



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament  
First Session**

**Thursday, 25 August 2016**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Bills .....	1
Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Bill 2016.....	1
Returned.....	1
Documents .....	1
Auditor-General's Report .....	1
Bills .....	1
Criminal Procedure Amendment (Summary Proceedings for Indictable Offences) Bill 2016 .....	1
First Reading.....	1
Second Reading .....	1
Motions .....	4
Centenary of Anzac.....	4
Bills .....	6
Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Bill 2016.....	6
Consideration in Detail .....	6
Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Amendment (Development Assessment) Bill 2016.....	6
Second Reading .....	6
Hurlstone Agricultural High School Site Bill 2016.....	12
Second Reading .....	12
Motions .....	15
Indian Independence Day .....	15
Berry Bypass.....	19
Sexual Harassment in the Workplace .....	26
Visitors.....	30
Visitors.....	30
Question Time.....	30
Operation Prospect.....	30
NSW Police Force Restructure .....	31
Police Tactical Command Vehicle.....	32
Social Impact Investment.....	33
Westconnex Compulsory Property Acquisition.....	34
Jobs Growth .....	36
Westconnex Compulsory Property Acquisition.....	38
Domestic Violence.....	39
Racial Vilification .....	40
Education Reforms.....	40
Personal Explanation .....	42
Commissioner Scipione .....	42
Members .....	42
Mrs Tanya Davies, Member for Mulgoa .....	42
Absence.....	42

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Committees .....	42
Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption .....	42
Membership .....	42
Petitions.....	42
Petitions Received.....	42
Committees .....	43
Legislation Review Committee.....	43
Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 23/56.....	43
Matter of Public Importance .....	44
Daffodil Day .....	44
Community Recognition Statements .....	46
Organ Donation.....	46
Southern Districts Soccer Football Association .....	46
Pittwater Electorate Olympians .....	46
Tribute to Bernard "midget" Farrelly.....	46
Battle of Long Tan Fiftieth Anniversary .....	47
Warialda Open Girls Rugby Union Squad.....	47
Tribute to Peter Hilder .....	47
Battle of Long Tan Fiftieth Anniversary .....	47
Linga Longa Farm.....	47
Toongabbie Christian School.....	47
Tribute to Nick Riches .....	48
Tempe Public School .....	48
Toongabbie Christian School.....	48
Macedonian Orthodox Church.....	48
Tribute to Mitch Walmsley.....	48
Battle of Long Tan Fiftieth Anniversary .....	49
Clarence Valley Business Excellence Awards .....	49
Tribute to David Fisher.....	49
Retirement of Bob Parr .....	49
Anzac Avenues, Wyong and Tuggerah .....	49
K2 Kayaking Olympic Bronze Medallists.....	49
Charlestown School Drawing Competition .....	50
Hawkesbury Community Kitchen.....	50
Our Lady of Lebanon Feast of the Assumption.....	50
Daffodil Day .....	50
Burwood Sandakan Remembrance Service.....	50
Albion Park Country Women's Association Evening Branch .....	51
Port Stephens Yacht Club Pacrim Regatta.....	51
Great Lakes Under-17 Netball Team.....	51
Mary MacKillop Catholic College, Wakely .....	51
Southern Highlands Melanoma Support Group.....	51

## TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Uruguayan Independence 191st Anniversary .....	52
Meriton Award for Excellence Winner Ckds Architects .....	52
Mary MacKillop Catholic College Twenty-Fifth Anniversary .....	52
Australian Bravery Award Recipient Mitchell Lee Burge .....	52
Recovery Point Program .....	52
Kiama Readers Festival .....	52
Parramatta Mission Abraham Conference .....	53
Domestic Violence Awareness Fundraising Events .....	53
People's Shed, Busby .....	53
Cricket Clinics .....	53
Rhythmic Gymnast Tyla Petrie.....	53
Tribute to Colin Bishop .....	54
Forster Keys Fun Day .....	54
Twenty-Fifth Taree Envirofair.....	54
Rockcan.....	54
Petitions.....	54
Southern Highlands Coalmining.....	54
Discussion .....	54
Private Members' Statements .....	59
Police and Emergency Services Personnel Awards.....	59
Indian Independence Day .....	59
Indian Independence Day .....	60
Guide Dogs .....	60
Palliative Care .....	60
Huskisson Wharf.....	61
St Martha's Church, Strathfield.....	62
Manning Great Lakes Local Area Command Awards.....	63
Junior Soccer.....	64
Australian Mitochondrial Disease Foundation .....	65
Commercial Fishing Industry Adjustment Program .....	65
Charmhaven Road Safety .....	66
Turramurra Lookout Community Garden.....	67
Housing Affordability .....	68

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Thursday, 25 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.]*

## *Bills*

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT (GOVERNANCE AND PLANNING) BILL 2016**

#### **Returned**

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the abovementioned bill with amendments. I set down consideration of the Legislative Council amendments as an order of the day for a later hour.

## *Documents*

### **AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT**

**The CLERK:** I announce receipt, in accordance with section 63C of the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983, of the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled "Red Tape reduction: Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Finance, Services and Innovation", dated August 2016, received out of session on 25 August 2016 and authorised to be printed.

## *Bills*

### **CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMENDMENT (SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS FOR INDICTABLE OFFENCES) BILL 2016**

#### **First Reading**

**Bill introduced and read a first time.**

#### **Second Reading**

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Attorney General) (10:13):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Criminal Procedure Amendment (Summary Proceedings for Indictable Offences) Bill 2016. The purpose of this bill is to allow four strictly indictable breaking and entering offences, which currently must be heard in the District Court, to be heard in the Local Court. As Attorney General, I am committed to delivering fast, fair and accessible justice for the people of New South Wales. One of the most concerning parts of the court process throughout our system is the time it takes for cases to be finalised in court. The period between an offence and sentencing is stressful not only for victims whose lives are impacted while they wait for the case to be resolved but also for witnesses who are expected to recall the details of their evidence, and for accused persons who await a verdict on their guilt or innocence.

This bill aims to reduce court delays for all participants in the criminal justice system by ensuring that criminal offences are dealt with in the most appropriate court. Criminal cases are dealt with in the Local Court, District Court or Supreme Court, depending on the type of offence. Criminal offences fall into three categories. The first offences categorised as summary offences are the least serious criminal matters in New South Wales. These offences must be dealt with in the Local Court and carry a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment or less.

The second offences are indictable offences that are dealt with in the Local Court, except where an election is made for the matter to be heard in the District Court. Offences in this category are known as "table offences" because they are listed in two tables in schedule 1 to the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. For table 1 offences, which are more serious, an election may be made either by the prosecutor or by the defendant. For table 2 offences, which are less serious, an election may be made only by the prosecutor. The third category is strictly indictable offences, which must be dealt with in the District Court or Supreme Court. The District Court and Supreme Court are best suited to deal with the most serious criminal matters because they have jury trials and larger sentencing jurisdictions than the Local Court.

In its 2011 report entitled "An Examination of Sentencing Powers of the Local Court in NSW", the Sentencing Council recommended that a general review of the Crimes Act 1900 be undertaken to determine whether any additional offences should be included in the tables, being the second category of offences I mentioned before. That review was undertaken by the Department of Justice, in close consultation with stakeholders, including the NSW Police Force, Sentencing Council, Office of Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid, Public Defenders, Chief Judge of the District Court, Chief Magistrate of the Local Court, Bar Association and Law Society.

Having considered both the review undertaken by the Department of Justice and the views expressed by stakeholders, the Government proposes in this bill to move four breaking and entering offences from the category of strictly indictable offences, which must be heard in the District Court, to the category of table offences which can be heard in the Local Court. This will allow the less serious examples of alleged offending in relation to those four offences to be heard and finalised in the Local Court. Therefore, prosecutors will be able to choose which court—either the Local Court or District Court—is the most appropriate forum to hear and determine these cases.

The Local Court currently deals with the vast majority of criminal cases in New South Wales and resolves matters quickly and efficiently. In 2015 the New South Wales Local Court was recognised in the Productivity Commission Report on Government Services, published on 6 February 2015, as the most efficient court in the nation with the lowest backlog and highest percentage of cases finalised within 12 months. It is also the most accessible legal jurisdiction in New South Wales, with courts located and regular sittings held across the State. Unlike the District Court, the Local Court does not hold committal proceedings for matters in its own jurisdiction, has more flexibility in its timetables and procedures, does not have jury trials and allows accused persons who cannot afford a lawyer to access duty solicitor services—urgent on-the-spot legal advice provided by Legal Aid—at the court itself.

According to data collected by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR], it takes an average of 11.6 months for a case to be finalised in the District Court compared to four months in the Local Court. In these circumstances, it makes sense to use the Local Court where appropriate. However, fast justice must never be achieved at the expense of fair justice. Unlike the District Court, the Local Court has a limit on its sentencing jurisdiction, being a maximum of two years imprisonment for a single offence and a maximum of five years imprisonment for multiple offences.

The four break and enter offences that the bill will re-categorise as table 1 offences carry penalties of more than two years imprisonment. Similarly, the existing table offences, of which there are hundreds, are serious criminal offences, with many carrying a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment or more. Allowing an offence to be heard in the Local Court does not mean that it must be heard in the Local Court. The most serious cases will still be heard in the District Court following an election from the prosecution. The making of an election by the prosecution in relation to table offences is governed by the protocol between the NSW Police Force and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions signed in January 2016. Where New South Wales police prosecutors are of the view that a matter is serious enough to warrant a sentence that exceeds the two year sentencing jurisdiction of the Local Court, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions may refer the matter to the District Court.

Importantly, for those matters that will be heard in the Local Court as a result of this bill, no impact on sentencing outcomes is anticipated. BOCSAR sentencing statistics over the years 2012 to 2015 show that a large majority, on average 90 per cent, of sentences currently imposed by the District Court for the four offences the subject of the bill were within the Local Court sentencing scope of two years imprisonment, or five years for multiple offences. BOCSAR will monitor any change in the sentences given in the Local Court and District Court for similar cases before and after the reform, and monitor any change in the timing or incidence of guilty pleas.

The data collected by BOCSAR will then be used by the Department of Justice to conduct a review of the reform one year after its commencement. That review will evaluate any impact on sentencing outcomes as well as the workload of the Local Court, District Court and justice agencies. I note that the Government has committed to fund one additional magistrate and two police prosecutors to deal with the increased workload in the Local Court. Once the review has been undertaken the Government will consider whether the reform should be expanded to make additional offences table offences. This approach is important to ensure that there are no unforeseen impacts caused by the reforms in the bill.

I have already touched on some of the expected benefits of this reform to the community, which are wide ranging. To summarise, first, and most significantly, delay and uncertainty will be reduced for victims and witnesses whose lives are impacted while they wait for matters to be resolved, which can be achieved faster in the Local Court. Secondly, victims and witnesses will avoid the trauma of giving evidence twice as matters finalised in the Local Court do not go through a committal proceeding to test the sufficiency of the evidence. By comparison, when a case is dealt with in the District Court, victims and witnesses can be called to give evidence

during the committal proceeding in the Local Court and potentially again in the District Court. Thirdly, the accused will receive justice faster.

Those who are convicted and sentenced will have quicker access to support and supervision for rehabilitation. A person on remand cannot access rehabilitation assistance provided by Corrective Services NSW. Therefore, imposing sentences at an earlier time allows offenders to then participate in programs addressing their criminogenic needs. Furthermore, an innocent accused may be acquitted earlier. The bill will contribute to alleviating the pressure on the criminal justice system, including the District Court criminal trial backlog. Moving the four offences is estimated to reduce the criminal trial backlog by approximately 25 trials per year. This in turn creates capacity in the District Court to focus on more serious criminal offending.

This reform complements other recent government efforts toward reducing the District Court criminal trial backlog. In December 2015 I announced a \$20 million package for more than 250 extra sitting weeks for the District Court over 18 months from January 2016 to June 2017. The package includes funding for two new District Court judges appointed in March 2016 and two additional public defenders to be located in Port Macquarie and Tamworth who will work across an area including Armidale, Port Macquarie, Tamworth and Taree.

Last month's budget delivered a \$39 million package which included three additional District Court judges—one based at Wagga Wagga, one in the New England region and one in Sydney—and more prosecutors and public defenders. The appointment of the five new judges from the two funding packages was accompanied by funding to justice agencies and court staff to support the new judges. This equates to five new sheriff's officers, five associates, five jury attendants and five reporting services monitors. This ensures each judge appointed can sit in a fully functioning and secure courtroom. Taken together with this bill, these measures will improve our criminal justice system. I emphasise that this reform has strong support from stakeholders, including the NSW Police Force, Sentencing Council, Office of Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid, Public Defenders, the Chief Judge of the District Court, the Chief Magistrate of the Local Court, the Bar Association and the Law Society.

I now turn to the detail of the bill. The key provision, item [3] of schedule 1, amends table 1 of schedule 1 to the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 to include sections 109 (2), 111 (2), 112 (2) and 113 (2) of the Crimes Act 1900. These offences are: aggravated breaking out of dwelling house after committing, or entering with intent to commit, a serious indictable offence, which is section 109 (2) of the Crimes Act 1900; aggravated entering dwelling house with intent to commit a serious indictable offence, section 111 (2) of the Crimes Act 1900; aggravated breaking and entering any dwelling house or other building and committing a serious indictable offence, or being in any dwelling house or other building and committing any serious indictable offence therein and breaking out of the dwelling house or other building, section 112 (2), Crimes Act 1900; and aggravated breaking and entering any dwelling house or other building with intent to commit any serious indictable offence therein, section 113 (2) of the Crimes Act 1900.

These offences will only be heard by the Local Court if the serious indictable offence alleged is stealing or intentionally or recklessly damaging or destroying property, the value of the property stolen or destroyed, or the value of the damage to the property, does not exceed \$60,000, and the only circumstance of aggravation is that the alleged offender is in the company of another person or persons. A transitional provision in item [4] provides that the amendments will only apply to charges laid after the commencement of the Act. The bill also makes minor amendments in the nature of statute law revision.

Items [1] and [2] of the bill correct a drafting oversight from 2007 when the term "maliciously" was replaced with the more modern concepts of "intentionally" and "recklessly" in the Crimes Act 1900. The Crimes Amendment Act 2007 did not update cross-references to revised Crimes Act 1900 offences in section 348 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 or references to "maliciously" in clauses 6, 7 and 8 of table 1 of schedule 1 to the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. This has created a discrepancy between the language in the Crimes Act 1900 and the language in the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. Parliamentary Counsel's Office has confirmed this was a drafting oversight and there is now an opportunity to remedy it at the same time as the reforms.

A transitional provision in item [4] will make clear the Parliament's intention in 2007 to modernise the language of the criminal law for all subsequent proceedings and provides the ability to deal with historical charges that have an element of maliciousness as a table offence. The bill will commence on proclamation to allow time for police and court computer systems to be updated to accommodate the reform. It is anticipated that the changes in this bill will come into force in October 2016. The inclusion of these offences in table 1 will ensure that more serious offences that call for higher penalties will continue to be dealt with by the District Court, while those matters that fall within the sentencing jurisdiction of the Local Court can be disposed of expeditiously.

With this bill the Government will work to ensure that the justice system is fast, fair and accessible. Delays, as we know, put victims under stress. Delays make it harder for victims to recall key details. Delays

deplete the resources of our justice system. Benefits from these measures will flow to all participants in the criminal justice system and will also assist in tackling the District Court criminal trial backlog. This is a sensible proposal that is supported by all key stakeholders. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

*Motions*

### CENTENARY OF ANZAC

**Debate resumed from 24 August 2016.**

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Corrections, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (10:31):** It is an honour to stand here as both the member for Baulkham Hills and Minister for Veterans Affairs to take note of the Centenary of Anzac. I acknowledge the presence in the House of the former shadow Minister for Veterans Affairs, the member for Fairfield. He joined me yesterday in taking part in the debate on a ministerial statement to acknowledge the service of the Vietnam veterans who honoured us with their attendance in the gallery. I thank all members of the House who participated in that debate. Members gave the Vietnam veterans an unsolicited standing ovation. I spoke to the group afterwards and was told that for some it was the most emotional experience they had had in their post-military service.

Those men who were here yesterday, having lunch with me, attending the debate and acknowledging the House's commemoration, have not always been treated in the way they deserve. As I mentioned in the ministerial statement, some of them told me that on their return from Vietnam they could not march on Anzac Day because the RSL did not recognise their service. They were vilified, criticised and ignored by not only society but also the veterans' community. It is a stain on both the RSL and the community that those Vietnam veterans had to wait until 1987 for their welcome home parade. Over lunch yesterday it was made very clear to me by the Acting State President of the RSL, John Haines, that his main focus as acting president and as a Vietnam veteran is to ensure that contemporary veterans returning from Iraq, Afghanistan, Solomon Islands, East Timor, Western Sahara and Bougainville are not treated in the same way as those who were part of the Vietnam contingent.

I acknowledge the Premier for his support of our veterans during the Centenary of Anzac. The Premier and I had a very interesting discussion on my appointment as Parliamentary Secretary in 2014. He said at a function that he wanted to celebrate the Centenary of Anzac. I said that I did not know whether we should say "celebrate" and that we should commemorate. As usual, the Premier came back with a response that put me to shame. The Premier said, "Yes, but we do celebrate courage and valour." I am happy to stand corrected on celebrating the Centenary of Anzac because the Premier was probably right.

When we hosted those Vietnam veterans yesterday, when the Premier, the Governor and members of Parliament held a reception at Government House on Saturday afternoon for Vietnam veterans, and when the Premier attended the ramp ceremony a few weeks ago for the 30 or so veterans who were finally returned home to be buried in Australia, we were celebrating their courage and valour. We are celebrating something that makes them different from other citizens in our society. I think the Premier was right to correct me. He was right to say that we should reflect on this part of our history in a celebratory way.

I pay tribute to the Premier for his support for not only the Centenary of Anzac but also another key project for the people of New South Wales, which is the renovation of the War Memorial in Hyde Park. The member for Fairfield is acutely aware of the renovation because he sat through as many committee meetings about it as I sat through. Other members may not be aware that the War Memorial in Hyde Park, built in the 1930s by public subscription, with support from State and Federal governments and the City of Sydney, was originally planned to include a water feature. That was to be part of the memorial to our World War I contingent. Unfortunately, the Great Depression came along and public subscriptions and taxpayer revenue dried up, so the War Memorial was never completed. It did not include the water feature that was originally planned for it.

Now, some 80 years later, as we commemorate the Centenary of Anzac, the War Memorial will be completed. On behalf of the veterans' community and their families, I offer my sincere thanks to the Premier, to the Federal Government and, in particular, to the Treasurer, who made it easy for us to obtain \$18 million from the Government. I went to a number of meetings to make sure that everybody present knew that I believed this was one of the most significant infrastructure projects of this term of Parliament. I stand by that, even though I will enjoy the \$8 billion railway that will come through my electorate in a few years' time.

I believe the veterans' community and their families deserve to see the completion of the War Memorial. I am delighted that so many new features will be included in the memorial. I am delighted that there will be a public space for reflection. I am delighted that there will be a library. I am delighted that there will be a

contemporary artistic reflection of the symbols of the Anzac story that we hold so dear. I am delighted that there will be a place that will commemorate the often forgotten country towns and hamlets that offered up their sons, only for them to die on the battlefields of western France and Gallipoli. I am delighted that the memorial will form part of not only the story of the past but also the story of the future. It will show the nation what we have become: one that is committed to freedom, democracy and fair play.

The veterans' community is thankful not just for the Premier's support for the memorial. His commitment to employing veterans in the New South Wales Government has attracted support and interest from around the country. Ministers from as far away as Western Australia are asking me how the Securing Our Veterans' Future policy will work. I pay tribute to my predecessor in this portfolio, Victor Dominello, and to the Premier for their commitment to the project. They know that, for all the bricks and mortar we lay down to remember our veterans, nothing is more important than the welfare of our veterans.

The best way for us to secure our veterans' future is to give them a sense of worth. We all know that a sense of worth comes with a job. We all know that a sense of worth comes with a feeling of security, of self-determination. A sense of worth comes from making a positive contribution to our society. For that reason, I think the Premier's policy of employing veterans in the New South Wales Government will be remembered. He will always be well regarded for his commitment to our veterans and he will always be welcome in the veterans' community.

But it is not just about the War Memorial, and it is not just about Securing Our Veterans' Future. To my mind—the Premier would probably be too embarrassed to boast about this, but I do not have his humility—the Premier's decision to bring the Cabinet meeting forward to six a.m. on the day that our servicemen were brought home, the day of the ramp ceremony at RAAF Base Richmond, shows what a decent man he is. Some of our Federal politicians were criticised for not turning up for that ceremony. I note that Bill Shorten and Malcolm Turnbull have commented on that and I think it should be set aside.

The key takeaway for our veterans' community is the demonstration that our Premier knows how important that ramp ceremony was to the widows of those soldiers, to the families of those who never came home. It is one of the greatest military injustices since Breaker Morant that those families were denied the right to properly farewell their loved ones after they fell on the battlefield all those years ago. I am delighted that those in command of our military forces now realise that the least we can do for those who have fallen on overseas fields is to bring them home and give them full military honours as we lay them to rest.

In acknowledging the Centenary of Anzac, I think it is important to highlight that the Australian Defence Force has never actively sought conflict. The history of our nation—of which I think our military history is an important cornerstone—shows that we are a nation of democracy and peace. Our history tells us, and will say to those in the future, that we are a nation of peace and tranquillity; we are a nation that uses our military only to ensure stability and freedom. It is no coincidence that we boast not only this history of not initiating conflict but also a longstanding commitment to democracy. We are one of only very few nations that can boast a century of democracy. It is no coincidence that the short list of nations that can boast a century of democracy includes New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Canada—and we are four countries that also boast a commitment to constitutional monarchy. It is certainly one of the ingredients that allows us to ensure the stability of our military forces, and indeed this very parliamentary democracy that we stand in today.

In acknowledging the Anzac story and taking note of the centenary, I think it is important to reflect on the service given by members of this House. Indeed, one of the great privileges of serving in this House is to be able to pay tribute every day to the memorial to George Braund and Edward Larkin that stands before us—two serving members of this Chamber who thought so much of their community that they were prepared to lay down their lives in service to their nation. We should continue to celebrate those two gentlemen for their valour and their contribution to two great institutions, the New South Wales Parliament and the Australian Imperial Force.

But they are not the only two from this House who have served in our military on overseas operations over the course of the past century. When I worked in this place some 20 years ago Ian McManus was a member of the Government. Ian, whom you may remember, Mr Deputy Speaker, was the Labor member for Bulli, so he is not someone whom I would usually be inclined to advocate for. But as a young man Ian served with the Royal Australian Navy. He won the United States Unit Commendation for his service during Operation Sea Dragon in the Gulf of Tonkin during the Vietnam War and also served, I understand, in the Malay Emergency. Ian was not the only one of course. Charlie Lynn, a former member of the Legislative Council, was a famous member of the Vietnam contingent. He continues to serve as an advocate for the memory of the Kokoda Trail and has a wonderful organisation that takes young people over that trail.

My former boss Peter Collins did his military service back-to-front. He served as a member of this place for more than 20 years and then, on his retirement from this place, went back to the permanent Navy and served

in Iraq as part of the international operations to secure the peace and security of the people of Iraq. I think that service should also be celebrated. These days we have Anthony Roberts, the member for Lane Cove, in Cabinet. As modest as he is about his military service, it should not be forgotten. Anthony served as a peacekeeper overseas. There are many such wonderful stories of service from this Chamber that I am delighted we can boast about as part of the commemoration of the Centenary of Anzac. Politicians around the world are often criticised as being the people who just send soldiers off to wars but never fight them. I think this House can proudly say we are not like that.

As part of the Centenary of Anzac, we should reflect on all who have served us, all who have served this nation. It is worth noting that that should include the more than 600 members of the Australian community who died fighting in the Boer War before the Anzac story even began. We should remember the 115,000 who were killed or wounded in the First World War, of whom 60,000 were killed; the 30,000 who were taken prisoner in the Second World War; the 39,000 who were killed in the Second World War; and the 3,600 who were killed or wounded in Vietnam, particularly the 518 who never returned home. That does not cover those injured or killed in Korea, in Afghanistan or in Iraq. These are not just statistics; these are families—and they need to be remembered.

I conclude by reminding the House that a number of wonderful scholarships are complementing the Centenary of Anzac. This year's recipients of the Premier's very own scholarship, which will continue to be awarded annually, travelled to battlefields in France. In previous years recipients had visited Long Tan, Korea and the European theatre. That scholarship program is run in partnership with Clubs NSW, which also runs the NSW Premier's Anzac Ambassadors program. As part of that program I was delighted, along with former Labor Premier the Hon. Nathan Rees and Anthony Ball from Clubs NSW, to take six students to Greece and the Western Front in April this year. These students were chosen, as many members will be aware, through a 1,000-word essay competition, and one of their obligations as members of the program was to report back to their communities.

As members know, I could go on forever about the Centenary of Anzac. It is something I think every member of this Chamber is passionate about, and I am delighted to see how many have embraced this aspect of our nation's history. I thank all those members who have invited me as Minister for Veterans Affairs to the various war memorials in their electorates, and I am delighted that the grants to improve those war memorials will continue. I ask the Chamber to take note of the Centenary of Anzac.

**Debate adjourned.**

### *Bills*

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT (GOVERNANCE AND PLANNING) BILL 2016**

### **Consideration in Detail**

#### **Consideration of the Legislative Council Amendments.**

*Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 24 August 2016*

- No. 1     **CDP No. 1 [C2016-071D]**  
Page 5, Schedule 1 [3], lines 15–25. Omit all words on those lines.
- No. 2     **CDP No. 2 [C2016-071D]**  
Page 9, Schedule 1 [19], lines 19 and 20. Omit all words on those lines.
- No. 3     **CDP No. 3 [C2016-071D]**  
Page 27, Schedule 1 [90], line 7. Omit "210B (8)".

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (10:48):** On behalf of Mr Paul Toole: I move:

That the House agree to the Legislative Council amendments.

**Motion agreed to.**

## **SYDNEY CRICKET AND SPORTS GROUND AMENDMENT (DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT) BILL 2016**

### **Second Reading**

**Debate resumed from 12 May 2016.**

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events, and Minister for Sport) (10:49):** I welcome the opportunity to speak in debate on the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground

Amendment (Development Assessment) Bill 2016. The bill was introduced into Parliament on 12 May 2016 by the member for Sydney. The bill seeks to amend the Act by removing the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust's exemption from the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Local Government Act 1993 in relation to planning assessment and approval on land managed by the trust; and applying the planning Act and Local Government Act to the provisions of the Act inserted as a result of the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (No 2) 2015, enabling the trust to grant a lease to the Australian Rugby Union for the development of a centre of excellence with the University of Technology Sydney [UTS].

The Government will oppose the bill. While the intent of the bill is noted, the amendments change only certain aspects of the Act and do not review the Act and its intent in its entirety. The provisions of the Act referred to in the bill have been in place and functioning in their current form since 1985. The Office of Sport is currently reviewing the governance of government-owned major sporting venues and is expected to report back to the Government by the end of 2016. This is part of our stadia network strategy, which is about improving the performance of all our stadia assets, particularly those owned by taxpayers. Any changes to the Act prior to the conclusion of the review would be premature and would presume its outcomes. The bill therefore adopts a short-term, minimalist approach when the Government is currently taking a more comprehensive approach that will lead to a more appropriate review of the said Act.

The bill also seeks to extend the application of the planning Act and Local Government Act to the Australian Rugby Development Centre. This effectively results in the retrospective application of the planning and assessment process despite receiving legislative support to proceed with the statute law changes. This would potentially put the Government at risk of legal action from contributors to the Australian Rugby Development Centre, being the Australian Rugby Union and the University of Technology Sydney. I take this opportunity to talk a little about the work that is happening across sporting venue governance because so much of what this legislation proposes would change it.

The Government is reviewing sporting venue governance because of its large investment in sporting venues. The Government has committed to a \$1.6 billion package, which represents the biggest investment in sport and entertainment facilities and the visitor economy in New South Wales since the Sydney 2000 Olympics. Its first priority is a rebuild of the Western Sydney Stadium at Parramatta, which will begin later this year. Its second priority is the transformation of ANZ Stadium into a world-class rectangular venue, which will begin in the current term of government. That is the intention at this stage, and it will be subject to the work that the Government does around planning.

As part of the infrastructure boost Allianz Stadium—or what is often referred to as the Sydney football stadium—will be refurbished. The Government has also bought the rights to ANZ Stadium from the Diversified Infrastructure Group, the former owner of the Stadium Australia Group. ANZ Stadium is now completely back in public hands—both the physical asset, which was always in public hands, and the stadium business. It will mean that we will be able to work more closely with all our content providers, whether across sport or entertainment, to make sure that we get the right matches in the right venues. This proposal has strategic benefits for New South Wales: It places New South Wales in a stronger position to compete nationally and internationally for events; and it enables the stadia investment restrictions in the Stadium Australia Project Agreement to be removed, ensuring that we can invest in facilities across Sydney, no matter where they are located.

The bill introduced by the member for Sydney will impact the Australian Rugby Development Centre—a fantastic facility at Moore Park and an investment by the Australian Rugby Union. It will be the new home of rugby in Australia. The Federal and New South Wales governments have committed joint funding support of \$20 million for the establishment of the Australian Rugby Development Centre. Australian Rugby Union and UTS Sydney will provide the balance of funding for the project. It is a fantastic example of sport, universities and research coming together in what has been a strong community sporting precinct over a long period. It will establish a high-performance training base for Australia's national rugby squads, including the Wallabies, Wallaroos and Sevens teams.

This is an opportunity to recognise the fantastic achievement of our Australian Women's Rugby Sevens team, who won a gold medal in Rio de Janeiro. It demonstrates how far rugby has come in making sport more accessible to women. The facility will also be home to the Ella Brothers Indigenous Education Centre and will provide a base to support visiting schools and regional and international teams. The centre will work closely with the UTS. The Sydney Cricket Ground and Sports Ground Trust has partnered with UTS to provide teaching and research programs at Moore Park. UTS has started transitioning its sports science and management courses, as well as its related research activities, to the Sydney Cricket Ground and Allianz Stadium precinct by utilising temporary facilities from earlier this year.

This precinct should be about providing facilities that allow people who are passionate about sport to access the facilities they need in a high-class environment—and that is exactly what the Australian Rugby

Development Centre is all about. Bringing together one of Australia's great sporting codes and one of this State's outstanding universities and research institutions is good for the public. Under a joint arrangement, the proposed Australian Rugby Development Centre building will also house a new permanent sports education campus for UTS. UTS will fund its share of the development and construction costs of the combined Australian Rugby Development Centre-UTS building.

The Government will continue to provide good-quality facilities at Moore Park for people across this State. The location has been the home of sportsgrounds and sports training facilities. I note from the earlier debate on the Centenary of Anzac that in the past it was used as the disembarkation point for Australian troops. It has been part of what the New South Wales community calls the "home of sport" for many years. In fact, the member for Sydney may be aware that it was once the site of the Sydney volunteer shooting range. If the site were to be returned to previous uses, I am not sure whether he would support that activity.

The site is also managed by one of the most established and well-credentialed trust boards in this State. The trust is the guardian of this land on behalf of the people of New South Wales. It is not a private entity; it is not a private board. It ensures that the sporting facilities are accessible to every member of the public, regardless of where they live in New South Wales. While I appreciate the intent of the member for Sydney in introducing this bill, the Government believes it will constrain our capacity to continue that tradition. Therefore, we oppose the bill.

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (10:58):** I lead for the Labor Opposition, representing the Hon Lynda Voltz, the shadow Minister for Sport in the Legislative Council, in debate on the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Amendment (Development Assessment) Bill 2016. The New South Wales Labor Opposition opposes the bill and I foreshadow that it will seek to move an amendment to it. The bill proposes to remove sections 16A and 16B of the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Act 1978 with the effect that provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Local Government Act 1993 will apply to Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust land.

Section 16A allows the Minister for Sport, after consulting with the Minister for Planning and the Minister for Public Works (Commerce), to approve improvements on designated lands. Section 16B exempts the approval of those improvements from the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Local Government Act 1993. The bill also proposes to remove section 16C (3), which allows an application received or approved by a Minister prior to any of the scheduled lands being included in a State environmental planning policy to still apply section 16B.

The Sydney Cricket Ground and the Sydney Football Stadium are, alongside ANZ Stadium at Sydney Olympic Park, the cornerstones of sporting and events. The Minister spoke about that in his contribution this morning. The removal of the exclusion of the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Act from the Local Government Act and Environmental Planning and Assessment Act will impact on the State's ability to grow the events market in New South Wales, which is an important employment sector. The removal of section 16B in particular will impact on the economic benefit delivered. I note that section 36F of the Local Government Act lays down particular criteria for the management of land categorised as a sportsground. Section 36F of that Act states:

The core objectives for management of community land categorised as a sportsground are:

- (a) to encourage, promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organised and informal sporting activities and games, and
- (b) to ensure that such activities are managed having regard to any adverse impact on nearby residences.

Applying those provisions to Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust land would effectively vest authority in the City of Sydney Council to prevent the Minister from implementing long-term strategies to secure the holding of important events at one of the premier venues in New South Wales. The Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Act already prohibits certain types of development on its land—being residential and tourist and visitor accommodation in section 16D—and has implemented a noise management plan that was developed as part of its environmental protection licence. The exemption of the application of the Local Government Act and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act reflects the importance of this venue in the New South Wales events market and stadia portfolio. Therefore, it is appropriate that the power to manage the designated lands and make amendments or improvements to it is vested with the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust, and the Minister for Sport rather than any local council.

It is anticipated that with the Government's purchase of the ANZ Stadium lease the material adverse effect clause will no longer apply. The trust intends to replace existing stands within the Sydney Cricket Ground when funding becomes available. The bill before the House, if passed, would limit decisions of future governments. The Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust also houses the headquarters of a number of sports. Its tenants include the Waratahs, Sydney Football Club, many cricket teams, the Sydney Roosters National Rugby

League team and the Sydney Swans Australian Football League team. The process of building new office accommodation and a centre of excellence for the Australian Rugby Union is currently underway. These developments would possibly also be stymied by the passing of this bill. The Opposition will oppose this bill but seek to move an amendment to the existing Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Act 1978. The amendment is to section 16A (2) to insert the words "and sought the consent of" after the words "has consulted with". Thus section 16A (2) would read:

S16A

- (2) The Minister may not, under subsection (1), approve the carrying out of improvements or any plans or specifications unless the Minister certifies in the approval that the Minister has consulted with and sought the consent of:
- (c) the Minister for the time being administering the Public Works Act 1912, and
  - (d) the Minister for the time being administering the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979,

As I said at the beginning of my address representing the Labor Opposition in this place, we will oppose the bill but will seek to move that amendment if it is read a second time.

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (11:04):** I make a contribution to debate on the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Amendment (Development Assessment) Bill 2016. I do so, first, because I am the local member impacted by this bill and, secondly, because although I do not disagree with the principles the member for Sydney espoused in his second reading speech, I do not think this bill is the right method to achieve them. However, I thank the member for Sydney for consulting me on this bill before he submitted it and for letting me know it was on the agenda today. I appreciate his courtesy. It is far in excess of the courtesy shown to me last December when the Attorney General tried to slip an amendment to the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Act into a miscellaneous provisions bill without consulting me. Others also ran around getting briefings from the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust, but did not consult me as the local member. That has been repeated again in debate on this bill.

The reality is simply this: The Sydney Cricket Ground, the Entertainment Quarter, Moore Park and the Centennial Parklands are a significant and important part of Sydney that need proper planning and proper integration into the planning system for this State, region and district. Only yesterday I met with the district commissioner to talk about how we can effectively integrate infrastructure and planning within the Sydney area. Although his bill does not achieve it, the member for Sydney is simply trying to use the provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, the Government's Greater Sydney Commission Act and Greater Sydney Commission to get a coordinated planning concept in respect of all matters, including significant government infrastructure and other things that are important to the State.

I was pleased to hear the Minister tell this House—and he was right to do so—that a review of legislation will be undertaken by the end of the year so that an appropriate system or standard can be applied to stadia within Sydney. I take no issue with that or the fact that they are important to Sydney. However, it is of chief importance that irrespective of where they are the stadia are properly planned as a function of the planning Minister. That is especially important in respect of stadia in my electorate. We cannot have some junior sports Minister careering around the State ignoring the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and the wishes of the Government in its planning phase.

The Labor Party does not come to dealing with the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust with clean hands in any way, just as the sports Minister does not come with clean hands after the way in which the Attorney General tried to effect the latest lot of amendments on the quiet last December. Just to ensure that I am being even-handed in saying that no major political party comes to this with clean hands, I will quote from the former member for Bligh, who represented an area that I am sure the Minister and the member for Coogee know quite well. He was not somebody without a great deal of talent. The former member for Bligh, Michael Yabsley, spoke about the sorts of historical amendments to which the Minister for Sport referred. He said: This bill represents the culmination of a grand and shameful conspiracy against the residents of the eastern suburbs, to thrust upon them and their residential environment a sporting stadium of massive magnitude. It is the ultimate example of government by wink and nod ...

Who would have contemplated the need for the Government to pursue this matter in a way that totally dispenses with the perfectly reasonable and respected procedures allowed for in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and Local Government Act?

But this bill does not achieve the general objective that both the former member for Bligh and the Minister for Sport spoke about; it cannot be achieved by changes to a couple of the provisions provided for in the bill and some tinkering around the edges. First, as the Minister for Sport said, a review is required. Secondly, it requires the Minister for Planning, for whom I have the utmost respect, to examine the possible impacts of this legislation upon the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, the Greater Sydney Commission Act, and State and district plans, and to ensure that the development that occurs within the stadia, including the Sydney Cricket Ground, is

done in a coordinated way that provides transport and operates in conjunction with the Entertainment Quarter, Centennial Park and Moore Park. That is a planning process. We cannot have one particular Minister careering around ignoring an overall planning objective, just as we cannot have the member for Sydney trying to introduce a bill and tinkering around the edges. This could have serious consequences and not achieve the desired objective.

The Sydney Cricket Ground used to be in the area of the member for Sydney and for some decades now he and the Lord Mayor of Sydney have been campaigning and fighting against the Sydney Cricket Ground. However, there have been significant changes in government approach to that area and a master planning process is currently being undertaken by Centennial Parklands as to its impact on Moore Park and Centennial Park. This is being done in a transparent way, and I am grateful to the Premier and the Minister for the Environment for ensuring that the views of Centennial Parklands have prevailed. I am also delighted that the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust is now being treated by the government of the day as a responsible organisation and is not receiving any favouritism for its ultimate plan to expand beyond its boundary. This matter is proceeding in a coordinated way and I look forward to seeing the results of the Minister's work at the end of this year.

My interest in this matter relates to the impact on my constituency. I have no issue with an overall State examination of how it applies at stadia—of course, the Labor Party would never oppose getting rid of privatisation in that area. There are great opportunities to improve the area, but it has to be done through an overall planning concept, not by one part of the Executive Government overriding the Government requirement to plan in a particular precinct. For those reasons I do not support the bill. I also make a brief comment on the second reading speech of the member for Sydney. Ordinarily when a member delivers a second reading speech he or she sets out the provisions in the bill and the impact those provisions will have on individual Acts. Obviously, Independent and crossbench members do not have the resources to do that, but I urge the Minister for Planning to ensure that as the reviews are undertaken by the district commissioners and the Greater Sydney Commission that the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust be compelled to be part of that overall planning review otherwise the Government is wasting its time.

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (11:14):** On behalf of The Greens I make a contribution to debate on the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Amendment (Development Assessment) Bill 2016. I find it remarkable that this land is so special that the provisions that apply to everyone else do not apply to this site. Interestingly, when the Act was proclaimed in 1985 to allow for this provision the Opposition at that time, the Liberal-Nationals Coalition, opposed it; now it is supporting it. Labor is also taking the position that the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act should not apply to these lands. The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and the Local Government Act set out the requirements for proposed development to limit impacts on traffic and issues that many of us who were in local government managed—I served on Leichhardt council for many years—and to inform the public, including neighbours, stakeholders and so on, in a methodical way to ensure that their input is guaranteed. We are creating cities, shaping the environment and making decisions that will have a significant impact on that land.

The Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Act 1978 has exempted its grounds entirely from any application of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Local Government Act 1979. Instead, decisions are left with the sports Minister with no need for an open and transparent process. As a principle The Greens believe that the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and the Local Government Act should apply. There should be clear and open assessment. The only applications that have gone through an open planning assessment process on Sydney Cricket Ground land were for upgrades to grandstands. I note that the member for Sydney identified other developments that have been approved behind closed doors without any consultation with local communities.

In 2007 the Rugby Centre for Excellence and in 2008 the Sports Medicine Clinic were completed. In 2011 the trust cut down mature trees in the gold members' car park without any approval from local government or any arborist reports. That is a significant problem and it should be remedied. In his second reading speech the member for Sydney spoke in great detail about the great fight that has taken place to make sure that people are consulted and included. The member for Heffron quoted from a speech given in 1985 by former member for Bligh Michael Yabsley, who said:

This bill represents the culmination of a grand and shameful conspiracy against the residents of the eastern suburbs, to thrust upon them and their residential environment a sporting stadium of massive magnitude. It is the ultimate example of government by wink and nod ...

The Coalition is now defending that position. Mr Yabsley raised that as a matter of principle, and that principle still applies today—namely, that proper assessment and community input can improve development designs and outcomes, community submissions are important, and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and the Local Government Act should apply in this case, as they should to all lands. I make this contribution in support of the member for Sydney and in recognition that the process we have under those Acts should apply to all lands.

This is a terrible precedent. Mr Yabsley called it in 1985 and we continue to call it today. The Greens support the bill.

**Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH (Coogee) (11:19):** I make a contribution to debate on the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Amendment (Development Assessment) Bill 2016. Although the lands are not in my electorate of Coogee, they are certainly on its doorstep. These lands have been of great interest to me and to those in my electorate and in neighbouring electorates for many years. We have seen how the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust has exerted its influence over governments over the years and how we need transparency in planning for the future of this very important sporting precinct.

Whilst I am unable to support today what the member for Sydney is putting forward, having been on local government for 12 years, there are elements of retrospectivity that one does not want to go near considering the compensation and precedents that can result from that. Whilst virtually the rest of the State comes under the auspices of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, one would have to exercise enormous caution to exempt areas, as this has been, though, since 1985. It only became an issue when it was discovered that the statute law had been used to give approvals outside of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

I welcome the Minister reviewing in totality the management of stadia and sporting fixtures in this city and in this State, how we plan them and the impact of any new development or redevelopment of those areas on not only neighbouring residents but also residents in other areas. I know, living in the east, that any development that takes place on these lands—I was around before the building of Allianz Stadium—causes ripple-on effects, particularly in electorates such as Coogee, Heffron and Sydney, because there are such large tracts of land in that area that there are major pinch points. Remnants of the Sydney Common, which make up Moore Park and Centennial Parklands, the Randwick Racecourse Crown grant, the University of New South Wales and the Prince of Wales Hospital complex, are sizeable pieces of land and the corridors through them become more and more congested.

My point is that any development does have an impact on people who reside kilometres away. It is therefore important that we apply the principles of good planning and good development consent to any site in this area, whether it be the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust or Bill and Mildred Frizzle's house down the road. I keep a very close eye on what happens in this area, and the very capable sports Minister, who is in the Chamber today, knows that I say more than my 2¢ worth on anything that happens in that area. He is always good enough to open the door to me and provide me with thorough briefings.

**Mr Geoff Provest:** And show you the door.

**Mr BRUCE NOTLEY-SMITH:** He shows me the door after he has given me a thorough briefing. But he is always receptive and understanding of how important this is. As was pointed out by the member for Heffron, this area has been contentious going way back into the 1970s, which is why the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust was established. I hope that the Minister for Sport finally, unencumbered by vested interests, will be able to offer this State and the residents of Sydney, Heffron, Coogee and Newtown the confidence that developments in this area will be in the public interest.

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (11:29):** In reply: I thank the Minister for Sport, the member for Heffron, the member for Fairfield, the member for Balmain and the member for Coogee for their contributions to debate on the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Amendment (Development Assessment) Bill 2016. I particularly thank the member for Balmain and The Greens for their support of the bill. I know it is supported by the member for Newtown as well. The member for Coogee, the member for Heffron, the member for Newtown and I are deeply concerned about protecting Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust land, and Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust land for the public benefit and we will continue to be, and that is reflected in the bill. I am appalled, but certainly not surprised, by the response of the Government and the Opposition to this bill. My constituents in South Paddington and Surry Hills will certainly be able to reflect on this in the upcoming local government elections.

Both sides of the House claim to support transparency and accountability in the planning system, but neither will support it when it comes to the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust. The exemption from planning laws for development proposals on Sydney Cricket Ground [SCG] land makes absolutely no sense. By removing this exemption, the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Amendment (Development Assessment) Bill would restore fairness for people living adjacent to trust land and help improve development outcomes. It would ensure that any development proposal is independently assessed by planning experts based on planning laws established to protect environment, heritage and neighbourhoods following a public development application or public environmental impact statement. The bill would enable the community to raise concerns with decision-makers before a determination.

Currently, planning decisions occur behind closed doors. The Government removed the extraordinary discretion of the planning Minister under part 3A. The Government should remove the even greater ministerial discretion afforded to the sports Minister, which includes sign-off without any independent expert assessment. I stress that we are talking about public land dedicated for public recreation—originally set aside as part of Governor Macquarie's 1811 Sydney Common bequest for the recreation needs of present and future Sydney generations. SCG land sits within public parklands and the densely populated areas of the inner city and inner east. Development on this site can be sensitive and even controversial, and it requires independent and expert assessment and community input. Over the past decade, construction on the site has been ongoing. The Rugby Centre for Excellence and the Sports Medicine Clinic were built, and construction on the six-storey Australian Rugby Development Centre with sports science facilities began earlier this year. Mature trees have been cut down in the gold members' car park.

All these occurred without any form of local community notification, consultation or input, or any independent expert oversight and assessment. Local residents only find out when they see the development commence. I have heard a number of rumours that there are further development plans for the land and I remind the House that laws were changed in 2006 to allow commercial, residential and tourist accommodation buildings on this public land otherwise dedicated for recreation. Developments are no longer for public sports matches, with the focus now on medical and education facilities and centres of excellence.

The SCG Trust Advisory Group that the trust is establishing in response to my bill may be a welcome step but it cannot replace an open, transparent, independent and rigorous planning assessment process. The trust will continue to be able to do what it wants without any expert assessment and approval. Residents will have limited representation and non-disclosure agreements could be imposed. I have heard no credible justification from either side for why land managed by the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust should be treated any differently from land owned and managed by developers, schools, universities, hospitals, churches, jails, aged care facilities or government departments, all of which are subject to local government and planning laws. This is clearly about favours to the SCG Trust.

The State's planning systems result in the approval of most planning proposals; the bill presents no risk to the SCG Trust getting its plans through. Rather, the bill provides an opportunity for proposals to be improved through community input, assessment and conditions. I would have expected more faith in a process that both the Government and the Opposition helped to establish. The bipartisan support for such an extraordinary exemption shows how powerful the sports trust is now. I have spoken to many sports fans who watch matches at the stadia who tell me that they are appalled by the way in which the trust behaves, viewing the public land as its own and adjacent parkland as a potential development site.

I understand that the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Act 1978 is set to be reviewed in the next two years and I ask the Government to commit to reviewing the inappropriate exemptions in the Act from planning laws for potential repeal. It is only fair that residents adjacent to the SCG have the opportunity to see all relevant planning reports on proposed buildings, including on traffic, views, overshadowing, heritage and trees, and be able to raise these concerns and have them considered as part of a final determination by an independent planning authority. This is what my bill would have done. I commend the bill.

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

**Division called for and Standing Order 181 applied.**

**Noes**

Greenwich, Mr A

Parker, Mr J

Piper, Mr G

**Motion negatived.**

## **HURLSTONE AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL SITE BILL 2016**

### **Second Reading**

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) ( 1:13):** I acknowledge the contributions of all members who have spoken in debate on the Hurlstone Agricultural High School Site Bill 2016—an important bill. This bill preserves Hurlstone's history and presence at Glenfield, and protects precious and valuable public land so that it can be used only for public educational purposes. This bill will prevent the selling out of south-west Sydney's educational future for 30 pieces of silver. To all intents and purposes, this bill is almost identical to a bill that was introduced in 2009 by the then Opposition, and supported by the current Minister for Education, the Hon.

Adrian Piccoli. I note with interest the comments of the member for Camden in this place on 4 May when he said, "I have only 10 minutes, but I will be back next week."

I waited and waited but the member for Camden never came back, which does not surprise me because not keeping commitments is typical of the Baird Liberal Government. Let me give the House another example. Minister Piccoli now claims that his position in 2009 was about protecting Hurlstone and agricultural education in the Sydney Basin—not at Glenfield, not in the south-west, but in the Sydney Basin. How quickly the Minister has rewritten history. However, the 2009 public record says something very different. I will give members a few examples.

On 11 March 2009 the then Opposition spokesman for education said, "The plan to sell most of the school is disgusting. It would be one of the great shames to let them do this just because the land has development value." Later, on 29 April, Mr Piccoli went on to add that the Government's plan was "ridiculous", that the Liberal-Nationals believed the relocation of Hurlstone was "impractical" and that the school should be retained in its current form. Yet again on 24 June Mr Piccoli said that the Liberal-Nationals opposed the sale of land at Hurlstone Agricultural High School. On 25 June 2009 Mr Piccoli presented a bill in this House that specified in clause 5 that the entire Hurlstone site not be sold. In clause 6 it stated that development of the site be restricted to government school purposes. The record speaks for itself; the record is clear.

There was no mention by Mr Piccoli of the Sydney Basin. The Sydney Basin is a recent invention by that master magician and illusionist—the current Minister for Education. The 2009 bill was all about Hurlstone at Glenfield; that was the commitment of the member for Murrumbidgee. The 2009 bill was never about the Sydney Basin. The Minister and his legion of spin doctors know that and the public record proves that it is another broken commitment. More galling than the Minister's refashioning of his commitment to Hurlstone in 2000 and 2009 was his recent support in this House of a stunt by the member for Camden who suggested that Labor's plan for Hurlstone in 2008 was detailed on the back of a coaster.

The Government and this Minister know all about stunts. Let me give the House some examples. The first stunt is a photograph of the Minister with year 11 student Jess Dunn in Hurlstone's foyer pondering Hurlstone's history and archives. The second stunt is a photograph of the Minister with his Nationals colleagues, including Mr Stoner, seeking to reassure the community about Hurlstone's future. The third stunt is a photograph of the Minister and his Federal colleagues Mr Pyne and Mr Mayne in an attempt to stop any selling of school land. This Minister has form when it comes to stunts.

A request for information under the Government Information (Public Access) Act details how, for the grand announcement of Hurlstone's carve up, a tethered cow was requested. One can only speculate why. I suspect that it had something to do with making the scene more agricultural and rural. Appropriately, someone stopped that scam and saw it for what it was—a blatant stunt. Members in this place have witnessed many stunts but the request for a tethered cow has reduced stunt-taking to a new low. The member for Hawkesbury made a valid point and is correct when he said that the decision to sell Hurlstone's land and to relocate it to Hawkesbury is not about education; it is about promising one thing in opposition and doing the opposite thing in government. It is about honouring a commitment to one's community, and it is about credibility. The definition of "credibility" on *dictionary.com* is, "the quality of being believable or worthy of trust." The website gives the following usage example:

After all those lies, his credibility was at a low ebb.

Credibility is something that is often lacking in this place and it is particularly lacking in the current Minister for Education in relation to his proposed sale of Hurlstone's farm and its relocation to Hawkesbury. Ironically, the credibility of elected representatives is something members of the public are crying out for. It is a quality that costs nothing at all. Credibility cannot be bought; it must be earned and developed over many years through one's actions. How is credibility earned? Let us go back to the definition of "credibility". Credibility is being trustworthy and believable. A corollary to that is being consistent. The voting public are rightly fed up with politicians who are inconsistent—politicians who say one thing but who do another—bellwether politicians who flip-flop with no regard for previous positions or opinions. They often say that circumstances have changed, or they draw a distinction—as one former Prime Minister did—between core and non-core promises.

Public life and public institutions are built on trust, which is why we have institutions such as the Independent Commission Against Corruption. It helps to build and maintain trust in government and it holds governments to account. That is what occurs also in the Legislative Assembly; in this Chamber we hold governments to account without fear or favour. The community, through their elected representatives, hold governments and individuals accountable and, in so doing, help to maintain credibility in our democratic system and our parliamentary institutions.

That brings me back to the bill before the House. The current Minister for Education must be held to account for his actions. His backflip must be noted; the damage that has been done to one of our finest public schools must be detailed; this sellout must be spelt out for all; and the irrefutable damage to the credibility of this place and to members in public office must be exposed. Very few schools in New South Wales have the reputation of Hurlstone Agricultural High School at Glenfield. It consistently ranks as one of the best performing schools in the Higher School Certificate—it is always towards the top. It is a prestigious school with a reputation second to none.

This academic success has bred generations of Australia's leaders including Sir William Keys, Mark Binskin, Professor Alan Trounson, John Edmondson, VC, former Treasurer the Hon. John Kerin, and the list goes on. Tens of thousands of former students make incredible contributions to their communities away from the spotlight. Apart from an enviable academic reputation, the school has facilities to help teach and promote agriculture. It has a working and functioning farm in the middle of Sydney's growth corridor. It is an asset of immeasurable educational and environmental value. It should be valued as part of our national heritage and we must work to protect such a legacy in the south-west.

For these reasons and others, such as the environmental benefit of maintaining the green space and protecting the green buffer between Liverpool and Campbelltown, Hurlstone in its current form and on its current site is worth preserving. It is worth taking a stand to defend Hurlstone Agricultural High School. The Minister for Education knew this only a few short years ago. In 2008-09 he and his colleagues mounted a fierce defence of Hurlstone. Their opposition to Labor's plans for Hurlstone was absolutely, "Hands off", "Leave Hurlstone alone", "The farm is not for sale and Hurlstone is not moving", were the cries. In opposition, Liberal-Nationals members were outraged. They were so outraged that they even introduced a bill to protect Hurlstone from greedy developers—a bill identical to the one that is being debated now. What has changed? Why has the Minister done a backflip? Why have those Government members who were so eager to protest now changed their minds?

There is only one reason for it. In 2008 and 2009 Mr Piccoli and his parliamentary supporters took the south-west for a ride. They never really believed in the cause of Hurlstone. They feigned outrage at the time, merely for their own short-term political gain, while at the same time having every intention to sell the land and the farm to the highest bidder when they got into office. There surely can be no other explanation for such a dramatic about turn by the now Minister for Education and his colleagues. No departmental brief could have caused such an about face. In the south-west, the need for Hurlstone and its farm has never been greater. The simple fact is that the Minister never believed—not for one second—in the cause he championed back in 2008-09. He and his colleagues fooled us all.

The tragedy of that is twofold. First, an incredible icon of education in south-western Sydney will be sold. That is tragic. The second tragedy is credibility. Is it any wonder that people have such disdain for politicians? The sale will further erode the trust the public has for this place and the credibility of its members on both sides. That is nothing to be proud of. I urge the Government to support the bill. The alternative, to paraphrase Nietzsche's aphorism, will be that the public will say, "I'm not upset that you lied to me, but I am upset that from now on I won't believe anything you say." If the Minister does not support this bill, the people will no longer believe anything he says. I commend the bill to the House.

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

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....33  
Noes .....47  
Majority..... 14

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J  
Catley, Ms Y  
Daley, Mr M  
Finn, Ms J  
Harrison, Ms J  
Hornery, Ms S  
Lynch, Mr P  
Mehan, Mr D  
Park, Mr R  
Robertson, Mr J  
Washington, Ms K

Atalla, Mr E  
Chanthivong, Mr A  
Dib, Mr J  
Greenwich, Mr A  
Haylen, Ms J  
Kamper, Mr S  
McDermott, Dr H  
Mihailuk, Ms T  
Parker, Mr J  
Smith, Ms T  
Watson, Ms A

Car, Ms P  
Crakanthorp, Mr T  
Doyle, Ms T  
Harris, Mr D  
Hoenig, Mr R  
Lalich, Mr N (teller)  
McKay, Ms J  
Minns, Mr C  
Piper, Mr G  
Warren, Mr G (teller)  
Zangari, Mr G

## NOES

Anderson, Mr K  
 Barilaro, Mr J  
 Brookes, Mr G  
 Coure, Mr M  
 Elliott, Mr D  
 Gibbons, Ms M  
 Hazzard, Mr B  
 Humphries, Mr K  
 Lee, Dr G  
 Notley-Smith, Mr B  
 Pavey, Ms M  
 Piccoli, Mr A  
 Sidoti, Mr J  
 Stokes, Mr R  
 Tudehope, Mr D  
 Williams, Mr R

Aplin, Mr G  
 Berejiklian, Ms G  
 Conolly, Mr K  
 Crouch, Mr A  
 Evans, Mr L  
 Goward, Ms P  
 Henskens, Mr A  
 Johnsen, Mr M  
 Maguire, Mr D  
 O'Dea, Mr J  
 Perrottet, Mr D  
 Provest, Mr G  
 Skinner, Ms J  
 Taylor, Mr M  
 Upton, Ms G  
 Williams, Ms L

Ayres, Mr S  
 Bromhead, Mr S (teller)  
 Constance, Mr A  
 Dominello, Mr V  
 George, Mr T  
 Gulaptis, Mr C  
 Hodgkinson, Ms K  
 Kean, Mr M  
 Marshall, Mr A  
 Patterson, Mr C (teller)  
 Petinos, Ms E  
 Roberts, Mr A  
 Speakman, Mr M  
 Toole, Mr P  
 Ward, Mr G

## PAIRS

Barr, Mr C  
 Foley, Mr L  
 Hay, Ms N  
 Smith, Ms K

Rowell, Mr J  
 Baird, Mr M  
 Davies, Ms T  
 Grant, Mr T

**Motion negatived.**

*Motions***INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY**

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (11:58):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Recognises the importance of Indian Independence Day on 15 August.
- (2) Notes the strong cultural ties between New South Wales and India.
- (3) Notes the important contribution of the Australian Indian community in New South Wales.

I move this wonderful motion to recognise the importance of Indian Independence Day on 15 August. There are very strong ties between New South Wales and India. Never have our cultural, economic and personal relationships been so strong. In the five years that I have been in this place I have come to know the various organisations that play a significant role in the Australian Indian community. I will highlight some of those organisations. The Swaminarayan Mandir in Blacktown is an important organisation. I recognise the good work done by its devotees.

The temple and community centre started life in 1996 as a group of friends coming together for prayer. Today the organisation has grown to be a centrepiece for worship and community-based activities in Western Sydney. I commend the outstanding community of the Swaminarayan Mandir and pay tribute to the Mandir leaders. They include Dr Khimji and Hansa Vaghjiani, Dilip Darji, Mahendra and Maya Amin, Dr Kiran and Parul Amin, Mukesh and Shetal Amin, and Vimal and Megna Amin. The centre plays an important community role through its delivery of children's cultural programs, senior citizen outings and excursions, and charity events such as flood relief work.

The centre also hosts Indian festivals that give devotees an opportunity to come together and celebrate their rich Indian cultural heritage. I acknowledge the great work done by Swaminarayan Mandir in building a stronger and harmonious community. The Sikh Temple Gurudwara Sahib at Glenwood is renowned throughout Sydney and New South Wales. The Australian Sikh Association Incorporated is the largest registered body of Sikhs in the Southern Hemisphere. The association manages the Gurudwara Sahib at Glenwood, which serves the Sikh community throughout Sydney and New South Wales.

I commend the outstanding community of the Sikh Temple Gurudwara Sahib and pay tribute to the temple leaders and all the devotees, including Mehnga Singh Khakh, the chairman; Manjit Singh Purewal, the vice chairman; Jagtar Singh, the general secretary; Captain Sarjinder Singh Sandhu, the president; Jaspal Singh, the treasurer; and Mohan Singh Pooni, the chief finance officer. The Gurudwara Sahib at Glenwood is the hub of religious and community activities all year round. The temple offers a place for prayer, meditation, teachings and hymns from Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. The temple also provides important community services, including the running of a Punjabi language school and a library, the provision of English and computer classes for the elderly, and other charitable activities. I acknowledge the great work done by the Sikh Temple Gurudwara Sahib at Glenwood in building a stronger and harmonious community.

I bring to the attention of the House the Vedanta Centre of Sydney in Ermington in my electorate of Parramatta, which goes from strength to strength. I commend the outstanding community of the Vedanta Centre of Sydney and pay tribute to the Vedanta leaders. They include Swami Sridharananda, president; vice presidents Mrs Vandana Sarathy, Mr Prakash Chand and Swami Atmeshananda; and Paul Nothold, secretary. The centre plays an important community role through its delivery of classes on Indian scriptures, meditation and yoga, as well as programs in performing arts, including music, dance, drama and skits. It has held five international yoga conferences since 2004. The centre runs spiritual counselling and children's classes and has collected funds for disasters in Australia and abroad. I acknowledge the great work done by the Vedanta Centre of Sydney in building a stronger and harmonious community.

I also mention the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha, also known as BAPS, and the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Rosehill—again in my electorate. BAPS is a worldwide community-based spiritual organisation that serves communities and families. BAPS upholds the Hindu belief that there can be unity in diversity. It values living in harmony with others and working in unity towards a better world. BAPS is committed to serving the community through its various activities, which include participation in council events such as the Rosella and Riverbeat festivals; organising blood donation drives under the auspices of the Australian Red Cross; taking part in Clean-Up Australia and National Tree Planting Day campaigns; organising walkathons for local charities—at the last walkathon earlier this year BAPS raised more than \$8,000 each for the Westmead Medical Research Foundation and the LBW Trust—organising prayers by BAPS children at Westmead Children's Hospital; organising health expos in partnership with local organisations such as WentWest for the benefit of local and migrant communities; and organising its youth wing to run prayer services at Parramatta Park for world peace and tranquillity.

Volunteers are the backbone of BAPS. For the past 10 years, the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Rosehill has stood as a centre of community, culture and spirituality. Its spirit of volunteerism is commendable. I acknowledge the great work done by BAPS in Rosehill in serving our community. I have known these organisations throughout my five years in this place. They are just a few of the exemplars of organisations that bring the community together and provide help for those newly settled in Australia. For those people who are bringing up families, they provide the right values and leadership. Without community organisations like these, New South Wales would be a much poorer place. I commend the motion to the House.

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (12:05):** I support my colleague the member for Parramatta on this motion recognising the importance of Indian Independence Day on 15 August and noting the strong cultural ties between New South Wales and India and the contribution of the Australian Indian community in New South Wales. As those in this place probably know, India is one of the largest nations on earth—it has a population of 1.25 billion—and it is a democracy. That is a tremendous statement: India is the largest democracy in the world. India's independence is therefore worth celebrating, as it stands as a beacon of modern civilisation, democracy and freedom around the world. All nations have their challenges, and no doubt the people of India would acknowledge that they do too, but it is wonderful that we can make such a statement about a nation that makes up such a large part of the world's population.

That Indian population is increasingly engaging with us here in Australia. Indian migration has become much more significant in recent years. I believe in the most recent period—the past three or four years—India is the largest source country for migrants coming to Australia. That has created very significant change in communities such as that of the member for Parramatta and mine in the electorate of Riverstone, where many people of Indian background are settling. They are becoming wonderful Australian citizens and are making a huge contribution to the welfare of our district and our great State. Many of these immigrants from India are entrepreneurial. They start-up businesses. They jump in and work hard to make a livelihood for themselves, their families, their relatives and their broader community—and, in the process, they create economic activity and jobs for the wider community of New South Wales. We are grateful for that. We recognise that contribution and encourage more of it—the sharing of their talent and the entrepreneurial spirit and energy that they bring to our community.

My friend the member for Parramatta talked a little about Gurudwara, the Sikh temple at Glenwood in my electorate of Riverstone. It is a significant religious hub in the western part of Sydney to which Sikhs look for spiritual guidance and nourishment. It is also a wonderful social contributor; it reaches out in many ways to become part of the Australian community. It is a trait of so many of the new ethnic communities settling in Western Sydney that they wish to reach out almost immediately. They do not just look inward and look after their own, which of course they must do; they also look outward and contribute to the welfare of the broader community in which they settle. I commend the Australian Sikh Association for being one of those organisations that does exactly that, and contributes to the benefit of the wider community of which it forms a part. I will highlight another group that so far has not been mentioned, the Council of Indian Australians [CIA], which has its home in the Blacktown council area and, more particularly, in my electorate of Riverstone. The council holds many events at Blacktown, at The Ponds or at other venues in Western Sydney.

The Council of Indian Australians has specifically reached out and fostered engagement between people of Indian background and the broader community. The main focus and charter of the CIA is to ensure that people whom it serves within the Indian community feel part of the broader community and form connections and build bridges with others. Each of its celebrations held at The Ponds in recent years has brought that kind of focus to bear. It is a very positive development that has been well received by the local community. An offshoot of the CIA is the support centre for the Indian community at Pendle Hill, which is in the electorate of the member for Prospect. It is a great initiative that supports newcomers to Australia. The Indian Support Centre has reached out to people in relation to qualifications issues, domestic violence, isolation in the community, language needs and a whole host of other challenges that all newly arrived migrants encounter.

The most recent waves of migrants from India face the same challenges as people who arrived in Australia in decades past. The Government has recognised the massive injection of energy, investment, talent and entrepreneurial spirit that New South Wales is receiving from Indian migration. It is a pleasure to know that former Premier O'Farrell and Premier Baird both visited India during their terms of office and that New South Wales was privileged to receive a return visit from Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014. He received a magnificent reception from the New South Wales Indian community.

**Dr Geoff Lee:** Rock star.

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY:** As my colleague said, the Prime Minister had a rock-star reception at the Homebush Bay Olympic site, where thousands and thousands of people gathered to hear him speak. His reception as a popular figure was rivalled only by that which was reserved for the member for Parramatta, whose presence was acknowledged most generously. The relationship between New South Wales and India is growing, deepening and broadening, which is overwhelmingly good for our community and signals a bright future for both sides of that equation. As we celebrate Indian Independence Day it is worthy of note that Indian migrants with a rich historical and cultural background will contribute to our society and the progress of New South Wales and of Australia. I commend the Indian community in New South Wales and I congratulate them on Indian Independence Day.

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (12:12):** I refer to the motion moved by the member for Parramatta in relation to Indian Independence Day on 15 August. This year is the seventieth anniversary of India's independence, which is a momentous occasion and a great opportunity to reflect on that achievement. India is the world's largest democracy, with more than a billion people. It is a united multicultural, multilingual, multi-faith society that is developing rapidly, with economic growth averaging around 8 per cent a year. India is an incredible country that is changing rapidly. The number of people who have been taken out of poverty in recent decades is staggering. Millions and millions of people have entered India's growing middle class in recent years.

The very close relationship between Australia and India has produced not only huge numbers of Indian migrants to Australia but also much more trade between the two countries, which offers fantastic opportunities for Australians and Indians. Those opportunities have been taken up by many in the Australian Indian community. An area of particular growth at present is dairy exports between the two countries. Our dairy products are of extremely high quality and India has the largest dairy market in the world. It is also the largest producer of dairy products globally, but it has a strong appetite for dairy products produced in New South Wales, which is great. The growth in our relationship in the past few years has included the export of uranium. That is a more contentious issue, but it is strongly supported by the Indian community in Australia who were very proud to—

**Dr Geoff Lee:** It wasn't supported by Labor, though.

**Ms JULIA FINN:** Yes, it was. It was initiated by Julia Gillard as Prime Minister and supported by the National Conference of the Labor Party. The growth in exports is enormous. Earlier this year I visited Ahmedabad and met with the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce, which wants to deepen ties with Australia. Gujarat is the sister state to New South Wales. The chamber of commerce wants to set up a process of sharing data about its

membership and the membership of Australian chambers of commerce to create better business opportunities. The Gujarat Chamber of Commerce does that with other countries, and it is something we should look to do to grow our markets. In Sydney the celebration of Indian Independence Day by our very proud Indian ex-patriot community—who are also very proud Australians—is growing each year, with functions increasing in size and number. They demonstrate a great pride in the growth of India and its success. In recent years India has been the largest source of skilled migrants to Australia and the most migrants overall, who are making a great contribution to this country.

We talked about the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha—or BAPS—community in Rosehill last night. We also have the oldest Hindu temple, the Sri Mandir in Auburn—which I will be attending later today—and the Indian Crescent Society, which was formed recently to represent the quite large Indian Muslim population. They are very proud of their Indian culture and of being Australians. Celebrating the seventieth anniversary of India's independence is a huge achievement for democracy and something that the Indian can be very proud of.

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (12:16):** It is appropriate that the Assistant Speaker is in the chair for this debate about Indian Independence Day because Coffs Harbour is home to the largest Australian Sikh community in the nation. I always get excited about celebrating Indian Independence Day for two reasons. First, India's non-violent struggle for freedom is an inspiration to countries around the world. Its rejection of terrorism, extremism and its belief in democracy and the rule of law are things that Australians also hold dear. Secondly, no-one knows how to throw a party quite like the Australian Indian community. We saw what was best about the Australian Indian community recently at a series of events held to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of India's independence. It started off with all the fanfare of an Indian dance festival. I cannot dance to save my life.

**Dr Geoff Lee:** You tried, which is good.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** I certainly tried. It was a wonderful festival that highlighted the best of the Australian Indian community, with all its pageantry, wonderful dress and not to mention the brilliant food. I note that the member for Granville, the member for Parramatta and the member for Riverstone also celebrated this wonderful occasion. I pay tribute to the organisers of this fantastic celebration of Indian independence, the Council of Indian Australians [CIA] and president Praful Desai, vice-president the outstanding Mohit Kumar—who is a very good friend of mine and who represents what is best about the Indian Australian community—secretary Nitin Shukla, joint secretary Keyur Desai, treasurer Dr Baalu Vijay and joint treasurer Amit Tripathi.

Last Sunday the member for Parramatta and I attended another outstanding celebration with the Federation of Indian Associations. The 15,000 people in attendance at Parramatta Park on the day celebrated the wonderful history and culture of the Australian Indian community with lots of great food and colourful dress. I congratulate Dr Yahdu Singh on yet another outstanding event—his involvement always ensures the success of an event, and this year's was no exception. I also pay tribute to the United Indian Associations and John Kennedy for the Indian Independence Day celebrations held last Monday night.

The relationship between India and Australia has never been more exciting. We are on the cusp of signing a free trade agreement with India, which, in my opinion, will underpin the defining relationship for both our countries for decades to come. It will underpin economic growth in Australia and contribute to the continued rise of India. Indeed, my generation more than any other will be the beneficiary of the India-Australia relationship. This will be one of the defining partnerships of the twenty-first century for both our countries, and I am looking forward to contributing to that. Every day we see examples of the great contributions that Indian Australians make to this country. They epitomise what is best about modern Australia—namely, a multicultural, vibrant and tolerant society that we have created together.

**Mr JOHN ROBERTSON (Blacktown) (12:20):** A significant number of my constituents are descendants of migrants or are migrants from the great nation of India. India is a great example of a multi-faith nation—whether Sikh, Hindu, Catholic or any other religion. Indian Independence Day gives us an opportunity not only to talk about that but also to acknowledge the great contribution that people from India make to the Australian economy. Last Monday week I was privileged to attend the Indian Consulate General to celebrate Indian Independence Day. A number of those opposite were also in attendance. One of the greatest highlights of my life was when I stood on the stage as Narendra Modi addressed people from the great nation of India. In fact, when he arrived it was like standing on stage at a rock concert. I will share a personal story with the House. As I stood on that stage at Homebush, my daughter and my son-in-law were watching the address on their television in India. My son-in-law was very excited and told his family, "That's my father-in-law on the stage with Modi." His family comes from Gujarat, which is where Modi comes from, and they were also very proud.

We are very fortunate to have so many people from that great nation in Australia because they bring with them entrepreneurship, drive and commitment to the place in which they live. Those who have chosen to live here

demonstrate that commitment and loyalty to our nation. Many operate businesses in my electorate and I am privileged to represent them in this place. These people not only contribute to the economy but also are charitable. They participate in community activities and give more than just employment opportunities. Our communities also benefit from their cultural contributions. We are fortunate that they are here and I am proud to contribute to this debate on Indian Independence Day. Gandhi demonstrated that much can be achieved in a peaceful manner. The Indian story is a demonstration of the fact that independence does not always have to involve physical conflict; it can be achieved significantly differently from how most people would expect a nation to gain independence. The Indian people are very proud of that. I congratulate the member for Parramatta on his motion.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER:** Before calling the member for Parramatta, I say to all participants in this debate, "Sat sri akal ji".

**Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta) (12:25):** In reply: I thank members representing the electorates of Riverstone, Granville, Hornsby and Blacktown for their contributions to this debate. They have clearly demonstrated bipartisan support for the Indian Australian community in New South Wales. The member for Riverstone has the Gurudwara Bangla Sahib in his electorate and he reflected on how the Indian Australians in his community make great Australians and significant contributions to the Australian way of life. The member for Granville, who is a good friend of the Indian Australian community, reflected on the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha—or BAPS—community, which we debated last night as a matter of public importance. I also thank her for her support in furthering business relationships with our sister state, Gujarat.

It is wonderful to see that 70 years of independence has truly catapulted the largest democracy in the world into a leading nation. No member in this House has a closer personal contact with Gujarat than the member for Blacktown—his son-in-law is Gujarati. The member is very proud. He often talks about his daughter and his son-in-law and his wonderful relationship with his new family. We wish them well and we are looking forward to seeing some photographs.

**Mr John Robertson:** Perhaps I can table them?

**Dr GEOFF LEE:** We will not be tabling any photographs from the member for Blacktown's phone. The member for Hornsby, who is another great supporter of the Indian Australian community, spoke about his good friends Dr Yahdu Singh and John Kennedy from the United Indian Associations. President Praful Desai and Vice President Mohit Kumar from the Council of Indian Australians are also good friends. The member for Hornsby spoke about our countries being on the verge of a free trade agreement and said that he is looking forward to enjoying more exciting relationships in the future. The signing of that free trade agreement will be a defining moment, particularly for those of the member's generation. On behalf of the New South Wales Government—including the member for Drummoyne, who clearly wanted to speak to the motion but did not get the opportunity to do so—and other members of this House I commend the wonderful contribution that the Indian community makes to Australia.

**Motion agreed to.**

### **BERRY BYPASS**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (12:29):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes the progress being made on the construction of Berry bypass.
- (2) Notes that the Opposition voted against the long-term lease of Port Kembla that part-funded the project.

Before I commence, I acknowledge in the Speaker's gallery Sam Hobson, who is doing work experience with me this week and is a resident of Berry. Speaking to him about this motion before I came down to the Chamber today, I know that Sam, as a Berry resident, is incredibly excited about this project. As an Illawarra Grammar School student, he travels up to Wollongong on what will be a major piece of infrastructure—in fact, the largest single investment in the history of the Princes Highway: \$580 million to improve the Princes Highway through Berry. I have had to stand at funerals of people who have lost their lives on the Princes Highway. It is never, ever a good thing to have to see locals face challenges on our roads, particularly country roads that lead to accident, injury and death. One of the things that brought me to this place was to campaign for those road upgrades.

The Berry bypass has been promised to our community since 1955. There has been talk, there have been discussions, glossy brochures, public meetings and lots and lots of contributions made, but nothing was ever done. In fact, when I said that I would come to this place and argue for these funds, I made it clear that it is something that we would deliver and so many people said to me, "I will never be alive to see it. I will never be around to drive on it". Today, people get to see the progress that has been made. The Berry bypass comes on top of a number

of projects in our region, such as the \$340 million Gerringong upgrade; the \$62 million South Nowra upgrade, which was delivered by both me and the Speaker, the member for South Coast; and the promised \$550 million Albion Park Rail bypass. In relation to these projects, I mentioned in the second part of the motion the fact that the \$580 million for the project is partly funded with \$170 million through the long-term lease of Port Kembla.

**Ms Anna Watson:** You mean the sale.

**Mr GARETH WARD:** I note the interjection of the member for Shellharbour. There is actually a difference between a lease and a sale, and, of course, this is a 99-year lease.

**Ms Anna Watson:** You'll be 150 years old.

**Mr GARETH WARD:** There is a bit of a difference between 99 and 150. Did you understand that? One is longer and one is shorter. I know that might be difficult for you to understand, but if you Google it I am sure someone can explain it to you.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Kiama will direct his comments through the Chair.

**Mr GARETH WARD:** I do apologise. Of course, the member for Shellharbour is not good with numbers because she has never actually won a preselection that has not been rigged. So I am not surprised that she does not understand how to deal with numbers. She is not good with numbers. I will go back to the motion. I would not want to venture into the realms of irrelevancy because I have been dragged kicking and screaming by the member for Shellharbour. The Berry bypass will improve road safety on the Princes Highway and the local road network, and it will reduce total crashes on the Princes Highway in the project area by an estimated 64 per cent—and that, of course, is incredibly important for local residents like Sam and other families in our region. The bypass will improve road safety through less interaction between traffic and pedestrians in the town of Berry.

Many Berry locals have spoken about how we have a beautiful township and a wonderful community, but major trucks and many vehicles travel right through the Berry township. The bypass will also improve the efficiency of the Princes Highway between Toolijooa Road and just south of Anderson Lane, reduce travel time by an estimated seven minutes, support regional and local economic development, and generate local employment opportunities. This project employs up to 500 people at any one time, so it is a major job generator. Berry bypass will provide value for money, improve flood immunity and improve wildlife crossings. The environmental considerations have been significant as part of this project, so much so that everyone from Landcare involved in the propagation and replacement of trees and those from Berry Men's Shed involved in generating the shelter boxes to provide for displaced wildlife in and around the town have been involved in this project.

The weather over the past three months has been drier than usual and we have been able to take valuable steps forward on this project, including opening two kilometres of new highway north of Berry for two-lane, two-way traffic and delivering the Super-T girders and placing them on the last six spans on the bridge at Berry. I point out that all of those beams have been manufactured in Australia. In fact, this is a great example of a project that is using Australian steel based on quality, longevity and price.

**Mr Nick Lalich:** Why don't you build the trains here then?

**Mr GARETH WARD:** I acknowledge the interjection. The trains are made of aluminium. I know that you are the little red engine that could; I know you try hard, but on this occasion you are just an old red rattler.

**Mr Mark Coure:** They're all made out of tin.

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

**Mr GARETH WARD:** Other steps forward on this project have been opening the realigned Toolijooa Road and extending Hitchcocks Lane; opening a temporary side road at Andersons Lane; the pouring of 1,100 cubic metres of concrete for the Kangaroo Valley Road bridge, which was a fascinating pour for those foundations because it had to be done continuously for 18 hours—it was a tricky task, but it was done with precision and proficiency; placing more than 7.7 kilometres of stormwater drainage; and processing more than 950,000 tonnes of rock for reuse on the project. Last month the final of 55 controlled blasts were carried out to progress the highway, which removed the equivalent of 210 Olympic swimming pools of dirt from Toolijooa ridge alone.

All up, 1.5 million cubic metres of material has been moved across the project, while 10 kilometres of stormwater drainage has been installed, along with 408 Super-T girders on the bridges. Much of the material left after blasting has been recycled and put back into the project, saving the New South Wales Government time and money. Once complete, the corridor aims to improve safety and travel time for the 19,400 motorists travelling on the highway every single day. Many of us come to Parliament to do important things. For me, this project is

critical for our community. I thank members for their support, and particularly the Government for its support. Without this Government and without its choice to invest in this project it simply would not have happened.

**Mr Nick Lalich:** Labor would have done far more.

**Mr GARETH WARD:** You had 16 years, old boy, and you did nothing.

**Mr Nick Lalich:** We did a lot in 16 years too. Four elections we won.

**Mr GARETH WARD:** You did absolutely nothing.

**Mr Mark Coure:** Let's hear the excuses now.

**Ms Anna Watson:** I don't make excuses. But you need to apologise.

**Mr Mark Coure:** Say sorry.

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:36):** I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out paragraph (2) with a view to inserting instead:

"(2) Notes that Labor's opposition to the sell-off of Port Kembla has been vindicated by the comments in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 27 July 2016 by the Chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, Rod Sims, who describes the Government's privatisation agenda as 'dopey'".

**Mr Gareth Ward:** Point of order—

**Mr Mark Coure:** That significantly changes the motion.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Does the member for Kiama have a point of order?

**Mr Gareth Ward:** I do. The point of an amendment is to not fundamentally to change the whole premise of the motion.

**Mr Nick Lalich:** What's the member's point of order?

**Mr Gareth Ward:** My point of order is you have changed the motion from a motion about the Berry bypass to one entirely about privatisation. That is not an amendment; that is a fundamental change to the motion.

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** Can we have the clock stopped?

**Mr Gareth Ward:** No, you can't.

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** Are you the Speaker now?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Until all members of this House start directing their comments or their points of order through the Chair instead of taking over the running of the House, I refuse to stop anything. I uphold the point of order.

**Mr Mark Coure:** Would you like my notes?

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** I don't need your notes.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Oatley will have an opportunity to contribute to the debate.

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** The House has been treated to the usual self-congratulatory motion that we have heard so many times in the past from the member for Kiama. In fact, the member for Kiama has been notably absent from this part of the House proceedings for some time now. I was beginning to wonder whether his vanity fetish, his overwhelming desire to be noticed by his colleagues, had finally been tamed. It seems that the insecurities of the member for Kiama cannot be tamed. We see him strutting up and down, his arms waving around like a blow-up air puppet.

**Mr Gareth Ward:** Point of order: Mr Deputy Speaker—

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Before I make any further rulings I would like to see a copy of the amendment of the member for Shellharbour.

**Mr Gareth Ward:** You have already ruled it out, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am seeking further advice.

**Mr Gareth Ward:** My point of order is taken under Standing Order 76. I know the member for Shellharbour likes to engage in puerile vitriol, but she has not actually addressed the motion. She has engaged in a personal attack against me, with the name-calling and childish behaviour we expect from the member for

Shellharbour. I ask her to come back to the motion and do what the people of Shellharbour would expect her to do—behave as a member of Parliament, not as a child.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order. The member Shellharbour will return to the leave of the motion.

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** I am getting to that, Deputy Speaker.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** When?

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** Because the raised voices of indignation pierces your eardrums. It is all a part of Gareth Ward's typical Thursday sitting week puppet show.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** I am going to speak about the bypass.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! I sit the member down.

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (12:40):** Let us put a stop to the blame game; let us put a stop to the politics. We had 16 years of Labor during which nothing happened. People were sick and tired of the excuses to get this done. It was never on Labor's radar. The good thing is, Mr Deputy Speaker, through you—and I will say this with 3½ minutes to go—you are doing an outstanding job, clearly listening, in your role. People are just sick and tired of the politics.

**Ms Anna Watson:** You guys can't handle any truth.

**Mr MARK COURE:** It is my speech; it is not a point of order. They are sick and tired of the politics.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Oatley will direct all his comments through the Chair and not directly across the Chamber.

**Mr MARK COURE:** Yes, Mr Deputy Speaker. Through you, Mr Deputy Speaker, they are sick and tired of the politics, but well done, through you, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Kiama, who is doing an outstanding job, has been able to get this job—the \$580 million Foxground and Berry bypass—happening. It is because of this gentlemen, through you, Mr Deputy Speaker, the member for Kiama, who is an outstanding member and I think one of the best members, other than me, in this Chamber. The \$580 million bypass is a game changer for this State and a game changer for the South Coast and the Illawarra. The New South Wales Government will inject \$110 million into the Foxground-Berry bypass project to continue this great work on this important corridor as part of the 2016-17 budget.

**Ms Anna Watson:** Started by Labor in 2006.

**Mr MARK COURE:** Shush. This is important.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will not tell the member for Oatley again; he will direct his comments through the Chair otherwise he will be sat down.

**Mr MARK COURE:** I was, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, you were not.

**Mr MARK COURE:** Through you, Mr Deputy Speaker, the Foxground-Berry bypass and the Princes Highway will provide 12.5 kilometres of a four-lane divided highway, which also includes a bypass to the existing winding highway at Foxground and a bypass at Berry, with access ramps north and south of the town. This is great news. This is a multimillion dollar project that not just the member for Kiama has wanted in his area for a very long time but residents living in and around the South Coast and the Illawarra. Work on the Foxground-Berry bypass is progressing well. I drove past there only recently and motorists are now travelling on the four kilometres of the new highway.

It is really important, through you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that after waiting decades for upgrades like this to begin, communities are now seeing major work along the highway progressing at an amazing pace. After years and years of waiting, particularly under Labor, this project is finally underway. When we came to office in 2011 there was a major infrastructure backlog and we are playing catch-up. Shame on those opposite, through you, Mr Deputy Speaker. We are getting on with the job of building not only all this major infrastructure but also upgrading things in my electorate such as St George Hospital. [*Time expired.*]

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I call the member for Shellharbour to reinstate her amendment.

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out paragraph (2) with a view to inserting instead:

"(2) Notes that Labor's opposition to the sell-off of Port Kembla has been vindicated."

As I was saying, we on this side of the House love the Berry bypass. In fact, we love it so much that we allocated \$170 million towards the Princes Highway in Labor's 10-year infrastructure plan at the last State election. Before this, the former Labor Government allocated planning funding towards the inevitable construction of the Berry bypass. In fact, we started the whole planning process for every road infrastructure upgrade taking place along the Princes Highway on the South Coast. But the member for Kiama likes to create the perception for his constituency that nothing had ever been done on roads in the Illawarra and South Coast until he was elected in 2011. The public record indicates that this assertion is simply rubbish. In fact, the *Illawarra Mercury* on 13 April this year told its readers in relation to the Gerringong upgrade:

The Princes Highway upgrade at Gerringong might have given people a false impression of the time it takes to build a major road.

But that project wasn't four years from go to whoa—

**Mr Gareth Ward:** Point of order: It is Standing Order 76. The member for Shellharbour is quoting an article in relation to the Gerringong upgrade. The topic of this motion is the Berry bypass.

**Ms Anna Watson:** You spoke about the Gerringong upgrade.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! These types of motions are usually wide ranging. The member for Kiama will have the opportunity to comment in his reply.

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** The article continues:

—the planning process for the Princes Highway upgrade from Gerringong to Bomaderry was well underway by the time of the 2011 election.

Planning for the upgrade began in 2006 – nine years before it was delivered.

According to the member for Kiama, planning road infrastructure is good under the Liberal Government but bad under the Labor Government. But there is another aspect to the Berry bypass that the member for Kiama never raised in his speech. He glossed over the cost of the project. He raced out to announce the Berry bypass with the cost of \$510 million. A little while later he was not so pleased to be confronted with the local Illawarra media asking him questions about why the project suddenly needed an extra funding injection of \$70 million. Garrulous Gareth had the Premier down for the big sod turning. He thought this would be terrific.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members will be referred to by their correct titles.

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** We will stick a shiny shovel into the ground with the Premier—all toothy smiles and wobbly heads, but then he had to face the local press. The first question was: "Why has this project blown out by \$70 million?" The Premier could not answer it; the Minister for Roads would not answer it, but the member for Kiama steps in and says, "Oh, it's because of inflation." I kid you not, that is what he said; Gareth blames inflation—the lowest rate of CPI in decades—for a \$70 million blowout in his favourite South Coast road project. The Berry bypass inflation was blamed for a \$70 million blowout. I note that the member's motion mentions the sale of Port Kembla. I seek an extension of time, given so much of my time was taken up.

**Extension of time not granted.**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Shellharbour should be thankful she has been allowed to contribute to the debate.

**Ms ANNA WATSON:** I am not finished yet; there is plenty more to come.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Shellharbour should understand and know that there is no provision in the standing orders to extend a speaker's time during this this type of debate.

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoynes) (12:49):** I commend the member for Kiama for bringing such an important motion to the House. Unfortunately, there was not a lot of fact within the debate to assist those in the gallery to comprehend the discussion. Although those opposite governed for decades, they accomplished very little. One example is the Rozelle metro in my electorate of Drummoynes where Labor spent \$500 million but did not lay a single track. It is hypocritical for the Opposition to then criticise a funding blowout of \$50 million or \$70 million.

The member for Shellharbour should be grateful that her contributions in this place do not filter back to her electorate, because the community would be horrified if they did. BIS Shrapnel calculates that in 2017 New South Wales will deliver \$8.4 billion worth of road infrastructure while the balance of Australia will deliver \$10 billion. That figure is greater than the combined funding of Victoria, South Australia, the Australian

Capital Territory and Queensland. That statistic highlights the level of work occurring in this State. Since 2011 the member for Kiama has consistently advocated for his electorate.

**Ms Sonia Hornery:** Point of order: I ask the member to speak to the leave of the motion, which is about the Berry bypass.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I have previously stated that debate during these motions becomes quite wide ranging. I allowed the member for Shellharbour to expand her contribution by speaking of an entirely different road.

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI:** The \$580 million Berry bypass is a game changer for the member for Kiama. The adjoining electorates are fortunate that the member for Kiama advocates so strongly for his community. The level of funding achieved for his community benefits the surrounding communities. The Albion Park rail bypass, the Gerringong upgrade and the South Nowra upgrade are a testament to the success the member has achieved in a short period of time. The member for Kiama has set the bar at a level that embarrasses the Labor Party. It cannot keep up. Those opposite are embarrassed about their lack of success.

**Ms Anna Watson:** Point of order: The member is flouting your ruling, Mr Deputy Speaker. He is not speaking about the Berry bypass.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I allowed the member for Shellharbour the same latitude.

**Ms Anna Watson:** I was speaking about the Princes Highway.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No, you were not. I allowed the member for Shellharbour the same latitude.

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI:** The community waited for decades for the Berry bypass upgrade to begin. Communities are now seeing major work along the highway progress at an unprecedented pace. I commend this motion.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (12:53):** Don't members love Thursday afternoons? It is interesting in these debates about infrastructure that the Government attempts to propagate the myth in motion after motion through member after member that when it came to government New South Wales was green fields, there was no development, nothing went on, and there was no planning. It purports that nothing happened before the Government was elected in 2011. As the member for Shellharbour rightly said, members know that many of these projects were in the planning stages and some of them had started preconstruction prior to 2011. In its first four years the Government had a great reputation for cutting ribbons on projects that the previous Labor Government had started.

**Mr John Sidoti:** Name one.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** My police station in Wyong and several roads as well. The people in the gallery should be under no illusion that this arrogant Government wants to spend all its time crowing without sharing credit. They do not acknowledge previous Liberal governments, because this Government has done everything in the State. What a joke. The member for Shellharbour made an important point concerning the explanation of the member for Kiama about the cost blowout with the Berry bypass. He said it is because of inflation, but that is incorrect. It is connected with the sale or lease of Port Kembla. In July the Chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC] directly criticised the privatisations and attacked the sell-off of ports in New South Wales. On 27 July 2016 Mr Sims was quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as saying:

Of course you get these lovely headlines in the Financial Review saying, "Gosh, what a successful sale"...Mr Sims said.

Mr Sims does not buy into the rhetoric of a lease. He stated further:

"... look at the multiple they achieved ... well, of course they bloody well did: the owners factored in very large price rises because there's no regulation on how they set the price of a monopoly. How dopey is that?"

The Government is doing the same thing through privatisation of electricity in this State. The projects are being achieved by means that will hurt the State in the longer term. The former chair of the ACCC, a previous zealot of privatisation, is saying that New South Wales has it wrong and in the long term the deals will hurt every person in the State. The Port of Newcastle has it written into the contract that it cannot increase prices or take more containers because it cannot compete with Port Botany. The devil is in the detail with this Government, whether it is tolls on new roads or privatisation of assets, including sport and recreation camps. Government members should be honest. [*Time expired.*]

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (12:58):** In reply: It was not what Opposition members said, it was what they did not say. Where was the shadow Minister for the Illawarra during this debate today? The member

from Wyong was dragged in to speak to the motion. Those opposite have so little concern for the people of Berry that they drag someone down from the North Coast to speak for a South Coast road.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Kiama will be heard in silence.

**Mr GARETH WARD:** Not once did those opposite reflect on the fact that this road could not have been built if it were not for the long-term lease of Port Kembla. There was an opportunity at the last election for Labor to commit to the Berry bypass, but it failed to do so. Those opposite were in government for 16 long, tumultuous, corrupt, appalling, abhorrent, disgusting and revolting years. During those years not one single sod of soil was turned on the Berry bypass. The Labor Party was in government for almost two decades. Not one Opposition member mentioned the people of Berry in today's debate.

**Ms Anna Watson:** No, because I was sat down.

**Mr GARETH WARD:** I acknowledge the interjection. The member for Shellharbour said it was because she was "sat down". The member was sat down because, as expected, her behaviour was appalling.

If the residents of Shellharbour saw the way the member behaved in this Chamber I am sure they would not vote for her. Not once did she try to address the issue. She plays the man and not the ball. In contrast, I have come here to fight for my community, to make sure that I obtain every dollar I can for road upgrades. I come to this place to make sure that we build infrastructure that makes a difference to people's lives. All we have seen from Opposition members is the sort of game playing and politics that we saw for 16 years when they were in government. They ignored the people of the South Coast. They did not want to know them. They never went down there. They did nothing for the people of our area. We were left in the dark.

Labor was interested only in Sydney. Under Labor, "NSW" stood for one thing: "Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong". Labor did not care about the regions at all. That is why it never invested in modern road projects like this. This road was first spoken about in 1955, yet we saw no action from Labor. The best that members of the Opposition could do was to talk about planning money. Planning money does not save lives. Planning money is not the actual money that is required to do the work. The work would not have been done without the long-term lease that Labor voted against.

**Ms Anna Watson:** Point of order: Planning money under the Liberals is a good thing, but planning money under Labor is a bad thing. Is that what the member for Kiama is saying?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**Mr GARETH WARD:** Light travels faster than sound. It is in that vein that some people appear bright until one hears them speak. The member for Shellharbour demonstrates why she is interested only in politics and not in delivering. I will address the cost of the bypass, as that issue was raised. We went to tender, and the tender price was \$580 million. Unlike the Labor Government, which talked about the project, we are getting on with it. I am proud of the fact that, as one drives through Berry, one can see the earthworks and the tar being laid. One can see the bridges being constructed—12 of them in total. I am proud of the fact that there is Australian steel in this project. I am proud of the fact that this project is generating local jobs. Labor members are not proud of this project, which is why they are behaving appallingly today. I commend the Berry bypass and the work of this Government to the House.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question is that the words stand.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....48  
Noes .....31  
Majority.....17

AYES

Anderson, Mr K  
Barilaro, Mr J  
Conolly, Mr K  
Crouch, Mr A  
Evans, Mr L  
Gibbons, Ms M  
Gulaptis, Mr C  
Humphries, Mr K  
Lee, Dr G  
O'Dea, Mr J

Aplin, Mr G  
Berejiklian, Ms G  
Constance, Mr A  
Dominello, Mr V  
Fraser, Mr A  
Goward, Ms P  
Henskens, Mr A  
Johnsen, Mr M  
Maguire, Mr D  
Patterson, Mr C (teller)

Ayres, Mr S  
Bromhead, Mr S (teller)  
Coure, Mr M  
Elliott, Mr D  
George, Mr T  
Grant, Mr T  
Hodgkinson, Ms K  
Kean, Mr M  
Notley-Smith, Mr B  
Pavey, Ms M

## AYES

Perrottet, Mr D  
Piper, Mr G  
Rowell, Mr J  
Speakman, Mr M  
Toole, Mr P  
Ward, Mr G

Petinos, Ms E  
Provest, Mr G  
Sidoti, Mr J  
Stokes, Mr R  
Tudehope, Mr D  
Williams, Mr R

Piccoli, Mr A  
Roberts, Mr A  
Skinner, Ms J  
Taylor, Mr M  
Upton, Ms G  
Williams, Ms L

## NOES

Aitchison, Ms J  
Catley, Ms Y  
Daley, Mr M  
Finn, Ms J  
Harrison, Ms J  
Hornery, Ms S  
Lynch, Mr P  
Mehan, Mr D  
Parker, Mr J  
Warren, Mr G (teller)  
Zangari, Mr G

Atalla, Mr E  
Chanthivong, Mr A  
Dib, Mr J  
Foley, Mr L  
Haylen, Ms J  
Kamper, Mr S  
McDermott, Dr H  
Mihailuk, Ms T  
Robertson, Mr J  
Washington, Ms K

Car, Ms P  
Crakanthorp, Mr T  
Doyle, Ms T  
Harris, Mr D  
Hoenig, Mr R  
Lalich, Mr N (teller)  
McKay, Ms J  
Minns, Mr C  
Smith, Ms T  
Watson, Ms A

## PAIRS

Baird, Mr M  
Davies, Ms T  
Hancock, Ms S  
Hazzard, Mr B

Barr, Mr C  
Hay, Ms N  
Smith, Ms K  
Park, Mr R

**Amendment negatived.**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Marshall):** The question now is that the motion be agreed to.

**Motion agreed to.**

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

**Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend) (13:09):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes the findings of the "Ducks on the Pond" report on the experience of women in trades.
- (2) Notes that every woman surveyed, apprentice or former apprentice, had experienced bullying, sexism, or sexual harassment in the workplace.
- (3) Urges the Minister for Skills and the Minister for Women to collaboratively implement measures to ensure women in trades are welcomed by colleagues and employers alike to work in harassment-free environments.

Skilled trades have traditionally been male-dominated lines of work, but more and more young women are enrolling as apprentices and finding work as tradies. Though the overall increase in the number of women engaged in trades has been slight, there is cause for celebration. There is no doubt that there is a skills shortage in New South Wales and if we can open up the trades to women we may yet be able to solve that crisis. The 2014 Ducks on the pond report investigated the engagement of women with apprenticeships and trades. Though it noted a number of areas of success and improvement, the report also highlighted a number of challenges still facing women in this area, challenges which will not be overcome without deep consideration and a whole-of-government approach to tackling systemic inequalities. One of the major issues highlighted by the Ducks on the pond report is workplace culture. The report says:

Workplace culture presents the most complex challenge for employers and female apprentices in traditional trades.

Almost every woman who participated in the focus groups which formed the core of the qualitative research behind Ducks on the pond reported that they had experienced unpleasant or inappropriate workplace behaviours, including—but not limited to—bullying, discrimination and sexual harassment. These are issues which confront

women in every workplace but, as the report points out, may be especially pronounced on worksites where traditionally male-dominated trades hold sway. The fact of the matter is that in these spaces where men have long worked with no women around at all a culture has developed which has, by necessity, become male dominated. The report says:

Once women come in to the equation, men seem uncertain about what adjustments they have to make, what constitutes a reasonable bit of teasing or testing and what goes beyond the pale.

Although only 2 per cent of employers believe that female apprentices "will distract the men" or have difficulty "fitting in with the workplace culture", in qualitative research female apprentices told researchers that they had, almost to a one, experienced sexual harassment—but were unlikely to report incidents or take it further. They feared that they would be seen as prissy or oversensitive and did not want to develop a reputation. As reported in Ducks on the pond, one woman said:

There is a huge undertone about sex, lots of sexual tension .... but you can't care about it. If you complain, you get on their wrong side. The harassment just gets pushed under the carpet.

Another woman said:

If you speak out, you have to leave. You're a trouble maker. And you need the support of the blokes to do your job.

The undercurrents of misogyny are, the report indicates, sometimes joined by homophobia. One woman is quoted as saying:

You let it go for a bit. Then you make it dead plain, I'm not interested. Then they say they always knew you were a lesbian!

The statistics are damning: Thirty-six per cent of female apprentices say that they do not want to get people offside and so they do not want to complain. Thirty per cent have complained in the past and, if women who have discontinued apprenticeships are counted, that number rises to 44 per cent. Thirteen per cent of women apprentices say that they are regularly bullied or harassed at work. Disturbingly, when discontinued apprentices are counted, the number rises to 30 per cent. We need to tackle this culture of workplace harassment head-on with a whole-of-government approach to education, regulation and enforcement.

We need to be offering more women pathways into trades, encouraging interested women to engage with trades earlier so we can smooth the transition and limit culture shock. We need to be educating business owners and employees about the dangers of workplace harassment, and we need to find ways to empower victims to share their stories and find justice. I look forward to working with members from all sides of the Chamber to collaboratively implement measures to ensure that tradeswomen are safe in their workplaces so that women want to take on these important roles and so we can look at trades in a twenty-first century way.

**Ms MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (13:16):** At the outset I wholeheartedly congratulate the member for Wallsend, Sonia Hornery, on moving this motion. I am going to move a slight amendment to her motion which, in good faith, the member has accepted. That demonstrates again the collaborative approach that the member takes in this Chamber, something I genuinely like and genuinely respect about her. We are all at one on this very important issue. I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out paragraph (3) with a view to inserting instead:

"(3) Acknowledges the work the Minister for Skills and the Minister for Women has underway to ensure women in trades are welcomed colleagues and employers alike to work in harassment-free environments.

As I mentioned, the member for Wallsend has accepted that amendment because she recognises that this issue must be approached on a bipartisan basis. We need to acknowledge the work that has been done and the work that we need to do to improve the percentage of women working in the trades. The House acknowledges the work of NSW State Training Services for the research and insights provided by the Ducks on the pond report. The 2014 report highlights alarming findings, as just covered by the member for Wallsend, about women working in non-traditional industries—appalling stereotypes. Almost every woman who participated in this study had experienced workplace bullying, discrimination or sexual harassment. Eighty-four per cent knew it would be a challenge to work in a male-dominated environment but underestimated the extent of the prejudice and sexual harassment.

The New South Wales Government is committed to improving gender equality and the lives of women in this State. I think it is important to highlight that the Minister, Pru Goward, has for many years been a champion for women in trades. She has made it a personal goal to increase the number of women working in trades and has introduced programs to ensure that that happens. For many years I have heard her talk about this issue. In fact the first time I realised that women working in trades was an issue—and an opportunity—was many years ago when I heard the Minister speak about it.

The New South Wales Government is committed to addressing this issue and, as I said, that commitment crosses party lines. The approach of the Government includes increasing the opportunities for women to achieve financial independence and financial security through work and eliminating domestic and family violence and sexual assault. Despite much progress made over the years, we know that gender inequality continues to exist for women in New South Wales in both their public and private lives.

In 2014 only 12.5 per cent of women commenced apprenticeships in the male-dominated areas of technicians and trades. The NSW Council for Women's Economic Opportunity brings together experts from business, industry, non-government organisations and academia to provide specialist advice to the Government on opportunities and initiatives to enhance women's economic development and independence. Following this Government's successful Women in Trades initiatives, in 2016 the council expanded its focus to include three key strategic directions—work and financial security, education and training, and leadership.

The first strategic direction—work and financial security—includes opportunities to enhance the representation of women across the workforce, including in non-traditional industries, which are high-demand and well-paid jobs. Improved participation by women means improved economic opportunities for them and their families. The Government is exploring strategies to encourage women and girls to undertake and complete training in these areas, and to maintain employment as tradespersons in the future. I acknowledge that workplace culture has a significant impact on the attraction and retention of female apprentices in traditional trades.

The Ducks on the pond report highlights that, in spite of efforts to increase the number of women in trades, female and male apprentices are not being treated equally at work, which makes it hard for women to do their job, to learn their trade and to obtain a qualification. In this report the sexism experienced at work resulted in high levels of dropouts by women apprentices and low reporting levels of workplace bullying and harassment. Women reported persistent testing and pressure to prove themselves to male colleagues, bullying and sexual harassment.

Eighty per cent of employers who participated in the survey had no gender diversity policy and most said that they had never considered it. Gender inequality is at the heart of this issue and workplace attitudes must change. Currently the Government is developing a sexual assault strategy for New South Wales which will provide a framework for a holistic, coordinated approach to sexual assault, prevention and response. This strategy seeks to provide a cohesive and consistent whole-of-government and community response to the needs of adult and child victims of sexual assault, adult survivors of childhood sexual assault, and their families.

The Ducks on the pond report highlights the urgent need for such attitudinal and cultural changes to occur to enable an increase in the number of women in traditional trades. More young women should view traditional trades as a viable career option and more employers should realise that women can work as effectively as men in traditional trades. While a lot of positive work has been done in the areas of women's economic opportunity, gender equity and the prevention of sexual assault, we still have a long way to go. The Government is optimistic that collaboration with the community and with the business sector will lead to women prospering in trades in the future. I acknowledge the work of the Minister on this front and I thank the member for Wallsend for moving this motion.

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (13:22):** I make a brief contribution to debate on the motion moved by the member for Wallsend and I congratulate her on moving it. The term "ducks on the pond" was used by men in shearing sheds when females entered a male-dominated work area. It is astounding that even to this day this term "ducks on the pond" is still being used, according to a report commissioned by the NSW Skills Board which relates to women in trade apprenticeships. Many young women are breaking into the last bastions of male-dominated workplaces, but they do not always receive the warm welcome that they deserve as some men still see it as their territory.

Many women, in particular young women, never consider a career in the trades. Unfortunately, even fewer employers entertain the idea of taking on young female apprentices to do the work that is traditionally done by men. All the women who were surveyed said that they had experienced bullying, discrimination or sexual harassment and they knew that they were entering a tough environment. However, they never expected to be the victims of sexual innuendo or prejudice. One woman said, "They [the men] are constantly testing you, trying to get you to break." The women who survive in these positions risk losing their identities. They change their appearances to look more like men, they change the way they speak, and they change their mannerisms.

Most employers believe that they have policies in place to address sexual harassment and they are shocked when they learn that female apprentices are still experiencing harassment. The women who were surveyed were reluctant, to the say the least, to report such harassment as they fear that they will be seen as the girl who runs to Human Resources to complain. Female apprentices do not want special treatment; all they want

is to be seen as being able to do the work. They do not want to be seen as boys; the extent of their needs is a uniform that fits and female bathroom facilities. However, many employers say that that is not important.

It took almost two years for the report to be released publicly. I do not know what the Government was afraid of or what it was embarrassed about. The only way that these issues can be addressed is for women to call out, just as champion jockey Michelle Payne did. I admire Michelle greatly. Employers must put in place policies to deal with sexual harassment and governments must enact appropriate legislation. Employers must be trained adequately and have a thorough knowledge of any legislation that is enacted and any instruments that are used to investigate breaches of the legislation. Governments must work with businesses to ensure that women in trades are welcomed by their colleagues and employers alike. All parties have an obligation to put in place policies to deal with sexual harassment and governments must enact appropriate legislation. Every worker, male or female, is entitled to feel safe at work, to be respected and to be treated with dignity. I congratulate the member for Wallsend on moving this important motion.

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (13:26):** I support the motion moved by the member for Wallsend. The Government is committed to improving gender equality and the lives of women in this State. Despite significant progress, women in New South Wales are still experiencing gender inequality in their public and private lives. The 2014 *Ducks on the pond* report highlights alarming findings about women working in non-traditional industries. The findings of this report are clearly disturbing and unacceptable. When female and male apprentices are not being treated equally at work it is a challenge for women to do their job, to learn their trade and to acquire qualifications, and all because they are women. Workplace culture has a significant impact on the attraction and retention of female apprentices in traditional trades.

Sexism experienced at work results in high levels of dropouts by women doing apprenticeships and low levels of reporting workplace bullying and harassment. Some men are convinced that women are not up to the task of working in traditional trades. According to the study, some bosses reinforce treating women poorly, while other bosses are treating women equally and refusing to allow harassment in the workplace. The study showed that supervisors generally are not equipped to deal with gender diversity in the workplace. Less than 2 per cent of employers have a policy of recruiting female apprentices and those that do are large companies.

Only 6 per cent of the larger organisations have a formal policy and 19 per cent expressed a preference for having at least one female apprentice on the staff. Eighty per cent of employers who participated in the survey had no gender diversity policy and most of them said that they had never considered it. The number of women in construction trades in New South Wales is low. Currently, only 10 per cent of the 305,000 people employed in the construction and building industry across the State are women. However, there are some good signs. In 2015 at Barangaroo, the 500th apprentice—the fiftieth Indigenous apprentice—was a woman, Ms Desiree Owens.

If we are serious about women's economic independence, we can no longer neglect the limited choices that still exist for some women, for example, women who do not go to university. For those women to achieve economic and financial security as well as independence, we must increase the options that are available to them to obtain qualifications and secure careers. One of the options available to women is a career in non-traditional trades. The New South Wales Government championed women undertaking non-traditional trades at a time when few thought it was important or relevant. This remains one of the last and most challenging frontiers for women and could lead to well-paid jobs as well as increased participation by women, which in turn could result in improved economic opportunities.

However, the underlying question is how best to make the attitudinal and cultural changes that need to occur to enable the number of women in traditional trades to increase. Essentially, more young women need to see a traditional trade as a viable career option and more employers need to believe that women can work in traditional trades as effectively as can men. Employment opportunities in traditional trades must be visible to women, and women undertaking traditional trades must be celebrated so as to encourage girls to consider this training. I support the motion before the House.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Marshall):** The question is that the amendment moved by the member for Oxley be agreed to.

**Amendment agreed to.**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Marshall):** The question is that the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

**Motion, as amended, agreed to.**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Adam Marshall):** I will now leave the chair and the House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I extend a warm welcome to David Pisoni, the member for Unley, and Grant Kerr, both from South Australia. I welcome the student leaders from Chatswood High School, St Pius X College, Mercy College Chatswood, Willoughby Girls High School and Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School, guests of the Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations, and member for Willoughby. I welcome Mr John McManus, guest of the member for Strathfield. I welcome the 26 students from the Top Education Institute. I also welcome anyone seated in the gallery who I have not mentioned. I hope everyone enjoys the afternoon.

*Question Time***OPERATION PROSPECT**

**Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (14:19):** Madam Speaker—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order. I call the member for Hornsby to order for the first time. Today, if members speak while I am speaking or interjects when I have asked them not to, I will call them order. If they continue to speak or interject I will remove them from the Chamber. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

**Mr LUKE FOLEY:** My question is directed to the Premier. Will the Premier apologise to Nick Kaldas and others who were inappropriately named on telephone intercept warrants, as recommended by the parliamentary inquiry into Operation Prospect?

**Mr MIKE BAIRD (Manly—Premier, and Minister for Western Sydney) (14:20):** As the Leader of the Opposition knows, not only was there a parliamentary inquiry but also the Ombudsman is finishing his work on Operation Prospect. I will comment when that work has been completed but I do have a question for the Leader of the Opposition.

**The SPEAKER:** Are Opposition members going to decide what is happening here? The Premier has the call.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** The question is related because the Leader of the Opposition is talking about police. Today the Leader of the Opposition shared a stage with someone who said this about senior officers of the NSW Police Force, "What we need in NSW Police is leadership, not a slumber party", and he said nothing about it. Before question time the Leader of the Opposition should dissociate himself from that comment.

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. That is clearly an imputation of an improper motive. If the Premier wants a debate on this he should move a motion.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The member will resume his seat.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** He can give a personal explanation because today he is announcing who should be appointed police commissioner, ignoring that there should be a comprehensive process for that. We want the best possible person for that job and he has ignored that. On top of that, he has undermined the existing police commissioner a year out—

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. It was the Deputy Premier who dumped Scipione under the truck yesterday, not the Leader of the Opposition.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Premier remains relevant to the question he was asked. There is no point of order. There are too many interjections.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** The Leader of the Opposition and his chief of staff may exchange smirks on that issue, they may sit there and smirk about that issue, but I, for one, am proud of the police commissioner in this State.

**Mr David Harris:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Does the member have a different point of order? If it is vexatious I will not allow any more points of order. It is certainly not like the member for Wyong to behave in this manner.

**Mr David Harris:** I am very guarded in my points of order. My point of order refers to Standing Order 130. The Premier is now debating the question and that is not allowable under the standing orders.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Wyong will resume his seat. The Premier remains relevant to the question he was asked.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** It is a simple point. The Leader of the Opposition has come out and undermined the police commissioner. Halfway through the police commissioner's contract the Leader of the Opposition wants him replaced with a new commissioner. I say that this State is very lucky to have the current Commissioner of Police.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I am surprised that members are interjecting during these comments.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** We are incredibly proud of the work that the police commissioner has done for this State. The people of New South Wales are lucky to have had all the work that he has done in this State.

**Mr John Robertson:** He is only there two days a week. Two days a week—that is all he goes to work for. He is there two days a week.

**Mr Troy Grant:** He has been to me four days already this week.

**Mr John Robertson:** Well, you can see him at home, dopey. The man works at home, you know.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** As we have just heard from the member for Blacktown and as we have seen in the actions of the Leader of the Opposition, the Opposition is proud to sit there and criticise the police commissioner. I say shame on them.

**Mr John Robertson:** The executive committee has not met for nine months. You ought to know that.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The comments of the member for Blacktown are out of order. I warn the member for Blacktown that he will be removed from the Chamber if he continues.

**The SPEAKER:** Does the member for Lakemba have a point of order?

**Mr Jihad Dib:** Madam Speaker—

**The SPEAKER:** Do not yell at me. If the member has a point of order he should go to the microphone and not screech from his seat.

**Mr Jihad Dib:** I want to ask whether Madam Speaker heard the comment of the Deputy Premier directed to the member for Blacktown.

**The SPEAKER:** No. I was speaking to the member for Blacktown.

**Mr Jihad Dib:** He knows that was an inappropriate comment.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Lakemba will resume his seat. We had this debate last Thursday. I cannot always hear interjections or comments.

**Mr Jihad Dib:** That is why I am drawing them to your attention.

**The SPEAKER:** If members have a point of order they should walk to the microphone rather than screech at me from their seat. If an inappropriate comment was made I am happy for a member to point it out to me, but I did not hear it. Nevertheless, I heard the inappropriate comments of the member for Blacktown. I place the member for Blacktown on three calls to order.

### NSW POLICE FORCE RESTRUCTURE

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (14:26):** My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier. How is the Government re-engineering the NSW Police Force to prepare for the future, particularly in regional New South Wales?

**Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Deputy Premier, Minister for Justice and Police, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Racing) (14:26):** Apparently the next Leader of the Opposition is in Canberra. Is that right? There is no talent on that side of the Chamber; they have to outsource their leadership candidates from Canberra. How confident are they feeling?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member to Keira to order for the first time. The Deputy Premier will be heard in silence.

**Mr TROY GRANT:** Today, the police commissioner—the outstanding police commissioner who has served this State for over a decade—and I announced that the NSW Police Force will be re-engineered to prepare it to protect the community into the future and to build on the outstanding work that it has been doing over the past two decades. The force of the future that will be achieved through the re-engineering process will allow the organisation to have an increased focus on the evolving terrorism threats that we are facing and the scourge of ice and other crimes that are increasing and impacting on suburban and regional communities across New South Wales.

The New South Wales Government has commenced the first phase of a new and enhanced executive structure which will see the creation of five executive positions that will report directly to the commissioner. This will expand deputy numbers from the current three. For the first time, there will be a deputy dedicated to counterterrorism and major criminal investigations, which is a very important component of crime that this State and this country has been acutely aware of, and I inform the member for Myall Lakes—a former police officer and a wonderful supporter of police across this State, particularly in his electorate—a dedicated deputy police commissioner will be appointed for regional New South Wales.

That is the first time such a position has been created and it will be the first time the voice of regional communities will be at the decision-making table of the New South Wales police organisation. We are all aware that terrorism is a clear and present threat to this State, particularly to a global city such as Sydney, and the nature of the threat constantly evolves. That is why we need a structure that puts a stronger and refined focus on terrorism to ensure that the dedicated efforts to combat this hideous crime that comes from across our seas, and even emanates locally, can be dealt with in the most appropriate manner.

Regional communities have their own challenges that are very different from the city—the tyranny of distance, the scourge of ice that is tearing apart a lot of our towns, higher domestic violence rates and rural crime not possible in metropolitan areas, particularly stock theft, trespass and other crime that is placing fear into people who live on the land. The regions and Sydney will benefit from a tailored focus rather than the current one-size-fits-all model. The recruitment process for the new positions will begin immediately. The new deputies will include: a deputy commissioner for metropolitan field operations, a deputy commissioner for NSW field operations, a deputy commissioner for investigations and counter terrorism, a deputy commissioner for specialist support that will service the entire State and an executive in charge of corporate services.

These deputies, once appointed, will be in charge of leading further reforms in their areas of responsibility to make sure the structure of the force moves with shifting demographics and the constantly changing and evolving crime trends that are faced globally and locally. These changes are about making the first significant reforms to the Police Force structure that have occurred over two decades. It will prepare the organisation to tackle crime and, most importantly, renew its capability to prevent crime. I thank the Commissioner of Police and NSW Police Association for their contributions to and support for this important step. We took into account international best practice and extensive modelling of the needs of our communities and where it is done well in other jurisdictions. I note today that Commissioner Scipione said:

As an organisation we need to be flexible, agile and responsive to the changing world that we police.

The Police Association also welcomed the announcement. It said:

Reengineering the force is aimed at delivering police on the ground where and when they're needed, which means our communities will reap the safety benefits.

This Government is taking all necessary steps right across our responsibilities. Policing is one of the most important responsibilities that we are charged with. This restructure and this re-engineering will ensure that this State will be protected into the longer term.

#### **POLICE TACTICAL COMMAND VEHICLE**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (14:31):** My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. The coordinator of the Lindt Café negotiation unit has told the inquest that the physical resources available were "not adequate but we had to make do with what was available to us. It would have been better if we had our negotiation truck". Why was the truck not repaired or replaced in 2011 and is still not available in 2016?

**Mr TROY GRANT (Dubbo—Deputy Premier, Minister for Justice and Police, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Racing) (14:32):** I thank the Opposition spokesman for his question, which is a much better worded question than was yesterday's. However, the answer remains the same. Decisions about what police have and do not have; what they need and do not need; where things go or do not go are not things that governments do—never have and never will. I commit in this place to sit down and brief the shadow police Minister on how it works. I will give him some written information to help him. He can read it in his own time and understand how it works. The uniforms, vests and caps they wear and the colours are all decisions taken by the Police Force, led by the police commissioner.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Opposition members are not doing themselves any justice by interjecting.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Point of order—

**Mr David Elliott:** Where is the mud on your boots, Guy? Where did you serve?

**Mr Guy Zangari:** I ask that the Minister for Veterans Affairs retract that statement. Shame on him for bringing that statement about mud and boots to our veterans in that comment. It is disgraceful.

**The SPEAKER:** Was there a comment made about the member for Fairfield personally?

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Yes, there was a disparaging remark; linking that comment to the memories of those who have fallen for our country.

**The SPEAKER:** It was not about the member for Fairfield. There is no point of order.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** The Minister knows that is below the belt.

**The SPEAKER:** Does the member have another point of order?

**Mr Guy Zangari:** It is Standing Order 129.

**Mr John Sidoti:** Come on, Berlusconi.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Standing Order 73: Once again, as I stand here in silence the member for Drummoyne seeks to impugn my reputation.

**The SPEAKER:** The member should be allowed to propose his point of order without interjection. I call the member for Drummoyne to order for the first time.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** My point of order is relevance under Standing Order 129. The question was about the truck being repaired and replaced.

**The SPEAKER:** The Deputy Premier remains relevant to the question.

**Mr TROY GRANT:** I will start at the beginning. For the benefit of the shadow spokesman for police, it is the job of the police commissioner and police in the team to decide what equipment they have, what they use and where they have it. They then procure it by coming to the Government each year using a thing called a budget. If something additional is needed in extreme circumstances, they come to the Government, to the Minister, who then goes to the Expenditure Review Committee [ERC]. It is their job to determine what they need, why they need it and how they are going to use it. It is the job of the Government—which members opposite probably do not understand because they did not do this for many departments, especially in the bush—to find the money within Treasury to fund it.

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

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Are you accountable to Parliament?

**Mr TROY GRANT:** I am.

**The SPEAKER:** This is not the member for Heffron's question. It is the Deputy Premier's answer to a question from the member for Fairfield.

### SOCIAL IMPACT INVESTMENT

**Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (14:37):** My question is addressed to the Treasurer. How is the Government using social impact investment to achieve better outcomes for the most vulnerable?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Treasurer, and Minister for Industrial Relations) (14:38):** I thank the member for Wollondilly for this very important question. We know our economy is the strongest in the nation but we also know we have an obligation not only to provide for the day-to-day services people rely on and the infrastructure that will bring our State to the next level, but we also need to support the most vulnerable. I acknowledge in the gallery today high school students from the electorate of Willoughby whom I had the pleasure of meeting before question time. I promised them that I would be on my best behaviour. I know that they, along with many members of this House, take a lot of interest in what I am speaking about today because we all believe that a measure of good government is about the infrastructure we build.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** The New South Wales economy is the powerhouse economy of the nation. The regional job creation news is fantastic. Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that State residential construction is at a record high. Unemployment figures received in the past few days show that for the fourteenth consecutive month this State has the lowest rate of unemployment, down to 5.2 per cent. Important strides are being made in areas to support the most vulnerable. I will update the House on the innovative

funding models in the area of social impact investment. Those investments allow us to tackle challenges in social services that have been challenges for successive governments for many years.

Social impact investment is allowing us to adopt a whole-of-government approach to innovative funding solutions that break the cycle of despair and support the most vulnerable. It allows collaboration between the community, not-for-profit sector, the private sector and the Government. Those social impact investments that have commenced are producing positive results. One social impact investment bond is the Newpin Social Benefit Bond. I have mentioned this bond in Parliament previously, and recently I received the financial results. The financial return for the past 12 months has exceeded, or been around, 12 per cent.

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** How much?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** It is a 12 per cent return. The real success of this bond is the 60 per cent success rate achieved by the not-for-profit organisation Newpin in uniting families and children who have been in out-of-home care. That is double the traditional success rate of Government. I commend the Minister for Family and Communities Services, his department and his predecessors who supported the bond coming to fruition. It changes lives. I visited St Marys and Doonside and spoke to parents who are in the process of being reunited with their children. Those parents said in receiving the bond they were not judged, they felt respected and were able to improve their own lives to take care of their children into the future. That is what it is about. The success of this bond has improved the lives of the most vulnerable. There are many opportunities throughout government to do this work.

Together with the Minister for Corrections, I announced an Australian first: a social impact investment bond in recidivism. Last month a contract was signed to work with two not-for-profit organisations with the aim of reducing parolee reoffending and re-incarceration. It is an important initiative. The Government is looking at ways to use social impact investment to support Indigenous communities in dealing with pockets of high youth unemployment and improving access to early childhood education. The opportunity of investing through the bonds has opened eyes as to what is possible and how we can work to breakdown traditional methods to support those encompassed in a generational cycle of despair. Social impact investment is the way of the future, and this Government is committed to working with non-government organisations and the private sector to make a difference and to improve lives.

#### WESTCONNEX COMPULSORY PROPERTY ACQUISITION

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:43):** My question is directed to the Premier. Given the compulsory acquisition of homes that is happening now, which the Premier and his Government claim is compassionate, will the Premier release the Russell report today?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Rockdale will cease interjecting. The Premier has the call. There is too much audible conversation coming from Government members.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD (Manly—Premier, and Minister for Western Sydney) (14:43):** I thank the member for her question. I have not claimed anything in relation to this issue other than the Government must do better.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Port Stephens will cease interjecting. The Premier has just commenced his answer.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I have acknowledged that during the process that has been undertaken I became aware of personal stories of individuals whose homes had been acquired, correspondence and a range of groups that made it plain the Government must do better. There are two parts to the answer. A number of recommendations have emerged from the Russell report that the Government has considered and started to implement. At the same time, I have asked the Customer Service Commissioner to consider the existing process. He is bringing forward recommendations, which will be released together. As part of this process I have been clear that Government does not always get things right.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! This is not a debate. The member for Port Stephens will cease interjecting. The member for Strathfield will cease interjecting. The member for Londonderry will cease interjecting. The member for Port Stephens will cease interjecting. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the second time.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** In relation to this issue, the Government must do better and it will do better.

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

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** As I have stated to the member for Strathfield, when that occurs we will release the report.

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

**Ms Tanya Mihailuk:** You are an actor; you cry crocodile tears.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** What did the member say?

**Ms Tanya Mihailuk:** You cry crocodile tears.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** What else did the member say?

**Ms Tanya Mihailuk:** You are an actor.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I can inform the House that every word I have said on this issue is genuine and the Government will improve the process. Opposition members attempt to create histrionics with regard to WestConnex. The Opposition does not want to fund WestConnex and would cancel it. The Opposition would cancel any public transport project, light rail project or metro project.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Summer Hill will cease shouting.

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** The good news for the people of New South Wales is that this Government will build those projects.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Point of order—

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

**Ms Jodi McKay:** I am entitled to take a point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** I did not say that you were not.

**Ms Jodi McKay:** My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The Premier's answer has nothing to do with the construction of WestConnex.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The member for Strathfield will resume her seat. I direct the member for Strathfield to remove herself from the Chamber for the remainder of question time.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Strathfield left the Chamber at 14:47.]*

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** If the member wants to take politics to a personal level that is a matter for her. The Government must do better in relation to the acquisition process, and it will. I want people to understand what the Opposition stands for. It speaks of tolls being higher than the consumer price index and says that should not occur. But those opposite signed a 49-year contract with regard to the Eastern Distributor that does exactly that. The Opposition does one thing and says another, and then says one thing and does another.

**Ms Jo Haylen:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! What is the member's point of order? The Premier remains relevant to the question.

**Ms Jo Haylen:** It concerns Standing Order 129.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The member should read the standing orders.

**Ms Jo Haylen:** Will you release it?

**Mr MIKE BAIRD:** I have said yes. It would be remiss not to acknowledge the member for Summer Hill—part of the dream team. Dream Team A is the member for Kogarah and the member for Summer Hill, who are preparing for succession. Dream Team B is the member for Strathfield and the member for Keira, and Dream Team C is the member for Maroubra and the member for Maitland.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Government members will cease interjecting.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** I had a point of order but the time allotted for the Premier's answer has expired, so I will not waste the time of the House.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! That was because of the noise from Government members. I will not take a question until Government members are silent.

**JOBS GROWTH**

**Mr ANDREW FRASER (Coffs Harbour) (14:50):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy. How is the Government driving jobs growth— ?

[*Interruption*]

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Opposition members will come to order. They thought the member said "grog" and they got excited.

**Mr ANDREW FRASER:** The sun is over the yardarm.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Opposition members will come to order. I need to hear the member's question. It is about jobs growth.

**Mr ANDREW FRASER:** How is the Government driving jobs growth across the State, and is the Minister aware of any alternative employment proposals?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will calm down. This is an important question. The member for Rockdale is on his final warning.

**Mr Greg Piper:** I want to see the *Hansard*.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the member for Lake Macquarie to order for the first time. That is the first time he has been called to order.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy) (14:52):** I thank the member for the question, which is: How is the Government driving jobs growth across the State, and is the Minister aware of any alternative employment proposals? I am proud to say that jobs growth is the number one priority of this Government. At the last election we committed to creating 150,000 new jobs over this term. Thanks to the economic management and leadership of the Premier, Deputy Premier and Treasurer, the target has already been met and we have delivered ahead of time.

The latest regional jobs figures continue to paint a strong and positive picture for New South Wales. Regional employment is up 29,400, or 2.4 per cent, over the year to July 2016. Employment in regional New South Wales has recorded by far the largest increase over the year to July 2016 compared with the regional areas of all other States. The unemployment rate for regional New South Wales in July of 2016 was 5.8 per cent, down from 6.4 per cent in the previous year. These latest figures show the importance of a strong and resilient economy and the benefits of sound economic management—something clearly lacking under the former Government. Last week the Government released the *Jobs for the Future* report, prepared by Jobs for NSW. Under the \$190 million Jobs for NSW Fund, new and innovative financial support programs will be available as part of a long-term plan to accelerate jobs growth in New South Wales.

I am a very fair man, so earlier today I thought I would check out the Australian Labor Party website to see whether Labor had anything to boast about regarding jobs in regional New South Wales. I found a link to the Country Labor website, but it did not work. What I found was the latest edition of *Country Labor Dialogue*. I will lay it on the table. On the back it shows Steve Whan digging a hole for himself. It is the most recent edition, from May—not May 2016 and not May 2015, but May 2014. The last time Labor spoke to the bush was in May 2014. On the back is the very helpful question: "Do you have a story or a photo?" I have a story. Last week I was in Canberra for the Council of Australian Governments Energy Council meeting.

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

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** As I was waiting patiently for my flight at Canberra "International Aerodrome", a nice chap named Jason—I did not catch his last name—asked me about jobs in New South Wales. He had heard about Jobs for NSW, including the opportunities for assistance to relocate jobs to this great State. Apparently he had been sounded out about a position and he was pretty keen. I first assumed he was an accountant—we are attracting a lot of them—because he kept saying that he had been busy recently counting a lot of numbers. Then, as the conversation went on, I thought maybe he was a podiatrist because he also said he was a shoe-in. Then I got the feeling he was from a cleaning business, because he mumbled something about fixing up a really big mess. Or possibly he was coming to New South Wales to get a job as a landscaper, because he said something about doing a dirt dump in Strathfield.

**Mr David Harris:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! At the moment I cannot make a ruling about the answer.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** I got a bit worried as we were boarding the flight, because Jason said he was going to parachute himself into Cabramatta. That is a funny way to avoid a cab fare.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I cannot rule it out of order.

**Mr David Harris:** Point of order: The Minister is clearly being irrelevant.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The answer is about jobs at the moment. I cannot rule it out of order.

**Mr David Harris:** Seriously?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** He was a young bloke on the move. Where he was going and where he was from, we are not sure. Interestingly, he then started asking me about what it was like to work in Parliament House. He asked what the food was like and what the lifts were like. He asked if there was a gym. I said I did not know. Then he got more particular. He asked what the Leader of the Opposition's office was like. He had heard it has a really nice view of the harbour. He wanted to know how many car spaces the Leader of the Opposition had.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I have ruled that the Minister remains relevant.

**Mr Guy Zangari:** My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. What the Minister is talking about is clearly irrelevant. He should talk about jobs—teachers, nurses and so on.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The member for Fairfield will resume his seat.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** This young bloke wanted to know how many car spaces the Leader of the Opposition had. I said, "One, as far as I know. It is next to the highway patrol vehicle that is permanently stationed on level four. He has at least one." [*Extension of time*]

He was a nice fellow, and another person coming to New South Wales for a job. We parted company—

**Mr Jihad Dib:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I have ruled that the Minister is being relevant to the question he was asked. Does the member have a point of order under another standing order?

**Mr Jihad Dib:** My point of order is taken under a couple of standing orders. Tedious repetition is one of them.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! That is not a point of order.

**Mr Jihad Dib:** The people of New South Wales expect an answer. That is not the answer they expect.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Lakemba is out of order. He will resume his seat.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** Before we parted company I asked whether he thought he would get the job. He said, "There are only two other contenders: Flopsy and Mopsy. I reckon I will be in that job in no time."

**Mr John Robertson:** Is that team B?

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** Are you Flopsy or Mopsy?

**Mr David Harris:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I have ruled that the Minister remains relevant to the question.

**Mr David Harris:** It is a different point of order.

**The SPEAKER:** The member may proceed.

**Mr David Harris:** I refer to Standing Order 49 on keeping order in the House. So many Opposition members are put on calls and then are deliberately provoked. We are sitting fairly quietly now.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I have asked the member to tell me which standing order is being breached.

**Mr David Harris:** It is Standing Order 49.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I have ruled that the Minister is being relevant to the question he was asked. The member is questioning my ruling on relevance and how I am keeping order in the House.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** We parted as he had a call to make to head office. Rather than focusing on one job, as those opposite do, we are focusing on creating a million new jobs across this State.

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 75. "Flopsy and Mopsy" are clearly not the correct titles of the people to whom the Minister is referring.

**The SPEAKER:** Nice try.

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** Flopsy and Mopsy? You name them—I do not know who they are.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 128. The Minister has made a hypothetical case; the position of Leader of the Opposition is not vacant.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister has not got to that yet. The Minister's time has expired.

#### WESTCONNEX COMPULSORY PROPERTY ACQUISITION

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (15:00):** My question is directed to the Minister for Finance, Services and Property.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will come to order. They will respect each other and listen.

**Ms JO HAYLEN:** Is it true that the Minister is delaying the release of the Russell report because, if it were adopted, the Government would have to pay people more money for acquiring and demolishing their family homes?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Minister for Finance, Services and Property) (15:01):** As we pointed out, we are not going to be lectured by those opposite when it comes to land acquisition management and reports.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** As we have said, we will be releasing the Russell review—a review that this Government instigated—with a Government response. As the Premier has said, we are considering the report, we have appointed the Customer Service Commissioner and we believe the response we come out with will balance the needs of landowners against the benefits of the infrastructure projects that this Government is committed to. These are projects that the Labor Government had 16 years to pursue, but it let the working families of Western Sydney down. There is no doubt that the issues of land acquisition that the Government is working through are sensitive.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister has the call. He will be heard in silence.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** I was listening to my favourite radio station this morning, the ABC—it used to be 2GB but now it is the ABC; it has changed over the past two weeks—and I heard Vince Mangioni, associate professor in property economics and development at University of Technology Sydney, when asked about the valuations for homes, say:

Generally, the valuations are robust, the compensation does reflect market value and they are done very professionally.

That does not mean, as the Premier has said, that we cannot do more—and we will do more, because this Government listens. We all know why Labor is worried about WestConnex. It is because their inner-city seats are about to be compulsorily acquired by The Greens.

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

**Ms Jo Haylen:** Point of order: The issue is relevance. My question was very specific. It was about whether the Government will have to pay more for the acquisition of people's homes. Why has the Government not released the Russell report?

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I cannot direct a Minister how to answer a question. I call the member for Summer Hill to order for the first time.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** The Minister for Energy and Resources may have been on a Labor Party website. I was on the website of the member for Summer Hill. There are some great things on there: words like "cycling", "social justice", "affordable housing"—all things we on this side of the House believe in. But I will tell members what words are not there, "Labor Party". It is a red website, but I guarantee that it will soon be Green—just in time for 2019.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** Point of order: I could not agree more with the Minister. I think the website of the member for Summer Hill is excellent.

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

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** It relates to Standing Order 129. While I think the member's website is very good, it is irrelevant to the question.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The Minister remains relevant to the question. He may not be answering the question specifically, but there is nothing in the standing orders that allows me to require him to do so.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** As I said, we will be releasing the report this year with a Government response. What we will not be doing—a little trick Labor used to do when it got Government reports—is any sanitisation. When those opposite produced a report on the central business district metro, they cut out the parts they did not like. What did the member for Keira, the then secretary of Transport for NSW, know about that? I like to call him 'Ryan Scissorhands': Cut, cut, cut; chop, chop, chop—whatever he did not like was out of there. We are committed to releasing the report and that is what we will do.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Summer Hill will come to order. She will cease shouting.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (15:07):** My question is addressed to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. How is the Government investing in a system to make victims of domestic violence safer by placing the focus clearly on the perpetrator?

**Ms PRU GOWARD (Goulburn—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Medical Research, Assistant Minister for Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (15:07):** I thank the Member for Castle Hill for the question and for his support for the work we are doing. This Government will continue to be the champions of social policy that makes people's lives better. That is why this Government has acted to address domestic violence in the way we have. Five years ago we inherited from Labor a domestic violence sector that was in disarray. As the Auditor-General reported in 2011—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members will cease interjecting.

**Ms PRU GOWARD:** This is important because it was the starting point. The Auditor-General said:

The response to domestic and family violence remains fragmented ... Organisations do not have a strategy for working together ... there is no shared understanding between organisations of each other's roles ... "

That was where we began after 16 years of Labor. With the Premier's leadership and the determination of my ministerial colleagues—the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Health, the Minister for Family and Community Services, the Attorney General and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs—we have created a domestic violence system that supports victims and puts perpetrators in the centre of the frame. The budget doubles the investment in specialist domestic violence initiatives to more than \$300 million over the next four years. That is in addition to the hundreds of millions of dollars the Government spends each year to combat domestic and family violence through mainstream services in justice, police, health, child protection, social housing and homelessness services. The New South Wales Government leads the nation in tackling domestic violence. For the first time in New South Wales, rather than delivering a patchwork of services, the Government has created a domestic and family violence system that responds in a consistent and effective way.

That is why yesterday I was so pleased to release the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform, which sets out the direction for a domestic violence system for the next five years, a system that supports victims when they are in crisis; supports victims to live safely; intervenes early with vulnerable communities; works to prevent violence; targets perpetrators and holds them to account, to change their behaviour; aims to reduce revictimisation; works to stop reoffending; and delivers consistent and quality services. The blueprint is the culmination of intensive consultation with people affected by domestic violence and those working on the front line. I thank each of them who made a contribution. The blueprint serves a critical role, guiding our record investment and our ongoing priorities across government by articulating a much bolder long-term plan.

Safer Pathway is an integral part of this system and will be rolled out across New South Wales over four years. This year's budget allocates \$53 million for a statewide rollout, with \$7.8 million in 2016-17 to roll out 21 new sites. Over the past month I have been delighted to have been in Wagga Wagga, Lismore, Newcastle, Muswellbrook, Ku-ring-gai, Oatley, Glebe, Blacktown, Nowra, Wyong, and Queanbeyan announcing some of the Safer Pathway sites that will roll out over the next 12 months. I have heard from police and expert services on the ground about how effective Safer Pathway will be for their communities. Victims should not have to tell their story to multiple services, multiple times. Victims should not have to shop around to government services to receive the support they need. Reform in social policy is tough, realigning services and government agencies is even tougher. That is what it is required and what this Government is doing.

Whether it is supporting a woman escaping domestic violence through the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, supporting a young woman who is at high risk of domestic violence through Safer Pathway and court support, ensuring perpetrators change through men's behavioural change programs, using GPS tracking, deploying new domestic violence police teams and suspect targeting or intervening early by innovating in our service sector to prevent domestic violence or changing the school curriculum to educate our kids on domestic violence, that is what this Government is and should deliver. Over decades governments have invested billions of dollars responding to domestic violence. Now we have a plan—a plan to break the cycle of violence and the family dysfunction that flows from it and through the generations. We are in exciting times where we are able to reform and deliver like never before. I am proud that New South Wales is leading the nation in making safer the lives of women, men and children.

### **RACIAL VILIFICATION**

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:12):** My question is directed to the Attorney General. Considering the Government committed to fix the failures in the Race Discrimination Act by the first half of 2016, when will the Government act to address the promotion of racial violence?

**Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse—Attorney General) (15:12):** Let me be clear from the outset: The Government has a strong commitment to keeping our community safe from race-hate speech; it always has and it always will. It is important to listen to all the voices in the very important debate that is taking place at the moment. As Attorney General I have heard from a number of community representatives, as I am sure the member for Balmain has, including the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, the Muslim Legal Network and the Catholic Education Commission NSW. There are some deeply personal issues for many people about this issue and a wide range of opinions across our community about the way forward.

As the member appreciates, laws are already on the books to protect our community from language designed to incite violence. The police already have prosecuting powers in this area. The debate is not only occurring in New South Wales but it is also occurring nationally daily across our media. It is a very complex area of the law. I assure the member for Balmain that the Government is strongly committed to getting a cross-section of views from our community to make sure that any reform strikes an important balance between the freedom of speech and the rights of people to be protected from violence.

As the member for Balmain knows, in 2013 a former Premier referred a Legislative Council committee to inquire into the offence of racial vilification and release a report. The committee's report recommended minor changes to the offence of serious racial vilification, and some procedural changes to clarify the investigation and prosecutorial process. The Government is continuing to consider those recommendations. I will not provide a timetable for response or for reform. We have to get the response right. We all know that this matter is serious and it is under active discussion. It is one that we must get right and one that must have wide support across our community before we initiate that reform.

### **EDUCATION REFORMS**

**Mr THOMAS GEORGE (Lismore) (15:15):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Education. Will the Minister advise the House how the tough decisions made by this Government have enabled the introduction of a record number of education reforms and related matters?

**Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI (Murray—Minister for Education) (15:16):** I take this opportunity to remind members of what has happened in education over the past 5½ years. We know that we are in a position to deliver some fantastic outcomes across schools in New South Wales. Every member of the Government, the crossbenches and indeed Labor can go to their local schools to hear about the great things the schools are doing, particularly with the Gonski money provided by the Government. They can talk about the capital works projects across New South Wales, not just in metropolitan Sydney. But those things do not come without making tough decisions. Some of the Government's decisions over the past 5½ years have been very controversial. We know that they are difficult issues to deal with in our electorates—and we have dealt with one in this Parliament this week.

Some of the decisions the Government made 5½ years ago were about finding the funding to make our contribution to Gonski and included savings measures out of the Department of Education. Members will remember that some of those measures included a cap on funding for non-government schools, so for Catholic and independent schools. There was a huge amount of media publicity and outrage from the Labor Party about that decision. It was a fair decision about sharing the burden of how we would repair the budget after Labor left it to a former Treasurer, and now Premier Mike Baird.

**Mr Michael Daley:** In surplus.

**Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI:** In surplus apparently. Just saying so, does not make it so. The issue around non-government schools was very controversial at the time. But this Government made the tough decision that if it was going to make efficiency savings in the public sector it would have to make them in non-government schools as well. I will outline what this Government has reaped from that decision. I can remember attending a press conference about this in the Premier's conference room whilst the Gonski negotiations were going on. I was asked, "Why are you doing this to non-government schools?" I said, "Unless we repair the budget we will not be a position to make a contribution to Gonski." We wore the pain of that decision and now we have seen a record increase in funding for schools across New South Wales.

The problem with those opposite is that they are not willing to make any of those tough decisions. They want to have it both ways. As I have said in this place previously, government is not just about cutting ribbons and making funding announcements. Those opposite opposed everything we did. The member for Londonderry has just asked about building schools. If we listened to everything those opposite said there would be \$1 billion less for school capital works projects—\$300 million less for regional New South Wales and \$700 million less for metropolitan Sydney. If we listened to the member for Macquarie Fields there would be no sale of Hurlstone. There would be no brand new state-of-the-art agricultural high school on 2,000 acres at the former Hawkesbury agricultural site.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Macquarie Fields will come to order and cease shouting at the Minister. The member for Macquarie Fields had his opportunity this morning during debate.

**Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI:** We would not get that increased capacity at the current Hurlstone Agricultural High School. It is a great high school

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Macquarie Fields will be removed from the Chamber if he continues to interject and shout.

**Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI:** We have been able to add 200 or 300 additional selective school places, predominantly for students in south-western Sydney, because of the tough decisions this Government has made.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Macquarie Fields from the Chamber under Standing Order 249.

*[Pursuant to standing order the member for Macquarie Fields left the Chamber at 15:21]*

**Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI:** The member for Macquarie Fields has only been in this place for 1½ years. If people put up their hand for a job in this place they should not make the mistake, especially in government, of thinking they are here to make friends. Members are here to make the right decisions for their electorates and for the people of New South Wales, not just to take the populist position. *[Extension of time]*

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

**Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI:** Who will pay for the \$20 million upgrade of Hurlstone? Who will upgrade those three schools for specific purposes in his electorate? Who will build the Oran Park High School? No-one, if we listened to the populist rubbish that the member for Macquarie Fields is espousing.

**Mr Greg Warren:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 59. The Minister is being irrelevant and tediously repetitive.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The Minister is not being tediously repetitive.

**Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI:** Members cannot go to their electorates and say, "I firmly believe in this" and then do something different when they turn up. In fact, we saw that this week with those two members sitting opposite. In their electorate they said, "I can't stand the greyhound industry. I won't stand by and let this industry continue."

**Mr Paul Lynch:** Point of order:—

**Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI:** And then they voted with Labor. They put the Labor Party ahead on their own values.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will resume his seat.

**Mr ADRIAN PICCOLI:** That is exactly what they did—they put the Labor Party ahead of their own values.

**The SPEAKER:** Today members have displayed the type of behaviour we have come to expect in question time—screaming and shouting. Those who think it is appropriate to shout, scream and interject will leave the Chamber. The majority of members behave disgracefully on a daily basis, and I am sick of it.

*Personal Explanation***COMMISSIONER SCIPIONE**

**Mr LUKE FOLEY (Auburn) (15:24):** By leave: I am happy to answer the Premier's question. I reiterate what I said this morning: I have confidence in Commissioner Scipione. In fact, I am sure that he will lead the Police Force longer than the Minister for Justice and Police will lead The Nationals.

**The SPEAKER:** That was not a personal explanation.

*Members***MRS TANYA DAVIES, MEMBER FOR MULGOA****Absence**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** I move:

That due to maternity, leave of absence for the current session be granted to Tanya Davies, member for Mulgoa.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Committees***COMMITTEE ON THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION****Membership**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS:** I move:

That:

- (1) Paul Gerard Lynch be appointed to serve on the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption in place of Kathleen Smith, discharged.
- (2) A message be sent informing the Legislative Council.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED****National Art School**

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

Petition requesting that a long-term lease be provided to the National Art School for its site, that it remain independent, and that the Government continue its funding until the Commonwealth Government agrees to fund it as an independent art institution, received from **Mr Alex Greenwich**.

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

**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**.

**South Coast Rail Services**

Petition requesting an hourly service from Kiama to Bomaderry station connecting with trains to Sydney, received from **Mr Gareth Ward**.

**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**.

**Pet Shops**

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

*Committees*

**LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Report: Legislation Review Digest No. 23/56**

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

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (15:29):** As Chair: I speak to Legislation Review Digest No. 23 of the fifty-sixth Parliament. The committee examined five bills introduced into Parliament in the last sitting week. I will briefly discuss the comments made in respect of four of the bills examined. The first is the Abortion Law Reform (Miscellaneous Acts Amendment) Bill 2016, which seeks to remove offences relating to abortion from the Crimes Act 1900, and to create exclusion zones around abortion clinics and associated offences. The committee commented that the proposed amendments to create exclusion zones around abortion clinics may impact on the right to protest, notably that the exclusion zones apply despite existing laws that allow for public assemblies. However, the committee noted that protests relating to abortion will still be lawful outside exclusion zones and the committee acknowledged that the provisions are intended to ensure the safety, wellbeing, privacy and dignity of those accessing abortion services. The committee made no further comment.

The second bill I speak to is the Greyhound Racing Prohibition Bill 2016. As the House is aware, the bill responds to findings and recommendations of the Special Commission of Inquiry into the Greyhound Racing Industry in NSW and introduces provisions to close the greyhound industry from 1 July 2017. Having regard to the factors the committee can consider under the Legislation Review Act, the committee noted that the closure of the greyhound racing industry may impact on property rights of industry participants such as those who own a racecourse, provide betting services or breed greyhounds for racing. The committee further noted that the bill specifically excludes a statutory right to compensation from the State. However, the committee noted that the Minister has announced an assistance package for affected participants, which will provide financial and other support. The committee also noted that the industry closure date is not until 1 July 2017, which provides industry participants some time to start making arrangements.

I turn now to the Poppy Industry Bill 2016, which establishes a legal framework for a poppy industry in New South Wales that will supply alkaloid poppies for the manufacture and production of therapeutic goods and scientific research. The bill implements a robust framework aimed at ensuring the production of poppies is not used for unlawful purposes. The committee commented on provisions within the bill that prevent an applicant from knowing the facts relevant to a decision to refuse, to grant or to renew a poppy licence where those facts would disclose criminal intelligence. The committee commented that this prevented an applicant from knowing all the facts relevant to an administrative decision made against them.

The committee noted the purpose and importance of restricting the disclosure of criminal intelligence on public interest grounds. Restricting the disclosure of such information avoids compromising any ongoing police investigations and ensures the safety of investigating officers. The committee made no further comment on this issue. The committee also highlighted the powers contained within the bill to enter and inspect property. The committee noted that the powers to enter and inspect certain property without a warrant may trespass against an individual's right to privacy and property. However, the committee noted the significant public interest in ensuring that alkaloid poppies are not being used for an unlawful purpose and thus did not consider the powers of entry unduly trespass on individual rights. The final bill I speak to is the Rural Fires Amendment (Fire Trails) Bill 2016.

**Mr David Elliott:** Good bill.

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN:** Absolutely. The bill seeks to provide the Rural Fire Service and other firefighting authorities with improved access to areas where bushfires may occur or are occurring, and also improved access to areas for hazard reduction purposes. As with the previous bill, the committee noted the powers granted by the bill to authorised officers to enter private land without a warrant. Such powers may trespass against an individual's right to privacy and property. However, the committee referred to the limited purposes for which entry to private land is granted, and the public interest in ensuring that fire trails are maintained and comply with Fire Trail Standards. As such, the committee made no further comments on the bill. That concludes my remarks on this digest. I thank the committee staff and members for their input, and I commend the digest to the House.

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (15:34):** I speak on behalf of the Opposition and thank the House for the opportunity to speak to the Legislation Review Committee Digest No. 23 of the fifty-sixth Parliament. The committee considered five bills against the criteria for scrutiny under section 8A (1) (b) of the Legislation Review Act 1987. Those bills are set out at page 12 of the digest. The committee commented on four of the bills. I will

not repeat the comments that were made by the chair of the committee, and I have nothing further to add. None of the comments the committee made involve referring the matter back to the Minister or to Parliament.

The items the committee commented on are considered to have been taken into consideration in the framing of the legislation and I endorse the Chair's comments. I note the committee sent out three items of correspondence on three separate bills, bringing the total correspondence sent out by the committee since last year to 50. In return we have received one item of correspondence from the Attorney General relating to a bill. That improves the balance of responses the committee is receiving from a responsible Minister and a responsible member moving the bills. I thank the committee staff for their help and the committee members for their input. I commend the digest to the House.

### **Report noted.**

#### *Matter of Public Importance*

#### **DAFFODIL DAY**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (15:36):** I am delighted to make a contribution to the matter of public importance today, Daffodil Day, in my capacity as shadow Minister for Medical Research. Daffodil Day is organised by the Cancer Council and falls on the fourth Friday of August each year. It is a day when the community can show support for people who have been affected by cancer. According to the Cancer Council, "The daffodil was chosen as a symbol of hope for all affected by cancer because of its reputation as a hardy annual flower, pushing its way through the frozen earth after a long winter to herald the return of spring, new life, vitality and growth. As one of the first flowers of spring, the daffodil symbolises rebirth and new beginnings."

Members of the public can make a contribution on Daffodil Day by donating to the Cancer Council or by purchasing Daffodil Day merchandise at a range of stalls, which will be manned by volunteers tomorrow. Tomorrow I will join my Federal colleague the member for Blaxland, the Hon. Jason Clare, at Bankstown station—as I have done regularly over the years on Daffodil Day. We work with the Cancer Council on the day and on many occasions students from a number of local schools have joined us, including students from St Euphemia College. It is a wonderful tradition where we speak to our local residents. On every occasion many people have bought merchandise in the morning and have made their contribution to fundraising for the Cancer Council.

This year's merchandise range includes the most popular Daffodil Day items, such as the daffodil pin, which is a wonderful way to honour loved ones who have sadly passed away from cancer or who have been afflicted by cancer in some way. I know Minister Elliott has experienced some hardship in that regard. The 2016 merchandise range also includes pens and the very popular Dougal Bear. People can also buy fresh daffodils on the day from the many stalls throughout New South Wales. Thousands of volunteers throughout New South Wales will do what they can to sell the merchandise tomorrow. All donations will help the Cancer Council raise much-needed funds to support vital cancer research, develop cancer prevention programs and provide patient support for the tens of thousands of Australian lives affected by cancer.

Donations of just \$5 will go towards assisting newly diagnosed cancer patients with support, information and resources to help them navigate their cancer journey; \$25 will go towards resources to support general practitioners and health professionals advising patients on cancer prevention screening and diagnosis; \$50 will help ensure that a cancer nurse is available on a free confidential telephone service to offer support on all aspects of cancer; \$100 will help to provide support to childcare centres and primary centres to take part in the National SunSmart Schools program; and \$500 will help fund the provision of telephone and web-based support groups facilitated by trained peer volunteers and health professionals.

This is just some of the great work undertaken every day by the Cancer Council. Most members of the community know someone who has been affected by cancer. Every day around 350 Australians tragically are diagnosed with cancer. The invaluable work of the Cancer Council, particularly through cancer research, is discovering new and better treatments that are helping to make an extraordinary difference in people's lives. Cancer prevention campaigns are starting to make a difference in the community, such as Slip, Slop, Slap! to help prevent skin cancer or other initiatives such as Pink Ribbon Day to help support breast cancer research and awareness through preventative screening.

The Cancer Council works closely not only with many sporting and community organisations but also with schools. It is important to get the message about prevention and awareness to children at a young age so that schoolchildren and young people are aware of measures they can take to help prevent them getting cancer and how they can cope when family members are also afflicted with cancer. I am delighted to bring this matter of public importance to the House. It is always important that the Parliament demonstrates its support for the Cancer Council and, in particular, Daffodil Day.

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (15:41):** It is with great pleasure that I speak on behalf of the Government in support of this matter of public importance relating to Daffodil Day 2016 and I am proudly wearing the Daffodil Day lapel pin. As members know, Daffodil Day falls on the fourth Friday in August every year and tomorrow is Daffodil Day. The Cancer Council chose the daffodil as the symbol of hope for people affected by cancer. There would not be one person who has not had some association, either directly or indirectly, with cancer or the effects of cancer.

The Cancer Council does a fantastic job. The Cancer Council NSW raises some \$3 million each year from Daffodil Day. Those funds are used to develop cancer prevention programs; support people with cancer through the Cancer Council helpline, which helps 16,000 people each year; and support cancer research. From its beginnings, the Cancer Council NSW has recognised the importance of research into cancer. Currently it invests around \$14 million in cancer research each year. It has supported Australian researchers working in global collaborative research projects on cancers that had previously received less attention than others, including brain cancers, pancreatic cancer, oesophageal cancer and the link between hepatitis B and liver cancer.

Staff and volunteers work tirelessly to raise awareness about cancer across the country and make a difference to people in our communities who most need support, including Aboriginal peoples who, along with everyone from every race, creed and colour, are affected by cancer. The Cancer Council NSW is a major partner for the New South Wales Government's cancer control agency, the Cancer Institute NSW. The New South Wales Government will provide treatment and care for an estimated 75,000 people with cancer in 2016.

This care is delivered by more than 200 world-class cancer services across the State. Those cancer services offer cancer treatments including chemotherapy, radiotherapy, surgery, cancer genetics services and youth and paediatric services. In New South Wales one in two people will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85. There are very few places in the world where a person's chances of surviving cancer are as high as they are in New South Wales. Currently two-thirds or 67 per cent of people are alive five years after a cancer diagnosis. At the beginning of the 1980s, the survival rate was only 48 per cent.

The International Cancer Benchmarking Project, which measures survival for four cancers in 12 jurisdictions, places our State's cancer outcomes as being among the best in the world for breast, lung, colorectal and ovarian cancers. The New South Wales Government and the Cancer Council NSW will continue to work together to provide community-focused education services to help people make healthy lifestyle choices. The electorate of the Upper Hunter has wonderful advocates and an amazing relationship with the Cancer Council, with an office based in Singleton. NSW Health is undertaking an upgrade to Muswellbrook Hospital and a cancer support unit is planned with the stage two upgrade. That is of importance to the people of the Upper Hunter and surrounding regions because they will then have access to any physical and emotional support they may require. I cannot wait for stage two of the hospital upgrade to be completed so that cancer patients and families can be truly supported in the way that they deserve.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (15:46):** It is a pleasure to speak in debate on this matter of public importance introduced by the member for Bankstown. I congratulate her for doing so. I acknowledge the Cancer Council on the Central Coast and the long association I have had with that organisation across a range of activities, including Dancing with the Stars earlier this year. I do not profess to be a good dancer but we raised a huge amount of money for a very good cause.

Daffodil Day is an important national fundraising event for the Cancer Council that aims to raise research funds while also assisting cancer sufferers and their immediate family members who are affected by this terrible disease. My father is suffering from a melanoma on the lung that is terminal. I am aware of the importance of the work of the Cancer Council, particularly in supporting families through difficult times. I acknowledge the contribution of staff working in cancer centres around the State, particularly at Wyong and Gosford. Few people these days can say they have not been touched by this dreaded disease, either themselves or in their family or social circles. The anguish it causes is all too familiar to most.

Each day more than 350 Australians are told they have a life-threatening cancer. Each day more than 100 Australians will die from cancer. These figures are shocking but thankfully there are organisations and charitable causes that seek to address this. The efforts of government and the community to fight this disease and to invest in research and treatment are the only way we can overcome this scourge. This issue is close to the hearts of many members in this House and to the people they come here to represent. This issue is often raised, particularly during private members' statements. With more funding, State and Federal governments can work together with the Cancer Council to provide better treatment options, give renewed hope for survivors and eventually find a cure. This long-term aim to eradicate cancer is helped every year by the generosity and support of Australians everywhere.

Each year we come closer to achieving this ambitious goal due to the dedication of volunteers who give up their time to help the Cancer Council raise money each Daffodil Day. I pay tribute to the Central Coast volunteers who will be selling the products referred to by the member for Bankstown. I will visit Wyong and Lake Haven shopping centres to thank the people in my electorate for participating in those fundraising activities. This year it will mean more to me than it has previously.

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (15:49):** In reply: I thank the member for Upper Hunter and the member for Wyong for their contributions to debate on this matter of public importance and acknowledge the statistics referred to by the member for Upper Hunter. I share his delight in the improvement of survival rates. In the 1980s there was a 48 per cent survival rate but due to medical research and, specifically, cancer research, there has been an improvement in treatment and survival rates for breast, lung and ovarian cancers.

My thoughts and prayers are with the member for Wyong who is going through a difficult time after his father's diagnosis. I am sure that all members offer support to the member for Wyong and his family. The member for Wyong, and I am sure many other members, will be supporting Daffodil Day in their electorates. I acknowledge the Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre, the Coolaburoo Neighbourhood Centre, the Bankstown Women's Health Centre and other organisations in my electorate that will be conducting fundraising activities tomorrow in support of the Cancer Council and cancer research.

This topic is at the heart of every member in this House. We all know of people who have been afflicted by cancer—whether they be members of our families or people in our communities. It is always a challenge for governments. I am sure all members agree that it is important to support organisations such as the Cancer Council and any fundraising efforts that assist in cancer research, assist sufferers and family members, and enable us to achieve our goal of finding a cure. I thank the House for supporting this matter of public importance.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I thank the member for Bankstown for bringing this matter of public importance to the attention of the House. I know that every member will support Daffodil Day in their electorates.

#### *Community Recognition Statements*

### **ORGAN DONATION**

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Corrections, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (15:53):** Last year the Hills community was rocked by the sudden and tragic passing of Nathan Gremmo. The Gremmo family is a fixture in the Hills and, to honour his memory, his family has established Jersey Day to raise awareness of the importance of organ and tissue donation. While Nathan's life was lost, another six were saved by the generosity of his family through organ donation. I urge everyone to don their favourite sporting jersey on 2 September, to register as an organ donor at [donatelife.gov.au](http://donatelife.gov.au) and to begin a conversation with their loved ones that could help to save lives.

### **SOUTHERN DISTRICTS SOCCER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (15:54):** On Friday 19 August 2016 I attended the seventieth anniversary celebrations of the Southern Districts Soccer Football Association and the seniors' teams award presentation, which was held at Mounties. On the evening, awards were presented to both the men's and women's seniors teams who were minor premiers for the 2016 season. Congratulations to all teams who achieved minor premierships this season. It would be remiss of me not to mention the tremendous lolly buffet that was organised for the evening—an obvious favourite with everyone in attendance. I thank the talented Mrs Rosemarie Arruzza for organising it. Well done to the organisers and committee members: Mr Andry Favaloro; Mr Silvo Pahor; Mr Neil Williams; and Mr John Vukasin. On behalf of the House, I wish all teams the very best for the upcoming grand finals.

### **PITTWATER ELECTORATE OLYMPIANS**

#### **TRIBUTE TO BERNARD "MIDGET" FARRELLY**

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning) (15:55):** I recognise the achievement of all northern beaches athletes who did us proud in Rio. I acknowledge Chloe Dalton and Ellia Green for winning gold in the first Olympic Women's Rugby 7s competition. They are proud Warringah Ratettes and Warringah Rugby Club members. I congratulate sailors Jason Waterhouse, Lisa Darmanin and Tom Burton; kayakers Murray Stewart and Naomi Flood; and beach volleyballer Maria Fe Artacho del Solar. Thank you for being an inspiration to all Australians, young and old. Another Pittwater sporting great recently passed away—Bernard "Midget" Farrelly. Mr Farrelly was from Palm Beach and a world champion surfer. He was the boat captain at Whale Beach Surf Life Saving Club at the time of his death. He was a gentleman and inspiration and he will be sorely missed.

### BATTLE OF LONG TAN FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (15:56):** On behalf of the people of Port Stephens, last week I had the immense honour of laying a wreath at the Newcastle and Hunter Region Vietnam Veterans fortieth annual Remembrance Day service, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. It was a memorable and moving service in honour of the 19 Hunter men who made the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam War. Each year at this service special tribute is paid to one of the 19 fallen. This year the sad story of Staff Sergeant John Hall was recounted. He was the last Australian serviceman to be killed in the war. The Vietnam War Memorial in Civic Park, Newcastle, is an impressive accomplishment of the Newcastle Vietnam Veterans Fund. It was officially unveiled in 1987 and is reported to be the first memorial to Vietnam Veterans in Australia. I thank the Newcastle and Hunter Region Vietnam Veterans and master of ceremonies Mr Stephen Finney, for their ongoing efforts to uphold the memory of those whose lives were lost and those whose lives were changed forever. Lest we forget.

### WARIALDA OPEN GIRLS RUGBY UNION SQUAD

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (15:57):** I congratulate and commend the open girls Warialda rugby union squad who recently became the very best side in all of New South Wales by winning the combined high school titles. To do that they had to play Terrigal and Wagga Wagga. To claim the State title they played Hunter Sports High in the final and won 19 points to 10. I congratulate each player on the team, the coaching staff and other teachers at the school. Tiarna Molloy captained that side to victory and was rewarded with selection in the under 18s women's rugby side to tour New Zealand in December. Congratulations Warialda High on proving again that the best players are certainly in country New South Wales.

### TRIBUTE TO PETER HILDER

### BATTLE OF LONG TAN FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (15:58):** It is with great sadness that I inform the House that Peter Hilder, a local Maitland identity, passed away earlier this week. Peter was a well-known and recognised member of the Maitland business community who became actively involved in the Maitland Business Chamber, serving as vice-president and president for many years. It was through his involvement in the chamber that he became a founding member of Youth Express, a work placement program that actively and effectively linked young people, schools and industry in a learning capacity. Peter was the chair of Youth Express for more than 23 years—an amazing achievement. Through Peter's effort and persistence, more than 35,000 young people in the Hunter have benefited from Youth Express. He made a significant difference in the lives of many of Maitland's youth. Peter's passing has left an incredible hole in the Hunter community. I take this opportunity also to express condolences to the members of the Vietnam Veterans Association for their losses and thank them for the ability to participate in their commemoration last week.

### LINGA LONGA FARM

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (15:59):** I inform the House that the Linga Longa Farm at Wingham, in the mighty Manning Valley, was recently awarded a bronze medal at the Australian Food Awards for its certified grass-fed beef. I congratulate farmers Lauren and Greg Newell on their success. They were the first farmers in New South Wales to become pasture certified through the Cattle Council of Australia. This was the first time the pair had entered their beef into any award competition, which makes their honour even more impressive. Members should know that beef from the Manning Valley is the very best, as members of The Nationals will attest.

### TOONGABBIE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (15:59):** It was a pleasure to attend Toongabbie Christian School on Saturday 20 August for the opening of its new and renovated secondary buildings. Toongabbie Christian School is a wonderful school within the Prospect electorate. Since 1981 the school has served our community by providing high-quality education and personal development for thousands of students. Prospect is blessed to have such a school. Recently it was fortunate to be granted funding from the Commonwealth and New South Wales governments via the Association of Independent Schools Block Grant Authority. In particular, I ask this House to recognise principal Dr Johan Griesel; chair of the school board Andrew Clachers; school captains Brad Duriasamy and Deborah Ramesh; and the prefects. I also acknowledge Toongabbie Christian School jazz band, the brass quartet and the many year 11 students who assisted on the day and made the opening such a success. Psalm 127:1 says:

Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labour in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.

### TRIBUTE TO NICK RICHES

**Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:01):** I extend my warmest congratulations to Bowral local Nick Riches. Nick was selected to represent Australia at the 2015 Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association World Games in Nottingham, England. Nick had the opportunity to compete in athletics and taekwondo. He was awarded a bronze medal in the long jump and a bronze and silver medal in taekwondo. Nick was also awarded a plaque for his amazing effort in the 400 x 100 metre relay, in an amalgamated Australian and Scottish team that won the relay by 50 metres. Unfortunately, the team could not claim victory as it was formed on the day and after the registration cut-off. Nick is truly an inspirational Southern Highlands local. I wish him all the best in his sporting career and hope that he continues to do an amazing job in representing Australia.

### TEMPE PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:01):** I recognise Tempe Public School Parents and Citizens Association, by far the most effective parents and citizens association I have come across in my time as a local representative. The Tempe Public School Parents and Citizens Association does a fabulous job in rallying the community around its local public school, transforming the school into the beating heart of the Tempe community. I recently visited Tempe Public School to inspect playground upgrades and new landscaping, which was funded by a 2015-16 Community Building Partnership grant of \$150,000 awarded to the association. The works would not have been possible but for the association. In particular, I acknowledge the hard work put in by 2015 secretary Lea Sherwood, who made sure that the association became a registered not-for-profit organisation; Theodora Gianniotis and Rachel Bernstone, who spearheaded the association's grant application; 2015 treasurer Todd Payne; and 2015 president Rachel Rothwell. I note that Rachel Bernstone and Todd Payne have since moved out of the area. I thank them for their tireless service to the Tempe Public School community.

### TOONGABBIE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (16:02):** It was a pleasure to attend the opening and dedication of the new and renovated secondary buildings at Toongabbie Christian School at the weekend. There were many people there. It was a great day out, with performances from the choir and the band. There was an enormous sense of community spirit in the school. It is a testament to the culture that all staff and students at the school have been tirelessly working to build. It was great to attend the opening of the renovated buildings, as clearly they have a significant impact on the school and its ability to thrive as a world-class educational institution. It would be remiss of me not to specifically mention the school's fantastic staff, particularly principal Dr Johan Griesel and two assistant principals Mr Richard Warren and Mrs Genevieve Brummell. I also acknowledge business manager Mrs Lily Ng who had a vital role in the project. It was great to meet those four exceptional members of staff. The school is in very safe hands under their stewardship. No doubt the school will go from strength to strength. I also acknowledge the school captains, who acted as master of ceremonies for the afternoon's events.

### MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:03):** I recognise a significant event held on Saturday 20 August at the Macedonian Orthodox Church in Atkinson Street, Liverpool. This was the blessing of the start of the building works for a new church, the Macedonian Orthodox Church of St Bogorodica-Precista, otherwise known as Holy Mother of God Parish Church. The new building is planned to have traditional architecture. I understand it has been designed by architects from Macedonia. A construction period of two to three years is anticipated. The blessing of the foundation stone attracted several hundred people and was welcomed by Liverpool's Macedonian community. People of Macedonian heritage add to the multicultural diversity of south-west Sydney. That diversity is one of the area's great strengths and one of the reasons Liverpool is such a great place in which to live. The Macedonian community contributes significantly to the area.

### TRIBUTE TO MITCH WALMSLEY

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (16:04):** I take this opportunity to congratulate teenager Mitch Walmsley from Wingen for being a member of the Australian Polocrosse under-16 junior team that recently competed in a three-game test series against South Africa. After travelling to Port Elizabeth, South Africa, in July, Mitch helped his side win the test 28-13, 26-10 and 26-14. To take the series out 3-0 in a foreign country on borrowed horses is a fantastic achievement for Mitch and his fellow team members. Mitch started playing polocrosse at nine years of age and has had many successes over the years. This year, in addition to playing for Australia, Mitch was a member of the New South Wales under-16 boys junior team that was undefeated at the Australian National Polocrosse Championships held in Albury in April. Earlier this month Mitch was a member of the Hunter Valley intermediate under-21 men's team that took out the championship grade at the New South Wales Zone Championships held in Bowral. I congratulate Mitch.

### BATTLE OF LONG TAN FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

**Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (16:05):** Last week, on 18 August 2016, we commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, also known as Vietnam Veterans' Day. The battle, which took place in 1966 during the Vietnam War, was one of the heaviest conflicts that Australia was involved in, with 18 Australians killed and 24 wounded. I had the honour of attending two memorial services last week, at Crystal Palace in Canley Heights and at Cabra-Vale Memorial Park in Cabramatta. Many veterans and the families and friends of those who served took part in the memorial service. I recognise Mr Xuan Lam, President of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam [ARVN] Veterans Association in Australia—New South Wales for organising the event. Many members of RSL sub-branches attended the Long Tan commemoration.

### CLARENCE VALLEY BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

**Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:06):** I offer my congratulations to all the nominees in the Clarence Valley Business Excellence Awards. Congratulations go to chairman Adam Gordon and the awards committee, as well as the sponsors and, in particular, the naming sponsor the *Daily Examiner*. Congratulations go to all the winners, especially the Business of the Year winner, Benny's Grafton Smash Repairs; the People's Choice Favourite Business winner, Nurture One Arthur Street Children's Centre; the People's Choice Award Favourite Employee winner, Vicki Lawson of the North Grafton General Store; and Ruth Finlay, winner of Trainee or Apprentice of the Year. Congratulations go to Farmer Lou for being inducted into the Hall of Fame. I congratulate previous Business Award Winners Caringa Enterprises, Mareeba Aged Care, Spar Maclean, Complete Staff Solutions and Clarence River Seafoods, who were also inducted into the Hall of Fame.

### TRIBUTE TO DAVID FISHER

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (16:07):** I pay tribute to David Fisher, who died tragically and suddenly on Monday night. He grew up in Colyton and was well known in the Labor Party as a tireless worker and a true believer. David went straight from university to work in the electorate office of former member Diane Beamer. Today Diane told me she had insisted he come to work for her when she was made a Minister. For four years he was her adviser on heritage and fair trading. Over the years David worked selflessly on Labor campaigns, not only for Diane but also for my good friend and former member for Lindsay David Bradbury, for Penrith councillor Greg Davies and for me. It is incumbent upon me to acknowledge his contribution in this Parliament. He is survived by his wife, Alison; his two-year-old daughter, Isabelle; his mother, Jill; and his beloved sister, Debbie. He was only 41. Vale, David Fisher.

### RETIREMENT OF BOB PARR

**Mr GREG APLIN (Albury) (16:08):** Bob Parr, Federation Council's planning chief, will retire on 26 August after 44½ years in local government. Bob worked for Broken Hill Shire Council for 17 years before moving to Holbrook Council. After 11 years at Holbrook Bob took up the position of head of the planning and environment department at Corowa Shire Council, where he conducted reviews of Corowa shire's local environmental plans, oversaw zonings for various land uses and was always an outstanding professional in his dealings with applicants and government officers. He has been a most dedicated council representative, notably during times of crisis, such as when the tornado swept through part of Mulwala in March 2013. Bob has been a champion baseball player and elite squash player and is a keen golfer. I congratulate Bob on a career of great service and significant achievement. I wish him all the very best in his retirement.

### ANZAC AVENUES, WYONG AND TUGGERAH

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (16:08):** I congratulate John Selwood, Kerrie Metcalfe and the Wyong Family History Group for their efforts in commemorating the centenary of the planting of two avenues of trees, each of those avenues now being called Anzac Avenue, in Wyong and Tuggerah as a tribute to those who fell in the First World War. Each of the trees that were planted 100 years ago represented a person lost from the local community. Two weeks ago I was involved in unveiling a plaque at Frank Balance Park to commemorate the centenary of the naming of Anzac Avenue, Wyong. Tomorrow there will be an event for Anzac Avenue, Tuggerah, at the Tuggerah Progress Association hall to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the planting of that avenue. The original trees were camphor laurels. Although the trees do not exist now, the fact that those avenues are still called Anzac Avenue is a tribute to all those who fell during the war.

### K2 KAYAKING OLYMPIC BRONZE MEDALLISTS

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:09):** I offer my congratulations, and those of the entire Central Coast community, to Olympic kayaker Lachlan Tame, who last Thursday night with his colleague Ken Wallace secured the bronze medal at the Rio Olympics in the K2 1,000 metres event. It was standing room only at the Avoca Surf Club last Thursday night. Literally hundreds of people turned out to watch Lachlan's first foray at the

Olympics. For him to come home with a bronze medal on his first attempt was absolutely brilliant. We have no doubt that Lachlan has a fantastic future ahead of him. Not only is the country proud of him but so is everyone at Avoca and everybody on the Central Coast. Congratulations, Lachie Tame.

#### **CHARLESTOWN SCHOOL DRAWING COMPETITION**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:10):** Earlier this year I ran a school drawing competition, asking primary school students in the Charlestown electorate to draw 'what I love most about where I live'. I received many wonderful drawings that just reinforced why I am so proud to call Charlestown and Lake Macquarie home. There were many strong entries, but three talented students stood out from the rest. In the five- to seven-year-old category, Jaiah Butchart from Kahibah Public School beautifully portrayed her backyard, with all of its gorgeous trees and the birds that live in them. In the eight- to 10-year-old category, Louis Selkirk from Charlestown South Public School used bright colours and a shading technique to draw a magnificent sunset over Redhead Beach. In the 11- to 12-year-old category, Oliver O'Grady from St Kevin's Primary School drew a brilliantly detailed picture of boats sailing on Lake Macquarie, with the Swansea Bridge in the background. Coincidentally, the winner of an earlier drawing competition I held was Emily O'Grady, Oliver's sister—clearly a talented family. I thank all the students who took the time to enter the competition.

#### **HAWKESBURY COMMUNITY KITCHEN**

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Hawkesbury—Minister for Finance, Services and Property) (16:11):** I recently had the pleasure of visiting and thanking the volunteers of the Hawkesbury Community Kitchen. Operating in the Hawkesbury since 1991, the kitchen aims to support those in need in the Hawkesbury through meal services, referrals and assistance for various requests. The kitchen has a steady supply of volunteers from other community groups, local schools and churches, as well as receiving financial support from the Richmond Club, Windsor Rotary, Windsor Lions and various other organisations. I specially thank some of the kitchen's longest-serving volunteers: Val Barn, Joan Bruce, Helen Knobbs, Narrelle McCoy and Bob Camilleri. These men and women have sacrificed a lot of their time for the betterment of the Hawkesbury's most vulnerable, and their efforts often go unrecognised. I look forward to working closely with the Hawkesbury Community Kitchen in the future and commend it for its service to the Hawkesbury.

#### **OUR LADY OF LEBANON FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION**

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:12):** On Monday 15 August I joined more than 1,000 worshippers at Our Lady of Lebanon Co-Cathedral in Harris Park to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption, which is also the annual feast day and the culmination of feast week celebrations at Our Lady of Lebanon. The annual celebrations at Our Lady of Lebanon have grown in recent years from a massive parish barbecue and mass to the week-long festivities we see today that are attended by more than 10,000 people. Bishop Antoine Tarabay, the Maronite Bishop of Australia, was joined by the new Catholic Bishop of the Parramatta Diocese, Bishop Vincent Long, and by the Bishop of Melkite Eparchy, His Grace Bishop Rabat, in celebrating the Solemn Mass. I pay special tribute to the efforts of Father Tony Sarkis, the dean of the co-cathedral, in leading the organisation of feast week for the first time. Congratulations to him and to all the volunteers who made all the events during feast week a great success.

#### **DAFFODIL DAY**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (16:13):** Tomorrow, 26 August 2016, is Daffodil Day. It is the time of year when Cancer Council NSW asks communities to come together to remember the importance of hope and life and that we can beat cancer. We can all assist in the fight against cancer, including by wearing a Cancer Council pin, buying daffodils or other relevant items for sale, or making a donation. I acknowledge the great efforts of chief executive officer Jim L'Estrange and his team at Cancer Council NSW, and especially the contribution of the local ambassadors in my electorate of Davidson, Sangita Bhatia of Forestville and Liz Hing of Castle Cove.

#### **BURWOOD SANDAKAN REMEMBRANCE SERVICE**

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (16:14):** On Sunday 7 August I had the pleasure of attending the Burwood Sandakan Remembrance Service at the Sandakan Memorial in Burwood Park. The memorial was unveiled in 1983 by Paul Keating, and every year since there has been a service to remember the soldiers who were held as prisoners of war in Sandakan, Borneo, following the fall of Singapore in World War II. The conditions suffered by those prisoners were brutal and almost unthinkable to many today. Of the nearly 2,500 prisoners held captive in Sandakan, only six survived. As the new patron of the Sandakan Community Education Committee, I make a commitment to the community that we will never forget the incredible sacrifices made by those who suffered at Sandakan. I acknowledge the committee: Clyde Livingstone, Gladys Barnes, Russ

Kenny, Alan Chapple, Colin Hodges, Kevin Connelly, Mary Bryant, John Fisk, Councillor John Faker and Michael McMahon. I thank them for the trust they have placed in me by naming me as their patron.

#### **ALBION PARK COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION EVENING BRANCH**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:15):** For the past 15 years the Albion Park Country Women's Association Evening Branch has made a tremendous contribution to the Illawarra region and, in particular, to our local Albion Park community. I acknowledge and thank Margaret Taylor and Yvonne Davis for their years of hard work and dedication with this wonderful group of ladies. The Country Women's Association [CWA] has a long and distinguished history. It was founded in 1922, when country women were fighting isolation and a lack of adequate health facilities. The CWA is the largest women's organisation in Australia and does an incredible job of improving conditions for country women and children. Across New South Wales, approximately 10,000 women belong to one of more than 400 local branches—which are connected to 30 groups working not only for the overall aims of the CWA but also often for specific issues such as supporting public education, protecting our unique agricultural land and calls for the desecration or abuse of the Australian flag to become a criminal offence.

#### **PORT STEPHENS YACHT CLUB PACRIM REGATTA**

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:16):** I recognise the Port Stephens Yacht Club, whose members recently represented Australia at the 2016 Pacific Rim Yacht Challenge. Eight local sailors and two supporters competed against teams from Japan, Canada, the United States of America, New Zealand and Russia at the biannual PacRim Regatta in the Russian port town of Nakhodka. The PacRim Regatta consisted of 10 races held over three days. Rather than have teams sailing their own yachts, the Nakhodka Yachting Federation supplied vessels, and the teams rotated between vessels to ensure a fair race—so this was a true contest of skill.

I am pleased to report that the Port Stephens team finished third overall, with the Russian host team taking out first place and New Zealand coming in second. Congratulations to Bill Haskell, John Nederlof, Ken Buckingham, Tamara Afonina, Bill Armstrong, Neil Edwards, Gail Parsons and Andrew Parsons, as well as Clive Dutton and Greg Busch. I thank the Nakhodka Sailing Federation for looking after the Port Stephens team and congratulate all the Port Stephens Yacht Club competitors on their success in both in sailing and international relations.

#### **GREAT LAKES UNDER-17 NETBALL TEAM**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:17):** I congratulate the Great Lakes under-17 netball team, who recently earned the title as the second-best team in New South Wales for their age and division. The girls took part in the NSW Netball State Championships in Newcastle in late June, where they excelled. The team finished the long-weekend competition with 17 wins and only three losses. The players, coaches and parents are to be commended for their success. It proves once again that the best athletes come from regional New South Wales.

#### **MARY MACKILLOP CATHOLIC COLLEGE, WAKELY**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:17):** On 19 August 2016 I was delighted to attend the Mary MacKillop Catholic College, Wakeley, for the annual Mary MacKillop Day mass. Mary MacKillop college is a wonderful school towards the south-west of the electorate of Prospect, with a history tracing back to Mary MacKillop herself and her role as one of the Sisters of St Joseph, a teaching order active in south-western Sydney since the 1930s. Today the school caters for more than 900 students and is a valuable member of the Diocese of Sydney. I note the wonderful efforts of Father Richard of St Benedict's Smithfield, Father Alberic Jacovone, Archbishop Amel Nona, Father Damien Mosakowski and Father Patrick McAuliffe in leading the mass on that day. I also congratulate and thank the school principal, Narelle Archer, the Sisters of St Joseph and the students of Mary MacKillop Catholic College for providing such a wonderful example to our community.

#### **SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS MELANOMA SUPPORT GROUP**

**Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:18):** I acknowledge the efforts of Wollondilly resident Mark Thomson and extend my gratitude to him on behalf of the people of my electorate for his amazing efforts in setting up the Southern Highlands Melanoma Support Group. Twelve years ago Mark first noticed a black mark on the back of his knee, which prompted him to see a doctor. Unfortunately, Mark had a second case of melanoma in 2013 after experiencing excessive pain and was given a life expectancy of only nine months. Mark has not stopped fighting his melanoma, and in fact started a melanoma support group that brings together sufferers, doctors and people who look after melanoma victims. They meet at Mittagong RSL Club on the first Monday of every month. This is an amazing addition to our community and I wish Mark all the best.

### URUGUAYAN INDEPENDENCE 191ST ANNIVERSARY

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:19):** I recognise an event that occurred on Saturday 20 August at the Uruguayan Club in my electorate of Liverpool. This event celebrated the club's forty-fourth anniversary and also celebrated the 191st anniversary of Uruguayan independence. The club has been an important focus for the Uruguayan community, and Latin American communities more generally, ever since its opening. It adds to the multicultural diversity of Liverpool and south-west Sydney. It is always a pleasure to celebrate Uruguayan independence—when a country in the Southern Hemisphere decided to cut its ties with an imperial empire in the Northern Hemisphere and become a republic. Hopefully, two centuries later Australia will follow this fine example of independence.

### MERITON AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE WINNER CKDS ARCHITECTS

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:19):** I offer my congratulations to CKDS Architects on winning the NSW Meriton Award for Excellence at the 2016 Urban Development Institute Australia [UDIA]. CKDS are leading architects on the Central Coast and have been much praised for their recent designs for the Waterside Project in Gosford city and Tuggerah's Regional Sports Centre. With almost a dozen awards already under its belt, this local company will now be considered for the UDIA Presidents Award in September. I wish it the best of luck.

### MARY MACKILLOP CATHOLIC COLLEGE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

**Mr NICK LALICH (Cabramatta) (16:20):** On 19 August 2016 I had the pleasure of attending the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mary MacKillop College in Wakeley. It was fantastic to join the celebrations with the staff, students and local residents. I note that many alumni returned to the school to celebrate this important day. The celebrations acknowledge the college's rich history and how much it has transformed since it was established. The festivities were marked with rides, games and various food stalls. I was joined by my State parliamentary colleagues the member for Prospect and the member for Fairfield, the Federal member for Fowler, Chris Hayes, and the Federal member for McMahon, the Hon. Chris Bowen. I acknowledge the great work Principal Narelle Archer has done for the school over eight years. I thank the organisers for making the event so memorable.

### AUSTRALIAN BRAVERY AWARD RECIPIENT MITCHELL LEE BURGE

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (16:21):** When people respond to a mayday call they usually do not expect to receive an Australian Bravery Award, but this is exactly what happened when Mount Colah resident Mitchell Lee Burge heard chatter over the radio about a kayaker signalling for help. With no response from Marine Rescue, the New South Wales Coast Guard or NSW Water Police, Mr Burge knew the risks but also knew that he had to at least try to help—especially as the sun was beginning to set. On rough seas and in torrential rain, Mr Burge navigated his vessel to the kayaker's last known location, with complete radio silence from others.

In desperation, Mr Burge and his crewmate used an old fishing method to help find the kayaker: They placed the boat in neutral and drifted for a few minutes. They then plotted a course and half an hour later they saw the kayaker in the distance. But it did not stop there. In rough seas with close to no light, they knew there was so much at stake. Fearing accidentally crushing the kayaker, or losing him to the violent seas, Mr Burge and his crewmate used a rope and life jackets to get him in. Returning to headlands via Palm Beach, the emergency services were anticipating their return. Today I pay tribute to Mr Burge's tremendous bravery and courage, and thank him for selfless efforts in saving the life of another.

### RECOVERY POINT PROGRAM

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:22):** People leave prison and rehabilitation programs with the hope of returning successfully to society and starting their lives anew. But there are many challenges faced during the re-entry process. Previous routines and old temptations can resurface. Too often people are left alone and feeling vulnerable, making it all too easy to turn back to crime and to drugs. That is why I am proud to have the Recovery Point Program, run by the Samaritans, servicing my electorate of Charlestown. The Recovery Point Program helps people in the Hunter leaving prison or alcohol and drug rehabilitation centres successfully reintegrate and transition back into society. The group programs give people a safe place to talk about concerns in their day-to-day situations and help people not feel alone in their experiences. They also provide access to crucial services such as housing, Centrelink, health workers, clothing and food in a friendly, non-threatening environment. Every day the Samaritans Recovery Point Program is transforming people's lives. I commend their work.

### KIAMA READERS FESTIVAL

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:23):** I acknowledge the Friends of Kiama Library, Kiama Readers Festival President Mrs Judy Spooone, immediate past President Nancy Finch and Secretary David Stevenson for

their recent hard work and dedication. Fifteen authors are coming to our township from Friday 14 October to Sunday 16 October 2016 for the Kiama Readers Festival. Authors include the ABC's Richard Glover, Debra Oswald, Damon Young, Frank Moorhouse and others. The festival organisers have worked tirelessly and are hoping to attract more than 500 people, including many interstate visitors from Sydney, Canberra and Victoria, to various events that are being held at the Kiama Library, Kiama Leagues Club and the Kiama Pavilion. I encourage all members to attend the Kiama Readers Festival.

#### **PARRAMATTA MISSION ABRAHAM CONFERENCE**

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:23):** Last Sunday I attended the Abraham Conference, a wonderful interfaith conference organised and hosted by Parramatta Mission and Reverend Dr Manas Ghosh, and attended by more than 200 people, including the member for Parramatta and the member for Lakemba. Parramatta Mission and Leigh Memorial Church are leaders in this area, having hosted this conference for a number of years as well as an annual interfaith service in their church. They celebrate the ideals and beliefs that unite people across different faiths. The keynote speaker, Rabbi Dr Ben Elton, spoke about the link between hate speech and violence and the panel comprising Jewish, Christian and Muslim leaders discussed the impact of hate speech on their communities. While it is a confronting topic, the unity and constructive engagement of all the conference participants was inspirational. I congratulate the organisers on bringing so many in the community together for a successful conference.

#### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS FUNDRAISING EVENTS**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:24):** I inform the House of a wonderful initiative hosted in Krumbach that brought together domestic violence awareness and belly dancing. In early May 2016 the Fireflies Dancers from the Krumbach district organised a fundraising event known as Shimmy Mob. The unique pairing was pulled together by a dedicated group of people who are working tirelessly to raise awareness of domestic violence within the local community. In its first year the group raised nearly \$3,000 for the Great Lakes Women's Shelter. I know that President Julie Brady will be very pleased as will the chief executive officer of Women's Community Shelters, Annabelle Daniels. I must also mention Juliana Bahr-Thomson. Juliana is paddling from Newcastle to Noosa in a Guinness World Record attempt 1,000 kilometre journey to raise awareness for environmental charity Surfriider Foundation and domestic violence awareness charity White Ribbon. I wish her well on her courageous journey.

#### **PEOPLE'S SHED, BUSBY**

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (16:25):** Today I recognise the People's Shed located at Jersey Street, Busby. The physical construction of the shed was funded by a Community Building Partnership grant that I was happy to support. The shed at Busby had an open day and official opening on Saturday 13 August. The shed aims to assist with crafts, plenty of arts, woodwork, information technology, metalwork and lots more. I thank the shed for the invitation to open it officially. The invitation was conveyed to me by People's Shed Secretary Andrew MacRae, who has been tireless in his support for this venture. I also acknowledge and congratulate the very large number of volunteers involved in this project, who deserve praise and recognition.

#### **CRICKET CLINICS**

**Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:26):** During November and December 2015 the Bradman Foundation organised a program to provide cricket clinics to disabled children at the Bradman Oval. The program was announced at the yearly DreamCricket Festival on the 30 October 2015 when 85 young children were registered to play cricket. Thanks to the considerable efforts of the Movement Disorder Foundation, the Rotary Club of the Southern Highlands and the Bradman Foundation, the clinics attracted roughly 140 children from the Wollondilly and Southern Highlands communities and ran every Wednesday afternoon. Executive officer of the Bradman Foundation Rina Hore outlined how the sessions would assist in teaching the children skills and assisting their coordination. I had a lot of fun playing cricket with the children. This is an amazing effort from the Bradman Foundation, Rotary Club of the Southern Highlands and the Movement Disorder Foundation, and the Wollondilly community owes them a great amount of gratitude.

#### **RHYTHMIC GYMNAST TYLA PETRIE**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (16:27):** One would think being a national champion is the highest a person can go, but that is clearly not the case for Tyla Petrie—for whom the sky is not the limit but a starting point. Fourteen-year-old Tyla has been doing rhythmic gymnastics for the past eight years, and has placed first in an astounding amount of competitions during that time—the NSW Sports Management Committee Invitational Competition, the NSW Senior State Championships, and the Australian Gymnastics Championships in rope, hoop, ball, clubs and overall in level 9. Dani Le Ray, Tyla's coach and a former Olympic rhythmic gymnast, believes that Tyla is a key member of the Abbotsleigh senior squad.

Although Tyla says that she was surprised to do well in this year's competitions, there is no doubt that her dedication and motivation to keep training have been the reasons behind her success. Any athlete will assert that work ethic is just as important as one's love for the sport, and it is clear that Tyla's steadfast dedication not only has brought her substantial success this year but also will guarantee her incredible success well into the future. Tyla continues to display her talents and capability in gymnastics. I applaud her success so far and wish her all the best as she strives for gold. I hope that one day we will see her on our screens, representing Australia.

#### **TRIBUTE TO COLIN BISHOP**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (16:28):** I pay tribute to the late Colin Bishop of Coolangatta Estate, who passed away recently aged 94. His legacy is that future generations will be able to see and experience an important piece of Australian local history. Like Alexander Berry, Mr Bishop will be remembered as a pioneer whose actions resulted not only in the restoration of Coolangatta village but also in the emergence of an award-winning winery and resort that is also regarded as one of the South Coast's premier tourist attractions. At age 25, Colin Bishop acquired land on the foothills of Coolangatta Mountain with a bank loan of £400 guaranteed by his father. By 1950, he and his first wife, Norma, were able to acquire one of the run-down buildings near their land.

Their farm soon formed part of the once-thriving Coolangatta settlement, established by pioneer Alexander Berry in 1822 and became a self-supporting village that exported goods to Asia and Europe. During the 1950s they had five children and bought more buildings in the former Coolangatta village. By the 1960s, Mr Bishop owned all the historic buildings on what is now Coolangatta Estate. Then in 1972 Coolangatta Historic Village, with 20 accommodation rooms and a restaurant, was officially opened accompanied by a re-enactment of Berry's landing and period costumes to mark the sesquicentenary of settlement in the Shoalhaven. Colin's passing comes just one month after that of his second wife, Winsome. He is survived by his children, Megan, Greg, Robyn, Paul and Bruce.

#### **FORSTER KEYS FUN DAY**

#### **TWENTY-FIFTH TAREE ENVIROFAIR**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:29):** Today I inform the House of the success of this year's Forster Keys Fun Day, which was held in early July near the beautiful Wallis Lake, where the sun always shines, the whales come to call and there are always frolicking dolphins. Locals braved chilly conditions to turn out for the two-day event, which saw more than 10,600 people head along. The event continues to grow and this year's feat is a credit to the hardworking organisers. I also acknowledge the organisers of the twenty-fifth annual Taree Envirofair. Close to 5,000 people are reported to have attended and the coordinators said it was the best event they have held to date.

#### **ROCKCAN**

**Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:29):** On 21 November 2015 Mittagong RSL Club played host to RockCan, which is an Interchange Australia initiative. RockCan brings together musicians, some of whom have disabilities, to perform and display their musical talents. It was made up primarily of local musicians and bands who were afforded the opportunity to perform in an inclusive and professional atmosphere. Joseph Lyons, the marketing manager at Interchange Australia, plans to have RockCan as a regular occasion. Events such as RockCan require significant organisational effort, and special acknowledgement must go to all of the volunteers who made it possible. The opportunity for disabled and non-disabled musicians to perform together allows them to learn from one another and brings the community together throughout the setting up of the music event. I urge members to rally behind this incredible cause and promote RockCan as an important and inclusive music event.

#### *Petitions*

#### **SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS COALMINING**

#### **Discussion**

**Ms PRU GOWARD (Goulburn—Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Medical Research, Assistant Minister for Health, Minister for Women, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (16:30):** I represent my communities in the Southern Highlands who have signed the petition we are here to debate today and who are seated in the gallery. It is the second such petition in four years and it is equally urgent in its demand that coalmining in the Southern Highlands be stopped. In the words of petitioners, "requesting legislation to halt and exclude coal exploration and extraction on and below the land surface near Berrima and in the Southern Highlands, and in the interim there be a moratorium on current or proposed mining or extraction activity."

This petition contains more than 16,000 signatures. That is a very strong statement about the level of concern in the Southern Highlands community and more widely across the State. This community has loudly and repeatedly said no to Hume Coal's proposal to establish a coalmine in the middle of one of the few remaining open spaces close to metropolitan Sydney, the site of an unparalleled sandstone aquifer and the centre of prosperous tourism and agricultural industries. It also happens to be home to one of mainland Australia's most significant Georgian villages, boasting a courthouse, gaol, shops, cottages, and an historic hotel, which is the longest continuously licenced public house in New South Wales, and more than 50,000 people live there.

The community is certain all of this beauty and prosperity is at risk from the proposed Hume Coal mine, and so am I. This petition is the work, primarily, of the Battle for Berrima [B4B], a group of committed citizens led by Ken Wilson, Michael Verberkt, Rod Blay, Lyn Watson, John Lamb, Hugh Farrimond, Jock Pharey, Lyne Wilson, Heather Edwards, Ian Burns, Jill Brophy, Stewart Bunn and Amanda Fry. They have put their lives on hold to bring this petition to our Parliament today. I salute them and their great efforts on behalf of the community. B4B has staged fundraisers to pay for expert reports and raised awareness in community meetings and it hosts a comprehensive website. The village is covered with anti-coalmining posters and there is barely a street or a road in the Southern Highlands without a sign on the fence telling Hume Coal to go away.

The struggle against Hume Coal's proposal has been going on since 2010. I held the first protest meeting in the Sutton Forest Hall on a dark and very wet night that year and the community has led the way ever since. The community believes it is impossible for Hume Coal to mine underground without destroying the vast and unique sandstone aquifer that gives the highlands its wonderful water supply, its tall trees and generous pastures, its way of life and its beauty. The community believes a coalmine may create some jobs but will drive away others in the tourism, hospitality and agricultural sectors. The community also believes its pretty Georgian town of Berrima will be covered in coaldust from the mine head, which is planned to be no more than a few kilometres away. They dispute the wind measurements Hume has provided. Local knowledge tells them the town will be hard hit, as will people's lungs and health. Convict-hewn sandstone will not look quite the same when it is covered in coaldust, and the pretty town of Robertson is not keen on the dozens of coal trains that will roar through their village day and night.

The community believes that the economics of this mine do not stack up. There are many unanswered questions about the water licence required and exactly where Hume Coal expects to buy those water licences. They also believe that this is a fight worth winning but they do not understand why it has taken so long, and why a huge international company wants to wreck our beautiful country for uncertain gain. They do not understand why this just does not stop. I too would love to see a halt to this once and for all. How frustrated are we all by the time this exploration and development proposal has taken? Highlands people are desperate to save their way of life, their livelihoods and the environment.

I know and believe that in New South Wales we have good processes—the toughest environmental standards in the country and the most thorough and independent assessment processes, culminating with the Planning Assessment Commission. Aquifer interference policy requirements will need to be met, as will health and safety requirements. I know the excesses of the former Labor Government when exploration licences were sold for millions of dollars and greedy Ministers made terrible decisions and rode roughshod over communities. That is a dark legacy and a stain on our State. I know how those decisions have shattered the confidence of communities in all of us who sit in Parliament and I know how hard we need to work as a government to rebuild that trust.

I know that we need to stay the course, believe in ethical decision-making, believe in proper checks and balances and believe in doing what is right for the environment, for people's lives and for our prosperity. I think we will get this right. I know good and independent processes are the only way ultimately to secure the common good, no matter how arduous and slow they may be. The history of the world tells us that power without process and transparency lead inevitably to the corruption of the State, but my heart lies with the 16,000 people who signed this petition. I, too, just want it to stop.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (16:36):** I stand in solidarity with the Southern Highlands community. I am the member for the electorate Wyong. For 15 long years now under the former and current governments we have been fighting a coalmine underneath our water catchment. I acknowledge that the Labor Party has no great favour to pay in initially allowing that licence to go ahead, but former Minister Kelly knocked back the application for the mine in 2011. Barry O'Farrell then stood on a picnic table at Mardi and swore an oath that if the Coalition won office legislation would be introduced to ensure that the mine would not go ahead. Unfortunately, that promise was soon forgotten when they won office. It is a stain on our community that another application has now been lodged for this mine to go ahead.

I feel for the Southern Highlands community. I have visited the area and seen the signs. I understand how important water is to their beautiful community. Last year I introduced a private member's bill to try to stop mining

underneath our water catchment. Unfortunately, the Government would not even vote on that bill. Today I have reintroduced that legislation. Last Thursday a meeting was held in the suburb of Blue Haven. That meeting, which was held at lunchtime on a working day in a working suburb, attracted more than 200 people. We will continue this fight. Fifteen years is a long time but we have to keep fighting.

I congratulate the Minister for fighting on behalf of her community but I disagree with her on one important point—the process is not independent. I note that I also disagree with many of my colleagues on that point. I said publicly at that meeting, and I will continue to say it publicly wherever I go, the processes in this State under the former and current governments is not whether mining should happen but how mining should go ahead. That is a disgrace. The Government is currently buying back licences, which I do not disagree with, but it is happening on an ad hoc basis. We need to protect our water catchments. The water that is taken from the Wyong River through that catchment serves more than 300,000 people. However, we are told that the jobs that will come from the mine are more important than the jobs that will be lost if we lose that water supply. It just does not make sense. People scratch their heads.

The community, through our community organisation called Water Not Coal, has fought. It has raised funds to hire engineers and geologists to get the facts about why this mine should not go ahead and how the aquifers will be destroyed. Yet, panel after panel, and Planning Assessment Commission hearing after Planning Assessment Commission hearing have disregarded that. Although the Planning Assessment Commission has applied conditions, it has never said no. I hope that the Berrima people are successful in their fight. I hope that, together, my community, their community and other communities around the State will achieve a sensible outcome to protect our water supply.

Mining occurs in Wyong. There is a mine at Mandalong and underneath the northern part of the Central Coast, but those mines are not under water catchments. Water catchments should not be mined under any circumstance. I do not care who the Government is, I will stand up on behalf of my community and say that. That is why I keep reintroducing my private member's bill. Hopefully, we will get to vote on it and hopefully members on the other side of the Chamber will acknowledge the importance of water catchments. I am talking about designated water catchments; they are gazetted as water catchments.

The company agrees that it will damage the aquifers. The company told us that it will take us only 325 years to recharge those aquifers! None of us will be around to see that. Yet king coal continues to rule; that is just not right. As I said at the start of my contribution to this discussion: My community stands in solidarity with the people of Berrima. There is a growing movement—through Lock the Gate and other organisations—that understands that coal is not everything and that money is not everything. Protecting our communities and our water supply is much more important. I hope that they have a victory.

**Mr MICHAEL JOHNSEN (Upper Hunter) (16:41):** I speak to the petition concerning mining activities near Berrima in the Southern Highlands. As the member for Upper Hunter I understand the grave concerns in the community about coal exploration and development in the region. Indeed, it is important that the environmental and social impacts of any potential mining operations are considered before an approval to mine is given anywhere in this State. This has been central to the reforms that this Government has undertaken to bring rigour and transparency back to the assessment process for mining proposals. Our planning assessment framework considers a triple bottom line of environmental, economic and social factors to determine whether a project should be approved. Any approved development may only proceed under strict conditions that protect the water and environment resources.

Mining project proposals are required to obtain statutory approvals under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Mining Act 1992. Major mining projects are declared as State significant developments and are assessed by the Department of Planning and Environment. These legislative frameworks establish clear criteria with which a proponent must comply, and establish a mandatory public consultation process. For example, all State significant development applications are publicly exhibited for a minimum of 30 days. State significant development applications that are not supported by the relevant local councils or have more than 20 public objections to the proposal are referred to the Planning Assessment Commission for determination. The Planning Assessment Commission is an independent statutory body. Its members include experts in planning, architecture, the environment, urban design, land economics, traffic and transport, law, engineering, tourism, heritage, or government and public administration.

The Commission's decision-making procedures provide for public meetings and ensure that the community concerns are incorporated into the decision-making process. Any member of the public can make a submission about a State significant development during the public exhibition period. Other Government agencies are also consulted on State significant development applications. A project proponent must carry out an environmental impact assessment as part of the assessment process if there are likely to be significant environmental impacts. The assessment process takes into account site, local and regional impacts that may be

specific to that particular area. This is furthered in the process by the ability of the Government to request additional information from the proponent about a particular issue relating to that project that may be known to the staff or identified through the assessments.

Projects that cannot demonstrate that impacts from the development can be appropriately mitigated are not approved. As we have heard, the process is rigorous; it incorporates strict controls and requires significant expert input. For those reasons, moratoria and legislative bans on coal exploration and development in the Southern Highlands are not required. We have a strong and rigorous process in place to balance resource activities and the protection of the environment.

**Mr JAI ROWELL (Wollondilly) (16:44):** I stand up today for the people of the Southern Highlands in my electorate and I voice their concerns about the Hume Coal project. I have raised matters of concern for my community in this Chamber many times, such as stopping coal seam gas mining in Wollondilly's water catchment areas. I make no apology for standing up for my community. It is clear to me that the vast majority of the people in my electorate do not support this crazy application. Hume Coal has embarked on a lengthy court battle over access agreements and land rights, and prominent and well-respected media identity Alan Jones, AO, weighed into this matter some time ago. Mr Jones wrote to POSCO's managing director, Mr Soo Cheol Shin, to voice his views, which I share. I will read some of those views today:

Dear Mr Shin

I regard the whole Hume Coal project as disgraceful, un-Australian and one of the worst aspects of commercial vandalism I have seen.

The Hume Coal project has no place in the Southern Highlands. The ridiculous comment that POSCO prides itself on forging strong links in the communities in which it operates is, with respect Mr Shin, rubbish. You are vandals and there's no way of escaping that conclusion. And if you don't want to be referred to in that way, then you must change your behaviour.

Why don't you appear, for example, at our sold-out luncheon in the Southern Highlands on Thursday the 3rd of April where we're going to raise money for two elderly people, Margaret and Ross Alexander? They have a beautiful property in the Southern Highlands. They've been blocking Carter's Lane ... for seven months.

Your outfit took the Alexanders to court to remove the blockade and gain access to what was theirs. Roads, trucks, bulldozers, drilling rigs. And you're talking about strong links in the communities. You have to be joking.

The Alexanders lost the case, even though they have a covenant over their land. The Mining Act apparently gazumps everything. But does it matter. If your company had any morality it would understand the right of the Alexanders to their property.

Come to the luncheon for the Alexanders. Let the people see who you are. You're responsible for an arbitrator being appointed so the Alexanders have to go through a whole land access arbitration mess, all without the help of a lawyer because POSCO has denied them legal representation in the arbitration process. What are you people on about?

The letter goes on and on, and it concludes:

So Mr Chin, if I have to lead the fight against this outrageous behaviour, I'm happy to nail my colours to the mast. As I said, you're welcome at the lunch. I hope you will have the courage to show your face.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Jones AO

I share the concerns of Mr Jones. The treatment of my community is unacceptable. I was happy to sign this petition many months ago and I thank the organisers for their hard work. I also note that the managing director of that company did not attend the lunch that day. This is a really bad decision—it is bad for my community and it is bad for the member for Goulburn's community. Regardless of the political consequences to my future I will fight tooth and nail to make sure that this will not happen on our watch. I call on the Government to stop this application.

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (16:47):** By leave: I make a contribution on behalf of The Greens in support of this petition calling on this House to enact legislation to ban coal exploration and extraction in the Southern Highlands, and particularly to halt the progress of Hume Coal's Greenfield Berrima coalmine. From the outset I put on record my congratulations to the communities of Medway, Berrima, New Berrima, Bowral, Burradoo, Moss Vale and across the Southern Highlands that have put so much effort into getting 16,000 signatures on this petition and bringing this discussion to the House today. I acknowledge all the guests who are in the gallery today and also my colleague Mr Jeremy Buckingham, who has worked so hard in this space with them.

It is a monumental effort, but monumental community efforts, unfortunately, are required to take on multinational mining companies that are prepared to trample communities, and pollute our land and water for short-term profits. Monumental community efforts are required in the face of a planning system in New South Wales that does not red light mining and simply allows project after project to be approved despite them being environmentally, socially and economically irresponsible. It is after the fact—after damage has been caused to the

environment and after monumental efforts of local communities have been made—that the Government wasted taxpayer dollars on buying back mining licences.

The Greens say this: It is time to cut out the middleman and halt those projects at the get-go. I know the power of community voices. In my North Coast community, we showed what can be done with a persistent and passionate community campaign when we stared down Metgasco and its plans to drill for coal seam gas in our beautiful hinterland. We did that in the face of the Government and after successive governments for so long had refused to protect us from destructive gas fields. Ordinary citizens—just like the people of the Southern Highlands—came together and collectively organised to ensure their voice was heard. We made sure that our voice was heard. Victory was not the result of any single effort; rather, it was the culmination of hundreds of individual and collective actions, such as petitions, submissions, meetings and, ultimately, a community blockade.

As recently as two weeks ago we received the incredible news that BHP's Carooona coal project in the Liverpool Plains area—a project that for 10 years has been opposed by farmers, The Greens and community members—has been cancelled. That victory also was the result of sustained effort and community organising. I say to people who are present in the gallery: Congratulations. Keep up your persistence in this David and Goliath battle. The Greens stand with you every step of the way. I know the people of the North Coast will also. To the Government and Labor I say this: We can no longer pretend that it is okay to continue to approve massive new coalmines and expansions of existing coalmines. What are we thinking in this era in which every large country in the world is closing mines and not starting any new ones? The communities of the Southern Highlands deserve better. The people of New South Wales also deserve better.

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (16:50:5):** By leave: I support my Greens colleague and I support the petition. It is rare that The Greens agree with Alan Jones, but sometimes he gets it right. I acknowledge the work of the member for Goulburn, the member for Wollondilly and the member for Wyong. People in the gallery have heard people speak passionately against this mine; yet, it continues. Why does it continue? It is because we have a paper-thin façade of the planning process known as the Planning Assessment Commission [PAC]. We know that because results from the Planning Assessment Commission are clear. Almost 95 per cent of applications that are submitted to the PAC are approved. We know that the planning assessment system is essentially a rubber stamp. As the evidence shows, we also know that that process will lead only to approval of a mine. It may not be quite as big or as bad as others, but it will have significant impacts.

When it comes to the Planning Assessment Commission the deck is stacked against the community, let alone the Land and Environment Court and the Joint Regional Planning Panels. The State needs an overhaul of the way in which our planning system works. For that to happen, we need every single member of this Parliament—Labor and the Coalition, not just the members who represent affected communities—to hear firsthand that our water catchments and food bowl areas must be protected. That is why The Greens support a 100 per cent moratorium on any new mining of fossil fuels in the State. The Greens believe that that is the solution. We can talk about individual campaigns, and next month we will have individual members of Parliament talking about their electorates and mining proposals, but we need the Government to act.

We cannot be too critical of the current Government because, as we know, the Labor Government issued mining licences like confetti. The Government has taken some steps, but clearly the action it has taken is inadequate. Clearly we need a paradigm shift away from fossil fuels in this age of climate change, we need committed investment in renewable energy, and we need to protect our water resources and food bowl areas from exploitation. It is absolutely critical that we not only say these words but also ensure that action is taken by the Government. We know about the power of the coalmining industry and the fossil fuel industry. I give credit to members from the Coalition, Labor and The Greens who are doing the right thing and are fighting for a halt to mining, but we need the Government to change its point of view.

That is why The Greens believe there should be an immediate moratorium and a ban. Without the Government giving a commitment to that, the people of the Southern Highlands will be betrayed by the Planning Assessment Commission. I am sure of that because of the Planning Assessment Commission's record of almost 95 per cent of mining and fossil fuel applications being approved. We cannot have confidence in that commission. But of course, I hope there is a miracle. There is always the possibility of a miracle. The Greens always hope that the glass is half full. The only way to protect against exploration and extraction activities is to draw a line in the sand and say, "No more!" to fossil fuel exploration. Let us defend our water catchments and let us also make sure that our food bowl areas are protected—not just for us, but also for our children's children.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans):** I thank the people from Protect Berrima and Southern Highlands of New South Wales for coming in and for behaving themselves.

*Private Members' Statements***POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES PERSONNEL AWARDS**

**Ms LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie—Minister for Early Childhood Education, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Assistant Minister for Education) (16:54):** This evening I pay tribute to three outstanding police and emergency service officers from the Port Macquarie electorate. These three men from differing backgrounds share similar attributes—they protect people in our community during times of need, often putting their own lives at risk. For Superintendent Paul Fehon the NSW Police Force has been his lifelong passion. During his career spanning 36 years Paul Fehon has held many senior positions within the NSW Police Force—from criminal investigation, internal affairs and working with the National Crime Authority to leading forward command operations in the hunt for Australia's then most wanted man—Malcolm Naden—in 2012.

Having been a local area commander for more than 10 years, Paul is currently the local area commander for the Mid North Coast. He has had a long and distinguished career, which culminated in his recently being awarded an Australian Police Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours list. This well-deserved accolade is for his dedication and service to the NSW Police Force and I am sure he will be thrilled to receive his award on 8 September at Government House. Recently announcing his retirement after almost 32 years with Fire and Rescue NSW is Superintendent Dave Gray. Dave Gray has been with the Mid North Coast Command since 2003 after spending much of his career at Castle Hill in Sydney. Dave has been a popular member of his command and a mentor to many younger officers. Dave says he has loved his time in the fire brigade and has found it rewarding. He, too, was recently honoured by Port Macquarie and Mid North Coast Emergency Service personnel at a special farewell morning tea. I say: Well done, Dave.

Someone who has spent more than 33 years volunteering for his community is Ken Fletcher. Ken is a much-loved and well-respected member of Port Macquarie Marine Rescue and was recently recognised with a commemorative plaque as one of four Marine Rescue NSW finalists at the Rotary NSW Emergency Services Community Gala Awards ceremony in front of 350 people in Sydney. Seventy-two year old Ken shows no sign of slowing down and is currently the operations officer with Marine Rescue. He is a past president and deputy unit commander of the service. Ken says the camaraderie of Marine Rescue and having to rely on others on a boat during sea rescues builds strong bonds with his team members.

Our community should be extremely proud of the commitment of Paul Fehon, Dave Gray and Ken Fletcher in their respective roles serving us, whether through paid employment or as a volunteer. These three outstanding men have played a vital part in the deployment of emergency services to protect their communities and others for more than 100 years collectively. As a community we express our appreciation to them for that and wish them all the very best for the future.

**INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (16:57):** As members know, 15 August is Indian Independence Day and I note that many members spoke today on a motion about Indian Independence Day in which I was unable to participate. I had the privilege of speaking to the Indian community of St George at St George Girls High School on 14 August to celebrate this important day in the history of India. I was joined at the event by former Premier Morris Iemma, now a commissioner for the southern district on the Greater Sydney Commission appointed by the Minister for Planning.

The Minister for Planning has made a fine appointment in appointing a former Labor Premier to this distinguished position. I was joined by Morris Iemma, who took the opportunity to thank the subcontinent community and the Indian community in particular for their contributions over many years of public life to the St George community, to Sydney, to New South Wales and to Australia. He said their commitment to their families and to education, and their ingenuity, entrepreneurship and integrity had brought distinction to the subcontinent community and had made a valuable contribution to our multicultural society. The event included dancing and singing—fortunately I was able to avoid both—and some of the songs were in the 22 official languages of India.

**Mr David Elliott:** Name them.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** I cannot name any of them—I can name Hindi, so one of 22 and I would guess that would be the same for other members of this Parliament. Indian National Day is important in world history because the characteristics that gave rise to Indian independence were non-violent resistance and civil disobedience, inspired by the great Mahatma Gandhi. Those characteristics in the face of oppression became models for resistance movements around the world such as the campaign in the southern United States of America led by Dr Martin Luther King and the Southern Baptist Alliance. Dr King travelled to India after the death of Gandhi and met with Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, and leaders of the Indian National

Congress to develop an insight into how a great movement advocating non-violent resistance and civil disobedience can dislodge an oppressive regime. I stand by my description of British rule of India as an "oppressive regime", but believe the Minister, in the school of Churchill, would have a different perspective.

Non-violent resistance and civil disobedience are important in the face of oppression because one can damage a movement using bullets, tanks and guns but one cannot kill an idea. Ultimately, in the history of human endeavour, an idea is stronger than a bullet, a tank or a gun. That is why the characteristics of the Indian independence movement are of such importance to us in the world today. Those characteristics spawned many other movements for independence and human rights around the world. Martin Luther King said that when he went to other countries he entered as a tourist, but when he went to India he entered as a pilgrim. He believed the Indian independence movement had a great influence on the civil rights movement in the United States and other such movements in the world. [*Time expired.*]

## INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

### GUIDE DOGS

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Corrections, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Veterans Affairs) (17:02):** The member for Kogarah ran out of time or he may have mentioned in his contribution that the great Indian nation, particularly the Sikhs of the Punjab, have a proud tradition in military service. Indeed, in the First World War we lost more Sikhs on the Western Front than Australians. That fact is worth acknowledging. There is no doubt that dogs provide man with a special sort of companionship. The American poet Douglas Malloch once said, "Thorns may hurt you, men desert you, sunlight turns to fog; but you are never friendless ever, if you have a dog." I pay tribute to my dog, Winston. We are all familiar with the vital work carried out by Guide Dogs NSW/ACT. Today I wish to highlight the contribution of members of the Hills shire to this worthy cause. In a lengthy and expensive process, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT takes puppies from birth and trains them to become highly specialised dogs assisting those with blindness or impaired vision. However, it takes a community to raise a guide dog.

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT asks for "puppy-raisers"; that is, people who will care for the puppy from eight weeks to 14 months of age, before the puppy begins its intensive guide dog training. Beginning in 2012, the *Hills Shire Times* has published a weekly column following the progress of puppy-raising, until the puppy is ready for guide dog training. The first puppy to be featured was a black labrador called Wyman, adopted by *Hills Shire Times* reporter Bev Jordan. In the column "Words with Wyman" readers followed his progress until he was ready for guide dog training. He visited my electorate office and was a good boy. Although Wyman was unable to become a guide dog, he was put into the Pets as Therapy program. He is now the much-loved companion of the Webb family. Mrs Webb says that the bond Wyman has with her young son, Angus, is helping him develop his speech. Both Angus and his brother, Thomas, have autism, intellectual delay and an unidentified genetic condition.

"Words with Wyman" has been succeeded by several more columns. There has been "The Full Monty", following the progress of Marilyn Tobin and her puppy, Monty. Marilyn's son is well known to members. Next was the column "Viking's Ventures". Viking has now graduated as a guide dog. After reading "Viking's Ventures", Liz and Terry Tolhurst started puppy-raising Richie, which was followed in the column "Richie's Rambles". Last month, a fifth guide dog column was begun, starring a black labrador, Bentley. This week in "Bentley's Blog", we learned of Bentley's love of shoes and the havoc he creates by tearing down the hallway with a shoe in his mouth, much to the bemusement of puppy-raiser and shoe owner Stephanie O'Hara.

A special shout out should go to reporter and puppy-raiser Bev Jordan, who has run these columns and generated much interest in these puppies by asking readers to vote on the name of the puppies and their columns. *Hills Shire Times* also does follow-up stories on the eventual home of the puppy. As Bev Jordan said when she and Marilyn Tobin returned Monty to Guide Dogs NSW, "It's a great feeling to think your puppy will be making a difference." These generous volunteers are making an outstanding contribution to the lives of guide dogs and in doing so, are greatly helping their fellow citizens. After all, as Winston said, one is never friendless if one has a dog.

### PALLIATIVE CARE

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (17:05):** Recently I had the pleasure to meet with two palliative care advocates. Dr Yvonne McMaster, a Senior Australian of the Year finalist and inspiring visionary, spent 20 or more years assisting those facing the final stages of their life to live more comfortably and maintain a quality of life. The other was Mr David Wilkinson, who is the Cancer Council's Blue Mountains member of Parliament liaison volunteer and president of the Nepean Blue Mountains Prostate Cancer Support Group. Both stressed the importance of holistic palliative care to provide the best quality of life possible, up to the point of death. Both

were concerned about the inadequacy of existing palliative care services across the State, but in particular, in outer urban and regional areas.

Palliative care aims to provide relief from pain and suffering, and provide care and support to the affected person to enable him or her to live as actively as possible. At the heart of palliative care is a person-centred approach. Best practice involves multidisciplinary engagement where the team members work with affected persons, their families and carers to achieve a result based on each person's wishes. Many Australian surveys demonstrate that the majority of people wish to die at home in the presence of their loved ones. Unfortunately, far too many people are denied this opportunity with less than 15 per cent of people in New South Wales able to access the support and care needed to die at home. Recently I received a letter from Margaret following the death of her husband. She said:

My dear husband Rudolf...passed away whilst in the care of Nepean Hospital in the early hours of 2 June 2016. This was following a short period in hospital as a result of significant respiratory issues that were being treated.

Rudi's death was traumatic, painful and very unpleasant. Not at all like it was described to me earlier that day when it was explained as a decision that would give Rudi (and me) a calm, peaceful death without unnecessary pain or discomfort. My final life memories of Rudi are now of the tortured way he passed from this world, and I deeply regret that his end of life transition was not managed more peacefully, sensitively or respectfully.

His life was not an easy one and he suffered greatly through WWII in concentration camps and later, because of the occupation by the Soviet Union, he spent time as a political prisoner. He was a brave and courageous man who put his own young life on the line for others.

Since news of his death has passed around the world I have received an email box full of tributes to him and a phone full of text messages. His passing would have been easier if his end-stage management had allowed him some dignity in his exit from this life. Margaret told me, in detail, of the trauma of those final days of hospitalisation. How could Rudi and his family be assisted to endure his final days with dignity and respect? The answer lies, partly, in access to adequate and well-funded palliative care. Far too often we are told that there are no resources to provide the level of care that is required by our ageing population. Yet NSW Health in its report, "Fact of death analysis", shows that on average in the last year of life someone will spend 40 days in hospital at a cost of \$1 billion. Dr McMaster has been working with her colleague, palliative physician and data analyst, Dr Anthony Ireland, to show how an investment in community-based palliative care would provide net savings for the State and at the same time offer dying people the end-of-life care they are calling for.

New South Wales currently spends 70 per cent of what Victoria does, yet New South Wales is more than three times the geographical size of Victoria. Based on Dr Ireland's calculations, it is estimated that an additional investment of \$27 million per annum is required to meet the current gaps in funding and address the issues of access to services when they are needed. This would net a saving of \$140 million in New South Wales. At Nepean and Blue Mountains hospitals we have some wonderfully skilled and caring staff in palliative care. Within our community we have incredible volunteers in our Blue Mountains Palliative Support Service. I acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of all these incredible people as they perform such difficult work with the utmost care, compassion and skill. I have spoken to many families in my community who have required assistance from these services, and they speak very highly of these staff and volunteers.

But no amount of care and compassion can fix a system which is overstretched and overburdened. In New South Wales we require an additional 21 palliative positions and four additional trainees. We need an additional 10 specialist palliative care nurses and three more allied health staff per local health district. People like the late Mr Rudi Weiner and his family deserved better in the final stages of his life. We need to equip our health system with the necessary staff and resources to ensure people maintain a good quality of life for as long as possible and, when the time comes, facilitate a peaceful and dignified death. I thank Dr McMaster for her warmth and intelligence. Her advocacy is passionate, informed, comprehensive and sensible. I pay my respects to Mrs Margaret Reid-Werner and her family, and I thank her for sharing this most intimate and difficult story with me.

#### HUSKISSON WHARF

**Ms SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (17:11:2):** I inform the House that on Tuesday 16 August 2016 I had the pleasure of attending the official opening of the redeveloped Huskisson Wharf. The wharf sits at the junction between Currumbene Creek estuary and Jervis Bay, providing spectacular views of the coastline that are characteristic of the South Coast electorate. Early records show that the wharf was first proclaimed as a legal public wharf in the *Government Gazette* of February 1900. The wharf received more than 100 years of vessel use as the busiest public wharf facility in the Shoalhaven local government area.

The wharf is used by both recreational and commercial vessels. Lovingly termed "Husky Wharf" by the locals, the wharf serves as the boarding and disembarkation point of the Huskisson Ferry, which connects Rockwall in Myola to the bustling resort centre of Huskisson. The wharf is also the departure point for many of the tours that attract visitors to the area who hope to experience the unique beauty of one of only six marine parks in New South Wales. The tours include dolphin and whale-watching cruises, fishing charters, scuba diving charters, boat hire services, stand-up paddle boarding, kayaking and eco tours.

The wharf facilities were first identified as needing an upgrade by the Shoalhaven City Council and the local boating community in 2005. Key reasons for the upgrade were the projected increase in boating use, recent growth in non-powered watercraft use and a limited supply of public waterfront land, causing increased competition for use. Currumbene Creek also serves as the only public sheltered area in Jervis Bay that provides refuge for vessels in severe weather conditions. Another noted concern was that Jervis Bay was the only major waterway in the Shoalhaven that did not provide disabled access for the community. Prior to its redevelopment the original facility was composed of two separate wharves. By August 2015 work had begun to join the previously separate Huskisson Wharf to the adjacent Rotary Wharf. The refurbished wharf now features an extended 19-metre-long pontoon, disability access ramps, better lighting and better boarding amenities.

I was joined at the opening by the Federal member for Gilmore, Ann Sudmalis, MP; the Hon. Rick Colless, MLC; Shoalhaven City Council mayor, Joanna Gash; Huskisson Woollamia Community Voice chair, Garry Kelson; Shoalhaven City Council Director Assets and Works, Ben Stewart; NSW Maritime Principal Manager South for Boating Operations, Mike Hammond; members of the Huskisson Wharf Management Committee; and many members of the local community. I was given the great honour of cutting the ribbon on this wonderful project. The upgrade would not have been possible without the Baird-Grant Government's NSW Boating Now program. The redevelopment of the wharf totalled \$1.6 million, with an incredible \$1.2 million provided by the Government's NSW Boating Now program.

The remaining \$400,000 was provided by Shoalhaven City Council. The upgrade of Huskisson wharf is the largest to be carried out, receiving more funds than any other NSW Boating Now project. To date, the Baird-Grant Government has provided \$37.5 million as part of the NSW Boating Now program to support the delivery of similar projects across the State. The aim of the program is to improve boating experiences by developing the capacity and the amenity of boating infrastructure on New South Wales waterways. I thank the Baird-Grant Government and, in particular, the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, the Hon. Duncan Gay, MLC, for recognising the importance of our local wharf and for his continual commitment to developing the infrastructure of the South Coast's waterways.

The redevelopment of the wharf offers opportunities to expand the local tourist industry and will allow large cruise ships to unload passengers at Huskisson. Cruise ships have not been able to visit the bay for many years due to inappropriate facilities. The new wharf means that their return is now an option that can be considered. Tourism continues to be a growth industry in the Shoalhaven and the South Coast, stimulating the local economy and creating jobs. The upgrades will bring greater access, meaning that more people will be able to safely experience the beauty of the Jervis Bay area from the water.

I thank the Shoalhaven City Council—in particular, the mayor, who has worked very closely with me on this project. I thank the Huskisson Wharf Management Committee and the Huskisson Woollamia Community Voice—in particular, Garry Kelson for his passionate advocacy for this and many other projects. Their constructive feedback and research contributed to the quality of the funding submission and the final design. I again thank the Baird-Grant Government for acknowledging the vital role that the wharf plays in our local community and the South Coast tourism sector. The Husky wharf makeover will generate untold opportunities for the South Coast.

### **ST MARTHA'S CHURCH, STRATHFIELD**

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (17:15):** On Sunday 14 August 2016 I had the great pleasure of joining parishioners past and present in celebrating the centenary mass for St Martha's Parish at Strathfield. St Martha's is a vibrant and, in many ways, unique parish, not only in my electorate but also in the nation. This Catholic parish is the only one in Australia named after St Martha, and one of a few across the globe. Martha, the sister of Mary and Lazarus, was a model of hospitality in her dealings with Christ, as recorded in the book of John.

St Martha's was established in 1916, which was an interesting year in the history of the Catholic Church, as well as in the history of the Labor Party. Its establishment coincided with the fierce community debate over conscription. As the more historically minded members would know, including the Temporary Speaker, Mr Lee Evans, that led to the first split of the Australian Labor Party. The Catholic section of the party that remained was fiercely opposed to conscription. During that time there was also a rise in sectarianism between the then dominant faiths, the Catholics and Protestants. In Strathfield, unlike in other inner city suburbs, there was not a strong Irish Catholic presence. Some residents even believed that an official Catholic presence in Strathfield would harm residential property values. Amidst that turmoil and debate, St Martha's emerged as an independent parish, thanks in part to the determination and resolve of Monsignor Peter Byrne, who became St Martha's foundation priest.

Much of this history is captured in the book *Faith, Hospitality and Service*, which was released earlier this year. I pay tribute to Dr Damian Gleeson for the insight he shows in his marvellous book on the history and life of the parish. It tells of the emergence of a strong parish within the Strathfield community. It was and is a

unique parish. Not many parishes have had the honour of a Premier of New South Wales and a Prime Minister of Australia as parishioners. James McGirr, Labor Premier from 1947 to 1952, and Frank Forde, caretaker Prime Minister after the death of John Curtin, were parishioners. St Martha's has also had a strong history of producing and supporting priests, brothers and sisters. At least eight priests have Strathfield origins, and many Strathfield women joined orders such as the Dominican, Josephite and Marist religious communities. The role of the Christian Brothers and their ties with the church and the much-respected St Patrick's College is also acknowledged in the book.

The parish in 2016 is very different from that of 1916. The 2011 Census noted the emergence of a non-Anglo, non-Irish congregation. The top five overseas birthplaces for parishioners now are South Korea, Lebanon, Italy, China and India. This was certainly evident during a packed and wonderful centenary mass that I attended. It was presided over by His Grace the Archbishop of Sydney, Anthony Fisher. I note that it was the first parish event over which he has presided since his illness earlier this year. Of course, everyone in this House wishes him well. His Grace was joined by a healthy number of former priests, as well as the current parish priest, the wonderful Father Christopher Slattery. Also known as "Father Chris", Father Slattery is well known and respected in the parish. I acknowledge and thank the pastoral council and the centenary committee members for organising the day. They include Tony Abiassaf, George Ayoub, Liz Doumit, Jane Farhat, Greg Glass, Erica Hassett, Raywathy, Koelmeyer, Yvonne Martins, Conti Rodrigues, and Helen Williamson.

I always have a burst of confidence when I visit St Martha's parish and St Martha's School and see the number of younger parishioners. That is a statement of hope for the future of this parish and the Christian faith in my electorate. With a patron such as St Martha, the role of women has always been a vital part of the parish. Again, it was pleasing to see women take an active part in the service. St Martha is the patron of many people, but most notably and aptly of those who serve. I look forward to working with the parish as it enters its second century and continues its role as a parish that looks outwards and which explores how it can follow in the footsteps of St Martha and serve people and the faith.

#### **MANNING GREAT LAKES LOCAL AREA COMMAND AWARDS**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:20):** I had the honour and privilege of attending the Manning Great Lakes Local Area Command awards ceremony on Monday 4 July. The ceremony was emceed by Chief Inspector George, the blessing was offered by Police Chaplain Chris Thornhill, the welcome address was given by Acting Superintendent Wayne Humphrey, and the closing address was given by Acting Assistant Commissioner Peter Thurtell.

National Police Service Medals were awarded to Chief Inspector Christine George, Chief Inspector Anthony Power, Retired Inspector Paul Scott, Sergeant Anthony Kirk, Sergeant Ken Nicholson, Sergeant Greta Crowe, Sergeant Anthony Atkinson, Retired Sergeant 2nd Class Warwick Pulsford, Leading Senior Constable John Hassett, Leading Senior Constable Michael Reid, Senior Constable Wayne Smoothy, Senior Constable Linda Hedley, Senior Constable Jaimie Reardon, Senior Constable David Arandale, Senior Constable Glen Flynn, Senior Constable Paul Kosseck, Senior Constable Alison Sewell, Detective Senior Constable Joanne McGinn, Senior Constable David Russell, Senior Constable Rachael Lisle and Retired Senior Constable Peter McTiernan.

National Medals were awarded to Leading Senior Constable John Hassett, Detective Senior Constable Joanne McGinn and Senior Constable David Russell. The National Medal—First Clasp, for 25 years of service, was awarded to Sergeant John Broadley. New South Wales Police Diligent and Ethical Service Medals were awarded to Sergeant Matthew Hinton, Leading Senior Constable Timothy Cusack, Leading Senior Constable Roy Grimmett, Senior Constable Lee Caller, Senior Constable Michael Cartwright, Senior Constable Cristopher Harland, Detective Senior Constable Tony Crameri, Detective Senior Constable Paul Kelly and Detective Senior Constable Josh Tynan. New South Wales Police Diligent and Ethical Service Medals—First Clasp, for 15 years of service, were awarded to Sergeant John Broadley, Leading Senior Constable John Hassett, Senior Constable Jaimie Reardon, Detective Senior Constable Joanne McGinn and Senior Constable David Russell.

New South Wales Police Diligent and Ethical Service Medallions—First Roundel were awarded to Mr William Paulson, Ms Alexandra Reid and Ms Vicki Smith. The Commissioner's Commendation for Courage was awarded to Constable Stephen Lyons. A Warrant of Appointment was awarded to Sergeant Troy Martin. Northern Region Commendations were awarded to Senior Constable Iain Bonner and Detective Senior Constable Tony Crameri. Northern Region certificates of merit were awarded to Leading Senior Constable Carl Blick, Senior Constable David Dunkley and Constable Stephen Doust.

Certificate of Service was awarded to the late Senior Constable Joy-Anne Trewick. The Traffic and Highway Patrol Command Award—National Medal—First Clasp, for 25 years of service, was awarded to Senior Constable Geoffrey Rinkin. New South Wales Police Diligent and Ethical Service Medals—First Clasp, for 15 years of service, were awarded to Senior Constable David Arandale and Senior Constable Glenn Flynn. The

New South Wales Police Diligent and Ethical Service Medal—Third Clasp, for 25 years of service, was awarded to Senior Constable Geoffrey Rinkin.

The Manning Great Lakes Local Area Commander's Commendation was awarded to Senior Constable David Russell. Manning Great Lakes Local Area commander's certificates of merit were awarded to Senior Constable Rachael Lisle, Senior Constable Gemma Davy, Senior Constable Hamish Thompson, Senior Constable Martin Hennessy and Constable Paul Burns. The Manning Great Lakes Local Area Commander's Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to Mr Pierce Jackson and to Mr Mark Tory. A presentation was also made by Mr Morgan Stewart, the chief executive officer of Club Taree to Police Legacy. It was a fantastic event and it was inspiring to hear about what these police officers have done over the past 12 months. A young man from Blackhead Surf Life Saving Club, who was accompanied by a large contingent of fellow club members, was awarded for trying to save and to resuscitate a swimmer.

Also there were police officers who have been diligently serving our community for many years. Our community owes them a great debt of gratitude for their service. Often police officers start the day not knowing what they will face during that day, and often they have to put themselves in harm's way in order to protect the community. I also put on record my appreciation of the work the command does in our community and of the cooperation officers have given me on the few occasions I have had to contact them. They are always ready to assist where they can. As a local member, I truly appreciate that. I congratulate all those who received medals, commendations or the like on the day. I know they do not do this work in order to get that type of recognition, but it is absolutely fantastic that the police service and the community recognise them. On behalf of the House, I congratulate all of them.

### JUNIOR SOCCER

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (17:25):** Recently I was visited at my mobile office by a six-year-old boy, along with his twin sister and his mother, who told me that he had played soccer that morning and that his team had won every game so far this year. He was very proud of himself. He was dressed in his soccer gear, a Heffron Hawks strip—the Hawks play in the Eastern Suburbs Football Association competitions. His mother proudly told me that he had wonderful Brazilian coaches who had told her that her son was a very talented soccer player and that he could even get extra coaching. I asked the boy's mother how much she had to pay for this Brazilian coaching for her six-year-old son. She replied that it was \$1,100 and that the extra coaching was an optional extra. I was astounded.

I had already been aware that children—12 and 13 years of age—were being charged \$2,000 or \$3,000 a season to play representative football, but I was quite outraged about local six-year-old children paying \$1,100 to participate in what should be a community-based sport. So I made some inquiries and have ascertained that in the Eastern Suburbs Football Association a number of community-based clubs have outsourced effective control of their organisations to profit-making bodies that charge children as young as five and six huge amounts of money to play what is commonly described as "the beautiful game". Redfern Raiders United, which is thought of as a community-based club, charges children as young as 12 \$850 to play soccer; Queens Park Soccer Club charges \$700; and Easts Soccer Club charges five- and six-year-olds \$650.

Private football academies have infiltrated community-based clubs and are earning profits for themselves at the expense of local children and families. Councils across this State, as well as, for example, the Centennial Parklands, are allocating public grounds—thinking they are being utilised by community-based clubs run by volunteers, as are most other junior clubs—to private soccer academies that generate huge profits for private individuals. The Eastern Suburbs Football Association has even outsourced its regional league to Football Flair Academy, to which children have to pay large sums of money to play at representative level.

On 17 February 2016, during debate on the Associations Incorporation Amendment (Review) Bill, I made some observations about the Eastern Suburbs Football Association and the way it conducts its affairs. The opinion of the association I expressed back in February, that it was acting with belligerence and stupidity, and the description I gave of its general manager, that he was belligerent and incompetent, I maintain today. This is an association that, as well as lacking in competence, has been motivated by malice. But the fact that it is now also turning a blind eye to parents having huge sums of money extorted from them is an outrage. Responding that parents do not have to pay this amount of money to participate ignores the fact that these profit-making soccer academies have infiltrated community-based clubs and are preying upon parents—exploiting their belief that their six-year-old will one day play for Manchester United.

I know of housing commission tenants who are taking food off their children's table in the hope that one day their child could live this dream. I am sure councils in my electorate and the Centennial Parklands would like to know that they are subsidising the ground fees of private sector soccer academies who charge thousands of dollars for young children as young as five or six years old to participate in soccer, which in my view is quite

scandalous. Football NSW is the peak body in the State responsible for the regulation of football associations. However, Football NSW is merely a representative body.

Associations vote in their annual general meeting and are not likely to rock the boat. As such, it cannot be left to Football NSW to investigate and report on this scandalous exploitation of the dreams of many young, aspiring Socceroos and their parents who only want the best for their children. I conducted an inquiry into Football NSW, from which I recommended the removal of the president and their directors, and I have some knowledge of that sport. In my view, the Legislative Assembly needs to be involved because it concerns a number of electorates. Therefore, I call on the Government to set up a joint select committee of the Parliament to investigate children's soccer in New South Wales.

#### **AUSTRALIAN MITOCHONDRIAL DISEASE FOUNDATION**

**Mr DARYL MAGUIRE (Wagga Wagga) (17:30):** Tonight I would like to talk about a little known disease called mitochondrial disease. I have spoken about it before in this place but I want to update the House on some events that are going to occur. This disease affects my electorate as it affects all 93 electorates in the State of New South Wales. Mitochondria are the energy source in almost every body cell. They are often called the cells' powerhouses or generators. Mitochondria transform food to produce 90 per cent of the energy needed by the human body to function, sustain life and support growth. Mitochondria are most plentiful in tissues that require a lot of energy to function and therefore damage is most common to the brain, heart, muscles, liver, inner ear and eyes.

Mitochondrial disease is a genetic disorder that robs the body's cells of energy. Over time this can cause multiple organ dysfunction and potentially death. Both children and adults can be affected by this disease. Due to its genetic basis, the disease often affects multiple family members. It can present itself at any stage of life. Adult-onset mitochondrial disease is becoming more commonly recognised. It often masquerades as other diseases. It is for this reason it can take a long time for patients to be correctly diagnosed. Depending on which parts of the body are affected and to what degree, people with mitochondrial disease can lose their sight or hearing; suffer muscle weakness and pain; become unable to walk, eat, swallow or talk normally; have strokes or seizures; develop liver disease or diabetes; suffer heart, respiratory or digestive problems; experience developmental delays or intellectual disability; and suffer from infertility.

Until the 1990s mitochondrial disease was thought to be rare—one in 20,000 people—but it is now recognised as the most common sub-group of inherited metabolic disorders. Research shows one in 200 people may carry the genetic disorders that put them at risk of developing the disease. In fact, if we compare other types of illness to mitochondrial disease, one in 3,500 births will develop cystic fibrosis, one in 8,000 births will develop haemophilia and one in 15,000 births will develop motor neurone disease while one in 5,000 births will develop a life-threatening form of mitochondrial disease.

The Australian Mitochondrial Disease Foundation was formed in 2009 as a charitable foundation. On previous occasions the former member for Mount Druitt, the Hon. Richard Amery, and I have hosted functions in this place to inform members about it. I have good news. There will be a function in this Parliament which I encourage all members and staff to attend. The event is called the Role of Mitochondria in Major Diseases and will take place from 3.00 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. on 22 September 2016. I will proudly sponsor the event in the Parliament House Theatre. I encourage all members to attend and learn about the cost of expanding research into how such a small component of ourselves can make such a major difference to our lives.

Diseases such as Parkinson's, autism, cancer, chronic fatigue, Alzheimer's, Huntington's, muscular dystrophy and diabetes can be linked to mitochondrial disease. Significant speakers will include: Professor Carolyn Sue from the Kolling Institute, Sydney; Professor David Thorburn, from the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Melbourne; and Dr Grant Dewson from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, Melbourne. This is another step in combating mitochondria disease. The new fundraising initiative for combating this disease is called A Bloody Long Walk, and it will be promoted in other major capital cities too. I encourage all rural centres, such as Wagga Wagga, Tamworth, Dubbo and Albury to help raise funds for this organisation. I encourage all members to participate in the walk and spread this message as wide as they can to help to raise funds for the Australian Mitochondrial Disease Foundation.

#### **COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRY ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM**

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (17:35):** Yesterday I welcomed to Parliament House many of my local commercial fishers and their families, people for whom I have enormous respect and regard. They had converged onto Parliament House with their fellow fishers from up and down the coast of New South Wales because they are livid. They are livid because this Government is destroying their livelihoods. Is that not sounding a little bit all too familiar in this place? I thank my colleagues the member for The Entrance and the

shadow Minister for Primary Industries, the Hon. Mick Veitch, for organising yesterday's meeting and for doing all that they can to support the fishers.

All members of Parliament of all political persuasions were invited to yesterday's meeting to listen to the stories of the commercial fishers. I thank the many Labor members of Parliament who attended, together with representatives from the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party, the Christian Democratic Party and The Greens. But here is the thing: not one Nationals or Liberal Party member of Parliament bothered to attend, not even to listen to one story. And yet it is this Government's business adjustment program that is causing so much heartbreak. For the benefit of those members of Parliament who did not attend, I will share the words of young Maddison Blanch, who had the courage to speak to a packed room in Parliament House yesterday. She said:

Hi, my name is Maddison Blanch. I'm 13 years old. My father is a 3rd generation fisher. He has been affected by reform. My father (Phillip Blanch), like the majority of fishers in NSW, goes to work rain, hail or shine.

My dad goes to work and provides Australia with fresh aussie seafood and brings an income home for his family just like every other aussie dad. I was brought up with fresh Australian seafood. And I refuse to eat frozen seafood.

My dad loves what he does but, because of reforms, my dad needs to buy more shares to continue to work as he does now, for 2017. So basically he needs to buy back his job, like most fishers.

How are they meant to buy shares when:

- A) no one is selling them
- B) the fishers shouldn't have to take out a loan to afford to buy more shares to continue to own their jobs (u don't have to be smart to work that out )
- C) Why do they want to spend more money on something that can't be guaranteed with the Williamtown R.A.A.F base PFOS and PFOA contamination spill

Put yourself in the region 4 fishers shoes, not being able to work, through no fault of your own. Watching your family job, passion go down the drain. Not being able to help everything and everyone that meant something to you slowly slipping away. Unable to support your family. Be honest, you know you can't because it's not happening to you and your loved ones. Like I said before, I'm 13. I have watched my dad go through all this and slowly I can see him giving up. It hurts me because I can't do anything about it. This is not just about my dad, this is about every fisher across New South Wales. I love my dad's job and I would like to help my dad do it and learn about it but I may never have the chance. What if all the fishers were gone, in other words region 4 fishers will be extinct because of what the government is doing. The government doesn't know what it's like to be a fisher so they can't judge or put an opinion in.

Last year I drew a picture. It's a small picture but to me, my family fishers and other fishers, it shows passion, pain and heartbreak. The fishermen's lives have been stripped to nothing and they're expected to start again. Their future is looking cloudy. The picture brings me to tears because it means so much.

Maddison ends with:

Everything that's happening to the fishers is unfair and they don't deserve this. They've done nothing wrong.

This is not just an issue that affects commercial fishers and their families; this affects us all. Already 85 per cent of the seafood we eat in Australia is imported. As a result of the Government's reform, we will see less local seafood and small players will be forced out of the industry to the benefit of big business. We will see fewer sustainable fishing practices foisted on an industry that has prided itself on its sustainable seasonal practices. One of the difficulties faced by commercial fishers in their fight against these reforms is the lack of public support or understanding of their plight. In Australia, we seem to hold farmers in our hearts but see commercial fishers as the plunderers of the sea. Nothing could be further from the truth. We are talking about small family-run operations, which, over generations, have managed resources sustainably. It is in their own interests to ensure that the area they fish is healthy.

Yesterday we heard from fourth and fifth generation fishers who know no other future. They cannot afford to get out or stay in. It will cost \$200,000 to \$450,000 for some fishers to do the work they are currently doing. I urge Minister Blair and his Government to do the decent thing by hardworking fishers and press the pause button. But not one Government member had the decency to turn up to hear the stories of those fishers, and I fear for the future of fishing families. I implore the people of New South Wales to support their local commercial fishers so they can keep doing what they love to do and so we can keep loving local seafood.

### CHARMHAVEN ROAD SAFETY

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (17:40):** I bring to the attention of the House a significant road safety issue in my electorate of Wyong. Residents of Charmhaven in the north-east of the Wyong electorate face a road gauntlet every time they leave their houses. They contend with blind corners, speeding cars and a network of roads that were not built for the capacity they now carry. The 1.9-kilometre stretch of the Pacific Highway between the Lake Haven roundabout and Lowana Avenue has been the site of more than 13 accidents in the past 12 months. Jetty Avenue, in particular, is causing great concern, but other streets causing concern include Una Avenue, Wyreema Avenue, Awaba Avenue, Norah Avenue and Munmorah Avenue. Most of the accidents involve local

residents as they face the menacing task of getting in and out of their streets that intersect with the 70-kilometre-per-hour stretch of the Pacific Highway. They also have trouble trying to turn into their own driveways, and the 70-kilometre-an-hour speed limit results in vehicles being rear-ended as they do so.

A couple of head-on accidents have occurred on one stretch of road, but luckily there have been no fatalities. The people of Charmhaven have not sat still and let the issue go. They know as well as many others who drive through the area daily that it will not be long before a fatality. They know that a close call one day can be a death the next. They have decided not to let this become an eventuality and have been lobbying the Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] to take action. Last week I met with more than 20 residents at the site of one of the worst intersections in my electorate. Sadly, many of the other intersections were within sight. Residents spoke as loudly and clearly as they did when they first raised the issue with me during the 2015 election campaign. When I doorknocked every house in that suburb, the number one issue was safety, especially when making a right-hand turn onto the Pacific Highway.

The residents are not asking for immediate large infrastructure investments, although they are much needed. They simply want a safer and clearer way to turn in to and out of their suburb. Their action and engagement in the process has meant that the RMS will now conduct a safety audit into the road. When I was re-elected as the member for Wyong I raised this issue in my first meeting with RMS, which is now engaging consultants to conduct the safety audit. On behalf of the residents, I welcome that decision. I may have taken on this issue on behalf of the residents but they are the ones fighting it, which has included petitioning local council and writing a number of letters. The residents are a testament to what can be achieved when a community comes together and engages in the process.

As local members we often champion issues of importance to our community, but it is more rewarding when people in the community step up to take on the day-to-day issues that matter to them. In an age of political apathy and ambivalence I am inspired that people in my electorate are so willing to engage in the political process to help achieve outcomes. I commend the community of Charmhaven for its willingness to step up and for its advocacy for the issues that matter to them. I look forward to working with the Roads and Maritime Services and the Charmhaven community, and seeing results in the short and long term that will make their community safer. I acknowledge in particular Charn Cook and Chris Bourke for their advocacy. They have been in constant contact with me through Facebook. I also acknowledge Dean Troutman who also collects data on Facebook. In fact, he was the first person to draw my attention to how many accidents have occurred recently.

Sometimes these battles seem daunting and the community often gets despondent. Yesterday I was reading through the business paper of the new Central Coast Council and I was pleased to see that money has been allocated to fix some of the issues afflicting the residents of Murrawal Road and Kilpa Avenue. I also advocated for that community group during the election campaign. It was worried because cars were crashing through residents' fences as they raced along that section of road. It is a bit of a rat run and lots of people speed through what should be a 50-kilometre-an-hour area. It is great news for the community that this work has gone out for tender. I congratulate the Central Coast Council on doing what should have been done quite a while ago.

#### **TURRAMURRA LOOKOUT COMMUNITY GARDEN**

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai) (17:46):** In an age of constantly changing technology, where new things are frequently thrust upon us, often the simple hidden things are the best. An example of what I am speaking about is a sloping plot of tranquillity beside the throbbing Pacific Highway at Turramurra in the electorate of Ku-ring-gai. Blink while you drive by and you may miss it. But if you take the time to stop and wander past the scarecrows into the Turramurra Lookout Community Garden you will immediately see why so many locals love it. These days not everyone has the luxury of space for their own garden. Many of our community members live in retirement homes. Even the traditionally leafy Ku-ring-gai is shouldering its share of housing density for Sydney, which means many of my constituents do not have room for a garden of their own. Others have the space in their homes, but they do not have the constant companionship that a communal garden like the one at Turramurra offers.

The Turramurra Lookout Community Garden is an oasis of flowers, herbs and edible vegetables but, unfortunately, the local fauna, including rodents, also think so. Indeed, the volunteers at the community garden have their hands full all year round keeping these intruders from eating whatever they feel like and damaging the garden. The idea for a community garden arose in 2009 and construction began in 2010 after the selection of a suitable site. Today the garden is a mixture of 24 individual plots, which members of the community can purchase at \$50 a year and call their own. Members of the group range in age from young families to green thumb octogenarians. Led by John Dailey, the garden is frequently busy. Activity is at its highest on Saturday mornings when many of the volunteers rub shoulders in one of the garden's working bees. They also swap stories over tea and biscuits during the breaks. In fact, the garden has more than 50 members—half of them have an individual plot and the rest are engaged in communal gardening.

I had the privilege of being present during one of these working bees and was impressed by what I saw. There was a great community spirit and I observed firsthand the calming effect of the garden. I have also seen firsthand the worth that garden has added to the life of a particular young man who has acute learning difficulties and autism. The pride that young man takes in helping to establish the garden and his own plot is heartwarming. His industriousness is a credit to him. I was more than happy to approach the New South Wales Government on behalf of the organisation when it asked for help in developing the garden further. Through the assistance of my parliamentary colleague the Hon. John Ajaka, Minister for Ageing and Disability Services, an \$8,000 grant was made recently to the Turrumurra Lookout Community Garden to further assist its work. Even people without a great knowledge of gardening know that composting and fertilising are key features of any thriving garden. John Dailey suggested to me that the area housing the compost bays, worm farms and various nutrient areas was not only awkward to access but actually unsafe. That was a trigger for my approach to the Minister and his generous offer of support.

In these days of big-ticket infrastructure projects like the NorthConnex tunnel in Ku-ring-gai and other projects all over the State, it is great to see that the less valuable community projects are not being forgotten by the Government—because, in their own way, they are major projects in people's lives. I commend John Dailey for his vision. I especially congratulate the Baird Government and, in particular, Minister Ajaka for making this contribution possible. Eight thousand dollars can go a long way when it is directed to a group of volunteers such as the Turrumurra garden group, the members of which give of their own time. With the \$8,000 Government grant the garden group has decided to construct a timber deck and surrounding safety railings to frame the composting and nutrient-recycling facilities on a level platform. That will mean that gardeners do not have to risk working on dangerous sloping ground, given that Turrumurra traditionally has the highest—if not near the highest—rainfall in Sydney.

One of the great features of the Turrumurra Lookout Community Garden is its educational benefits for our schoolchildren. Many schools visit the garden and, in turn, many garden members visit our local schools to talk about gardening and ways to help students set up their own vegetable gardens. The garden has been so successful and popular that its president, John Daly, was chosen as Ku-ring-gai Citizen of the Year this year. I had the pleasure of being present at his receiving of the award on Australia Day. The community garden has featured in a number of publications including Indira Naidoo's book, *The Edible City*, in which she selected five community gardens around Australia to write about. I wish all those involved in the Turrumurra Lookout Community Garden many more years of developing their own little piece of paradise—in fact, everyone's own little piece of paradise.

### HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (17:50):** Housing affordability is one of the most critical public policy challenges of our time. It is an economic challenge, but it is a social justice issue too. Housing security should be available to us all, yet I am concerned that in practice that is not the case—particularly if it is a young family trying to purchase a first home, a tenant of social community housing facing an ever-growing maintenance backlog, a lodger in a boarding house, or the hundreds of thousands of renters trying to study, work, raise families and live, when the deck is often stacked against them.

As the dream of home ownership fades for many in Sydney the statistics show that more and more people are renting. The 2006 census showed that one in four people in New South Wales was renting. By 2011 that number had risen to one in three. All the evidence points to the number accelerating. Yet renters are left without the critical protections that they need. Short-term leases and no-fault evictions mean that renters live with the constant threat of eviction. The ability of landlords to turf out renters without cause puts New South Wales out of line with other States. It also fundamentally undermines the other rights afforded to renters and makes their housing precarious and insecure. It is clear that the longer, fixed-term tenancies which are harder to terminate are in the best interests of tenants, and we must look at policy levers that work towards that end.

As a starting point, there is a case for reviewing the use of six-month leases. They contribute to uncertainty and expose tenants to frequent rent increases. We must also act to protect tenants from unjustified rent increases. Renters are being priced out of suburbs and out of neighbourhoods. They are being forced out because of ever-skyrocketing rents, particularly across the inner west. We have this ridiculous situation where tenants have told me that they just "fly under the radar". That means they are afraid to report maintenance issues or to complain to landlords in case their rent is raised or they are forced out just because they are causing too much trouble. There is also a concern that renters are not able to truly make a house a home. More often than not they cannot have pets, they cannot make minor alterations such as hanging things on the wall, and they often have to wait months for basic repairs to be made, leaving them in limbo.

All of this means that those who have few options but are forced to rent are having to accept housing insecurity. It also makes life difficult for those who choose to rent and who just want to be afforded basic rights. Luckily, they have a friend in the Tenants Union of New South Wales [TU]. For 40 years the TU has provided

important advice and has passionately advocated for tenants. It has been in the corner for tenants when very few others were. The TU fought to establish the Rental Bond Board in the 1970s. It fought for tenancy legislation in 1980 to protect renters, and it fought to reform the Tenancies Act in the late 2000s. The Tenants Union continues to fight for fairness in the Act today.

A key victory was establishing tenancy advice and advocacy services across New South Wales, funded through the arrangements for bond payments. These are significant wins that have made a real difference for renters and I warmly congratulate the Tenants Union on its 40 years. As policy-makers our goal should be to strive for balance in tenancy laws and I think the mantra of stability, liveability and affordability should be our guiding principle. We must advance policies that deliver sustainability in what is a volatile housing market and we must do whatever we can to ensure that the private market provides secure tenancy.

We should pay serious attention to rights that improve liveability, including the right to privacy in one's home and protections around the relationship renters have with their landlords. Renters should be allowed to own pets and to make minor changes to make a house a home. Finally, we must work towards affordability. Key to that is the Federal Parliament seriously addressing capital gains tax and negative gearing. Labor federally took a brave policy to the recent election to limit negative gearing. That policy would level the playing field for young families and, in particular, key frontline workers such as nurses, teachers and police. Renters deserve to feel secure in their housing and I believe it is time for us to take a hard look at what we can do in this place to make that a reality.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders at 17:56 until  
Tuesday 13 September 2016 at 12:00.**