be forgotten. At last year's Gathering of the Clans Kathy was extremely sick but she still turned up and worked the microphone, while passing on her opinion to me about who were the best pipe bands on the day. Kathy was Scottish and Australian to the core and a real stalwart of the community. I think all members would recognise people with Kathy's qualities in their electorates. They are the people we cannot do without. Without them we are that much poorer.

WAGGA WAGGA ELECTORATE MEN'S SHEDS

Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (17:21): I bring to the attention of the House some exciting developments with men's sheds in the Wagga Wagga electorate. The electorate has had a men's shed since the early 2000s when I became the local member. It was established in Ashmont and its president was Rick Priest. From there the men's shed movement has grown throughout the Riverina and in my electorate in particular. In fact, Wagga Wagga now has two men's sheds and I commend them for their work in our community. It does not matter what it is, the men's shed is involved. Whether it be repairing furniture, doing good deeds for older people or cleaning off graffiti, members of the men's shed take part. They also run interesting courses in the shed including on timber work and computers. Whenever a men's shed opens its doors the place is packed.

Recently I took part in the opening of the Uranquinty Men's Shed at a brand new shed built on land at 80 Connorton Street. Importantly, the shed was constructed in partnership with the New South Wales State Emergency Service [SES], which has sponsored the Uranquinty Safety Group. Emergency equipment for Uranquinty will be located at the shed, which is just on the outskirts of Wagga Wagga. That community was inundated in the 2012 floods, so having equipment located at the Uranquinty Men's Shed will bring enormous benefit to the area. The site will include a radio base station. The community raised the money and built their shed in cooperation with the Wagga Wagga City Council. It is spectacular. Like all new structures, they need to fit it out but they will get that work done. I am sure they will apply for a Community Building Partnership grant to enable them to finish that work. I congratulate the Uranquinty community on their efforts.

I also congratulate Adelong Men's Shed, which applied for funds to build an extension to its woodworking workshop. The extension will have lined walls, shelving, storage cupboards and a dust extraction system. The Adelong Men's Shed is a fantastic organisation that has been able to achieve its goal to upgrade its facilities through community support from the Bendigo Bank, local fundraising and a \$13,000 Community Building Partnership grant. The members of the men's shed are busy making contributions back to the community. Dare I say it, the experience those shed members have in woodworking, carpentry and steelwork is unique. They are using every opportunity to pass their skills on to a younger generation.

The Rock and District Men's Shed has been developing its shed for about 18 months. The shed is old and has a rough, undulating floor that is unsafe, especially since many of the men are retired and some of them need assistance to get around. An amount of \$17,633 has been allocated to the men's shed in the Rock to allow them to put in a concrete floor to remove the difficulties that the men and women have experienced with the uneven surface. Women are very welcome at the sheds and have used the shed very productively. Of course, the group have plans to extend the shed, which is what happens. You find when they obtain a shed there is first an awning, then another shed, then an extension, then a vegetable garden and on it goes.

My electorate now has men's sheds in Tumut, Wagga Wagga, Wagga Wagga East at Gumly Gumly, Adelong and Lockhart, which has been operating for a while. Most of the people who started those sheds got the idea from the Wagga Wagga community. Men's sheds now have coordinators in place for the region, which they have done without government funding apart from the small grants that local members have been able to help out with. That says a lot for the men's shed movement. They now focus on mental health and things that men never talk about, such as those examinations that blokes have to undergo but are not good at talking about. Men need to talk about things such as bowel cancer. Every time I visit a men's shed I encourage blokes to get a check-up because bowel cancer is the most detectable and most treatable form of cancer. I encourage the men's shed members to talk about their health. I congratulate everyone involved in the men's shed movement. They are absolutely spectacular and a credit to our community.

TRIBUTE TO MARCELLE MANSOUR

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation) (17:27): I recognise the important contribution of a woman who is an inspiration to our community in Ryde. Marcelle Mansour is compassionate and looked up to as a beacon of integrity amongst many of her peers and, undoubtedly, her admirers. She is passionate about continuously enriching the Australian multicultural community. Marcelle has been described as a highly ethical individual whose morals are largely recognised by her fellow constituents and colleagues through her contributions to the arts community. A migrant to Australia in

1977, Marcelle's family moved from their homeland of Jaffa in Palestine and forged a new identity in this great nation of ours, paving the way for much of her inspiration and multicultural contributions to our society. Marcelle has professionally practised visual arts since the early 1980s with works spanning from portraits to murals and sceneries.

Marcelle has also been involved with the Australian ethnic media as a journalist involved in newspapers, community radio and television networks. A mother of four and grandmother of five, Marcelle's work is widely appreciated and awarded, and subsequently has been included in exhibitions at the Louvre Museum in Paris, the New York City Gallery and in many group exhibitions across Australia, including in this very building, Parliament House. Marcelle was also acknowledged for her contribution to her field of work, receiving the Gibran Kahlil Gibran Medal in 1995 on behalf of the renowned and prominent vocalist within the Middle East, Fairouz. Marcelle is not only a visual artist but also a writer, poet and journalist. Marcelle received a bachelor of arts in English literature from Ain Shams University in Egypt before migrating to Australia, undertaking further studies and completing a masters of studio arts in 2011 followed by a masters of fine arts in 2013 at the Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney.

Last year Marcelle was recognised as an Ambassador of Peace by the Universal Peace Federation. This honour emphasises Marcelle's strong-willed nature and determination in highlighting universal human experiences. Marcelle focuses on peace through building bridges with others and by inspiring viewers and audiences on how to cross thresholds towards transformation for healing humanity, reshaping reality, shifting war to peace, turning occupation into liberation, eliminating violence and therefore introducing peacefulness, transitioning terrorism into elevations, and recreating materialism into spiritualism. I commend Marcelle for these great efforts and goals in working towards achieving a safer and more grounded community not only in Sydney but also across the world through means of communication, particularly through her medium of art.

At times the phrase "a picture paints a thousand words" can be lost, but local pioneers like Marcelle, whose artworks can be highly engaging and interpreted and appreciated across all cultures and religions, show how great humanity can be and how lucky we are to have somebody like Marcelle in our society leading the way to a more communal way of life. I am very appreciative of Marcelle's ongoing efforts for our vibrant community in Ryde and beyond. It does not go unnoticed that her tireless efforts to achieve great results in our busy world help to form the greater society we live in. I look forward to the many more wonderful achievements she will be proud to claim. I believe Marcelle will continue to conquer any feats with her venerable perspectives.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (17:29): Today I highlight the shameful defunding of domestic violence workers across New South Wales, particularly in Western Sydney. Recently I visited Penrith Women's Health Centre with my colleagues the shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and member for Maitland, the member for Blue Mountains, the Hon. Sophie Cotsis, and my newly elected Federal colleague, the member for Lindsay. I note that the shadow Minister and member for Blue Mountains have also spoken in this place this week about the issues raised at that meeting. In this contribution it is impossible to convey the experiences of the thousands of women who use this service.

We know the statistics and are acutely aware that domestic violence remains a challenge for all governments across Australia. However, it was very clear to everyone at that meeting that the Government is failing women right across our State. It is simply heartbreaking to hear stories about the services of domestic violence caseworkers and counsellors working in early intervention being cut. These services are invaluable to women fleeing traumatic situations and it remains unthinkable to me that these services will be receiving less money and thus less support. It is an incredible shame that the Penrith Women's Health Centre was forced to let go of its only domestic violence caseworker when funding ran out on 30 June this year.

Unfortunately, this story is not localised to my part of Sydney. When we met with the Penrith Women's Health Centre we were also joined by staff from the Sydney Women's Counselling Service and the Cumberland Women's Health Centre. They have also lost staff due to cuts in funding by this Government. These services are a lifeline to women who are unable to access support from government and in the wake of the Going Home, Staying Home reforms these services are often the last resort for women who are still living with their partners. We all know how complex domestic violence can be. It often goes unreported and is often not spoken about. Tragically, in these situations many women simply do not know where to turn. It is crucial that organisations like the Penrith Women's Health Centre retain their funding to employ much-needed specialist domestic violence caseworkers and counsellors so women are not left behind by governments in often the most difficult situations.

The importance of having these specialist workers cannot be understated. Counsellors and caseworkers are front-line responding services and it is astounding that the Government does not see their value and is cutting this funding. Domestic violence is chronically under-reported because it has become increasingly difficult for

women to access these services when refuges are closing. In many cases the first point of contact for women experiencing violence is women's health services and counselling services like the Penrith Women's Health Centre. In particular, I recognise the staff at the Penrith Women's Health Centre for the outstanding work they do in extremely difficult situations. My colleagues and I were inspired when we met these brave women who are at the front line of some devastating situations. It is my hope that one day we will see announcements that increase their capacity instead of increasing their already difficult burden.

It gives me no pleasure to reiterate the statistics but, unfortunately, it seems that little progress is being made to ensure that fewer women fall victim to domestic violence and few women lose their lives each year. The raw statistics show that about one in three women experience physical violence and almost every week in Australia a woman is killed by her former or current partner. Penrith is ranked thirty-fifth highest local government area out of 155 in New South Wales for domestic violence. These services are desperate for funding and it is time this Government addressed the failure that is Going Home, Staying Home. It needs to urgently re-fund services such as the Penrith Women's Health Centre.

HOLSWORTHY ELECTORATE EVENTS

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (17:35): I take this opportunity to welcome the Temporary Speaker to the Speaker's panel. It is nice to see you in the chair.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Crouch): Thank you.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS: Over the past couple of weeks I have been pleased to welcome the Minister for Multiculturalism, Minister for Disability Services and Minister for Ageing, the Hon. John Ajaka, MLC, to the Holsworthy electorate. In June and July we visited some amazing local organisations and events such as the Liverpool Volunteer Resource Centre, The Shepherd Centre, Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre, Mandaean Synod of Australia and Sydney Pacifica. There were more but time does not permit me to list them all. Suffice to say I think the Minister should consider a second home at Liverpool because he has been visiting there so often lately. We also had the opportunity to open some new seniors social housing projects at Casula and Lurnea. This \$10 million investment boost for seniors in our local area was funded by the sales proceeds from Millers Point.

The Millers Point sales will generate an estimated \$500 million for investment in 1,500 new social housing properties across the State. I am happy to say that for each property sold, five have been delivered to people in need. These homes will help older people who might have otherwise struggled to get by in the private rental market. These purpose-built, accessible homes will make such a difference to the lives of the residents. All the homes have been designed to be accessible to older people and include things like handrails or modified bathrooms. I was lucky enough to be shown around some of these new housing structures by the residents. I thank Stephen, Mike, Doris and Anna for being very hospitable and taking the time to show the Minister and I around their new homes. They are taking a large amount of pride in keeping up their new homes' appearance.

I recently also had the opportunity to launch the National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS] with the Minister at The Shepherd Centre in Liverpool. We have so many community groups and disability organisations that our community relies on and I am glad that this Government is assisting to provide essential support to them. The NDIS scheme allows parents or people with disabilities and their carers to make the right decisions for them and it also allows them to have a greater say. Importantly, everyone will share the benefits of this new scheme. Indeed, it is estimated that the NDIS in south-western Sydney will create up to 6,000 new jobs and boost funding by an estimated \$750 million by 2019.

I was pleased to see that the \$250,000 grant we gave The Shepherd Centre last year is being put to great use in supporting children across the State at a crucial time in their lives. I thank Jim Hungerford, chief executive officer of The Shepherd Centre, for the continuing work he does to support people who have hearing loss and for hosting the Minister and me on the day. We also had the opportunity during the visit to meet with the Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre to get an update on the current services and needs for migrants in south-western Sydney. The Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre [MRC] works with newly arrived migrants, refugees, and diverse communities to build their capacity to take part in local life not only in south-western Sydney but also across Australia.

The centre provides essential services for our local migrant community including: information and referral to other services; playgroups and parenting support; youth services including homework support, youth casework and recreational activities; classes and courses, such as English, art and computer classes; employment and training opportunities; and aged care support. I commend the work they do for new members of our community and particularly thank Kamalle Dabboussy, Averil, Olivia, Donna, Jenny, Joe, Ayman and Emma for continuing to provide this support.

I was recently able to provide a \$15,000 grant towards the Young Adults Disabled Association [YADA]. As most people would know, I worked in the disability sector before entering this place and continue to be a huge fan of providing support to organisations that support people with disabilities, like YADA, which does so much work for our community on the smell of an oily rag and is often not recognised for it. This grant will go towards making the organisation even stronger and will enable it to upgrade some of its infrastructure to support even more people in our local area.

Buffy McDonald and John Eastwood deserve a lot of praise for the work they put into this organisation. They are two of the most dedicated local disability support providers I have met. Disappointingly, in the last fortnight they were burgled. No organisation deserves that, least of all YADA, a particularly special organisation that was greatly hurt. I hope the perpetrators will be caught soon. Once again I commend all the organisations mentioned for the work they do in building, assisting and bringing together our community and I thank Minister Ajaka for his ongoing support of south-west Sydney.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (17:40): Three weeks ago I was very pleased to join with my Federal colleague Kevin Hogan, Clarence Valley Mayor Richie Williamson and Debrah Novak to accept a petition condemning violence against women. For a long time Debrah has been a loud voice advocating against violence towards women generally, but more specifically in the Clarence Valley. Debrah was instrumental in organising a petition with almost 1,000 signatures asking the Clarence Valley's three elected community leaders to continue to speak out against domestic violence, which was presented to us at Memorial Park, Grafton.

The petition was initiated because the community is angry and frustrated by having to wait for justice for the tragic death of Maclean woman Lynette "Norma" Daley nearly five years ago on a lonely stretch of beach near Iluka. Norma's death was featured on the ABC's *Four Corners*, and there is no doubt that the program spurred the Director of Public Prosecutions to review the matter to determine if there was evidence against the two men who were at the scene of the crime. I am very pleased for the family that court attendance notices have been issued to the two accused, who appeared at the Grafton courthouse earlier this week. Whilst this is the start of the legal proceedings, we can only hope for justice for the family. Three other Clarence Valley women who are missing, dead or murdered all have one thing in common: their families are still waiting for justice in relation to their disappearances. All these women deserve justice. Debrah Novak said the recent outrage over the failure to prosecute two men who were originally charged with manslaughter over Ms Daley's death had brought up these other cases in the community where justice was still being sought.

Police are actively pursuing the presumed murder of Grafton woman Sharon Edwards, more than a year after her disappearance. And the person or persons responsible for the murder of Brooms Head girl Lee Ellen Stace in 1997 remains a mystery. South Grafton woman Jasmine Morris is still missing and has not been seen since 2009. The campaign aimed at protecting women is off the back of justice for Norma and is aimed at bringing awareness to the problem of domestic violence in the Clarence Valley. As a man and a community leader it is incumbent on me to be an advocate in any public safety campaign focused on protecting women. We must speak out as a community and continue to advocate to the necessary authorities to seek justice for all women who have met with foul play and have been subject to domestic violence. This is one of those important social matters that sits at the heart of our community. It should transcend politics and all levels of government. We all have a responsibility to speak out against domestic violence and violence against women.

It is totally unacceptable that at least one woman in Australia dies every week at the hands of her partner or former partner, and our community is not immune. Domestic violence is the ugly side of humanity and we as a society have a responsibility to do everything we can to end the level of violence against women in our community. I have spoken previously in this place about the great work being carried out by Dallas Waters in his campaign to tackle domestic violence in sporting organisations in the Clarence Valley through his Domestic Violence is Foul Play initiative. The message he has sent to the sporting organisations is that they do not tolerate foul play in their sports so it should not be acceptable that participants in their sport beat up their spouses or their children.

We know that the Clarence Valley is in the State's top 10 per cent for domestic violence-related offences and so every initiative we take is important and must be pursued to eliminate violence against women. Whether you are a civic leader, sporting leader, corporate or community leader, or just an average citizen, we all have a responsibility to stamp out violence against women. I have said before that this is a bigger problem to fix than for just one man or for government alone. If we want to reduce domestic violence in our community then it is up to each of us to speak out when we hear it or when we see it. Both the Federal and State governments have made the eradication of domestic violence a priority. It is very pleasing to see community advocates like Dallas Waters and Debrah Novak step up to the plate and take action for their community.

SYDENHAM STATION CREATIVE HUB

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (17:45): The Sydenham Station Creative Hub is an example of planning innovation at its very best—an approach that thinks outside the box to integrate established industrial properties with exciting new businesses such as Batch Brewing Company. Of all the businesses to get off the ground and make a success of it, the least likely would have to be the one in which the owners met on a lacrosse field. First, who plays lacrosse? Secondly, why would young people choose to start a business in a climate where we know 60 per cent of small businesses fail? Despite the odds—and their unusual beginnings—Chris and Andrew have made Batch Brewery a success, a huge success. Theirs is a popular microbrewery and tasting bar, run from a converted smash repairs garage on a busy street in Marrickville. They employ an impressive 17 staff and their beer is regularly served in more than 150 venues across Sydney.

Andrew is a local, raising his family in Dulwich Hill, and instantly saw the potential of the sparse industrial zone bordered by Victoria Road, Marrickville Road and Sydenham station. The area is a mix of factories and warehouses, the sound of heavy trucks on Sydenham Road interrupted only by the roar of planes overhead. This sounds far from ideal, but, surprisingly, they are not alone: hidden amongst the industrial laundries, car yards and factories there is a barber shop, a multitude of coffee shops, a theatre and art gallery, and lots of fellow microbrewers. A little further out, there is even an axe-throwing facility—I kid you not.

This is the new inner west, a community of migrants, families, workers in industrial estates and, yes, lots of hipster craft brewers, all living and working side by side. It is an unlikely success, but a success nonetheless. I am proud to have championed and to continue to champion the local council's plan to harness this potential by rezoning this area to light industrial while supporting creative industries and small businesses like Batch Brewing to build a night-time economy, all the while protecting the industrial businesses already there. The aspects of the neighbourhood that appealed to Andrew and Chris also make it ideal for a new entertainment precinct. A variety of premises can be adapted, one of the busiest train stations is on their doorstep and there is easy access to the fast-growing and rapidly expanding suburbs of the inner west.

The precinct will allow creative industries to use spaces in warehouses and factories, even potentially temporarily in the evenings. Increased activity will be teamed with council's commitment to new lighting, traffic calming, greening of the space and generally making it more pedestrian friendly—all the while supporting artists and creative workers working with potential live music venues. It will support existing businesses in Marrickville, Sydenham and Tempe by bringing more people to the area. Chris and Andrew have many factory workers who drop into the brewery after work to taste their latest brew and they regularly use local businesses for their own needs. In fact, the furniture maker across the road made their tap decals and the laser cutter further down has helped them with marketing.

This is the truly fascinating thing about the precinct: First, it builds upon what is already happening and, secondly, it is bucking the trend of the usual gentrification. This is not about shuffling the old industries on to make way for a hipster paradise. Instead, the precinct is about unlocking the potential of the existing community and recognising that if we think outside of the box, we can support and grow all kinds of local businesses. Thirdly, the concept sought to make a lemonade from a particularly sour lemon of life underneath the flight path. Intensive residential development would not work because of the noise and the fact that planes and tall buildings do not mix.

It demonstrates that we can revitalise suburbs without the one-size-fits-all residential development favoured by the Baird Government. It stands in stark contrast to this Government's uncreative, one-size-fits-all, paint-by-numbers approach to density along the Sydenham to Bankstown line. It also contrasts with other top-down planning approaches that leave us with unfortunate, bland entertainment precincts like Darling Harbour and Fox Studios. Fourthly, it demonstrates that we are taking steps towards being a truly global city in which vibrant suburbs offer a chance to see a show, taste local beers, visit an art gallery or two and finish up with live music at the bowlo. In this precinct, we recognise the importance of a vibrant nightlife, and of making new spaces for creative industries and artists to grow.

It also demonstrates that we still live in a city where it is possible to get a few drinks, to listen to live music and to get home safely. Successes often emerge in the most unlikely of places, including lacrosse fields and overlooked industrial zones on the outskirts of our suburbs. Brewers Andrew and Chris took a chance on a warehouse next to a busy road and have made a success of it. I am excited about what this precinct offers for the future of the inner west, and I back it all the way.

ALBURY ELECTORATE OLYMPIC REPRESENTATIVES

Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (17:50): The Olympic Games provide a major spectacle of our times. To spectators it has become more important than events such as world championships. It is where careers are

established and memories made. The Olympics Games, for all its faults, has captured the imagination of the world. This is the tournament the people want to see. Each time it rolls around, we take particular athletes into our hearts. The Olympic Games is perhaps the ultimate expression of the battles and challenges of life that reality television struggles to emulate. However, from a regional perspective the importance of the games is that we see local heroes emerge. "Emerge" is probably a good word to use, because country sportsmen and sportswomen train quietly and, as they improve, travel internationally, blooming most spectacularly every four years when we finally see what our neighbour has achieved in his or her sport.

In the electorate of Albury this year we have a champion who will represent Australia in the double trap shooting event. Mulwala's James Willet is only 20 years of age but he has rapidly built a name for himself in this sport. Highlights of his career so far include: claiming fourth at the 2015 International Shooting Sport Federation [ISSF] World Championships in Men's Double Trap at Lonato, Italy; winning the 2015 Oceania Championships in Men's Double Trap at Sydney; taking bronze this year in the ISSF World Cup Double Trap held in Nicosia, Cyprus; coming first in the double trap at the ISSF World Cup Test Event in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and coming first in the double trap at the 2016 Australian Clay Target Association Shotgun National Championships held in Brisbane.

I met James at the Corowa Anzac Day service earlier this year. He told me he was about to head off to Italy for a championship, followed by some training in Rio. His sister, Marnie, was speaking at the service that day. Marnie is the girls' school captain at Corowa High for 2016, and I met her once again on 1 June on her visit to Parliament House as part of the school leadership program. At the Corowa Anzac Day service, James struck me as a genuine representative of the farming life. He was well spoken, well presented and down to earth. There were no airs and graces about him, despite the fact that for someone so young he had travelled the world and achieved so much success in his sport. In discussion it was clear that James knew what job he had to do in Rio and that he was getting on with it.

Chris Johnston, the recently retired principal of James' former school, Corowa High School, is thrilled that James is the school's Olympic Ambassador. He told me that James was twice the school's sportsperson of the year, once in 2012 and once in 2013. He also told me that at school James was a very quiet and polite but driven young man focused on agriculture and the family farm. Family has always been important to James. His family has supported him throughout his career. Chris said that he was "a quiet achiever, with a lot of steel in the quietness". It was at the age of 12 that James took up target shooting with the Corowa High School Shooting Team, quickly excelling and displaying a genuine talent for the sport.

In 2015 James made the fortuitous move into double trap shooting, and spectacular results followed in rapid succession. The rapid nature of his progress belies the hours that James has dedicated to the pursuit of excellence, and the level of support he has received on this journey. His commute for training to Werribee by train was taking three hours. In response, James and his father, Arthur, developed a shooting range on the family farm near Mulwala. He trains with assistance and guidance from five-time Olympian and gold medallist, Russell Mark, who also specialised in the double trap discipline. Once James headed off to major national and international events he quickly made his presence known.

Although still a junior by age category, James went to his first world championships in 2015 as a competitor in the adult section, qualifying for the final. Since then he has achieved other outstanding results, culminating in his being named as a member of the Australian Olympic team. At the Shooting Australia annual Awards of Excellence, James was named the 2015 Male Shooter of the Year. He also won the Ashley Adams Perpetual Trophy as 2015 Athlete of the Year. James Willett has certainly made a dramatic entrance onto the world stage in his sport. His is a story that keeps getting better and better. Age, too, is on his side. I am sure all James' friends in Mulwala and Corowa, in particular, and at Corowa High School, will be cheering for him as he takes aim at the Olympic Games in August. We wish him a steady hand, a clear eye and fast reflexes.

I also congratulate Corowa's Marcus Fraser, Tooma's Charlotte Sutherland, and former Corowa and Albury tennis player, Sam Groth, on their recent inclusion in the Australian team. Marcus will represent Australia in its first Olympic golf team. Marcus has achieved recognition with wins and high places in tournaments around the world, from Malaysia to India and Japan, since he turned professional in 2002. Charlotte has achieved medals in rowing in several world cup crews and is studying agriculture at the University of Melbourne. I wish all the best to James, Marcus, Charlotte and Sam.

KYEEMAGH INFANTS SCHOOL

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale) (17:55): I draw the attention of the House to a community campaign by the Parents and Citizens Association of Kyeemagh Infants School in my electorate of Rockdale, and add my support to its calls for the Government to expand the school. Kyeemagh Infants School is a kindergarten to year 2 public school situated at the juncture of the Cooks River and Botany Bay. The growing community in

the area desperately needs a full kindergarten to grade 6 local public school. I acknowledge the dedication and hard work of the Kyeemagh infants P and C, including Luisa Trieu, Louise Sheehy, Nadene Faure, and James Kyriakou who came to see me at my office, P and C President Gina Moeke, and the many other parents and community members who have already gathered many hundreds of signatures in support of the school's expansion.

Kyeemagh Infants School has one of the most committed communities I have ever seen. Although it is one of the smallest schools in the St George area, the P and C is constantly active, raising money, participating in local events and giving back to our local area. The school now has only three classes and just 60 students, but it wants to be able grow to cater for many more. The school is particularly keen to provide continuing support for three special needs children whose parents face great difficulties in finding appropriate schools that are prepared to cater for their sons and daughters. Starting at a new school is never easy, but it is dramatically harder when schools are unwilling to accommodate special needs children in the first place even before dealing with all the challenges of making new friends and finding acceptance again when they are a little bit different. The Kyeemagh Infants School community is begging to be able to keep these children in their local school, and the Government should be there to support it through this process.

The Kyeemagh Infants School P and C is so committed to seeing the school expand that it is willing to fundraise for demountables to house year 4 to year 6 if it obtains departmental approval. Many parents already refer to the school informally as "Kyeemagh Public School". It would be foolish of the Government not to consider taking advantage of this active school community to help support education in the St George area, particularly given the priority precincts flagged by the Department of Planning and Environment in Banksia and Arncliffe, which will drastically increase pressure on our local schools over the next decade. My electorate is facing rapid development and, while our community is bearing a significant part of Sydney's inner ring growth, we rightfully expect that government services will keep pace with our expanding population.

Neighbouring schools, including Brighton-Le-Sands Public School, are struggling to cope with local enrolments, and increasingly parents in the area are being forced to send their children further and further afield to find a school at which they can get a primary education. Brighton-Le-Sands Public School has more than 800 students, while I understand that Rockdale and Arncliffe public schools are also having difficulty finding places for all the new students we have coming through. Kyeemagh Infants School is ideally positioned to expand to meet this demand. It is on a substantial block of land in a suburb with plenty of open space and a welcoming, friendly environment a stone's throw from parks and the waterfront. While other schools across the State might struggle to find the physical facilities to house existing student numbers, Kyeemagh Infants School currently has unused buildings.

It is simply good common sense that the Minister for Education and the department would make the best possible use of the existing assets at Kyeemagh rather than struggling to fit more students into demountable classrooms at nearby schools. Kyeemagh Infants School already has 19 students ready to commence year 3 in 2017 and an empty classroom they could be taught in and it could begin the transition towards being a full kindergarten to year 6 primary school. The demand and community support are there. They are just waiting for support from the Minister.

TOP BLOKES FOUNDATION

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (17:59): Tonight I speak about the Top Blokes Foundation, an organisation aimed at empowering young men aged 14 to 24 to positively contribute to their local community. This organisation provides peer mentoring, community engagement and suicide prevention programs to young men to ensure they do not slip through the cracks of society. I had the privilege of attending the Top Blokes Foundation National Boys Health Forum on 1 June, along with my colleague the member for Keira and many members of this Chamber. At the forum I was able to see the amazing work that this organisation does in our community and to realise the need for this organisation's existence.

Some of the statistics I heard at the forum are of great concern. For young men in Australia suicide is the leading cause of death. The average age that a young man starts drinking alcohol is just over 15; the average age a young man will first watch pornography is 11; and young men are 3½ times more likely to die from an accident than young women. These statistics are not helped by the fact that 82.6 per cent of media articles pertaining to young men are negative. I know my colleagues on all sides of the Chamber will agree that these statistics are very serious and they are the reason we need organisations like the Top Blokes Foundation.

Top Blokes runs one-day intensive programs as well as eight- and 16-week programs to provide for a range of topics to be covered in either a short or long syllabus. The topics include alcohol awareness, mental health, sexuality, racism, anger management and many others. Top Blokes has also done great work in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex [LGBTI] youth support, running workshops specifically on sexuality and

tolerance of all identities. It is incredibly hard for some young men to come to terms with their sexuality and many find it challenging to come out as gay or bisexual to their parents and peers. Organisations like Top Blokes are helping to make this process easier for young men, to help them to not fall through the cracks, and breaking down the stigma surrounding young men that occurs all too often in communities.

The Top Blokes programs also teach young men respect for women. Through workshops on changing perceptions of masculinity and gender, teaching young men how to have healthy relationships, and the realities of pornography, Top Blokes is helping to shape the young men in our community to have a more respectful approach in their thoughts, actions and interactions with the young women around them and in their lives. Programs like these can hopefully assist our community in reducing domestic violence rates by teaching young men respect from a very early age.

We must ensure that the mental health and wellbeing of young men in our community is never overlooked or cast aside. The Top Blokes Foundation's eight- and 16-week programs have made good progress in ensuring that the mental health of our young men is being taken seriously in our communities. Of the young men who have taken part in the programs, 84 per cent of participants have significantly changed their opinions about alcohol and other substances, 80 per cent have learnt new techniques for anger management and conflict resolution, 83 per cent felt an increase in their self-confidence, and mental wellbeing increased on average by 18 per cent for the eight-week program and by 21 per cent for the 16-week program.

The Top Blokes Foundation is doing vital work in our community in improving the mental health of our young men as well as teaching them important lessons on alcohol, drugs and sex, and teaching them tolerance and respect. I acknowledge the hardworking team and all those involved with Top Blokes. I thank and commend them for their work in our community. I urge all my colleagues to reach out to this organisation because, although we deal with many cultural and sociological issues in our communities, all too often this issue is overlooked. Many young men are not comfortable in speaking out about their mental health issues. Only this week we heard stories in this House from colleagues about the challenges of men's mental health. I believe it is very important that we engage them at a young age.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (18:04): I commend the member for Campbelltown for his advocacy for the Top Blokes Foundation. It is fitting that he does so on the day of the funeral of young Stuart Kelly. Sadly, this year suicide will be the largest killer of males under 44. It is critically important that we address this national tragedy. More Australians will die from suicide this year than will be killed on our roads. I therefore commend the work of the member for Campbelltown and, more importantly, the work of the Top Blokes Foundation in addressing this national tragedy and in doing other important work around raising awareness of respect for women by young men, helping young men with self-esteem issues and helping them deal with sexual and gender identity. It is critical work and I am greatly interested in the Top Blokes Foundation. I look forward to working with the member for Campbelltown in supporting the organisation in the future.

WUNDARRA SERVICES

Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour) (18:06): Mr Temporary Speaker, I congratulate you on your elevation to the role of Temporary Speaker. I am very pleased to see you in the chair and I pass on the regards of Darren Jamieson to you as well. Tonight I speak about a very serious issue I have previously raised in this House. Wundarra Services has been charged with the responsibility of looking after Aboriginal juveniles and other juveniles who are at risk. I have met with the Minister this week about this issue. Following my previous representation to the Minister, he organised review of the service by the Office of the Children's Guardian and Family and Community Services. But that review is not good enough. I have received a litany of complaints and concerns about 12- to 13-year-old children on the streets after midnight, supposedly under the care of a carer from Wundarra Services.

The service has a house at Sandy Beach which has been trashed on a regular basis. The young people who supposedly are under care in that house have threatened, harassed and abused neighbours, about which I have informed the Minister. People have sold their properties because of thefts in their neighbourhood and fear for their safety as a result of the young people who reside in houses owned and operated by Wundarra Services. I have received complaints from carers who have said that when they have raised concerns about the management of Wundarra Services no shifts have been offered to them. Families have been unable to gain access to children and I have received complaints about meetings that have not been attended by Wundarra Services or Family and Community Services.

Police have complained to me that when they have visited properties operated by Wundarra Services the smell of cannabis in the house has been overwhelming—yet children aged 12 to 17 have been in the house with carers present at the time. Stolen property has been located at certain properties. Following investigation, the Office of the Children's Guardian has renewed the service's licence but with 11 stipulations. Those 11 conditions

have not been followed. Children have been raped by carers and young people under the care of Wundarra have raped children in public toilets at Moonee, as has been reported in the *Daily Telegraph*.

The latest incident occurred last Friday. Two young boys—I think they were aged about 11 and 14—were placed in the care of Wundarra Services because their mother had voluntarily gone into drug rehabilitation. The grandmother and uncle offered their support and help but that was not accepted by Family and Community Services and it was not accepted by Wundarra Services. There are two stories relating to this incident. The young man, who is less than 14 years of age, was at the pictures with his carer. He excused himself, for whatever reason, and went down to the car in the car park. The keys were in the ignition. He took the car onto the Pacific Highway at lunchtime and was involved in an accident. Thankfully, no-one was killed but the oversight by Wundarra Services, by Family and Community Services and by the Office of the Children's Guardian was not good enough.

I am demanding now that this service be defunded. The Office of the Children's Guardian website says that the service is under the control of Glenys Lovelock. It is not; it is under the control of Ernie Lovelock. Ernie Lovelock has threatened carers and children. I believe this money must be taken away. Mr Lovelock has made millions of dollars out of this service over the years. It is funded to an amount of over \$2 million. The Aboriginal community and people who are employed by Family and Community Services have come to me to say that they do not believe that the service is operating under the guidelines it has been given. That continues to be the case. I demand that this service is defunded and that alternatives are found because I am sick and tired of the treatment of these children. These children are at risk but they are not given support by this service, by Family and Community Services or by the Office of the Children's Guardian. I have raised this with the Minister this week. I will continue to raise this issue until the service is defunded and the children are given the care that they deserve.

INDIGENOUS YOUTH

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Minister for Finance, Services and Property)
(18:09): It has now been more than a week since we saw shocking images of children in detention in the Northern Territory. Our horror at the treatment of those children is entirely justified but our consciences should not be appeased by the mere fact that yet another royal commission has been called. Detention is at the end of a sad and unfortunate process, not at the beginning. It goes without saying that people should be treated justly and humanely in our correctional facilities, but it is even more important to honestly address, in the first place, the reasons so many young Indigenous people end up in those facilities. We cannot simply make excuses for the crimes that young people commit. Unless we tackle the underlying factors, the children will continue to wallow in these facilities long after the television images fade and the commission's findings have been forgotten.

A lot has been written in the past week about what has occurred at the Don Dale facility but the wisest words have come from Warren Mundine, chair of the Indigenous Advisory Council and former president of the Labor Party. He wrote that the real problem was not that so many Indigenous people were in custody but what got them there in the first place. That factor was social breakdown. According to Mundine, Indigenous communities are trapped in an endless, deadly and dysfunctional cycle. This consists of intergenerational welfare dependence, teenage pregnancies, domestic violence, mental health problems and drug and alcohol addiction.

The fact that young Indigenous people are four times more likely to commit suicide should tell us all we need to know about the overwhelming sense of hopelessness and despair they must be feeling. There are two easy and all-too-common responses to statistics like these. Firstly, there are symbolic actions to redress the historic injustices against the Aboriginal community. Secondly, there are ever larger government programs and agencies. But however well intentioned these interventions have been, it is clear that they have not had the desired outcomes for the Indigenous community.

Warren Mundine points out that many of the problems have become worse since the late 1980s—a time when symbolic actions and government interventions were most prolific. In fact, he lays a major part of the blame for social dysfunction on the shift from work to welfare in the 1970s. By making Indigenous people dependent on welfare, well-meaning governments robbed them of their most important possession: a sense of purpose and meaning. Our Indigenous communities are hurting and our responses continue to fail them. Given this history, it is no wonder that many are cynical that yet another investigation will make any practical difference.

So what does work? After researching this subject, author Arthur C. Brooks has identified four values that are most closely correlated with humans flourishing. They are family, faith, community and meaningful work, which collectively he calls the "happiness portfolio". It is only by focusing on these things, he says, that strong individuals, families and communities are created. This is where I believe the Government should focus and target its investment. Unfortunately, many of these things are ideologically unacceptable to the political Left—in fact, by actively promoting the heavy hand of government intervention, they are undermining almost everyone.

Our approach must change. In the words of Brooks, "it must offer hope as well as help". The Government should see people as assets who can make a contribution, rather than liabilities who need help. It should see work as an opportunity, not a punishment, and it should see family and faith as pillars for strong communities, not relics of a bygone era that we can ignore. It is only by getting these unfashionable basics right that our Indigenous communities can be lifted up and flourish. Warren Mundine agrees. He writes of a future where every Indigenous child is in school and every Indigenous adult is in a job. This is the practical face of a true social justice agenda. It respects human dignity, promotes self-agency and goes with the grain of human nature.

I appreciate that these are complex issues but as a Liberal I have hope in the power of individuals and communities to determine their destinies. This is why, later this year, I will take a group of 20 year 12 students to the Northern Territory as part of the Hills-Hawkesbury Student Leadership Program. Instead of attending schoolies week, this program will see them work alongside the students and staff at two local schools to help with repairs and gain exposure to Indigenous culture. It is our small contribution to a school which, against significant odds, is educating Indigenous children to give them the best opportunities in life. Indigenous communities are part of our national history but they must also be part of our national story today. It is my hope that as a result of this program each and every one of these students will become a passionate advocate and champion of Indigenous success.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (18:16): I pay tribute to the Minister for Finance, Services and Property for his contribution tonight. He is very passionate about good policy and he is particularly passionate about helping the most vulnerable. He not only talks the talk, he walks the walk. I specifically want to highlight the amazing Hills-Hawkesbury Student Leadership Program. It takes young kids from our community and potentially inspires them to consider a future life of service by providing them with mentoring throughout their Higher School Certificate year, culminating with the opportunity for them to put what they have learnt into action in helping those who need it most. This year the initiative will enable the students to support a remote Indigenous community. It is a remarkable opportunity that the member for Hawkesbury is giving the young people in his community. I hope that they, too, will one day go on to make a difference not unlike that of the member for Hawkesbury.

FLINDERS ESTATE NOISE POLLUTION

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:18): I congratulate Temporary Speaker Crouch on his position as Temporary Chair. On 10 March I outlined in this place the plight of Flinders estate residents who are suffering increasing noise from the M1 Motorway. This matter was brought to my attention by an attentive local resident, Mr David Harries, on behalf of more than 130 local residents. They each signed a petition. As it did not originally comply with the standing orders, it was presented to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight in August last year. I attempted to obtain the agreement of the Leader of the House to have the non-conforming petition tabled in the House, but he opposed my request. Nonetheless, since August last year, I have attempted to have this matter addressed by the Minister. I commend the Minister for, at the very least, being conscientious in his responses to my numerous representations. However, I advise the House that the Minister has been clearly misinformed of the true nature of this problem.

In his responses to my representations, the Minister indicated that noise amelioration measures for Flinders residents are the responsibility of the developers of the estate and the Shellharbour City Council. As a consequence of the Minister's advice, I made representations to the developers and council. I received advice from the developers—UrbanGrowth NSW and Peet Limited—indicating that in the development of the Flinders estate the developers fully complied with all relevant legislative and development consent requirements. The Shellharbour City Council also provided me with advice indicating similar views. I provided all of that correspondence to the Minister. The Minister's view—that noise pollution from the M1 Motorway and its amelioration is the responsibility of the developer and the council—at best is contested. At worst, it is just now quite misleading.

A few kilometres up the road, residents who live at North Kiama will have noise barriers built, with funding provided by the Government. While I congratulate the Government on acting on the concerns of local North Kiama residents, it begs the question: Why will the Government not act on the same complaints by residents who live at Flinders? We are talking about a 500-metre gap that needs to be plugged. We are not talking of the need to build the Great Wall of China. The fact remains that noise pollution coming from the M1 Motorway at Flinders is the very same noise pollution for the North Kiama residents. Its increasing noise pollution from the very same road. I have asked the Minister to now address this issue by accepting that it is the Government's responsibility to provide lasting noise amelioration for the Flinders residents. I say to the Minister: Build this wall!

Briefly, I acknowledge that the Leader of the Opposition, Luke Foley, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and shadow Minister for Racing, Michael Daley, and my regional parliamentary colleague, the shadow Treasurer, Ryan Park, visited the Dapto Dogs last Thursday evening. Together we showed our support for the greyhound racing industry and the world famous Dapto Dogs. I respect the various views being expressed

on that important issue, but I disagree with the Government's ham-fisted approach to shutting down this industry. The industry can be reformed, and it should be given the chance to implement the 79 recommendations contained in the report of the commission of inquiry. I look forward to speaking on the Government's bills when they eventually are introduced to Parliament.

CABRAMATTA POLICING

Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (18:21): I take this opportunity to recognise officers of the Cabramatta Local Area Command [LAC] for the great work that they do in providing a safe and secure environment for my local community. The 130-plus dedicated officers who are stationed at the Cabramatta LAC are out there every single day, responding to our calls and putting their lives on the line for us. They not only risk their lives for us but also give up their time to engage with local organisations and schools to raise awareness on safety matters or their responsibility to the community. In addition, the LAC is always available to lend a helping hand to local organisations, such as the Police Citizens Youth Club [PCYC], to raise money and continue to fund their social programs. I am delighted to say that I enjoy a close relationship with the local police command.

As many members know, during the early 1990s Cabramatta was not the most pleasant place to be. Cabramatta was labelled the drug capital of Australia. However, due to the ongoing hard work of the Cabramatta police during those dark years, crime declined dramatically—in particular, drug-related crimes. Now Cabramatta is a tourist destination. In 2001, the then Labor Government announced the construction of a new police station due to the rapid growth of our local area. I am pleased to say that I was present for the opening of that facility in 2003, which allowed the Cabramatta LAC officers to do their job in a bigger and more modern complex.

The regular briefings that I have with the Cabramatta LAC provide me with great insight into the work that they do for our community. I want to mention two people in particular that have been the driving force in keeping my community safe. Firstly, the superintendent of the Cabramatta LAC, Mr Wayne Murray, has done an outstanding job since taking the helm in 2012. Wayne has made sure that the Cabramatta LAC is well resourced and placed to respond to any situation. Under his strong leadership, the Cabramatta LAC has been a visible force, which, knowing that our community is in safe hands, brings great comfort to my community. I commend Superintendent Murray for his strong advocacy for the reinstatement of closed-circuit television [CCTV] camera monitoring in the Cabramatta central business district area.

Secondly, I acknowledge the Cabramatta LAC crime manager, Detective Chief Inspector Darren Newman, for the work that he has done in leading the crackdown on both domestic violence and the rise of the drug, ice. The Cabramatta LAC is currently dealing with the rise of high-quality counterfeit \$50 notes and has begun an awareness campaign that has made a huge impact on my local community. People can go into any store and see comparisons between a counterfeit and a genuine \$50 note. That is how effective the awareness campaign of officers of the Cabramatta LAC is, and I commend them for that.

Recently I attended the Rotary Police Officer of the Year Awards at the Marconi Club and was pleased that Sergeant Darren Laing received the Officer for the Year—Peer award and that Noel Rayner won the Police Officer for the Year—Community Award. Sergeant Laing is at the forefront of the Magistrates Early Referral into Treatment [MERIT] program, which ensures that offenders who voluntarily enter the treatment program receive counselling, support and education before their court date, which helps them get their lives back on track. The program was not being heavily utilised at Cabramatta since its inception in 2000. It was only after Sergeant Laing was appointed as the MERIT liaison officer that the program was fully utilised. Sergeant Laing took it upon himself to become a subject expert on this program. During the 2015-16 period, the Cabramatta LAC referred more than 140 persons to the program, which is far more than the number referred in the entire remainder of the State.

Constable Noel Rayner received his award for his fantastic work in his role as the Cabramatta LAC youth liaison officer. Noel, who has been in the role of youth liaison officer for a number of years, has led several student leadership and mentorship programs in high schools in my local area. At Cabramatta High School he successfully managed a program that targets students from the Pacific communities, which allows them to gain an insight into the NSW Police Force. The programs also aim to help break down the barriers between students and the police. In addition, his previous experience in youth social work has given him a deeper understanding of the issues that face youths. Once again, I acknowledge the men and women at the Cabramatta LAC—and of course all our men and women in uniform—for the work they do to ensure that we live in a safe and secure environment.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:27
until Tuesday 9 August 2016 at 12:00.**