



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Council**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Sixth Parliament  
First Session**

**Thursday, 23 June 2016**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



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# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

**Thursday, 23 June 2016**

**The PRESIDENT (The Hon. Donald Thomas Harwin)** took the chair at 10:00.

**The PRESIDENT** read the prayer.

## *Documents*

### **BUDGET FINANCES 2016-17**

#### **Production of Documents: Order**

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (10:02):** I seek leave to amend Private Members' Business item No. 834 outside the Order of Precedence of which I have given notice by omitting paragraph (2).

**Leave granted.**

Accordingly, I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within 21 days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents in the possession, custody or control of the Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Finance, Services and Property, NSW Treasury, the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation, or the Department of Premier and Cabinet, relating to the Government's 2016-2017 budget finances:

- (a) any document detailing recurrent and capital estimates at agency level for the financial years 2015-2016 [revised] to 2016-2017 inclusive, noting that printouts provided from Treasury's Financial Information System should only be the version consistent with the 2016-2017 State budget;
- (b) any document identifying uncommitted, unallocated funds or contingencies within those forward estimates, noting that printouts provided from Treasury's Financial Information System should only be the version consistent with the 2016-2017 State Budget;
- (c) all estimates relating to projects included in the State Infrastructure Strategy, Metropolitan Strategy and the State Plan 2021;
- (d) any document showing economic and other assumptions underpinning the estimates for the financial years 2016-2017 to 2019-2020 inclusive;
- (e) any document identifying or qualifying risks and contingent liabilities that might impact the financial years 2015-2016 [revised] to 2018-2019 inclusive;
- (f) any document that relates to the State's future financial position as revealed in the estimates;
- (g) any documents pertaining to 2015-2016 actual budget performance not requested elsewhere in this order;
- (h) all documents pertaining to revenue estimates 2016-2017 to 2019-2020 inclusive; and
- (i) any legal or other advice regarding the scope or validity of this order of the House created as a result of this order of the House.

**Motion agreed to.**

### **STATE BUDGET 2016-17**

#### **Production of Documents: Order**

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (10:04):** I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within 21 days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents, excluding the Budget Estimates and related papers for the financial year 2016-2017, in the possession, custody or control of the Premier; the Treasurer; the Minister for Finance, Services and Property; NSW Treasury; the Department of Finance, Services and Innovation; or the Department of Premier and Cabinet:

- (a) all advice, correspondence, briefing papers and documents provided by New South Wales government departments, agencies and public trading enterprise sectors to the Treasurer, NSW Treasury or the Department of Premier and Cabinet relating to the 2016-2017 budget, including but not limited to:
  - (i) any documents that assess the impact of any of the measures outlined in the budget; and
  - (ii) any models or documents that estimate the revenues to be raised as a result of the measures outlined in the budget.
- (b) all advice, correspondence, briefing papers and budget kits provided to any members of Parliament relating to the 2016-2017 budget handed down on 21 June 2016;

- (c) any documents, excepting any budget papers tabled in Parliament, provided to individual members of Parliament outlining regional electorate capital works summaries, by electorate, including but not limited to documents described as electorate reports and regional reports in the NSW Treasury Capital On-line Entry System;
- (d) any documents, excepting any budget papers tabled in Parliament, which refer to capital expenses by electorate, by agency, funded by appropriations from Parliament as well as funds from asset sales and other sources, including but not limited to documents described as electorate reports and regional reports in the NSW Treasury Capital On-line Entry System;
- (e) any other documents, excepting any budget papers tabled in Parliament, which refer to capital and recurrent expenses by electorate, including but not limited to documents described as electorate reports and regional reports in the NSW Treasury Capital On-line Entry System; and
- (f) any legal or other advice regarding the scope or validity of this order of the House created as a result of this order of the House.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Committees*

**GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 6**

**Reference**

**The Hon. PAUL GREEN (10:05):** I seek leave to amend Private Members' Business item No. 836 outside the Order of Precedence of which I have given notice by omitting the words "and public" in paragraph (2) and omitting the words "28 October 2016" in paragraph (4) and inserting instead "13 October 2016".

**Leave granted.**

Accordingly, I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) the Crown land estate in New South Wales covers approximately 33 million hectares of land, representing 42 per cent of the State;
  - (b) Crown land, held by the State of New South Wales, is under pressure from privatisation and private development; and
  - (c) the citizens of New South Wales value Crown and public land as a public asset to be used for the benefit of all.
- (2) That, notwithstanding the allocation of portfolios to the General Purpose Standing Committees, General Purpose Standing Committee No. 6 inquire into and report on Crown land in New South Wales, and in particular:
  - (a) the extent of Crown land and the benefits of active use and management of that land to New South Wales;
  - (b) the adequacy of community input and consultation regarding the commercial use and disposal of Crown land;
  - (c) the most appropriate and effective measures for protecting Crown land so that it is preserved and enhanced for future generations; and
  - (d) the extent of Aboriginal Land Claims over Crown and public land and opportunities to increase Aboriginal involvement in the management of Crown land.
- (3) That, with the agreement of the committee, participating members' travel costs be covered by the committee.
- (4) That the committee report by 13 October 2016.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Motions*

**ORLANDO, FLORIDA, NIGHTCLUB ATTACK**

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (10:06):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) on Sunday 12 June 2016, a man walked into Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, United States of America, and committed the deadliest mass shooting by a lone gunman in American history;
  - (b) 49 people were killed in the shooting, another 53 were injured and many thousands of family, friends and lovers had their lives irreparably damaged; and
  - (c) the attack was an horrendous gay hate crime committed by a person claiming Islamic extremist allegiances.
- (2) That this House condemns the evil actions of those who commit hate crimes and acts of terror.
- (3) That this House extends its sympathy and support to the victims of the shooting, their families, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex [LGBTI] community and the people of Orlando at this time of great grief and fear.

**Motion agreed to.****DEATH OF MS JO COX, MP, MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, UNITED KINGDOM****The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (10:07):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) Jo Cox was the member for Batley and Spen in the British House of Commons from her election at the 2015 general election until her murder on 16 June 2016;
  - (b) Ms Cox was a passionate and vocal advocate for social justice, refugees and human rights, including in the current Syrian conflict, was a former chair of the National Labour Women's Network and was recognised and awarded by a number of international organisations as a young leader;
  - (c) in her inaugural speech to the House of Commons, Ms Cox celebrated the benefits of immigration and diversity and concluded that "we are far more united and have far more in common with each other than things that divide us"; and
  - (d) Ms Cox will be remembered for her incredible energy and passion and the potential of a life and a career that has been so tragically cut short.
- (2) That this House expresses its sincere and heartfelt condolences to Jo Cox's family, friends and community, especially her husband, Mr Brendan Cox, and her two children, aged three and five.

**Motion agreed to.***Committees***GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 3****Report: Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales: Unfinished Business****Ms JAN BARHAM (10:07):** I move:

That, on the Chair of General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3 moving that the House take note of report No. 34 entitled "Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales: Unfinished Business":

- (a) debate on the motion take precedence of all other business on the *Notice Paper* for that day only, until adjourned or concluded; and
- (b) members speaking to the motion may speak for not more than 10 minutes.

**Motion agreed to.***Motions***LEBANESE MUSLIM ASSOCIATION IFTAR DINNER****The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (10:08):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) it is currently the holy month of Ramadan, celebrated around the world by the Muslim community;
  - (b) Ramadan is a time of prayer, fasting, reflection and charity; and
  - (c) one of the religious observances during Ramadan is the Iftar, when the daily fast is broken at sunset, at the time of evening prayer and is often done as a community.
- (2) That this House notes that:
  - (a) the Lebanese Muslim Association [LMA] held its annual Iftar dinner on Saturday 18 June 2016;
  - (b) the Iftar honoured four of the founding fathers of the LMA and recognised their contributions to the Lebanese Muslim community;
  - (c) LMA Project Officer Sara Saleh made an inspiring speech about Ramadan, the young Muslim community and the innovative youth transition program known as "Thrive", which provides support for migrant and refugee youth as they transition to the Australian community; and
  - (d) a large number of community and religious leaders attended the LMA Iftar, including:
    - (i) the Hon. Scott Morrison, MP, Federal Treasurer;
    - (ii) the Hon. Tony Burke, MP;
    - (iii) the Hon. Jason Clare, MP;
    - (iv) Mr Chris Hayes, MP;
    - (v) Mr Luke Foley, MP, Leader of the Opposition;
    - (vi) Mr Jihad Dib, MP;



- (vii) Ms Tania Mihailuk, MP;
  - (viii) the Hon. Sophie Cotsis, MLC;
  - (ix) Dr Hugh McDermott, MP;
  - (x) Ms Julia Finn, MP;
  - (xi) the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane, MLC; and
  - (xii) the Hon. Courtney Houssos, MLC.
- (3) That this House congratulates the LMA:
- (a) on their successful Iftar;
  - (b) for their ongoing and important work advocating for the Muslim community; and
  - (c) for providing a broad range of support services for migrant and refugee families, including welfare, health, counselling, education and women's programs, as well as the innovative Thrive program for young people.

**Motion agreed to.**

**AUSTRALIAN MIDDLE EAST MEDIA**

**The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:10):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
- (a) on 9 May 2016, Australian Middle East Media, Australia's largest non-government media enterprise serving Australians of Middle Eastern heritage, celebrated another successful year with its fifth Annual Gala Dinner being held at the Bellevue Reception Lounge, Bankstown, which was attended by approximately 800 guests; and
  - (b) those who attended as guests included:
    - (i) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice representing the Hon. Mike Baird, MP, Premier and the Hon. John, Ajaka MLC, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services and Minister for Multiculturalism;
    - (ii) Mr Jihad Dib, MP, member for Lakemba, shadow Minister for Education representing Mr Luke Foley, MP, Leader of the Opposition;
    - (iii) the Hon. Jason Clare, MP, Federal member for Blaxland, shadow Minister for Communications representing the Leader of the Federal Opposition, the Hon. Bill Shorten, MP;
    - (iv) the Hon. Craig Laundy, MP, Federal member for Reid and Assistant Minister for Multicultural Affairs;
    - (v) the Hon. Tony Burke, MP, Federal member for Watson and shadow Minister for Finance;
    - (vi) Mr Nickolas Varvaris, MP, Federal member for Barton;
    - (vii) Mr David Coleman, MP, Federal member for Banks;
    - (viii) Senator Sam Dastyari;
    - (ix) Dr Geoff Lee, MP, member for Parramatta and Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism;
    - (x) the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane, MLC;
    - (xi) the Hon. Lynda Voltz, MLC;
    - (xii) Mr Mark Coure, MP, member for Oatley;
    - (xiii) Mr Guy Zangari, MP, member for Fairfield and shadow Minister for Justice and Police, Corrections and Emergency Services;
    - (xiv) the Hon. Scott Farlow, MLC;
    - (xv) Mr Glenn Brookes, MP, member for East Hills;
    - (xvi) Dr Hugh McDermott, MP, member for Prospect;
    - (xvii) Mr Chris Minns, MP, member for Kogarah;
    - (xviii) Mr Stephan Kamper, MP, member for Rockdale;
    - (xix) Mr Youssef Shawki, Consul-General for Egypt;
    - (xx) Mr Hamad El Alawi, Consul-General for Oman;
    - (xxi) representatives of Christian, Muslim and Druze religious communities;
    - (xxii) local government mayors and councillors; and
    - (xxiii) business and community leaders and representatives.

- (2) That this House congratulates and commends Australian Middle East Media and its Chairman Wally Wehbe, and General Manager Remy Wehbe, on yet another successful year in providing media services to Australians of Middle Eastern heritage and to the Australian community as a whole.

**Motion agreed to.**

**ARAB COUNCIL AUSTRALIA STRATEGIC PLAN**

**The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:10):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
- (a) on Thursday 31 March 2016, the Arab Council Australia held its Annual General Meeting and launch of its Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 at a gathering for members and friends at Bankstown;
  - (b) the council's Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 was officially launched by the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice, representing the Hon. John Ajaka, MLC, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Multiculturalism; and
  - (c) presenting reports on the activities and progress of the council at the meeting were:
    - (i) Ms Fatima Ali, Chairperson;
    - (ii) Mr Amir Salem, Treasurer; and
    - (iii) Ms Randa Kattan, Chief Executive Officer.
- (2) That this House:
- (a) notes that the Arab Council Australia, which was founded in 1979 as the Arab Welfare Workers Interagency and formally adopted its present name in November 2004, is a secular non-profit community organisation dedicated to improving the lives of the most vulnerable people in the community; and
  - (b) congratulates the Arab Council Australia on the launch of its Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 and commends it for its ongoing service to the New South Wales community.

**Motion agreed to.**

**INDEPENDENCE DAY OF ISRAEL**

**The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:11):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
- (a) on Thursday 12 May 2016, a reception attended by over 700 guests was held at the Shangri-La Hotel, Sydney, to celebrate the sixty-eighth Independence Day of Israel;
  - (b) the reception was jointly hosted by:
    - (i) the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies, represented by President, Mr Jeremy Spinak;
    - (ii) the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, represented by President, Mr Robert Goot, AM, SC; and
    - (iii) the Zionist Council of New South Wales, represented by President, Mr Richard Balkin.
  - (c) those who attended as special guests included:
    - (i) the Ambassador for Israel, His Excellency Mr Shmuel Ben-Shmuel;
    - (ii) the Hon. Mike Baird, MP, Premier;
    - (iii) Mr Luke Foley, MP, Leader of the Opposition;
    - (iv) representatives of Sydney's consular corps;
    - (v) numerous Federal and State members of Parliament; and
    - (vi) representatives of many Jewish community and other community organisations.
- (2) That this House:
- (a) congratulates the State of Israel on the occasion of its sixty-eighth Independence Day; and
  - (b) extends its best wishes to Australia's Jewish community.

**Motion agreed to.**

**DIONYSIOS SOLOMOS AWARD**

**The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:12):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
- (a) on Sunday 6 March 2016 at the MacLaurin Hall, University of Sydney, the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW Limited, under the Presidency of Mr Harry Danalis, hosted the annual Dionysios Solomos Awards for

- students who achieved the highest marks in Modern and Classical Greek in the 2015 Higher School Certificate [HSC];
- (b) the awards are named after Dionysios Solomos, a Greek poet from Zakanthos who wrote the *Hymn to Liberty*, which became the basis of the Greek national anthem in 1865;
- (c) those who attended as guests included:
- (i) Dr Stavros Kyrimis, Consul General for Greece in Sydney;
  - (ii) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice, representing the Hon. John Ajaka, MLC, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Multiculturalism;
  - (iii) the Hon. Sophie Cotsis, MLC, shadow Minister for Women, shadow Minister for Ageing, shadow Minister for Disability Services and shadow Minister for Multiculturalism, representing the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Luke Foley, MP;
  - (iv) Professor Vrasidas Karalis, Head of the Modern Greek Department at the University of Sydney;
  - (v) Ms Constantina Samartziz, representing HSC students; and
  - (vi) representatives of numerous Hellenic community organisations.
- (d) those students of Greek Afternoon Schools of the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW Limited who were recognised as high achievers comprised:
- (i) Sophia Isabella Mavridis, Danebank Anglican School for Girls High School;
  - (ii) Eleanna Gasti, Clemton Park Public School;
  - (iii) Sam Krithinakis, Bald Face Public School;
  - (iv) Christopher Dimou, Bardwell Park Public School;
  - (v) Antonia Kousparis, Beverly Hills North Public School; and
  - (vi) Marisa Savvas, Clemton Park Afternoon School.
- (e) those students who received Commended Certificates in the Minister's Award for Excellence in Modern Greek comprised:
- (i) Helena Vomvellis, Danebank Anglican School for Girls High School;
  - (ii) Dean Tsalikis, Kyeemagh Public School; and
  - (iii) Alexandros John Vpulgarakis, Connell's Point Public School.
- (f) those students who received Highly Commended Certificates in the Minister's Award for Excellence in Modern Greek comprised:
- (i) Silia Kapsis, Coogee South Public School;
  - (ii) Stephanie Midis, Peakhurst Public School; and
  - (iii) George Papacosta, Clemton Park Public School.
- (g) those students who received Merit Certificates in the Minister's Awards for Excellence in Modern Greek comprised:
- (i) Anneliese Tambakeras, Dulwich Hill Public School;
  - (ii) Angelique Malakonakis, South Hurstville Public School;
  - (iii) Jorja Papantoniou, Bardwell Park Public School;
  - (iv) Michael Wierum, Summer Hill Public School;
  - (v) Sebastian Sacilotto, Chipping Norton Public School; and
  - (vi) Terry Platirahos, South Strathfield Public School.
- (h) those students who received Awards as Beginners in HSC Modern Greek comprised:
- (i) first prize, Stella Antoniou, Blakehurst High School;
  - (ii) second prize, Kristina Kazamias, Blakehurst High School;
  - (iii) third prize, Alexandros Pavlidis, Open High School;
  - (iv) equal fourth prize, Stella Ladikos, Open High School;
  - (v) equal fourth prize, Christina Solomou, Open High School;
  - (vi) sixth prize, Ross Kovanis, Newington College;
  - (vii) seventh prize, George Sfinas, Open High School;
  - (viii) eighth prize, Helena Vomvellis, Open High School;

- (ix) ninth prize, James Gatsos, Newington College; and
  - (x) tenth prize, Madeline Tsoukalas, Open High School.
- (i) those students who received Awards as Continuers in HSC Modern Greek comprised:
  - (i) equal first prize, Haralambia Kolevris, Open High School;
  - (ii) equal first prize, Constantina Samartziz, Saturday School of Community Languages, St George Girls High School Centre;
  - (iii) third prize, Georgina Palden, All Saints Grammar;
  - (iv) fourth prize, Nicholas Karasavvidis, All Saints Grammar;
  - (v) fifth prize, Irini Stephania Kassas, Open High School;
  - (vi) sixth prize, Hara-Kyriaki Lavdioti, St Spyridon College;
  - (vii) seventh prize, Danae Kyriakaki, St Spyridon College;
  - (viii) eighth prize, Marianna Elfar, Open High School;
  - (ix) ninth prize, Christy Kyriakides, St Spyridon College; and
  - (x) tenth prize, George Kontrafouris, Saturday School of Community Languages, Ashfield Boys High School Centre.
- (j) those students who received Awards for Extension in HSC Modern Greek comprised:
  - (i) equal first prize, Haralambia Kolevris, Open High School;
  - (ii) equal first prize, Constantina Samartziz, Saturday School of Community Languages, St George Girls High School Centre;
  - (iii) third prize, Harry Gribilas, The King's School;
  - (iv) fourth prize, Athanasia Valsamou, Saturday School of Community Languages; The Hills Sports High School Centre;
  - (v) fifth prize, Stefanos Artemios Margkakis, Saturday School of Community Languages, St George Girls High School Centre;
  - (vi) sixth prize, Danae Kefallinou, Kirrawee High School;
  - (vii) seventh prize, Hara-Kyriaki Lavdioti, St Spyridon College;
  - (viii) eighth prize, Danae Kyriakaki, St Spyridon College;
  - (ix) ninth prize, Nicholas Karasavvidis, All Saints Grammar; and
  - (x) tenth prize, Sevasti Andreou, Blakehurst High School.
- (k) those students who received Awards as Continuers in HSC Classical Greek comprised:
  - (i) first prize, Sebastian Schwartz, Sydney Grammar School;
  - (ii) second prize, Emily Kerrison, Pymble Ladies' College;
  - (iii) third prize, Karen Zhang, Pymble Ladies' College;
  - (iv) fourth prize, Yuan (Nikki) Liang, Pymble Ladies' College;
  - (v) fifth prize, Hamish Ivison, Sydney Grammar School;
  - (vi) sixth prize, Christos Kollias, St Spyridon College;
  - (vii) seventh prize, Alexandra Sheppard, Pymble Ladies' College;
  - (viii) eighth prize, Kalliope Stivaktas, All Saints Grammar;
  - (ix) ninth prize, Sianne Tsandidis, All Saints Grammar and
  - (x) tenth prize, Kirsten Fang, Pymble Ladies' College.
- (l) those students who received Awards for Extension in HSC Classical Greek comprised:
  - (i) first prize, Sebastian Schwartz, Sydney Grammar School;
  - (ii) second prize, Emily Kerrison, Pymble Ladies' College;
  - (iii) third prize, Hamish Ivison, Sydney Grammar School;
  - (iv) equal fourth prize, Yuan (Nikki) Liang, Pymble Ladies' College;
  - (v) equal fourth prize, Karen Zhang, Pymble Ladies' College;
  - (vi) sixth prize, Alexandra Sheppard, Pymble Ladies' College;
  - (vii) seventh prize, Kirsten Fang, Pymble Ladies' College;

- (viii) eighth prize, Seamus Duncan McKillop, St Ignatius College; and
  - (ix) ninth prize, Annabelle Moreton, Pymble Ladies' College.
- (2) That this House:
- (a) commends the Greek Orthodox Community of NSW Limited on its organising and hosting of the 2016 annual Dionysios Solomos Awards presentation function; and
  - (b) congratulates those students who received awards and commendations at the 2016 annual Dionysios Solomos Awards.

**Motion agreed to.**

**MRS SHUBHA KUMAR**

**The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:12): I move:**

- (1) That this House notes that:
- (a) on Tuesday 12 April 2016, at the Parramatta Campus of Western Sydney University, Mrs Shubha Kumar of West Pennant Hills was awarded the Western Sydney University Community Award 2016 by Pro Chancellor Ms Elizabeth Dibbs on behalf of the Chancellor of the University, Professor Peter Shergold, AC, in recognition of outstanding community service and leadership;
  - (b) the Western Sydney University Community Award recognises outstanding contributions to the community in the Greater Western Sydney Region; and
  - (c) Mrs Kumar is a leading member of the Indian-Australian community in New South Wales and is President of the India Club Incorporated, which she founded in 2007 and which, amongst its many community activities, provides a program of seminars and workshops on issues such as domestic violence, the rights of the elderly and cyber-safety and social media.
- (2) That this House congratulates Mrs Kumar on the occasion of her receiving the Western Sydney University's Community Award 2016 and commends her for past and ongoing contributions to the people of New South Wales.

**Motion agreed to.**

**HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA AWARD**

**Dr MEHREEN FARUQI (10:13): I move:**

- (1) That this House notes that:
- (a) on 9 June 2016, Humane Society International Australia awarded the Bridgette Bardot International News Series Award for best international television documentary series to Australian Broadcasting Corporation journalists Caro Meldrum-Hanna, Sam Clark and their team at a ceremony at Parliament House;
  - (b) the award was dedicated by Humane Society International Australia in memory of Dr John Kaye and his tireless work towards ending greyhound racing and animal cruelty in New South Wales;
  - (c) Caro Meldrum-Hanna, Sam Clark, and their team received the award for their three-part series exposing animal cruelty in the greyhound industry, specifically for the programs *Making a Killing*, *The Secret Greyhound Export Trade* and *Cover-ups, Tip-offs; Mismanagement*;
  - (d) the programs have been instrumental in exposing systemic animal cruelty in the greyhound racing industry and have been credited with sparking commissions of inquiry in both New South Wales and Queensland, increasing adoption rates of greyhounds as pets and instigating criminal investigations into greyhound racing trainers who were breaking the law; and
  - (e) the Bridgette Bardot International News Series Award for best international television documentary series is part of the Genesis Awards of the Humane Society United States, honouring the news and entertainment media for their outstanding reporting and creative portrayals of animal protection issues.
- (2) That this House congratulates Caro Meldrum-Hanna, Sam Clark and their team for winning the Bridgette Bardot International News Series Award for best international television documentary series.

**Motion agreed to.**

**COMMEMORATION OF YOM HASHOAH**

**The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:15): I move:**

- (1) That this House notes that:
- (a) on Thursday 5 May 2016, the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies hosted the 2016 commemoration of Yom Hashoah, also known as Holocaust Remembrance Day, at the City Recital Hall, Sydney, which was attended by several hundred guests;
  - (b) Yom Hashoah commemorates the murder of approximately six million Jews under Nazism during World War II, with this year's commemoration focusing on "Creative Responses to the Holocaust" and particularly how artists, writers and poets process the meaning and message of this tragic and infamous event; and

- (c) this year's keynote address to the Sydney commemoration event was delivered by Australian author Lily Brett, with a speech also delivered by Mr Alister Henskens, MP, SC, member for Ku-ring-gai, on the topic "Righteous Among the Nations".
- (2) That this House, on the occasion of the commemoration of Yom Hashoah in 2016, extends heartfelt condolences to Australia's Jewish community, to all survivors of the Holocaust and to the families of those who did not survive.

**Motion agreed to.****INDIAN SUPPORT CENTRE****The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:16): I move:**

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) on Sunday 1 May 2016, the Indian Support Centre marked the first anniversary of its foundation with a celebratory community event at its premises at Pendle Hill;
  - (b) those who attended as guests included:
    - (i) Dr Geoff Lee, MP, member for Parramatta and Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism;
    - (ii) Mr Kevin Conolly, MP, member for Riverstone;
    - (iii) Dr Hugh McDermott, MP, member for Prospect;
    - (iv) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice;
    - (v) Ms Julia Finn, MP, member for Granville;
    - (vi) Councillor Susai Benjamin, Blacktown City Council; and
    - (vii) representatives of various Indian-Australian community organisations.
  - (c) since its foundation, the Indian Support Centre has had a successful year in providing a wide array of support services and assistance to members of the Indian-Australian and other communities.
- (2) That this House congratulates the Indian Support Centre and particularly its Management Committee, comprising Subba Rao Varigonda, President; Tony Colaco, Vice President; Stanley D'Cruz, Secretary; Srililitha Suresh, Treasurer; Jaspreet Chopra, committee member; Nalin Patel, committee member; Anupama Suri, committee member; Deepak Chitnis, committee member; Rekha Sanjeev, volunteer member; and Saryu Rao, volunteer member; on the occasion of the first anniversary of its foundation and commends it for its ongoing service to the people of New South Wales.

**Motion agreed to.****FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF NSW****The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:16): I move:**

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) on Friday 1 April 2016, the Federation of Indian Associations of NSW held a celebratory dinner reception at the Madison Function Centre to welcome to Sydney:
    - (i) the new Consul-General of India in Sydney, His Excellency Mr B. Vanlalvawna and his wife, Mrs Rosy Vanlalvawna; and
    - (ii) a visiting delegation of senior ministers and members of Parliament from India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh.
  - (b) the function was attended by several hundred members of Sydney's Indian-Australian community including leaders and representatives of numerous Indian cultural organisations; and
  - (c) welcome speeches to the new Indian Consul-General and his wife and the visiting delegation were given by:
    - (i) Dr Yadhu Singh, President of the Federation of Indian Associations of NSW; and
    - (ii) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice.
- (2) That this House:
  - (a) extends a warm welcome to the new Consul-General of India in Sydney, Mr B. Vanlalvawna and his wife, Mrs Rosy Vanlalvawna, as well as the visiting delegation from Uttar Pradesh; and
  - (b) commends the Federation of Indian Associations of NSW and its Executive, comprising Dr Yadu Singh, President; Satish Bhadranna, Secretary; Santhosh Seetharaman, Joint Secretary; Kumar Madappa, Vice President; Mahesh Raj, Joint Vice President; Chand Chandha, Treasurer; Navneet Verma, Joint Treasurer; John Niven, member; and Vicky Ahuja, member; for their ongoing work on behalf of the Indian-Australian community as well as the wider Australian community.

**Motion agreed to.**

**ASSYRIAN NEW YEAR**

**The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:17):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) on Sunday 3 April 2016, the Assyrian Universal Alliance Australian Chapter and the Assyrian Australian National Federation celebrated the 6,766th Assyrian New Year at Fairfield City showground with approximately 10,000 members and friends of the Assyrian-Australian community in attendance;
  - (b) a major theme of the opening ceremony of the festival was the ongoing persecution faced by Assyrians and other minorities in Iraq and Syria; and
  - (c) those who attended as guests at the opening ceremony included:
    - (i) Senator the Hon. Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, Minister for International Development and the Pacific, representing the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, MP; Prime Minister;
    - (ii) the Hon. Tanya Plibersek, MP, Deputy Leader of the Federal Opposition and shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development, representing the Hon. Bill Shorten, MP, Leader of the Federal Opposition;
    - (iii) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice and joint Deputy Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of the Assyrians, representing the Hon. Mike Baird, MP, Premier;
    - (iv) Dr Hugh McDermott, MP, member for Prospect and joint Deputy Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of the Assyrians, representing Mr Luke Foley, MP, Leader of the Opposition;
    - (v) the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, MP, Treasurer and Minister for Industrial Relations;
    - (vi) Mr Craig Kelly, MP, Federal member for Hughes;
    - (vii) the Hon. Chris Bowen, MP, Federal member for McMahon and Federal shadow Treasurer;
    - (viii) Mr Chris Hayes, MP, Federal member for Fowler;
    - (ix) Mrs Tanya Davies, MP, member for Mulgoa, Parliamentary Secretary for Youth Affairs and Homelessness and Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of the Assyrians;
    - (x) Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile, MLC, Assistant President of the Legislative Council;
    - (xi) the Hon. Paul Green, MLC;
    - (xii) Mr Frank Carbone, Mayor of the City of Fairfield;
    - (xiii) Reverend Fathers of the Assyrian Church of the East;
    - (xiv) councillors representing local government; and
    - (xv) representatives of Armenian, Jewish, Greek and other ethnic communities.
- (2) That this House congratulates and extends its best wishes to the Assyrian-Australian community on the occasion of 6,766th Assyrian New Year.

**Motion agreed to.**

**FESTIVAL OF HOLI**

**The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:17):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) on Saturday 20 March 2016 at Plaza Park, The Ponds, the Council of Indian Australians in partnership with The Ponds and Kellyville Ridge Community Association held a successful community function to celebrate the 2016 Festival of Holi, also known as the Festival of Colours;
  - (b) the Festival of Holi, which is held not only on the Indian subcontinent but throughout the world where there are Indian communities signifies the victory of good over evil and is an occasion for celebration and thanksgiving; and
  - (c) those who attended as guests included:
    - (i) Mr Kevin Conolly, MP, member for Riverstone, representing the Hon. Mike Baird, MP, Premier;
    - (ii) Ms Michelle Rowland, MP, Federal member for Greenway and shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multiculturalism;
    - (iii) Mr Mark Taylor, MP, member for Seven Hills;
    - (iv) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice; and
    - (v) representatives and members of numerous Indian-Australian community organisations.
- (2) That this House:

- (a) congratulates the Council of Indian Australians and The Ponds and Kellyville Ridge Community Association for their organising of this function; and
- (b) extends its greetings to members of the Indian-Australian community on the occasion of the 2016 Festival of Holi.

**Motion agreed to.**

**LAMBORGHINI CLUB AUSTRALIA**

**The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:17):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) on Friday 29 April 2016 at the Deckhouse Hunters Hill, the Lamborghini Club Australia Incorporated, in conjunction with the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Australia Incorporated, held a celebratory dinner attended by 300 guests to:
    - (i) mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of Ferruccio Lamborghini, the Italian industrialist inventor and creator of the Lamborghini car; and
    - (ii) promote closer commercial relations between Australia and Italy.
  - (b) those who initiated and organised the successful function included leading members of the Lamborghini Club Australia Incorporated, comprising:
    - (i) Mr Sam Movisio, President;
    - (ii) Mr Gary Overs, Secretary and Treasurer;
    - (iii) Mr John Edwards, NSW State and Events Co-ordinator;
    - (iv) Mr Paul Azzo, Assistant Events Co-ordinator; and
    - (v) Mr Nicolas Care, Chief Executive Officer of the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Australia Incorporated.
  - (c) those who attended as special guests included:
    - (i) Antonietta Baccanari, Italian Trade Commissioner in Sydney;
    - (ii) Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile, MLC, Assistant President of the Legislative Council;
    - (iii) Mr Craig Kelly, MP, Federal member for Hughes; and
    - (iv) the Hon. David Clarke, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Justice.
- (2) That this House:
  - (a) congratulates and commends Lamborghini Club Australia Incorporated and the Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Australia Incorporated on:
    - (i) organising a successful function to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of Ferruccio Lamborghini; and
    - (ii) promoting greater commercial relations between Australia and Italy.
  - (b) extends its best wishes and regards to the Italian-Australian community for its ongoing contribution to our state.

**Motion agreed to.**

**AUSTRALIAN GYNAECOLOGICAL CANCER FOUNDATION**

**The Hon. DAVID CLARKE (10:18):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
  - (a) on Sunday 7 February 2016 the Australian Gynaecological Cancer Foundation [AGCF] held a Sydney Harbour cruise function attended by several hundred guests to raise funds for the purpose of raising awareness of and funding research for the prevention, detection, treatment and cure of gynaecological cancer; and
  - (b) those who assisted in organising and promoting the function and who provide ongoing support to the AGCF included:
    - (i) Ms Maria Venuti, AM;
    - (ii) Ms Helen Zerefos, OAM;
    - (iii) Professor Anna deFazio, AGCF Scientific Advisory Committee member and gynaecological research specialist at the Westmead Institute for Medical Research;
    - (iv) Professor Neville Hacker, AO, Head of Gynaecological Cancer at Royal Women's Hospital, Randwick;



- (v) Mr and Mrs John and Maria Stillone, AGCF Ambassadors;
  - (vi) Mrs Betty Lee, Bowerhaus Jewellery;
  - (vii) Mrs Teresa Restifa;
  - (viii) Mr Michael Mannington, Volunteer Photography;
  - (ix) Mr and Mrs Nat and Gina Zanardo;
  - (x) Councillor Vincent DeLuca, OAM;
  - (xi) Councillor Fadwa Kebbe, AGCF Ambassador;
  - (xii) Dr Alan Carless, Honorary Executive Officer of the AGCF;
  - (xiii) Ms Marie Ficarra, former member of the Legislative Council;
  - (xiv) Ms Rosita Luk;
  - (xv) Ms Victoria Green;
  - (xvi) Ms Philippa Indovino;
  - (xvii) Ms Liana Bowes;
  - (xviii) Ms Linda Restuccia;
  - (xix) Ms Suzanne Floro;
  - (xx) Mr John Caputo;
  - (xxi) Mrs Robin Yazbeck;
  - (xxii) Mr William Anderson, PSM;
  - (xxiii) Mr Frank Mirabito;
  - (xxiv) Mr Mario Martino from Nicholas and Co Agency; and
  - (xxv) Mr Glenn Ware.
- (2) That this House congratulates and commends the AGCF on its holding of a successful fundraising event on 7 February 2016 and for its ongoing work in support of the prevention, detection, treatment and cure of gynaecological cancer.

**Motion agreed to.**

#### *Documents*

### **TABLING OF PAPERS**

**The Hon. NIALL BLAIR:** I table the following reports:

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Act 1992—

- (1) Report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled "Review of prices for WaterNSW, Water—Final Report", dated June 2016
- (2) Report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled "Review of prices for Hunter Water Corporation, Water—Final Report", dated June 2016
- (3) Report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled "Review of prices for the Water Administration Ministerial Corporation, Water—Final Report", dated June 2016
- (4) Report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled "Review of prices for Sydney Water Corporation, Water—Final Report", dated June 2016

I move:

That the reports be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

### **TABLING OF PAPERS**

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE:** I table various papers and petitions comprising 10,226 signatures in support of campaigns regarding the Parramatta Female Factory site. I move:

That the documents be published.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Petitions***PETITIONS RECEIVED****TAFE Funding**

Petition noting the consequences of cuts to TAFE funding in New South Wales and calling on the Government to stop cuts to TAFE funding and to support a plan to save TAFE, received from the **Hon. Mick Veitch**.

**Wauchope Train Station**

Petition requesting the Government to stop proposed job cuts at Wauchope Trainlink Station and to allow the current levels of customer service to be maintained, received from the **Hon. Courtney Houssos**.

*Business of the House***POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS**

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I move:

That Business of the House Notice of Motion No. 1 be postponed until a later hour of the sitting.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Committees***PROCEDURE COMMITTEE****Extension of Reporting Date**

**The PRESIDENT:** On 23 February 2016 I referred to the Procedure Committee terms of reference for an inquiry into young children accompanying members into the House with a reporting date of the last sitting day in June. I inform the House that at a meeting of the Procedure Committee on 22 June the Committee resolved to extend the reporting date to 25 August 2016.

*Special Adjournment***SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT**

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** I move:

That this House at its rising today do adjourn until Tuesday 9 August 2016 at 2.30 p.m. unless the President, or, if the President is unable to act on account of illness or other cause, the Deputy President, prior to that date by communication addressed to each member of the House, fixes an alternative day or hour of meeting.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Business of the House***SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to allow the moving of a motion forthwith relating to the conduct of business of the House.

**Motion agreed to.**

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I move:

That the order of Private Members' Business for today be as follows:

- (1) Private Member's Business item No. 669 outside the Order of Precedence standing in the name of Mr David Shoebridge relating to the Steel Industry Protection Bill 2016;
- (2) Private Member's Business item No. 5 in the Order of Precedence standing in the name of the Hon. Peter Primrose relating to the Sub-continental Community in New South Wales; and
- (3) Private Member's Business item No. 7 in the Order of Precedence standing in the name of the Hon. Lou Amato relating to Fairfield Youth Off The Streets Program.

**Dr MEHREEN FARUQI (10:27:3):** I move:

That the motion be amended by inserting before paragraph (1):

- (1) Private Member's Business item No. 1 in the Order of Precedence standing in the name of Dr Mehreen Faruqi relating to the Abortion Law Reform (Miscellaneous Acts) Amendment Bill 2015.

My comments will be brief because I know that members have an important item of business first up, which is the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3 report entitled "Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales". In the light of that, I request other members to keep their contributions brief. The amendment I have moved will return the Abortion Law Reform (Miscellaneous Acts) Amendment Bill 2015 to the first item of private members' business today, as has been indicated on the *Notice Paper* for months, for the purpose of delivering the 20-minute second reading speech. The Abortion Law Reform (Miscellaneous Acts) Amendment Bill 2015 has been the first item in the order of precedence for months. I last postponed it in February this year until today, 23 June 2016. Since February it has been set down for today.

Formulation of the bill followed an extensive consultation period with key stakeholders and the public. Many in the community are looking forward to the introduction of this long-awaited bill today. The ordering of today's private members' business was set out at a meeting last night at which The Greens were not represented. I understand only the Labor and Coalition parties attended, no crossbench parties were represented at that meeting and that the meeting was over in a matter of minutes.

My party tried to resolve this issue last night, but after discussions it appeared that the other parties were not willing to allow this item to proceed, even though it was just a 20-minute speech and it had been first in the order of precedence. This is extraordinary and disappointing, and I believe it sets a dangerous precedent for the way the Parliament operates and the way that we deal with private members' business. I understand that there is a lot of other important business today, but I reiterate that this is simply a 20-minute second reading speech that has been listed in the order of precedence and that should be allowed to go ahead today as planned.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES (10:29):** The Opposition does not support this amendment. We have a process in this Chamber that was established in 2005 and initiated by the former Government Whip, the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps, in consultation with Opposition members and all crossbench members.

**Mr Jeremy Buckingham:** In 2015, not 2005.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I said 2015—please listen.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! I call Mr Jeremy Buckingham to order for the first time.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** As I said, it was introduced in 2015. For those members who were not in the Chamber before that date, private members' business on Thursdays was quite chaotic. Although we had the order of precedence, more often than not a number of members would seek the call and argue that their urgent motion should be debated. The fact is that the time allocated for private members' business on Thursdays is for all members. To facilitate all members having an opportunity to debate their motions, a system was put in place for a meeting to be held on Wednesday evenings with representatives from all parties—from the Government, the Opposition and all crossbench members. An email is sent out every Wednesday to remind members about this standing meeting; we all know that the meeting occurs during the dinner break or at the conclusion of the sitting on Wednesdays, and that the representatives of the parties who attend the meeting can put forward their motions.

Parties are not confined to putting forward motions on the *Notice Paper* in the order of precedence; they can put forward any motion to take precedence. Not all members choose to attend this meeting. If members have nothing they want to put forward for the time allocated to private members' business on the following Thursday, they do not attend. There have been occasions when members of The Greens have not attended that meeting. As usual, an email was sent out during the course of yesterday advising members that the meeting would occur last night and a follow-up email was sent minutes before the meeting as a final reminder of the meeting. The emails are sent to members of each party and their staff, so everyone is aware of the meeting. As I said, some members do not turn up to the meeting and there have been occasions when The Greens have not attended these meetings. Last night there was no representative from The Greens, but the meeting proceeded as we could not wait in case members decided to turn up. The first item that was put forward was a carryover of the Steel Industry Protection Bill 2016, and party representatives put forward additional motions.

If we were to constantly deviate from the process that is in place, the order of precedence system would break down. We put the system in place to ensure that there is a structure to private members' business. It is vitally important that all members know what items will be brought forward. At times items will be urgent, and we will accommodate those items. However, Dr Mehreen Faruqi's bill is not urgent; there will be plenty of opportunities for this bill to be brought forward. This House has given up private members' time this morning for an important committee report, which means that private members' time has been cut short. Everyone supports this move because it is such an important issue, and after this debate we will move to private members' business.

Dr Mehreen Faruqi will have an opportunity to introduce her item of business if members of The Greens choose to turn up to the meeting. I urge members not to support this amendment.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (10:34):** The Opposition does not support the amendment not only for the reasons outlined by the Government Whip but also because when it comes to the precious few hours we have each week for private members' business all parties prioritise the business they seek to bring on for debate. We had some reservations about the stolen generations committee report being dealt with in the time allocated to private members' business. It should have been dealt with on Tuesday afternoon, during the time set aside for debate on committee reports. This week we had almost no committee reports and there was ample opportunity to deal with this report. But we accepted the views of the chair and of The Greens that we should deal with the report this morning.

The Greens have also prioritised the Steel Industry Protection Bill 2016, which we support. The reality is that because we have only a few hours for private members' business we will be flat out getting through the committee report debate and the steel bill debate. Today's priority must be the steel bill. That does not reflect any views or other members' views about Dr Mehreen Faruqi's bill. It being a matter of conscience there is a variety of views in the Labor Party about this bill. Our position on this procedural matter does not reflect our views as to the substance of Dr Mehreen Faruqi's bill, but we hold the firm view that our priority today is the committee report debate on the stolen generations and the debate on the steel bill. With the best will in the world there simply will not be any time today to deal with any other matter because after question time the appropriation bills have to be dealt with. That is the time pressure reality of today. The Opposition cannot support the amendment.

**The Hon. MARK PEARSON (10:36):** I speak in support of the amendment moved by Dr Mehreen Faruqi for two reasons relating to clarification. It needs to be clear that the venue of the Whips meeting to determine what is to come on as private members' business today recently moved from the committee room on level 11 to the members lounge. Ms Jan Barham and I were waiting in the original committee room to bring on some items and discuss the order of precedence. It is not true that The Greens did not wish to turn up to the meeting to put forward their argument for Dr Mehreen Faruqi's bill to come on today; it was a simple oversight as we were in the wrong room and we were eight minutes late for the meeting in the members lounge. Considering that and the fact that Dr Mehreen Faruqi's bill has been on the order of precedence, after negotiations and the work undertaken by her to prepare for today I believe she should be given an opportunity to at least give her second reading speech. Those factors need to be considered by the House.

**Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (10:37):** The Christian Democratic Party strongly supported the new system we have for private members' business, so that all members can be ready to debate each item on the *Notice Paper*. We want to retain that system, so we do not support the amendment.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (10:38):** In response to the contribution of the Hon. Mark Pearson, I have in front of me the email that was sent to all members advising them of the meeting. The email made it very clear that the meeting would be held in the members lounge, so there really is no excuse for members not turning up to the correct venue. My second point is that the first two items for debate in the time allocated for private members' business today are moved by The Greens, so The Greens are suggesting that the first three items for debate in the time allocated for private members' business be Greens items. To me that would not be fair to other members of Parliament.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan):** The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....4  
Noes .....34  
Majority.....30

AYES

Dr Faruqi  
Ms Barham (teller)

Mr Buckingham (teller)

Mr Shoebridge

NOES

Dr Phelps  
Mr Blair  
Mr Clarke  
Mr Farlow (teller)

Mr Ajaka  
Mr Borsak  
Mr Colless  
Mr Franklin

Mr Amato  
Mr Brown  
Mr Donnelly  
Mr Gay

## NOES

Mr Green	Mr MacDonald	Mr Mallard
Mr Mason-Cox	Mr Mookhey	Mr Moselmane
Mr Pearce	Mr Pearson	Mr Primrose
Mr Searle	Mr Secord	Mr Veitch
Mr Wong	Ms Cotsis	Ms Cusack
Ms Houssos	Ms Maclaren-Jones (teller)	Ms Mitchell
Ms Sharpe	Ms Taylor	Ms Voltz
Reverend Nile		

**Amendment negatived.**

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan):** The question is that the motion be agreed to.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Committees***GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 3****Report: Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales: Unfinished Business**

**Ms JAN BARHAM:** I table General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3 report No. 34 entitled "Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales: Unfinished Business", dated June 2016, together with transcripts of evidence, submissions, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice, supplementary questions, and correspondence. I move:

That the report be printed.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan):** Ms Jan Barham has moved that the report be printed. I invite members to signify their agreement with the motion by standing in their places, thereby also acknowledging and paying respect to members of the stolen generations in the Chamber this morning, and to all other members of the stolen generations.

*Members and officers of the House stood in their places as a mark of respect.*

**Motion agreed to.**

**Ms JAN BARHAM (10:48):** I move:

That the House take note of the report.

I acknowledge that today we are standing on the land of Gadigal people of the Eora nation. I pay respect to all Indigenous elders, past and present, across the State. I pay respect to all those who were forcibly removed from their families and communities—the stolen generations. We are sorry for the wrongdoing of the past. The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Hon. Leslie Williams, is in the President's gallery, and I thank her for being here to witness this debate.

When the Bringing Them Home report was released in 1997 it shocked the nation. It documented the history from the late 1880s to the 1970s. It told of the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families, communities and country. They were stolen. It was done because the law of the day allowed it. In 1997 this Parliament was the first parliament to apologise for what happened, and that apology had bipartisan support. I am proud to table this report today. The committee's terms of reference included recognising reparations that were identified in the Bringing Them Home report, acknowledgment and apology, guarantees against repetition, restitution measures and rehabilitation, and monetary compensation. These measures guided the committee's recommendations and the writing of the report.

"Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales: Unfinished Business" presents 35 recommendations. The committee was informed by 52 submissions and committee members travelled across the State. Our first visit was to the Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls' Training Home. We were honoured to walk with the aunties and to hear about their experiences. It was heartbreaking. The committee then visited Kinchela Boys Home with the boys. That, too, was heartbreaking. We also travelled to Bomaderry to visit the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home. We went to Grafton, Walgett, Wagga Wagga, Kempsey, Broken Hill and Nowra. We also held hearings in Sydney, in this place, and heard evidence from former Premier the Hon. Bob Carr and former member for Canterbury, the Hon. Linda Burney.

I am very proud of the committee and the members who serve on it. The tabling of this report makes us proud of this place, the work that it does, and the members who come here to represent the people of New South Wales. I thank the deputy chair, the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones, and Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile, who has been a long-time campaigner for Aboriginal people. I also thank the Hon. Ben Franklin and the Hon. Sarah Mitchell, representing the Government, and the Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane and the Hon. Courtney Houssos, representing the Labor Party. Each of them heard of your pain and your needs. This is a unanimous report, and that is important because we all agree that there is unfinished business and that it must be addressed. You trusted us and we hope that we have delivered meaningful and achievable recommendations. We know that stories have been told before and that reports have sat on shelves. Not this one. We hope that the recommendations in this report will be implemented.

We consistently heard that you feel that you have not been listened to and that you have not been given a voice. The committee's first recommendation seeks to rectify that. The report recommends that a stolen generations advisory committee be established with you as majority representatives. The committee heard about the need for collective healing, that you are the only people who really understand what you have experienced, and that you need to heal together. You are brothers and sisters. Recommendation No. 3 states that the Government should provide funding and support for collective healing.

Your removal from your families, communities and country resulted in a loss of identity and culture. The committee has also addressed that in its recommendations. We know the importance of language, culture, reunion and reconnection. Those aspects of reparation are identified in a number of the committee's recommendations. We heard about pain and intergenerational trauma. Your experiences, your lack of love as children and knowing what it means to be cared for are noted. That trauma is passed on to your children and to your children's children. There are still shocking numbers of children being removed from their families, and that is a pain you all feel. The committee has addressed that by calling on the Government to undertake an independent audit of the Aboriginal child placement principles. It also calls on the Government to ensure that all staff who deal with Aboriginal people have appropriate cultural awareness training and trauma-informed training so that they know about your pain and suffering and how to treat you respectfully.

Your loss of identity and connection and your experiences have left you troubled and your health has suffered. The committee has recommended that a health card for stolen generations be established. The committee acknowledges that the New South Wales Government will need to work with the Federal Government to achieve that. We know that you lost opportunities for education and employment. Therefore, the committee has recommended that a stolen generations scholarship scheme be established. It has also recommended that the Stolen Wages Scheme be reopened because many of you did not know about it. The committee has recommended that memorials be established so that the abuses and experiences of the past are not forgotten. We want to ensure that everyone knows that this is the history of our country and that it must not be forgotten.

The committee has recommended that a scheme be established, with appeal rights, in close consultation with stolen generations survivors to deal with reparation. The committee reviewed the Tasmanian and South Australian schemes and understands the concerns raised about them, although they are very good. There are many more aspects of reparation that I could address, but I am sure that my committee colleagues will address them in their contributions. The committee has proposed what it believes is deliverable and achievable. We hope that the Government responds quickly to the committee's recommendations because many of those affected are aged. We must provide you with the health and wellbeing in response to the suffering inflicted on you. There is much more that I could say. This inquiry has been an amazing experience, and I thank you for your trust and honesty.

In conclusion, I thank the staff who supported us in this journey—the amazing secretariat who gave so much, heard so much, travelled with us and treated everyone respectfully. I thank Tina Higgins, Teresa McMichael, Emma Rogerson and Sarah Dunn for their work. I thank the Link-Up representatives who were with us on that journey to support survivors and to witness what was happening in that process. I particularly thank Government member Ben Franklin for his cooperation and consultation with the Minister and for being a great support for me personally. We have delivered a beautiful report. The cover features a specially commissioned painting of a tree—a sign of hope, protection and healing. In conclusion I say: We are sorry. We are very sorry for the past wrongdoings. We hope that this report will change the future. We cannot change the past but we can change the future. It is unfinished business and we hope we will deliver reparations to those who deserve it so much.

**Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (11:00):** On behalf of the Christian Democratic Party I add my welcome to all the representatives of the stolen generation, their friends and relatives who are in the gallery today. We say this is the people's House, and they are the people. We are very pleased that they are here as we formally adopt the report entitled "Reparations for the stolen generations in New South Wales". On the cover there is a tree

that reminded me of the very unhappy experiences we were told of during our visit to the Kinchela Boys Home by men who had been at the home as boys.

We heard similar reports at the other homes we visited in Cootamundra, Bomaderry and so on. I was very impressed and moved as the stolen generation shared their experiences from the heart so we could understand what it meant to be a member of the stolen generation. There were things they told us which they had never told anyone else before—some of the memories were so hurtful they really did not want to talk about them so they had not raised them previously. I am pleased that in our inquiry we were able to encourage members of the stolen generation to share their experiences with us.

At the Kinchela Boys Home they told us of a large tree at the back of the home. If the managers running the home thought the boys were breaking rules or misbehaving, the punishment was to be chained to that tree and often left there overnight in the grounds of the boys home. They offered to show us the tree, so the whole committee went out to the back of the home and saw that that tree is still there. The chain they used to chain the boys to the tree is still there too, but over the years the chain has become grafted into the tree. The tree has grown around the chain so the chain cannot be removed—it is now part of the tree. That reminded us of some of the suffering of the boys. Similar suffering occurred in the girls homes as well.

The stories that the stolen generation shared with the committee brought home what it meant to them on a very personal level. Obviously as members of Parliament we cannot participate 100 per cent in those feelings, but we did share them as we heard those stories, and that was very important. I was very grateful that the stolen generation members trusted our committee enough to appear as witnesses and to tell their stories so we could see and hear firsthand what they experienced through no fault of their own.

We heard how often they were picked up on their way to school or on their way home from school and never saw their mothers again. The mothers often did not know where their children had been taken to. No parent can handle that kind of experience of having their children stolen. That is why "stolen generation" is the correct term. I know some people do not like using it but I believe it is accurate. Members of the stolen generation were stolen—they were taken away and put into various homes, as I have said. We must keep the language accurate and not water it down or soften it up. We must tell the truth as to what happened.

I am very pleased that, as our chair Ms Jan Barham said, we were able to adopt a report that is unanimous. That took a lot of discussion and consideration, because the committee represents all the parties in the Parliament. They all have different views and policies, so it is quite a challenge to have quite a detailed report with many important recommendations. But the committee put the stolen generation as the top priority. We must do something for the stolen generation. We must come to an agreement. We must have a consensus. If we put up a divided report, that will give some people in the Government an excuse to say, "Well, the report is not unanimous—the committee did not agree on these recommendations," and the Government could then put them to one side.

The fact that the members of the committee from all the parties agreed on the report and on the recommendations so they are all unanimous puts great pressure on the Government to adopt the report and its recommendations. I am very confident that will now happen, because the Government cannot avoid its responsibility to adopt the report and its recommendations and, over a period of time, implement those recommendations which will benefit the stolen generation, their children, their families and so on—because it is not just the stolen generation that have suffered trauma. We heard that the children of the stolen generation have experienced that same trauma as well. I am pleased that the committee was able to agree on the recommendations, all of which are very important. I will mention some of them particularly for the members of the stolen generation who are in the gallery today. Recommendation 2 is:

That the NSW Government establish a reparations scheme for Stolen Generation survivors ...

That was the key purpose of our inquiry. That must be established by the Government. Recommendation 3 is:

That the NSW Government provide funding for collective healing initiatives, programs, forums and community centres, to support and assist Stolen Generation survivors and their families and communities ...

Obviously they will also invite other organisations such as churches and religious bodies to assist in that process. Recommendation 4 is:

That the NSW Government establish a Stolen Generations Scholarship Scheme to support Stolen Generation survivors and their descendants in accessing educational opportunities.

Some of these recommendations obviously came from witnesses from the stolen generation. Recommendation 8 is:

That the NSW Government collaborate with and provide support, both financial and non-financial, to the Coota Girls Corporation, Kinchela Boys' Home Aboriginal Corporation and the Children of the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home Incorporated, to

establish healing centres in appropriate locations to support the healing of individuals formerly institutionalised in those homes and their families and communities. That proposition of healing centres came directly from witnesses. In all the centres we went to the stolen generation witnesses spoke about the need for healing centres and that they were establishing them themselves. Our report will put them onto a higher level to be officially supported financially and in other ways by the Government so that the process of healing can be an ongoing process. Members of the stolen generation can gather in those healing centres and encourage and support one another and in some ways create a new family, because often they cannot find the original family that they belong to. Recommendation 11 is important. We have mentioned a number of times that the stolen generations must be involved in the process by giving advice and being consulted. It is not white people doing something for them, it is the Government in cooperation with the stolen generation implementing these recommendations, which is an important aspect. Recommendation 11 states:

That the NSW Government, in consultation with the Stolen Generation survivors, establish a memorial to acknowledge and commemorate members of the Stolen Generations in a prominent location in Sydney.

We are keen that that happens. I am pleased to have been a member of that committee and to work in cooperation with members from all political parties. I am looking forward to these recommendations being implemented. I give my word that I will make sure that this report is not put in a filing cabinet and nothing happens. I promise to make sure that these recommendations are implemented.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (11:10):** It is neither a pleasure nor a privilege to stand here today. There should not have been the need for an inquiry into reparations for stolen generations almost 20 years after the "Bringing Them Home" report came down. These injustices should have been addressed long ago. There should not have been a need to consider what actions the Government could take to deal with the ongoing difficulties and trauma faced by members of the stolen generations. Those actions should have happened as a matter of course. There should not have been a need to ever consider this issue at all, because these children should never have been stolen from their parents in the first place, torn from their hysterical mothers, their families and their communities entirely on account of their Aboriginality.

It was a genuine privilege to meet the survivors, many of whom are in the gallery today, to hear their stories, to look into their eyes. For them to trust us after all that they have experienced shows an extraordinary generosity of spirit. If the situation were reversed, I am not sure I would have been able to do so. To them, I say I am sorry. As a member of this Government, as a member of this Parliament and as a member of the Australian community, I am sorry. They have endured what no-one should ever have to. They have been separated from their families, their culture and their community. They were dehumanised, beaten and abused. They and their families have had to deal with the effects of their suffering ever since. We can never fix this. We can never give back those years, but we can try to make amends, and that is what we have sought to do in this inquiry.

Throughout this process we have heard devastating stories of what was done to Aboriginal boys and girls. We have heard of the boys who were stripped naked and made to hold a running hose above their heads all night in the middle of winter; the girls who were left abandoned and alone in solitary confinement in a room in Cootamundra Girls Home; the boys who were chained to a tree overnight in Kinchela and often subject to the most appalling abuse; the boys who were made to line up in two lines and punch one of their brothers as hard as they could until he fell, bleeding and unconscious, to the ground, only to be picked up again and carried through the cascade of punches to the end of the line; and the boys who, if they were thought not to be punching as hard as they could, were also sent down the line.

We have heard of the girl who was walking home from school with her sister and brother and was picked up by the police and put in a cell overnight while her mother was running up and down, screaming with hysteria, outside the cell's window. This girl was sent to Cootamundra. She never saw her brother again and has spent a lifetime trying to find him. We have heard about the boy who was woken by a staff member and passed out through his dormitory window to another staff member where he was regularly and repeatedly raped for years. This is a tiny handful of the stories I have been told in this inquiry and there are thousands more. Every survivor has them. The trauma of these experiences last a lifetime.

It became strikingly apparent throughout the inquiry that survivors of the stolen generations experience unique challenges across many areas in their lives. Our inquiry was forced to consider how best to deal with a range of issues across the full spectrum of government—from health and education difficulties, to accessing government services, addressing emotional and physical trauma, and re-establishing culture and community. It was a substantial challenge to crystallise these issues into practical, achievable recommendations, but we have done our best and I am incredibly proud of the body of work that has been produced. These recommendations, if adopted, create a real opportunity for acknowledging the past, for healing in the present, and for looking to the future with pride and confidence.

Although our report covers a range of different areas across government, I focus briefly on four specific things on which we have provided recommendations. The first is acknowledgement. We can all be proud of the bipartisan apology given to members of the stolen generations by this Parliament almost 20 years ago. Since then, however, the light shining on the injustices suffered has dimmed and there is a danger that successive generations



will forget what was done to our first peoples. War memorials are an important part of our society. They provide a focal point for sombre reflection, a sacred place for survivors and a constant reminder to the broader community of our history. We believe that a public memorial for the stolen generations can fulfil similar aims. To that end, we believe that a permanent memorial should be established in Sydney to acknowledge and commemorate members of the stolen generations along with other memorials in appropriate areas throughout the State.

The second area is healing. I am proud that this Government has been the first in the nation and is still the only one to formally include healing in its policy approach underpinning Aboriginal Affairs through the OCHRE [Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment] strategy. That commitment is clear. It seamlessly feeds into recommendation 3 of this report—supporting the establishment of collective healing initiatives, programs, forums and community centres. Stolen generations survivors were taken from their families when they were extremely young and by the time they were able to return to their communities, if at all, they were often shunned and cast out. Because of this and because of the pain they shared together, the children who were sent to Kinchela, Cootamundra or Bomaderry often see each other as members of their family. After all they have been through, supporting them to reunite regularly is the least we can do.

The third issue I wish to address is trying to make it easier for survivors to receive support from government agencies. Whether it be priority access to social, public and affordable housing, the establishment of a healthcare card or financial assistance for funerals, we believe that for what they have suffered the Government should make life just that little bit easier for members of the stolen generations. We would also like to see the creation of a direct point of contact in government for survivors—a one-stop shop—which can assist them to navigate the system, provide information and make referrals to appropriate services.

Finally, we recommend the establishment of a scheme to provide financial reparations to survivors. Similar schemes have been established in South Australia and Tasmania and provide models for consideration. A payment can never compensate for a lifetime of anguish and trauma, but it would be a genuine acknowledgement by Government of the responsibility of the State to their pain and distress.

This has been an extraordinary inquiry. It has challenged the views of all members about the responsibilities of government and it has reinforced the need for constant vigilance to ensure the welfare of those who we seek to serve is always at the forefront of our minds. The Government will now consider our recommendations and determine its response. I thank all members of this inquiry for their selfless cross-party commitment to treating this issue as it should be treated—above politics—where we achieved unanimous agreement on all recommendations. I thank the chair, Ms Jan Barham, for her tireless energy in pursuing justice for the stolen generations and her belief in what can be achieved together.

I thank the committee staff for their dedication, their professionalism and their extraordinary empathy in dealing with such a sensitive issue. I thank the Minister for Early Childhood Education, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Assistant Minister for Education, Leslie Williams, her Chief of Staff, Kathy Rankin, and her Deputy Chief of Staff, Claire Coulton, for their genuine passion for doing all we can to make amends and for assisting me throughout the process. The Minister's presence in the gallery for the entire debate today underlines her genuine commitment in this area.

Most of all I thank you, the members of the stolen generation. Without your trust and engagement this entire process would have been superficial and irrelevant. You engaged with us honestly and openly when you had every right to be filled with anger and suspicion. You have been traumatised, brutalised and paralysed by the past actions of this State. We are profoundly sorry for all that you have suffered and we hope and pray that the outcomes of this inquiry allow us all to look to a future of engagement, reparation and genuine reconciliation.

**The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE (11:20):** First, I acknowledge the traditional owners of this land and pay my respects to their elders, past and present. I also pay my respects to everyone who is here on this very important day. I would like to acknowledge the presence of Minister Leslie Williams, who is here to hear this debate and support this report. It is times like this that I am deeply honoured to be a member of Parliament. I stand a little taller and I am hugely proud to be a member of New South Wales Parliament. I feel even prouder of all my colleagues and staff who wanted to do their best in delivering this historic report that the people of New South Wales can assuredly be proud of. I am honoured to stand before you as a member of this committee to table this extremely well written 270-page report entitled "Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales".

Everyone involved in the making of this report was sincere in their feelings for the plight of Indigenous Australians and was genuinely concerned. Everyone wanted to ensure that we achieved the aims and objectives of those who were taken—stolen—and who had their identity ripped from them and their lives destroyed. Members of the stolen generation wanted us to understand the hurt and their continued suffering. They wanted us to acknowledge and apologise—not only so that we recognise the wrongs done to them and to their children, but to ensure that it is never repeated. They wanted action to guarantee that there was no repetition and they wanted

practical measures to ensure restitution and real and ongoing rehabilitation. And they wanted—and rightly so—real financial and non-financial measures of compensation.

We spoke to Indigenous people who have long suffered untold oppression—we saw the misery in their eyes and we heard it in their voices. We felt it in their raw, painful memories. From day one of white man, British invasion and subsequent occupation of this land, oppression and ill-treatment of the Aboriginal people of this land never ceased. From the late 1800s right through to the 1970s thousands of Aboriginal children were forcibly removed from their families and communities by the New South Wales Aborigines Welfare Board, the Aborigines Protection Board or through other means. Some children were placed in government-controlled training homes or non-government religious institutions while others were fostered or adopted into white families. The experiences of those who were removed were documented in detail by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 1997 report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children commonly known as the Bringing Them Home report.

The Bringing Them Home report was an important point in Australia's history. It recommended that all those affected by the Government's forcible removal policies be provided with financial and non-financial reparations, including an apology and monetary compensation. Unfortunately, despite almost 20 years passing since the Bringing Them Home report was released, it is clear that there remains much unfinished business in terms of providing reparations to stolen generation survivors and their families in New South Wales. Because of this, and because progress has been inadequate, we gave this report the subtitle "Unfinished business" as we wanted to address this and ensure that our recommendations were doable and that no government is given the opportunity to put them into the too-hard basket.

We wanted to address the daily issues of identity, health care, trauma, intergenerational suffering and a host of other sufferings that need redress because they affect those that suffered, whether they be members of stolen generations or their survivors and family members. As a committee, we were as one. We were really one team. We were all on the side of justice. We all wanted healing; we all wanted peace; we all wanted to recognise and avoid repetition of the horrors people had gone through; and we all wanted to ensure a sense of redress, knowing full well that you can never compensate for the past wrongs and the suffering of the Aboriginal people over many generations.

The Greens chaired the committee and Ms Jan Barham endorsed the recommendations. The Christian Democratic Party through its leader in this House, Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile, endorsed the recommendations. The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party and the Animal Justice Party I believe also support justice for the stolen generations. Members of the Government and the Opposition ensured that our leaders were consulted and fully informed and on board. I am certainly proud of our Labor leadership in Luke Foley, shadow Treasurer Ryan Park and shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs David Harris, who supported us in our aims and objectives in this report. This therefore means that this Government will implement the recommendations, and when we in the Australian Labor Party are in government in three years' time, we will continue to deliver on the recommendations.

To ensure that no business in this report is left undone, the first of our 35 recommendations calls on the Premier of New South Wales and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to establish a stolen generations advisory committee comprised of a majority of Aboriginal representatives including members of the stolen generations, with responsibility for advising the Premier and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs on any matters related to the stolen generations to monitor and review the implementation of recommendations in this report. The key recommendation I am particularly proud of is recommendation 2, which states:

That the NSW Government establish a reparations scheme for Stolen Generation survivors, in accordance with the principles of self-determination and doing no further harm ...

This I hope will be the start of the healing process. I hope that it is done in such a way that it properly addresses the hurt caused. Another key recommendation is recommendation 3, which states:

That the NSW Government provide funding for collective healing initiatives, programs, forums and community centres, to support and assist Stolen Generation survivors and their families and communities ...

As many of us know so little of the plight—let alone the history of the suffering—of Aboriginal people, we wanted to ensure that every means of education can be utilised to ensure a better understanding and acceptance of the wrongs done to Indigenous Australians. As requested by members of the stolen generation we want to build memorials to honour those that suffered and to educate in order to help restore culture, language and identity.

Overcoming the disadvantages is another huge hurdle, as many continue to suffer the impact of the Government's past forced removal practices and policies, which has not only led to deep feelings of loss, resentment and trauma within Indigenous families and communities, but has also left many without a sense of identity and some without the skills to effectively parent their own children. In terms of health care and other practical and immediate support, we recommended that the New South Wales Government seek the support of

the Commonwealth Government to create a health care card for stolen generation survivors, similar to other Commonwealth health care cards, which will provide better access to medical services. Recommendation 8 of the report reads:

That the NSW Government collaborate with and provide support, both financial and non-financial, to the Coota Girls Corporation, Kinchela Boys' Home Aboriginal Corporation and the Children of the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home Incorporated ...

Recommendation 11 reads:

That the NSW Government, in consultation with Stolen Generation survivors, establish a memorial to acknowledge and commemorate members of the Stolen Generations in a prominent location in Sydney.

The report continued:

Recommendation 22

That the NSW Government, in consultation with Stolen Generation survivors, explore options for government agencies to identify and capture the needs of survivors and their descendants, for the purpose of ensuring services are tailored appropriately.

I conclude by citing words I heard recently from a short film, *Oceans of Injustice*, which depicts the suffering of the Palestinian people. I am sure that it is relevant to what I heard from the stolen generations of the Aboriginal people:

We think we know and we think we felt with them, and we think we understand the injustice because we've read some book. We don't know and won't ever know the true suffering of the... [Aboriginal] people until we go there, until we open our eyes and our souls and really see through the murkiness of it all.

Be mindful, thoughtful, because the injustice creeps up on you ... leaves you gasping for breath. How could this be happening? How could this be accepted? Why don't the people do something to stop this?

What I witnessed burnt my eyes far more than the saltiest sea. But open your minds no matter how painful it stings and trying to live for a moment in their fractured world as they are forced to.

Look into their eyes, hear their voices, and understand their story. Look at what was stolen, what their fears are. Look at what pressure and humiliation they are made to drown in every day.

Don't close your eyes. Don't turn away. Look.

Having said that, I thank my colleagues and staff as well as all those involved in this report. I commend the report to the House.

**The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (11:31:2):** I begin my contribution by saying that we have lots of different days in this place. Without doubt, this is one of the most meaningful days because, while we are here as members of Parliament, it is our job to do what we can to help people who need our help. I cannot think of a better way to use our time here as members of Parliament than to help those who survived the stolen generations. I am very proud to be a member of this committee. I am proud that people in the gallery are here to listen to what we have to say because I think it is important. The recommendations in the report are extremely worthwhile, and I join all the other committee members in giving my full endorsement to all of them. I hope that as a Government we commit to each and every action in the report because it is important and we need to do it.

There is no doubt—and we have heard it a lot already today—that the period we talk about in relation to the stolen generations between the late 1890s and the 1970s is one of the darkest in our history. The thought of having so many Aboriginal children forcibly taken away from their families under the policy of assimilation, many of them never to see their parents, siblings or relatives again, is incredibly traumatic. For the information of members who have not had a chance yet to read the report, it is quite lengthy; but I encourage you to look first at the case studies because they highlight some of the trauma and the very difficult and extreme circumstances that those survivors endured. They are all relevant and important, but I will mention one in particular from Uncle Manuel Ebsworth, who talked about going through the gates of hell where each child was stripped of their name, given a number, and lost their identity forever.

For those of us in this Parliament now it is hard to imagine what it would have been like for those children and their families. As a mother, I say to our visitors in the gallery that I cannot even comprehend what it was like for your mothers to lose you. It is wrong. It is not only wrong that people's children were taken away but also inconceivable that it ever happened in Australia. With this report, we are doing the right thing. We have a responsibility to ensure that the legacy of trauma is addressed and that we continue along that lengthy process of healing and reconciliation.

The committee travelled around the State extensively for this committee report, which was really important. It was important that we went to the places the people in the gallery had been in and that we had a chance to somehow try to begin to comprehend what they went through. I mention particularly the visits to the three homes where we were, first, with the Coota Girls and the aunties, who gave their time to us so generously and so selflessly to take us through parts of their journey. I am devastated that I was not able to visit the Kinchela

Aboriginal Boys Training Home, but I heard from my colleagues that it was also very confronting but extremely worthwhile in helping us understand a little of what our visitors in the gallery went through. I also thank the uncles and aunties at Bomaderry for the time they gave us as a committee.

The stories that we heard from the witnesses, some of whom are in the gallery, were heart wrenching. As I said earlier, we cannot even begin to imagine the pain that they went through and I do not think we should try to; but I think we should try to fix it and redress what happened in the past. That is what we want this report to do. There is a total of 35 recommendations, which is a lot—but they are all important and they are all things that we need to make happen. Other members have referred to the establishment of the stolen generations advisory committee, and I think that needs to be a key focus. Our visitors in the gallery are the only people who understand the full extent of what they went through. Members of Parliament must recognise and acknowledge that and have them as part of this process continuously and into the future. The advisory body should be a key guiding body for the Premier and for the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to ensure that we review the progress of this report and ensure that its recommendations are implemented effectively and efficiently.

The other issue to which I wish to refer is financial compensation. Members of Parliament are aware that no dollar figure will ever be enough. No financial compensation will ever repair the damage that was done to the survivors of the stolen generations. Members of Parliament also know that for some who are present in the gallery that is not what it is about, and we respect that. We respect that there are different views about the best way to go forward, but we still agree that there should be a financial reparation scheme in New South Wales that is developed in close consultation with the advisory committee to which I have referred. The scheme should also provide appropriate communal and individual responses, including a personal letter of apology from the Premier and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. Members of the committee think that is most important.

The issue of healing has been raised as being of paramount importance to the survivors and their descendants. It was probably one of the most common themes that came up during all 10 hearings of the committee. To garner support for collective healing initiatives, programs, forums and community centres, we want the survivors to tell us what we need to do to help them to heal. Recommendation 3 makes the case very clearly that we should adopt a multidimensional approach so that survivors can heal at their own pace, and heal as individuals. But they can also heal as a community and as a family because that is what they are and that is what they have become. We respect and acknowledge that.

Another issue that was raised frequently during the hearings was the loss of culture, the loss of language, the loss of identity and the survivors' connection to country. Therefore, one of the recommendations asks for more funding for the Family Records Unit of Aboriginal Affairs so that we can help our visitors in the gallery gain access to information they need about their families and their past. The committee also wants continued oversight from the Premier and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. They will have responsibility for the Government's implementation of the outcomes from this inquiry and report back to Parliament in a couple of years. That is important. Many members have referred to this already, but we do not want the report to sit on a shelf, gathering dust. We do not want to have done all that good work, and been entrusted by our visitors in the gallery to do that good work, and then not see the report go anywhere. The idea is that, with the survivors' support and with them as the driving force, there will be continued oversight of implementation of the recommendations. I know that is incredibly important to members of the committee.

I conclude with a few thank-yous. I acknowledge, as other members have, the committee staff: Teresa McMichael, Tina Higgins, Emma Rogerson and Sarah Dunn. I thank them. The report they helped members of the committee to shape is incredibly important and I think it will end up being quite historic. I think all the committee staff are exceptional, so thank you and well done. I also thank the Hansard staff, who came along and were part of our hearings on the site visits. They were brilliant, as always, and we are very lucky to have them and the work they do for us. I acknowledge on behalf of the committee staff and the Hansard staff that they also had to deal with the emotional aspects of this inquiry, and some days were very challenging. Members certainly felt that emotion, and I know that the committee staff and Hansard staff did as well. Thank you for being a part of this process with us. I also thank other members of the committee for their respect and diligence throughout this process. This was above politics. We all went in with a genuine intention to do what we could to make things better for people who deserve a better future. I thank members of the committee for that, particularly Ms Jan Barham.

We acknowledge and congratulate her because without her this report would not have happened. We are very lucky to have Ms Jan Barham in this place. Finally and most importantly, my most sincere and heartfelt thanks go to the people in the gallery today, members of the stolen generations, their families, their supporters. They lodged submissions and came to speak to us. You did not know us; you had no reason to trust us and share your stories, but you did. You let us in so we could understand a little about what you went through. There is no doubt that what happened to members of the stolen generations was wrong. We are sorry that it happened, and

your stories touched us all. Your willingness to share your experiences with us has meant that we have been able to put together this report and make recommendations. This means we can do what needs to be done to correct the terrible mistakes of the past.

**The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (11:40):** I start my speech today by repeating the very first words I spoke in this House:

I wish to begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of this land, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. I thank them for their continued custodianship, and so I pay my respects to the eternal Gadigal elders, and any other Indigenous people here, and offer a sincere hand of friendship on the journey towards reconciliation. I am immensely proud to be a member of the Labor Party, which has a long history of working respectfully with Indigenous people, and now in this place, I look forward to continuing our commitment to address the practical inequities that still, shockingly, befall many Indigenous Australians.

I commend the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3 report "Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales: Unfinished Business" to the House. I am immensely proud of this report and its recommendations that will address these practical inequities that I spoke of in my inaugural speech. I am also immensely proud of the way that the committee has worked together to deliver this report unanimously. It has not always been easy, but we have worked together in the best interests of the stolen generation survivors, their families and their healing. I thank my fellow committee members and our chair, Ms Jan Barham, for their work, for their cooperation and for the friendships we formed and cemented along the way.

It is hard to speak about the journey that we have been on for the past seven months in under 10 minutes. Many stories have been shared with us, some for the first time. It has been my privilege to be a member of this committee, and I feel a sense of responsibility as a custodian of the stories shared with us. I thank everyone who has participated in our inquiry, made a submission or spoken to us at a public hearing or during one of our site visits. Some of our most moving and memorable reflections were not caught by Hansard, but were given as an aside or quietly as we toured some of the former homes. I especially thank Aunty Isabel, Aunty Doreen, Aunty Shirley, Aunty Lorraine, Uncle Richard, Uncle Lester, Uncle Michael, Uncle Manuel, Uncle Harry, Aunty Christine, the Coota Girls Corporation and Kerrie Kelly, the Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation and Dr Tiffany McComsey, and the Bomaderry Children's Home Incorporated and Matthew Byers. They have shared so much with us, and we have hugged and cried with them. Their contribution to this report has been invaluable; we simply could not have done it without them.

I also thank the committee staff, especially Teresa, Tina, Sarah and Emma, for the careful and considerate manner in which they supported us to undertake our work. We held 10 days of public hearings in Sydney, Wagga Wagga, Kempsey, Grafton, Broken Hill, Walgett and Nowra. We visited the former homes at Cootamundra, Kempsey and Bomaderry. This simply would not have been possible without the committee's organisation, care and incredible attention to detail. We thank them. Finally, I thank my staff member Blake Mooney. He is a Wiradjuri man and he accompanied the committee on several of our regional visits. His counsel has been so important as I tried to comprehend the enormity of the issues we faced and the tragedy of the stories we heard.

It is difficult to estimate how many children were taken in New South Wales, first under the Aborigines Protection Act 1909 and then under the Child Welfare Act 1939. Both those pieces of legislation were passed through this very Parliament. Peter Read, in his informative booklet "The Stolen Generations: The removal of Aboriginal children in NSW 1883 to 1969", estimates the number at 6,225, with 825 going through the Kinchela and Cootamundra homes between 1939 and 1969. The reality is that we may never know. Throughout the inquiry we heard about how records have been at best lost and at worst purposefully destroyed. We hope that our recommendations regarding how the remaining records are accessed and managed will allay the fears of stolen generation survivors and their families, and allow them easy access in the future.

Although our report is lengthy, at nearly 300 pages, it is built upon the foundation that is the Bringing Them Home report. I pay tribute to that groundbreaking report. That report first recommended that financial reparations be provided to survivors of the stolen generations—but that was 20 years ago. As stolen generation survivors age, the need for urgent action becomes more important. I am immensely proud that our inquiry has unanimously, across party lines, recommended that a financial reparations scheme be established in New South Wales. Despite being the first State Parliament, under the leadership of former Premier Bob Carr in 1997, to apologise to the stolen generations, we are not the leader when it comes to financial reparations. Tasmania has already implemented and South Australia is currently implementing various schemes for their stolen generation survivors. We hope to learn from those experiences and give survivors a right of appeal in a trauma-informed environment.

Whilst we received many submissions arguing for a tribunal system for reparations, we were guided by the survivors themselves, and the diversity of opinion meant that we wanted to create a system that would cause the least amount of trauma possible to survivors. But I want to be clear: These financial reparation payments are

not compensation. No amount of money can undo the trauma and pain that has been inflicted. Indeed, I think the definition of reparations provided by the Federal Defence Abuse Response Taskforce is equally applicable here:

Reparation payments are not paid as compensation for loss or damage... Payments made under the Scheme are a means of acknowledging that abuse was wrong, should not have occurred, can have a lasting and serious impact, and mismanagement by Defence is unacceptable.

Unfortunately, I do not have time to talk to all 35 recommendations. I am so proud that there will be annual reporting on this issue to the Parliament and ongoing advice from the stolen generation survivors directly to the Premier and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. I wholeheartedly agree with the importance of restoring culture, language and identity as part of the healing process. One issue that I have pursued throughout the inquiry is the need for a memorial to the stolen generations both in Sydney and around the State. I must commend the memorial at the site of the former Bomaderry Children's Home. It is incredibly moving, and I hope that it will soon be one of many. Memorials are a key method of guarding against repetition, as is early intervention and support for Aboriginal families. But fundamental to our report is the importance of healing, and especially collective healing. We understand that this healing happens differently for each survivor and their family, and we have endeavoured to provide for a range of healing measures for both survivors and their families to address the ongoing and intergenerational trauma.

I feel incredibly privileged to have been able to experience this inquiry—to hear these stories firsthand, to visit these places that are significant to our State's history with the very people who lived through the trauma. There is no doubt that my experiences on this committee will stay with me forever and shape my time in this place. In preparation for and after my daughter's arrival, I read a lot about parenting and the different theories on routines and otherwise. Eventually I surmised what most parents know instinctively: As long as you love your children and show them that love and support, they will flourish. It struck me time and time again during this inquiry that we as a State so brazenly and actively deprived generations of Aboriginal children of that parental love. It was the State that threw small children into jail cells for criminals and it was the State's institutions that told them to think white, act white, be white. As a mother, as a parliamentarian, I am so sorry, and I hope that today we can go some way to righting those wrongs. I commend the report to the House.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES (11:50):** I begin by acknowledging those present in the gallery from the stolen generation, and their families and friends who are here to support them. I thank those who travelled long distances to be here today. We appreciate that they are present to hear members' contributions on the report of General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3. I thank Kim Healey for allowing us to use his artwork on the cover of the report; it is absolutely beautiful. I thank the facilitators of the Coota Girls, Kinchela Boys Home and Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home for allowing us to visit the sites, and for sharing their experiences and pain. The ability to empathise and understand survivors' experiences was assisted by visits to those sites and hearing their personal stories.

I commend the committee chair, Ms Jan Barham, for her ability to chair a very difficult inquiry. When dealing with people's emotions it is difficult to ensure that victims have a voice and are heard. Working to ensure that everyone came together to deliver a unanimous report is a credit to her ability as chair, and I congratulate her. I thank the committee and Hansard staff for everything they did to ensure that the report was completed. This debate is time limited. I would like to speak on all 35 recommendations but I have chosen to restrict my remarks to a couple of key issues. One of them is the importance and significance of healing. One witness, the chair of the Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation, Uncle Manuel Ebsworth, stated:

Let's be a family. Let's unite and get rid of this hate which was the past and let's all heal together.

It is a significant contribution to this report. Prior to the inquiry I did not appreciate the significance of healing and the journey of healing for the Aboriginal community. The concept of healing for Aboriginal people is different from that of non-Aboriginal people and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. There are different and unique healing journeys across each community and for each individual. The Healing Foundation defines Aboriginal healing as, "restoring and reaffirming one's sense of pride in cultural identity, connection to country and participation and contribution within the community through spiritual, emotional and social health and well-being". Inquiry participants referred to a range of activities that can help people heal, including individual counselling services, collective healing, healing centres, support groups, and performance in the arts through storytelling, as well as education and opportunities to explore history and cultural studies.

Unfortunately, the importance of healing was not embraced 20 years ago following the release of the Bringing Them Home report. During our inquiry we met with many people who voiced the urgency of healing programs to support ageing survivors and their families. Any healing programs implemented to meet individual and collective needs must encapsulate a holistic approach and be decided by, or at least involve, genuine engagement with Aboriginal people and communities. Over the years some programs and services have been implemented by Australian as well as New South Wales governments to support healing for Aboriginal people.

More recently, healing has been incorporated into the State Government's policy. While the journey to heal is a long road, healing programs and initiatives play a significant role in supporting survivors, their families and communities.

Evidence reveals the power of collective healing for those who have experienced traumatic events, such as being forcibly removed from their family's communities. We acknowledge that, especially for those who were institutionalised after they were removed, healing will allow survivors to benefit from addressing grief, loss and trauma that is the legacy of being forcibly removed. The healing centres are dedicated safe places within the community, where individuals can go to heal, be with others and feel supported. The committee heard that the current methods of enabling people to come together to heal outside the healing centres have not been ideal. The chief executive officer of Kinchela Boys Home explained that resources are consumed by the logistics of accommodation, meeting rooms—which are often in hotels—and facilitators to bring people together. This position was supported by Coota Girls and the Children of the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home Incorporated.

The committee visited the Clarence Valley Aboriginal Healing Centre, and I thank the centre staff for hosting us and taking the time to explain the healing programs they offer. Those programs are supported by local Aboriginal community organisations. There are healing programs provided to the community through the healing centre such as support groups and workshops. We also had the opportunity to visit the healing garden, which is a vital part of healing. The Clarence Valley Aboriginal Healing Centre is currently under construction. We were given the opportunity to walk through the garden as the vision for it was explained to us. It will include native medicine and bush tucker plants from each area, as well as a dedication to members of the stolen generation. The committee heard evidence that healing centres engage and empower people to take responsibility for their own healing.

Although healing centres can vary depending on the needs of the community, they have a number of common principles. First, they aim to strengthen the connection between families, communities, land and culture. They are physically and socially a safe place to be. They aim to overcome the causes and symptoms of trauma and meet the healing needs of the community. Importantly, they are managed by Aboriginal people. The committee has requested that the Government collaborate and provide support—both financial and non-financial—to the Coota Girls Aboriginal Corporation, Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation and the Children of Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home Incorporated to establish healing centres on behalf of individuals who were formerly institutionalised in those homes and their families. This will not address all the suffering and pain that members of the stolen generation have endured; it is one step.

Committee members had the opportunity to visit the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home. I thank its representatives for that time. We visited the memorial garden dedicated to the remembrance of members of the stolen generation. Uncle Sonny Simms, founder of the memorial garden, advised that two ceremonies had been held in the garden; one when the garden was first opened in 2001 and another marking the 100-year anniversary of the home's establishment. He acknowledged that many people attended on those occasions, including someone from the United States. In 2006 two memorials were unveiled on the site of the former Cootamundra Aboriginal Girls' Training Home. One is a replica of a wall that the children sat on bearing an inscription, "Sitting on our wishing well, waiting for family to take us home". The other is a group photograph set in polished stone that is symbolic of a mother coming up the driveway to take her child, or children, home.

There are other memorials and sites commemorating the stolen generation that are open to the public, and I encourage people to visit them. I recommend the memorial at the Australian Botanic Garden in Mount Annan, which was established with the support of the New South Wales stolen generations committee, the botanic gardens trust and Link-Up NSW. As I said, the report contains a number of recommendations. I encourage everyone to examine the report in detail because it is extremely important. It builds on some of the work done but, most importantly, it lays the foundations for what must still be done. I have been asked to present a message to the Premier on behalf of the survivors of Bomaderry Children's Home, Cootamundra Girls Home and Kinchela Boys Home. The message is simple:

The past cannot be undone. It is the present and future that you and this government have the once in a lifetime opportunity to address and direct. We are talking about addressing our trauma and the intergenerational trauma that continues to destroy the lives of our descendants, families and communities. To successfully address the issues raised in this report requires us, the Stolen Generations survivors, to be your partners. This message is an invitation to you to form a genuine partnership with us.

I commend the report to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan):** I acknowledge in the gallery a former colleague of some members, Senator Lee Rhiannon. Welcome back.

*Bills***STEEL INDUSTRY PROTECTION BILL 2016****Second Reading****Debate resumed from 2 June 2016.**

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE (12:02):** It is a privilege to have witnessed the debate on the report entitled "Reparations for the Stolen Generations in New South Wales: Unfinished Business". It makes me proud to be a member of this House. I congratulate my colleagues who served on the committee on their work on the report.

**The Hon. Lynda Voltz:** Point of order: We have just concluded an important debate, but it is also important that we hear this debate. I ask that we wait until the gallery has cleared so that we can hear what the Hon. Greg Pearce has to say.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan):** That is probably appropriate.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** I have enjoyed listening to the points made by members in their contributions because they open up a very old debate. I have also enjoyed during my study of Australian history reading about the ongoing debate between free-traders and protectionists. I am pleased to say that I am a long-time free-trader. The evidence supports the free-trade cause rather than the protectionist cause. That is particularly true in Australia, where fortunately we have not indulged in a great deal of the protectionism that is genuinely, but very naively, proposed in this legislation. Australia has prospered because it has been an exporting country. We have been able to pursue industries, innovation and our natural advantages to ensure that we are a leading economy in the world, notwithstanding our diminutive size and the tyranny of distance and other issues that we must overcome.

We have witnessed several attempts to deal with the reality of the steel industry in the modern world and marketplace. At one extreme, we saw what happened at Newcastle. The Newcastle steelworks were closed down because we recognised several decades ago that we could not compete with changes in the world economy and the world marketplace. What did that do for Newcastle? Newcastle is a success story. Having closed the steelworks, with help it has become a dynamic regional centre by building on its other natural advantages. It is the biggest coal export port in the world, but it is now also a centre of tertiary education excellence—it exports education to South-East Asia and the rest of the world—it is a great tourist destination and a defence hub, and I am told that it is a great place to visit and to call home.

An alternative approach to change is what took place in Port Kembla, in which I have had significant involvement. The direction taken was to maintain our steel industry to the extent that we were internationally competitive and able to export, but also to recognise during a difficult transition process the need to focus on what we can do well. We cannot maintain an industry that cannot compete on the world market. Newcastle has had three difficult stages. The first occurred some time ago, when the decision was made to close down parts of the steelworks. That caused considerable angst, unemployment and problems in the region. However, with a lot of government help and attention to innovation, the region responded.

More recently, in 2011, when I was the Minister for the Illawarra, BlueScope recognised that it could not continue to operate as it had and that it needed to restructure or to close. In an example of cooperation and good government, the then Federal Government, the State Government and BlueScope combined to establish what we called the Illawarra Region Innovation and Investment Fund. Importantly, we were not spending money trying to maintain a dying industry; we were spending money and making an effort to innovate and to invest in the region, and that worked very well. When I last looked at the fund, I found that it has supported \$90 million worth of investments. Those investments created 888 jobs. We supported a wide range of investment. I was pleased to see a great deal of investment in information and communications technology [ICT] and innovation, ranging from multinational companies like CSC Australia—

**The Hon. Lynda Voltz:** Have you got a photo?

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** For the benefit of the Hon. Lynda Voltz, I will bring her the photo. There were other local companies such as Lumina Administration, One Wealth and VanceInfo Technologies. That successful effort in the region was not achieved without a great deal of pain. The most painful moment of all was having to attend a press conference with former Prime Minister Julia Gillard—an incredibly painful exercise. After that experience I can understand why the Labor Party felt it had to return to Kevin Rudd. I cannot imagine having to do that.

Continuing the Illawarra and BlueScope story, recently it became clear that notwithstanding all of BlueScope's efforts, it could not continue with its operations. It had to restructure once again and focus on the



products that it produced to ensure they were competitive and export worthy. It was a difficult time. The unions acted responsibly, there was a reduction in jobs and the successful part of the business was saved and promoted. Steel is not a uniform product; various types of steel are made. This issue was brought home to me very early in the Liberal-Nationals Coalition term in office when the WIN Stadium had the misfortune of having its roof blown off. As Minister I spent a lot of time in Wollongong trying to resolve that problem. I spent a few evenings in Wollongong doing things so that I could get up the next morning and continue with my work.

*[Interruption from gallery]*

**The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps:** Point of order: The rules of the House are that interjections from the gallery are not permitted. It would be good to remind people in the gallery that interjections are not permitted at any stage.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Bronnie Taylor):** Regarding the point of order, the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps is correct. Interjections from the gallery are not tolerated. I acknowledge that. I request that everyone keep this discussion civil and respectful and listen to the member speaking.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** As I was saying, I wanted to fix the WIN Stadium roof after it blew off as it was an important example of the Government's interest in the region. I also wanted to make sure that the St George Illawarra games would take place at the stadium during that season. The first thing I said was, "Let us get the steel from BlueScope." I was astonished and surprised when the answer I received was, "BlueScope cannot make that steel. They do not make that steel. We cannot get it from BlueScope because they cannot make it." That was a real surprise but it was factual.

The third example to which I would like to refer involved the steel industry in South Australia. The steel producer in South Australia embarked on a program of expansion using a product that was subject to marketplace pricing and competition. That company overstretched itself and it is now in real crisis. Will that issue be fixed if governments buy more Australian steel? Can our steelmakers produce the sort of steel that we need to buy? We are already buying as much steel as we can. Other members have spoken about this issue and it is a matter to which I will refer later. The concept that we can make an industry survive when it is not competitive internationally and cannot export and make a profit is genuine but ill-founded. It will not work and it is best described as throwing good money after bad.

I am very much in favour of sensible packages that stimulate growth, development and innovation. Again I mention the Illawarra example that I used earlier. We invested in that part of the steel business that was capable of competing and surviving. With the aid of steel industry representatives and stakeholders from the local community, the rest of the package was used to invest in businesses that could take up the slack and support the region. That is what we should be trying to focus on at the moment. I hope that whichever side wins the election—I know which side I want to win—

**The Hon. Rick Colless:** Do you know which side is going to win?

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** We are pretty sure which side will win. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull will be back in South Australia delivering on innovation and assisting communities to transition to modern, sustainable, exciting and innovative business models. That is the choice that we have. It does not make any sense to try to prop up an industry by making governments buy products that cost 20 per cent more. Rather we must ensure that our regional development packages support businesses and enable growth in our industries. Since the Liberal-Nationals Coalition came to office a number of programs have been implemented to support businesses in the regions.

This Government's Bridges for the Bush program is assisting in improving vital local infrastructure—the sort of construction in which the Government wants to play its part. When the New South Wales Government builds bridges it uses a significant amount of Australian steel and it buys an enormous amount of steel from local producers. I am told that between 2012 and 2015 the Government purchased approximately \$26 billion in construction goods and services, \$17.2 billion of which was used to purchase goods from New South Wales suppliers and Australian based businesses. We do not need this legislation to encourage the Government to buy locally, as that is what it does all the time.

**Mr David Shoebridge:** Spain is not local.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** That is very good, David. The issue is how do we deal with the fact that we are in a global market? I do not think Mr David Shoebridge was in the Chamber when I commenced my speech. The debate between free-traders and protectionists has been an interesting one for a long time. We have an international structure of trade agreements, particularly the free trade agreements. In my past life I spent time working on international agreements in the environmental space and it is complex and difficult to negotiate international agreements. Returning to this protectionist legislation would not only be counterproductive but

would also destroy the hard-won international level of respect that Australia has earned when negotiating these agreements. If we want Australian industry and consumers to have access to global markets and to realise the benefits of our free trade agreements, we have to adhere to them.

This bill, which would mandate the use of Australian steel in New South Wales Government and local government construction work, would breach the terms of the free trade agreements that successive Australian governments have signed with other countries to eliminate tariffs and other restrictions on trade between countries. This is not just about trying to prop-up an industry; it will destroy our reputation and standing in international affairs. We must realise that we are not Donald Trump; we are a country that depends on our export relationships to maintain and deliver the lifestyles to which we have become accustomed. I cannot support a piece of legislation that would prompt unwanted responses. Inevitably, when we adopt protectionist policies they are met with retaliation and protectionist policies from other countries. It is interesting to watch the American election process. I suspect that if a president who has those protectionist attitudes is elected, America will not be able to implement them because the institutions in the United States of America, which is very much like Australia, is adherent to international law and international treaties, and it will not go down the track of protectionism that we are talking about.

This subject has not been discovered in this debate today. The Senate Economics Reference Committee which is inquiring into the future of the Australian steel industry was recently advised that Australia was the most active initiator of retaliation cases in trade relations in 2015. Interestingly, the second and third most active initiators of retaliation cases in the same period were Mexico and the United States of America respectively. If we want to see retaliation and if we want to see our hard-won international relations, rights and obligations diminished, this is the route to go down. We already have a successful purchasing regime. We have a policy of developing innovation and investment in assistance packages that work to help regions compete in the modern world and that is what we should be doing.

**The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ (12:23):** My response will be brief, but some of the comments of the Hon. Greg Pearce must be refuted. Free trade agreements seem to be the main concern of the Hon. Greg Pearce, but he failed to mention that America already exempts its steel industry from the Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement. He spoke about what we do with free trade. As I said, America already exempts its steel industry, but the minute we mention that we want to do something for our steel industry and that this Government wants to make a choice about where to spend its money, lo and behold free trade is up for grabs. It is the biggest load of nonsense I have heard come out of the mouth of the Hon. Greg Pearce in the whole time I have been a member of Parliament.

**Mr David Shoebridge:** That is saying something.

**The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ:** That is saying something. We also heard the Hon. Greg Pearce say that BlueScope Steel could not build the replacement roof for WIN Stadium. That is another load of nonsense. If he wants to check, he can ask the Secretary of the Australian Workers Union of the Port Kembla branch, who is sitting in the public gallery. He can ask him whether they can produce that steel. The answer is that they could. The Hon. Greg Pearce is filibustering to try to stop a bill that is completely consistent with what his Federal colleagues are doing with the submarine project. They have demanded that the submarines be built from Australian steel.

**The Hon. Shayne Mallard:** Defence is different. It is about national security.

**The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ:** Government members are saying that defence is different, that national security is different. Now they will learn about defence and national interest. If we do not have a steel industry, we do not have a defence industry and we do not have a national interest. Members stand up in this place and start banging on about the steel industry, but they will not do anything to help it. It is not unreasonable for us to look at our steel industry and to ensure that Australia still has one. We saw what happened in the 1980s. At that time I marched from Wollongong to Sydney when unemployment in Wollongong hit 30 per cent because the Fraser Government would not bring Australia into the competitive world.

The Labor Party has ensured that Australia has remained competitive. It has gone to the marketplace. We are the best at delivering competition. Government members are intent on destroying industry in Australia. If the fate of industry in Australia during the global financial crisis was left to Government members there would not be any industries. The reality is that the New South Wales Government, which is the biggest consumer of steel in the Australian market, has the right to choose where it purchases its products from.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Bronnie Taylor):** Order! I remind Government members that every member has the right to be heard in silence. Interjections are disorderly at all times.

**The Hon. LYNDIA VOLTZ:** Government members should remember that when they look at purchasing steel from overseas to build carriages for the Newcastle light rail. The former Minister for Finance and Services, the Hon. Greg Pearce, said, "We are building bridges and we are using Australian steel." There is nothing different in this situation. Government members will say and do anything to oppose any issue that helps the people of Wollongong.

**The Hon. Dr PETER PHELPS (12:27):** It is time to inject some reality into this debate, not the lachrymose feel opinions from the socialist element on the other side of the House. With apologies to Dusty Springfield, all the wishing and hoping and praying will not replace the objective realities that face the Australian steel industry. This legislation is a piece of narcissistic nativism on the part of The Greens. It is a bill more suited to a white Australia of 1916 than a globalised Australia of 2016. We are no longer shielded behind the skirts of Mother England with the corporatist friendly environment of imperial trade preference. I start from a basic principle. Instead of persisting with corporate welfare that always fails, Government should focus on things that we can do to boost the performance of industries. We must ask ourselves, "Does Australian steel manufacturing have the economies of scale to compete internationally?"

There are three individual mills in India that produce more than the entire Australian steel industry produces. There is a single steel mill in South Korea that produces three times as much steel as the entire steel industry in Australia combined. Part of the problem is how much it costs to manufacture steel in Australia. Of course, labour is the largest cost. A recent article on the steel industry noted that the United Kingdom had labour costs of around \$US200 per tonne of steel, whereas in India it was on \$US20 and in China about \$US10 per tonne. I suspect that the Australian per-tonne labour costs are closer to the costs in the United Kingdom than to India. The Australian Government submission in February 2016 to the Senate inquiry into steel said:

The direct labour costs are significantly higher for both the Australian BOF and EAF plants while overhead costs are significantly higher for the Australian BOF plant relative to the respective weighted world average costs.

The problem stems not only from high labour costs but also from uncompetitive business costs, especially energy costs, which are almost certain to go up under the current proliferation of loopy schemes to fight non-existent anthropogenic global warming. If you do not believe me just have a look at what happened to steel in renewable-friendly Britain.

None of these problems can be solved with protectionism, either by tariffs or by preferential buying arrangements. Nor do supposed spill-over and multiplier benefits justify the cost of steel industry assistance. Protectionism only harms consumers; it does not make companies or industries any more efficient. Australia has tried erecting tariff barriers and protecting local industries in the past. "Protection all round" was one of the pillars of what journalist Paul Kelly dubbed the "Australian settlement". The failure of this policy was stark. Paul Keating famously warned that Australia risked becoming a banana republic—and then Hawke, Keating and Howard progressively dismantled Australia's protectionist system.

The profound economic reforms of the 1980s and 1990s led to the uninterrupted decades of economic growth Australia now enjoys. Reducing protectionism enabled the free market to drive productivity reforms and increase living standards across Australia. A 2009 study by the Centre for International Economics found that reductions in protection boosted family incomes by nearly \$4,000 per year. Instead of persisting with corporate welfare that fails workers, communities and companies, government should focus on things that can boost the performance of businesses. Reducing crippling red and green tape, cutting Australia's uncompetitive company tax rates, improving flexibility in the workforce and upgrading infrastructure would all be better than trying to desperately hold off market forces with taxpayers' money.

The problem, it must be conceded, is not just labour costs. Arrium's failure was a product of management's bad decisions, especially the move towards vertical integration. A 2013 Ernst and Young report on steel worldwide concluded that "the enterprise value of the top 30 steelmakers over the last three years shows that vertical integration has either no effect or a slightly negative effect on the valuations of steelmaking companies". But now we are told we must pay for the Arrium mess. The South Australian Government has pledged \$50 million of taxpayers' money and, as always, now has the begging bowl out for Canberra to pony up another \$100 million.

There are some in the union movement who have claimed that the "costs are not significant and the pay-offs are high". If that is true, then the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union [AMWU] and the Australian Council of Trade Unions [ACTU] can pay for it, or the Australian Labor Party and The Greens can pay for it—but, no, they want taxpayers to pay for it. We are told that \$150 million is needed to save 5,000 Whyalla jobs. If these workers are not prepared to invest in their own future, then why not get the industry superannuation funds to invest in the project? As the AMWU's website proudly proclaims:

Media Super is one of the AMWU's official superannuation partners, along with Australian Super, CBUS and MTAA Super Fund.

Well, let us see them put forward the cash, take the risk, wear the losses or, if we are to believe the AMWU and the South Australian Government, reap the financial rewards of this investment. After all, as a good socialist trade union, surely the AMWU supports the socialist objective: worker ownership of the means of production. Now they have the opportunity to put their money where their mouth is. Or maybe they fear that worker control will simply lead to another debacle, like ACTU-Solo—some of us are old enough to remember it—for a group which demands all the benefits of capitalist production but has none of the entrepreneurial talent required to achieve it. In a prior contribution, the Hon. Penny Sharpe spoke about "throwing Illawarra under a bus", but Labor's own climate change policy does just that. Federal Labor makes it explicit:

We do recognise that there will be uneven impacts across Australia with some industries and regions impacted by change, especially those with a heavy reliance on fossil fuels like the Latrobe Valley, Illawarra, the Hunter and the Collie River Valley, along with other emissions intensive trade exposed sectors.

But I am sure that the AMWU, being the good left-wing union that it is, is solidly in support of this Labor environmental policy—a policy that will, by their own admission, throw the Illawarra and the Hunter under a bus. There was a time when industry was celebrated. The building of a new dam, a new factory, a new steel mill, a new rail line or a new power station were events that were cause for celebration back when we understood just how much work is required to stave off starvation and poverty for mankind. But now, 200 years into the most prosperous time in human history, we have forgotten what it takes to prosper. We have lost sight of just how real and terrible poverty and famine actually are. We think we can demonise those who produce, and celebrate those who redistribute, and that it will never come back to bite us.

At their worst, we see "environmental campaigners" like The Greens party celebrating poverty and the pre-industrial age, a time before electricity or coal or steel or modern vaccines, a time when life was short and brutal. Somehow this time has become idealised in the minds of some green leftists to be a golden age of peace, prosperity, harmony and virtue. What a shock they would have if they had to leave their cafes in the eastern suburbs of Sydney and work as hard as mankind had to back then, and suffer the hunger, fear, cold, and sickness that used to be an accepted part of life.

A large part of the problem stems from the fact that statisticians, like Labor and The Greens and the unions which support them, commence from the a priori assumption that because they see humanity producing and trading there will always be production and trade. They have accepted this fact as a given, requiring no further consideration. Instead, they have devoted themselves to dividing the spoils of that economic activity. But, oh, how wrong they were. I am sure some Australians assumed there would always be a domestic car industry, that there would always be a domestic whitegoods industry, that there would always be a domestic clothing, textiles and footwear industry, and that there would always be a domestic radio, TV and phonograph industry. Today they are all gone.

The unions demanded more and more, forgetting the iron law of economics: that no person can consume more value than they produce. These industries had corporatist industrialists running them—people who were too lazy to innovate, too comfortable to compete, and too cowardly to fight unrealistic union demands. Instead, they, in turn, demanded government protection from foreign competitors and became complacent, stagnant and ultimately dead. Despite their professed hatred of slavery and serfdom, the statisticians in The Greens, Labor and the unions think that they can take wealth with impunity because to them wealth is an anonymous, social, tribal product, born of no mother but springing forth like Aphrodite from the sea. But all wealth is produced by somebody and belongs to somebody. And the special virtue of capitalism which allowed it to outstrip its competitors was freedom, which led to the creation, not expropriation of wealth. It is morally obscene to regard wealth as an anonymous, collective product, and to talk casually about redistributing it.

The only fair market is a free market—and the bigger the market the freer it will be. Globalisation is an unqualified good for everyone. And within every category of product offered on a free market the prize goes to the one with the best value for money. Some say that the market is not free, that there is a thing they call "dumping". They say that foreign competitors are unfairly undercutting Australian producers. Let me address this directly and, in doing so, I again quote in this Chamber none other than Crikey's own Bernard Keane, who is hardly a man of my general political world view: The most insidious and damaging form of protectionism in Australia is ... anti-dumping measure—imposing additional tariffs on goods deemed to have been imported below cost—is so dumb an idea, and so damaging to the economy, that Australia should walk away from it entirely.

... there's no policy basis for anti-dumping measures, they're even less efficient than traditional protectionism, the use of them is increasing, and the current system harms Australia.

The traditional rationales for anti-dumping measures are predatory pricing and fairness. [But] ... the predatory argument is absurd—in a globalised trading system it's ridiculous to suggest another country's industry could impose higher prices subsequent to having forced an Australian industry to shut down via price competition.

That leaves the argument that it's simply "unfair" to Australian industries. But unfair to whom? Consumers and other industries that use dumped goods as inputs benefit from dumping. And the "fairness" argument applies as much to non-dumped imports as dumped products. If another country is dumb enough to subsidise the price of its exports so that Australian consumers and business pay less for them, that's a benefit for Australia, and certainly not a basis for Australia to punish itself by making them more expensive.

And in any event, most of the countries targeted by our anti-dumping protections are poorer than Australia—so on an international level, the fairness argument is reversed.

... [anti-dumping] processes also come with significant bureaucracy.

But worst of all, the current system hurts Australia. Consumers have to pay more for imported goods. Businesses face higher costs because they are unable to take advantage of lower prices offered by importers. These costs flow through the economy, distorting markets. Sectors like the steel industry come to rely on anti-dumping actions as a core part of their business model, rather than competing more effectively against imports. But because these costs are diffused across the economy, while the "benefits" of anti-dumping are concentrated in one sector or company, they're disguised from the public and policymakers.

... In the end it will be a question of getting it into the heads of politicians that anti-dumping costs Australians far more than dumping does.

But people say, "Oh, the foreign steel is inferior, and ours is much better." Inferior for what? Better for whom? Why not let the market decide? I note that The Greens in this place have long been critical of "gold plating" in the electricity transmission sector and of over-capitalised construction. Yet, here they come with a bill which promises to do precisely what they criticise. If a project needs a steel beam that lasts for 50 years, why should they be compelled to buy more expensive beams that last longer? Even now we are hearing murmurs that some sort of new mandatory standards for steel, enforced by government decree, will be introduced. Of course, like all such measures, they will be couched in the weasel words of "public safety" or "public good", which is precisely the sort of fabricated indirect protectionism about which over many decades in relation to beef and rice we have rightly railed against Japan.

Within every category of goods and services offered on the free market, it is the seller of the best product for the best relative price who wins the greatest financial rewards in that field. That occurs not immediately, or automatically, or by government fiat, but by the virtue—and I use that term in full recognition of its meaning—of the free market, which teaches buyers and sellers to look for the objective best and penalise those who act on irrational considerations. The free market demands the best, not the worst, that a person can produce. It demands the artful, not the slovenly. It demands the innovative, not the stagnant. And in this regard I condemn not merely this nonsensical bill and the rapacious unions it is meant to flatter as part of a turf control war between The Greens and the Left of the Labor Party over the heart, soul and, more importantly, the finances of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union but also the leadership of BlueScope—a group that took the company from \$50 per share in April 2007 to \$5 per share. I say this to BlueScope: Your one job is to make money. There is no other moral duty of a company. It exists to make money.

I had a look at something called "Our Bond" on the BlueScope website, which is a 183-word flaccid recitation of managerial-speak, social licensing and touchy-feely do-gooder-ness. But let me remind BlueScope's directors: Your one job is to make money. It is not, also according to your website, to work with non-government organisations [NGOs] in Malaysia, to fund a suicide hotline, to provide free housing in Indonesia, to have "Eat More Fruit" days at work, to partner with the Australian Institute of Sport [AIS] on athlete mentoring, to fund Indigenous scholarships, to host a health fair in Malaysia, or to promote:

... a new global certification scheme that will extend beyond environmental criteria to take into account ethical and community considerations as well as reporting, product design and biodiversity [for steel production].

I also say to BlueScope's directors: Your job is to make money on a free market, not to try to get an Order of Australia for your directors by ostentatious displays of corporate philanthropy, using profits that rightly belong to shareholders. So let me redraft your "Bond" for you: "Our goal is to make money". That's it. If that means taking a hard line over union wage claims, so be it. If it means calling on the Government for reform—not for bailouts or protectionism but for deregulation and reduced taxation—so be it. If it means retrenchments, so be it. And, if all that fails and it means winding up a business that can no longer compete viably in a globalised economy, then so be it.

The type of businessperson who seeks special advantages by government coercion creates a burden for all. And who pays? That is paid for by the overwhelming majority of businesspeople who paid the taxes and higher costs of such coercion but gained nothing. Who justifies such policies and sells them to the public? Statists who manufacture absurd doctrines, such as the public interest, or manufacturing strategic materials, or protecting regional jobs. One of the interesting features of this debate so far has been the demonisation of countries such as China. I was wondering where I had heard such words before. In fact, they come from the Fourth Intercolonial Trades Union Congress held in Adelaide in 1886 where it was unanimously agreed by the trade unionists present that Chinese immigration should be abolished:

... because—first, the competition of Asiatic against European labour is entirely unfair ...

That type of mood made its way further into the Australian Labour Party which, when writing the objectives of the Federal Labour Party in 1905, they were said to be:

... the cultivation of an Australian sentiment based on the maintenance of racial purity and the development in Australia of an enlightened and self-reliant community [took precedence over] the securing of the full results of their industry to all producers by the collective ownership of monopolies and the extension of the industrial and economic functions of the state and the Municipality.

In other words, as the historian Humphrey McQueen noted:

... the Labor Party [and the trade union movement of which it comprised] was racist before it was socialist.

This legislation is simply another example of the progressive demonisation of foreigners that we witnessed in the campaign by the Electrical Trade Union [ETU] prior to the last State election when nefarious Chinese elements were seen to be grasping for the State's electricity assets. I will not sit idly and pretend it is not happening. I will call it out for exactly what it is. Ultimately, it is from the pockets of other workers that the money will be stolen. Government has no money in and of itself. It takes money from others in the form of taxation. The taxed public has a right to demand and every right to expect that the money will be used in the most efficient manner possible. That does not mean featherbedding procurement projects for the sake of sectional interests. I oppose the bill.

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (12:47):** I oppose the Steel Industry Protection Bill 2016 introduced by The Greens. What a quaint title for a bill. It says it all and is straight out of the nineteenth century. It is a shame we do not have university students present in the gallery as we did last night because they could have derived a lesson in political history from this Chamber. We could have dressed Opposition members in bowler hats and waistcoats and have them smoking cigars and calling for protectionism. Why do we have Opposition members speaking? Why not instead have the busts that are displayed on the walls of this House delivering the speeches? In fact, Macarthur looks a bit like the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, the Hon. Adam Searle—or at least in many ways the hairdos are quite similar.

**The Hon. Sophie Cotsis:** If you want to attack a member, do so by substantive motion.

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** The Hon. Sophie Cotsis should take a point of order if she wants to interrupt me. Former Premier Jack Lang's ghost must be rattling around the Chamber. This motion is harking back to the 1920s, when the Sydney Harbour Bridge had to be built out of Australian steel.

**Mr David Shoebridge:** What have you got against the Harbour Bridge?

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** Mr David Shoebridge probably has something against the Harbour Bridge. He probably wants to pull it down because light rail will be going over it. I can see the paymasters of the Labor Party have directed those opposite to support this bill.

**The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones:** Point of order: There are a lot of interjections across the Chamber and it is very hard to hear the member's contribution to this debate.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Bronnie Taylor):** Order! There have been a lot of interjections during the debate. Members have a right to be heard in silence, even if their views are not shared. I ask members to show respect for those who are speaking.

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** Indeed, every member has a right to express their views in the Parliament, whether or not it is a filibuster, as claimed by the Hon. Daniel Mookhey. The fact is I do have a view on this bill and I reserve my right to express that view.

**The Hon. Daniel Mookhey:** Well express yourself.

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** I am sure the member will be able to express his view in Canterbury, when he is there next week. I can see the union lefties and the protectionists have joined forces, as pointed out by the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps, in the disgraceful unity shown by The Greens and the Labor Party on this bill. This bill is a dinosaur and, like the dinosaurs, if it passes that will guarantee that the steel industry will drown in the tar pits of economic stagnation, with the collapse of innovation and the loss of competitive purpose in industry. Who are the beneficiaries of this bill? The very people that those in the Labor Party and The Greens—and I note The Greens have left the Chamber and are not prepared to listen to this debate on their bill—lampoon and attack in this Chamber: the big bosses, overseas investors and the banks.

Any jobs that are protected by this legislation would be short term and on life support. They would remain on the State teat, only deferring what we believe is the inevitable decline of this industry. If we follow this Government's economic path, this industry will not decline. This bill will kill off innovation and cost the New South Wales economy investment and jobs. We do not have to look back far in history for evidence of this. How long did economic support of the car industry last for short-term political gains? The car industry received huge

subsidies and bailouts over decades, which discouraged innovation in the industry as well as its restructuring and redeploying into other areas. In the end, taxpayers had had enough of these subsidies. It was the same with Kodak and the shoe and textile industries in the 1980s and 1990s. These industries were subsidised and protected and are now deep in the tar pits.

The Government opposes this bill because it is the wrong way to support an industry. The Hon. Paul Green talked about protecting jobs, and this Government is genuine about protecting jobs. However, it is about growing sustainable jobs. The way to support the steel industry is to grow a stronger economy. More domestic consumers create more demand, as do more business and government consumers. They also build export potential and export markets for industries. This populist bill will almost certainly violate our free trade agreements. These agreements were negotiated by Labor and Liberal governments. Former Labor Prime Ministers Paul Keating and Bob Hawke are on our side in this debate. They would be ashamed of Labor Party members siding with The Greens in this populist way, which could set back our State.

If we want Australian industry and the consumers and workers of New South Wales to have access to and gain benefits from global markets, then we must adhere to the terms of our free trade agreements. This Cold War-era bill mandates the use of Australian steel in New South Wales government and local government construction work. That would breach our free trade agreements and trigger retaliation from our trading partners which would affect our other exports. Those opposite do not seem to care about our other exports—agricultural produce, natural resources, the growing area of professional services. As the Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Lands and Water, the Hon. Niall Blair, said in a speech in this place on 2 June, "Australia was the most active initiator of trade retaliation cases in 2015". Do those opposite understand what is meant by Australia being the most active initiator of retaliation relating to violations of free trade agreements? We lead the world in pointing out countries that are cheating or breaking agreements. Australia cannot be the dobber—to use an Australian term—one day and a cheat the next day.

If this bill were to pass, that would seriously compromise our global reputation. That leads to questions about sovereign risk from global investors in the thriving economy in New South Wales and risks to jobs growth. The Labor Party, particularly in Queensland and Victoria—and even in New South Wales after the Sydney Metro fiasco—and The Greens do not really understand sovereign risk. There would be a domino effect of economic consequences for the State and the country. Those opposite would like to be subsidising and protecting the steel sector today, but Mr David Shoebridge and the Hon. Daniel Mookhey would then try to pass similar bills to protect the meat industry, the grains industry, the minerals industry, the high-tech industry and insurance services, as all these exports would be under threat if this bill were to pass and affect our free trade agreements.

Let me put this in context. United States government procurement, to which our businesses have full access thanks to the Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement [FTA], is worth \$535 billion annually. That is 50 times the entire New South Wales Government budget—services, operational and infrastructure. That access would be put at risk by the passage of this bill. As my good mother always says: We are proposing to cut off our nose to spite our face. This bill will end up hurting more jobs—jobs outside the steel industry, perhaps jobs in innovative and competitive industries in the new economy that the Prime Minister talks about.

I find it offensive that implied in this bill is that The Greens and the Labor Party are the only parties that care about steel workers' jobs. I refer those opposite to the Payroll Tax Deferral (BlueScope Steel) Act 2015 as evidence that we do care about the jobs and livelihoods of workers and their families and the businesses that rely upon them. The Baird Government acted quickly to secure steel jobs in the Illawarra by extending \$60 million in payroll tax relief to help the company to maintain its steelmaking capability at Port Kembla. I know the Hon. Paul Green was a very enthusiastic supporter of this legislation—

**The Hon. Daniel Mookhey:** Still is.

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** And still is. The Hon. Paul Green, unlike those opposite, is motivated by general concern about the welfare of families. You are only motivated by your paymasters, the trade unions. You are only motivated by populist politics. You are only motivated because you know that if this bill gets through it cannot go anywhere else. It is a stunt.

**The Hon. Daniel Mookhey:** Point of order: The member knows that if he wishes to refer to members of the Opposition he should refer to their proper titles.

**The Hon. Shayne Mallard:** To the point of order: I was not referring to individuals but to them collectively.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Bronnie Taylor):** Order! I remind members that, according to previous rulings, their remarks should be made through the Chair. I ask members to contain themselves and to allow the member to be heard in silence.

**Mr David Shoebridge:** He is a goose.

**The Hon. Shayne Mallard:** Point of order: Mr David Shoebridge referred to me as a goose. I am a mallard, so clearly a duck. Madam Deputy President, I ask you to ask the member to withdraw his remark.

**Mr David Shoebridge:** I withdraw.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Bronnie Taylor):** Thank you, Mr Shoebridge.

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** That is enough of those fowl interjections. Some members did not want to hear me praising the Hon. Paul Green, but he is motivated by genuine concern for the welfare of families, as is this Government. However, we have a different approach to finding a solution to this problem. We believe that the best way to ensure jobs is by growing the economy, by growing the State's pie so there is more to go around for everybody. I need only refer to this week's historic budget. New South Wales has the strongest economy and is in the strongest budget position of any State. I know those opposite are embarrassed by this, but it is a fact. Last year the State Government provided the economic support for the creation by the private sector of nearly 142,000 jobs.

**The Hon. Catherine Cusack:** How many?

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** We supported the creation of 142,000 jobs.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Bronnie Taylor):** I will now leave the chair until 2.30 p.m.

**Debate adjourned.**

#### *Questions Without Notice*

#### **GOODS AND SERVICES TAX**

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (14:31):** My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. Will the Minister give the people of New South Wales a guarantee that the Government will not revive its campaign to increase the goods and services tax after the Federal election, and if not, why not?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (14:31):** You have to love the Leader of the Opposition. I do not know who writes his questions because they sell him a dud every day. Why the member would ask an economic question, given the credentials of the Opposition—

**The Hon. Penny Sharpe:** Evading the question again.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** I will get to the member in a moment. Just wait, you will get your chance. Most people understand that to change the goods and services tax, the Federal Government and all the States must agree to it. Unfortunately for some, there are a couple of Labor States. They will not be Labor for long. Queensland is going down and down at the moment; I do not like the chances of that Government remaining in office after the next election. The current Prime Minister, who will still be the Prime Minister after 2 July, has said, "No, we are not going to; people had a discussion about it and were not interested." They had a sensible discussion. That is what economic credibility is about.

The budget reply from the Leader of the Opposition included promises. I got out the magnifying glass and the scouts were running around trying to find out, but we could not discover how the Opposition is going to pay for them. It was the great silence. They said, "Me too, me too, we are going to put in an M4, the same as the Government. We are going to do the M5, the same as the Government." But how will the Opposition pay for it? Opposition members say they do not like tolls, so how will they pay for it? There either has to be a toll or the money is taken from consolidated revenue. The second option would require reducing funding for schools, emergency services and health. The Opposition must have a magic pudding. It will have to rub the lamp and not eat the pudding if it wants to find the money. That is how the Opposition will fund its proposals. Forget about the goods and services tax; I want to know what those opposite have put in the magic pudding. There were absolutely no answers in the reply from the Leader of the Opposition. Those opposite are silent because they know that, once again, their lack of economic credentials is evident to the people of New South Wales.

#### **REGIONAL ROADS FUNDING**

**The Hon. RICK COLLESS (14:35):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. Will the Minister update the House on his recent visit to Scone and Tenterfield, and the Government's historic level of regional roads funding?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (14:35):** The Government has an exceptional track record when it comes to delivering roads



and infrastructure projects across regional New South Wales. I thank my colleague, who has lived in the Tenterfield area and in his working life has covered more country across New South Wales than did some of the early explorers. There is a sole Country Labor member. In the recent regional roads announcement made by a great colleague of mine, the fantastic Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce—two boys on the road is bad news—a further \$24 million was committed to finish road upgrades. I asked him whether he knew Walt Secord.

**The Hon. Rick Colless:** And he said?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** He had never heard of him. I suspect that is probably disappointing for the member. A further \$24 million has been committed to finish upgrading the 42-kilometre stretch of Mt Lindesay Road between Legume and Woodenbong. It is a vital link for local traffic, industry and tourists travelling to south-east Queensland and down to the Northern Rivers. It is more likely people are leaving Queensland and travelling to New South Wales, given Queensland's Roads budget. There will be a further \$12 million invested on top of the \$5 million already invested to upgrade this notoriously dangerous corridor.

We had the great pleasure of announcing a further \$30 million injection into the Scone bypass. This includes an additional \$20 million in Federal funding—I love Federal funding—and \$10 million in State funding. This investment brought the overall commitment from both levels of government to \$55 million for this project. The additional funding will fast-track the design and construction of the bypass, which is a great result for the people and businesses of the New England. When the Coalition came to government in 2011 the economy was a basket case and there was an infrastructure black hole. Regional roads across the State were in dire shape and the bush had been severely neglected by Labor during its 16 years in office. If the party has only one Country Labor member, it is not paying much attention to regional New South Wales.

If Labor is running dead in the electorates so it can minimise its vote and play the Independents, it will not be putting much money in. That is what Labor did in Tamworth, Port Macquarie and all across the State. The Opposition was playing politics rather than looking after the people. It is simple arithmetic: If you want to drive down our votes, we drive down the money we put into the regions. If the Opposition believed in the regions and in its own people, it would put up the extra money. However, it did not do that. As usual, the Opposition applied the Hon. Walt Secord theory of politics before people.

**The Hon. Walt Secord:** Patience.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** If I keep mentioning the honourable member, Barnaby might know who he is. Since 2011 the Government has been implementing a number of programs that have already started to make a difference, not only to regional roads—*[Time expired.]*

#### DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLANS

**The Hon. WALT SECORD (14:39):** I direct my question to the Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Multiculturalism. Given that the Disability Inclusion Act commits local councils to making communities more inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities and requires them to produce disability inclusion action plans, when will these plans be finalised, and what will happen with the plans of councils that have been forcibly merged?

**The Hon. JOHN AJAKA (Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Multiculturalism) (14:40):** If the honourable member understood the Act and the time requirement for councils to submit their disability inclusion action plans, he would know that all councils are required to submit them by 30 June 2017, and that is what they are working to achieve. Councils are working on their disability inclusion action plans to ensure that they are submitted by 30 June 2017. In addition, my agency—Ageing, Disability and Home Care—is working closely with Local Government NSW to ensure that all assistance is provided to councils to make sure their plans are ready by that date. Recently appointed council administrators will undertake that task as part of their role. They will ensure that the action plans are finalised and submitted by 30 June 2017.

#### KINDERGARTEN AND PRIMARY SCHOOL GUN LICENCE PROPOSAL

**The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK (14:41):** I direct my question to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, representing the Minister for Justice and Police. I refer the Minister to the ABC online news yesterday about Kilkivan Kindergarten, which has been issuing its own licences for toy guns. Will the Government include a similar and innovative gun licensing scheme in kindergartens and primary schools in New South Wales to help young children learn the basics of gun safety and respect for firearms at an early age?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (14:42):** I understand that that is a serious question and that the member's motives are genuine. Looking after education and young people is the role of my colleague the Minister for Education, the Hon. Adrian Piccoli. I will refer the question to him for his consideration.

## STATE BUDGET AND REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

**The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK (14:43):** I address my question to the Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Multiculturalism. Will the Minister update the House on what the New South Wales Government is doing to assist refugees in New South Wales?

**The Hon. JOHN AJAKA (Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Multiculturalism) (14:43):** Refugee Week 2016, which runs from 19 to 25 June, is an opportunity to focus on the valuable contribution made by refugees to Australian society. It is also an opportunity for us to experience the rich diversity of refugee communities throughout this State. New South Wales is welcoming humanitarian entrants fleeing from the horrors of overseas conflicts, particularly conflicts in the Middle East.

As part of the 2016-17 budget, the Government is investing an additional \$146 million over four years to help refugees start a new life in this State and to build foundations for their long-term economic independence. Of that \$146 million, an extra \$32.4 million will be provided for specialised health services for refugees over four years. That will support refugees in navigating the health system and ensuring they have access to the services they need. An additional \$3.9 million will be provided to ensure that refugees arriving in this State are able to access private rental assistance. This will help them to enter and to stay in the private rental market. Another \$720,000 will be provided to support community hubs, which work with migrant and refugee women and preschool-age children. They help to create friendships and to support networks and to give a sense of belonging. They also help preschool children to be ready for school and offer services such as skills training and English classes.

Australia has a long and proud history of successfully resettling refugees and humanitarian entrants. At the launch of Refugee Week in Callan Park, Premier Mike Baird said that Australia should celebrate the contribution made by refugees and pointed to the fact that Australia has resettled 800,000 refugees since the Second World War. Over the past six months the New South Wales Coordinator General of Refugee Resettlement, Professor Peter Shergold, has spearheaded government preparations for the additional intake of Syrian and Iraqi refugees. I have attended many consultations, forums and workshops on behalf of the Government with Professor Shergold.

The budget measures I have mentioned are some of the results of that consultation process. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees this week released concerning figures that show more people are driven from their homes by war and persecution now than at any time since United Nations records began. A report entitled "Global Trends" noted that a total of 65.3 million people were displaced at the end of 2015 compared with 59.5 million people just 12 months earlier. The study found that, on average, 24 people were forced to flee each minute in 2015—which is four times more than a decade earlier, when six people fled every minute.

As our State prepares to welcome our share of migrants and refugees, we need to help people have their skills and qualifications recognised in Australia. We all know that one of the keys to settling in a new land is gaining employment. As we saw in this week's State budget, the New South Wales Government is funding a number of initiatives that will support refugees in rebuilding their lives. These initiatives are designed to ensure that all levels of government and non-government agencies work together to help meet the needs of refugees. Many people find Australia a difficult place to navigate when they first arrive, but we are lucky to live in one of the most culturally diverse States in the world. We come from more than 245 different birthplaces, we follow about 125 religions, and we speak more than 215 different languages. [*Time expired.*]

## RUSSIAN WHEAT APHID ERADICATION

**The Hon. ROBERT BROWN (14:47):** I direct my question to the Minister for Primary Industries. Given that the Russian wheat aphid can cause significant yield losses in cereal crops, will the Minister outline what preparedness measures are being taken in New South Wales to protect wheat and barley farmers from this highly invasive pest?

**The Hon. NIAL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Lands and Water) (14:48):** In mid-May 2016, the Department of Primary Industries and Regions in South Australia commenced its response to the detection of Russian wheat aphids in that State. Russian wheat aphids are a major pest and impact on wheat and barley. The aphid injects toxins into the plant during feeding, which retards plant growth, and heavy infestations can kill the plant. Due to the extensive spread of the aphid in South Australia, the Plant Health Australia National Management Group agreed that it is not technically feasible to eradicate the pest. Since then, the aphid has been detected in western Victoria.

Russian aphids can spread quickly using various methods, including wind and flight dispersal. Awareness is high across grain-growing areas in New South Wales. Growers, agronomists and industry representatives have

been instructed to report both observations of the absence of symptoms or suspect symptoms to the New South Wales Department of Primary Industries. A New South Wales-wide network of growers, agronomists, grains industry representatives, Department of Primary Industries [DPI] and Local Land Services staff is aware of the incident and is being kept up to date on information about the infestations in South Australia and Victoria and encouraged to continue to report crop status observations. New South Wales DPI has prepared, posted and promoted Russian wheat aphid web pages and online reporting tools. Reports of observations of crops in New South Wales are being received by New South Wales DPI. To date, Russian wheat aphid has not been detected in New South Wales.

A rumour of a detection in the Central Murray area of New South Wales was misinformed. Samples submitted from that area that gave rise to the rumour were examined and found to be negative for Russian wheat aphid. However, given the nature of the pest and its means of spreading, Russian wheat aphid is very likely to arrive in New South Wales in the near future. Working with jurisdictions, industry, technical experts and Plant Health Australia, New South Wales DPI is actively involved in developing management plans for implementation when the aphid is detected in this State. The Russian Wheat Aphid National Technical Group will develop industry advice on options for treatments, management and breeding resistant crops.

#### LOCAL LAND SERVICES

**The Hon. MICK VEITCH (14:50):** I direct my question without notice to the Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Lands and Water. I refer to the proposed \$19 million in asset sales by Local Land Services detailed on page 6-25 in Budget Paper No. 3 and his officer's comments in today's edition of *The Land*. Will the Minister guarantee that the proceeds from any sale of property, plant and equipment from Local Land Services will be retained by Local Land Services?

**The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Lands and Water) (14:51):** I thank the member for his question. In relation to Local Land Services [LLS] and the article that he refers to in today's edition of *The Land*, it is quite clear—and I also made this clear in my interview yesterday on a similar matter during *Country Hour*—that there have been no decisions as to what assets may be sold within Local Land Services. We are definitely encouraging Local Land Services to look at their asset base and to come up with an accommodation strategy. In line with existing Government policy, proceeds from any property asset recycling are retained within the organisation. That is the Government's policy.

**The Hon. Greg Pearce:** The Government property policy I put in and Labor opposed.

**The Hon. NIALL BLAIR:** I acknowledge the interjection. It was brought in by the former Minister. No properties will be sold without LLS agreeing to the sale. Where this is the case, it will be driven by local boys deciding what they want in order to provide better and different services in their area. It is not driven by a budget process but by a desire to improve services. There has been no directive from the board of chairs to require mergers or certain numbers of officers, et cetera. As I said, that is being looked at as a broader strategy.

Returning to the crux of the question, it is about making sure that the Government's policy is delivered. If Local Land Services looks at any assets and wants to redirect the funds into other areas, they will go back into Local Land Services. It is interesting that those opposite all of a sudden want to talk about what is happening with the budget in relation to Primary Industries, and particularly agriculture in regional New South Wales, because we listened to the Opposition leader's budget reply speech this morning and he left out agriculture. He also missed out—

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! I call the Hon. Lynda Voltz to order for the first time.

**The Hon. NIALL BLAIR:** When those opposite have one member who resides in regional New South Wales, it is interesting that they suddenly want to be regional champions and prosecute the case as to what is happening in our regional communities, particularly with Local Land Services and primary industries. Not only does this budget make a record contribution to the primary industries sector but also we are making sure we build the infrastructure that our regional communities need.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! I call the Hon. Mick Veitch to order for the first time.

**The Hon. NIALL BLAIR:** That is something the Leader of the Opposition failed to address in his budget reply speech. He absolutely neglected the primary industries sector and regional infrastructure. For those opposite to all of a sudden take an interest three days after we handed down the budget shows that they are not fit ever to hand down a budget.

## STATE BUDGET AND PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (14:55):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Lands and Water. Will the Minister update the House on how the 2016-17 New South Wales budget is supporting important programs within the State's primary industries sector?

**The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Lands and Water) (14:55):** The 2016-17 New South Wales budget delivers more than \$1.4 billion across the primary industries and lands and water sectors and includes an impressive program of capital works for our State. Our \$12 billion primary industries sector is the lifeblood of rural and regional communities. This year's budget sees the Government backing our farmers and investing money where it is needed most. Our primary industries sector—the largest and most innovative in the country—is in a sweet spot. The rising middle class in Asia is hungry for premium food and fibre products. Recent free trade agreements signed by the Commonwealth Government will also open up new markets, lowering previously prohibitive tariffs for a range of key commodities. The State's farming sector is best placed to capitalise on these opportunities. We have a world-class research and development program in the Department of Primary Industries that is about working hand in hand with industry and the farming sector to find the next big thing to drive on-farm productivity growth.

We also have world-class biosecurity and food safety systems in New South Wales, which give us a competitive advantage when targeting new markets. This year's budget supports those systems, with \$21 million allocated to our food safety systems, while also bolstering that research and development capability within the Department of Primary Industries. In 2016-17 almost \$10 million will also be spent on building the State's capacity to respond to new weeds and minimise the impact of established weeds through the NSW Weeds Action Program. But market access, biosecurity controls and food safety systems mean nothing if you do not have a plan and the infrastructure in place to cope with droughts. That is why this year's budget includes record funding of \$80 million for the Farm Innovation Fund, which provides low-interest loans for the installation of on-farm capital infrastructure that will help make a property more resilient—commonsense things like feed bins, silos, sheds, critical water infrastructure and fencing.

The budget also includes \$9 million for scholarships for farmers to undertake training and also hire in experts to help them develop a farm business plan. While much of the State is now experiencing excellent seasonal conditions as a result of widespread winter rainfall, it is important that we help our farmers to use the good times to prepare for the bad. I am also very pleased to report that \$159 million has been assigned for Local Land Services to continue their delivery of quality services. The New South Wales Government is also looking at how it can support the next generation of young people to enter the primary industries sector. Late last year I hosted a young farmer business roundtable. The Government has partnered with NSW Farmers to kick-start the Young Farmer Business Project, which includes the appointment of a Young Farmer Project Officer. This is just the start of that conversation. I am proud to welcome to the House today Sam Bush, who grew up on a mixed farming enterprise at Cootamundra and graduated from Hurlstone Agricultural High School in 2012.

Sam, or Bushy, as he is known to his friends and family, has been in my office for the past two weeks undertaking school experience. He is on track to graduate from the University of New England with a double degree in agriculture and law next year. He is exactly the type of person that our sector needs. I can say proudly that I now know a bush lawyer. Sam has been a great asset to my office over the past two weeks. I wish him all the best in his university studies and I wish him all the best in the future.

## COAL INNOVATION FUND

**Mr JEREMY BUCKINGHAM (14:59):** My question is directed to the Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Lands and Water, representing the Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy. Given that clean coal has failed to materialise as a commercial technology, despite billions of dollars being spent on research over the past decade, why has the Government allocated \$23 million to clean coal in its Coal Innovation Fund? Is this just wasting taxpayers' money?

**The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Lands and Water) (15:00):** I thank the member for his question. As the question was directed to my colleague in the other place, the Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy, I will refer it to him for a reply.

## BARDWELL PARK TRAFFIC LIGHTS

**The Hon. LYNDA VOLTZ (15:00):** My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. Given that in September 2014 the Government announced that Roads and Maritime Services had provided funding for the traffic lights at the corner of Hartill-Law Avenue and Slade Road at Bardwell Park and that since March this year the small businesses at Bardwell Park shops have had their customer parking reduced to four spots, when will the traffic lights be installed?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (15:01):** I thank the member for her question. I am going to make a risky assumption that she has her facts right this time. In several of her questions the facts and sources have been wrong, but on this occasion I am giving her the benefit of the doubt that they are correct. I will take the question on notice and return with an answer.

#### STATE BUDGET AND MARITIME PROJECTS

**The Hon. LOU AMATO (15:02):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. Will the Minister update the House on the funding in the 2016-17 budget for maritime projects across New South Wales?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (15:02):** I thank the member for his question. The last Labor person who was interested in maritime projects was Eddie Obeid, and we have not had any questions about it since. I am pleased to report that yesterday's historic budget allocated \$71 million for maritime projects across New South Wales. This Government is improving maritime infrastructure across the State so we can ensure our beautiful waterways remain safe and accessible for the more than two million people who go boating each year. This year's record budget for maritime projects includes funding for progressive upgrades to ferry wharves across Sydney, which will further improve services for customers and provide for more upgrades of existing boat ramps and the installation of new wharves and pontoons at key locations.

**The Hon. Trevor Khan:** Thanks, Dunc.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** My pleasure. While the Labor Party has not followed up in this area, the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party has. New wharves are being delivered as part of the New South Wales Government Transport Access Program, which is an initiative to deliver modern, safe and accessible transport infrastructure. We have upgraded 12 wharves around the city and the funding in this year's historic budget will allow this successful program to continue. Work is continuing on upgrades to McMahon's Point Wharf. This will deliver improved access for families with prams and wheelchair users who avail themselves of our ferry services. Importantly, this upgrade will provide capacity for extra ferry services into the future.

We are also committed to improving the facilities for recreational boaters. The \$70 million NSW Boating Now program continues to deliver 192 priority regional projects over five years from 2015. This program is delivering real benefits to the boating community, especially those in regional New South Wales. We have already delivered 12 projects under the NSW Boating Now program. This includes the redevelopment of the Huskisson Wharf and the construction of a new two-lane concrete boat ramp and pontoon at Narooma. If anyone sees a large boat with Corinthian columns on the back, that is the floating palace of the Hon. Rick Colless. It was previously owned by the member for Upper Hunter. A further 17 projects in regional areas are currently under construction. This includes improvements to the Lemon Tree Passage boat ramp at Port Stephens, where boating is a popular pastime for the community. Another 48 projects valued at more than \$10.8 million will commence construction in the next financial year.

We are not only improving infrastructure for recreational boaters but also recognise the importance of regional tourism for New South Wales. This Government is providing an additional \$29 million from the Regional Tourism Infrastructure Program for improvements to the port of Eden. This funding will include work to extend the breakwater and existing wharf, which will allow the world's largest cruise ships to visit the far South Coast for the first time. [*Time expired.*]

#### BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION LEGISLATION

**Dr MEHREEN FARUQI (15:06):** My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Multiculturalism, representing the Minister for the Environment. Will the Government commit to making the submissions to the proposed biodiversity conservation reform package public and when will they be published online?

**The Hon. JOHN AJAKA (Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Multiculturalism) (15:07):** I thank the member for her question. I will refer the question to the Minister for the Environment for an answer.

#### WESTCONNEX AND MINISTER FOR ROADS, MARITIME AND FREIGHT

**The Hon. GREG DONNELLY (15:07):** My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. Given the Minister's repeated non-attendance at WestConnex public meetings and rallies, why is he defying a direction from the Premier's office and refusing to defend the project and instead sending Parliamentary Secretary Ray Williams to defend it?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (15:07):** I suspect that is not a question written by the brains trust; it has the hallmarks of having been written by the Hon. Greg Donnelly. Most of these protests occur on the weekend.

**The Hon. Walt Secord:** Oh, you do not work on the weekend?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** I do work on weekends but, despite allegations, I like to get home to Crookwell on the weekend. As much as I love the time I spend in the city, my family and my home are in Crookwell and I like to go there occasionally. We do attend public meetings—

**The Hon. Greg Donnelly:** No, you.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** Well, I do as well. I attend council meetings.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! The Minister is answering the question.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** The Hon. Greg Donnelly might want to ask a supplementary question but he should give me a chance to answer this one. The Hon. Greg Donnelly asked me why I was not defending the program. I do not know where he has been hiding in the State because I have hardly been quiet in defence of this fabulous project. I will be out every day highlighting how good it is. In fact, I am benevolent enough to pay tribute to Anthony Albanese, who is a little modest about his early work on WestConnex. I do not know why he does not want the people in his electorate to know what great work he did in the early days to help us with it. His modesty is unbelievable. Albo, thank you.

**The Hon. Greg Donnelly:** Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance. The question specifically dealt with the issue of the non-attendance of the Minister. Mr President, I ask that you draw the Minister back to the subject matter of the question.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! The Minister had been generally relevant so I will not uphold the point of order.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** WestConnex will deliver more than \$20 billion in benefits to New South Wales and play an important role in supporting Sydney's expected population growth of 1.6 million in the next 20 years. The project will ease congestion on Sydney's roads and improve travel times. It is already creating jobs but it will create a lot more. The Government continues to be committed to keeping the community informed and engaged at all times. The Sydney Motorway Corporation has been engaging with local communities, businesses and local governments on all phases of WestConnex. The Sydney Motorway Corporation has distributed more than 972,000 community updates to homes and businesses along the WestConnex corridor. More than 500 briefings have been held, including council briefings, property owner meetings and stakeholder discussions. Fifty-four community information sessions have been held, where local residents can drop in and talk directly with the team planning and building the motorway.

Over the past year, a number of successful local community engagement events have been held at WestConnex information kiosks. In that time, more than 37,000 residents visited the WestConnex displays at shopping centres, including at Westfield Burwood, Westfield Hurstville, Marrickville Metro and Centro at Roselands. Detailed information on each section of WestConnex is also included in each environmental impact statement exhibited for community feedback as part of the formal planning approval process. The WestConnex website is continually updated and WestConnex videos have been translated into eight languages to ensure diverse communities along the corridor are properly informed.

**The Hon. GREG DONNELLY (15:11):** I ask a supplementary question. In the light of the answer that the Minister has just given, will he elucidate his answer with respect to the dates and locations of WestConnex public meetings that he attended and addressed?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (15:12):** I have not been to any of those public meetings. Let me tell the member why. Those public meetings were organised by The Greens and the anti-WestConnex groups. I met with genuine community groups in my office and in the community but I have not attended the other meetings. As we saw in the press today, more than \$400,000 was allocated by the City of Sydney council to sponsor those people to stop the work. Some people have genuine concerns. Sometimes we do not get everything quite right. I would prefer it if that never happened. However, in the delivery of infrastructure and in the process of dealing with the community sometimes we do not do something correctly. In those cases I have made a point, wherever possible, of talking to all those involved.

This Government has had meetings with several Labor members, including the Federal shadow Minister for infrastructure and his community group. As I said earlier, he is a keen supporter although he is a little shy

about it at the moment, as are many Labor members in the lower House who quietly slip into my office and tell me that WestConnex is a great project. They also say, "Penny Sharpe could be watching us." She set the precedent by deciding not to build the final stage of WestConnex, which was probably the most stupid political infrastructure decision that anyone in this State has made—with the exception of the decision about the Rozelle metro.

### LIONS CLUBS

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (15:14):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Multiculturalism. Will the Minister outline the contribution of Lions clubs to local communities?

**The Hon. Sophie Cotsis:** We want to know about the NDIS.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! I call the Hon. Sophie Cotsis to order for the first time.

**The Hon. Walt Secord:** Point of order: I would like to know how this question relates to the member's ministerial responsibilities. Does he fund Lions clubs?

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! The question is in order. I call the Hon. Sophie Cotsis to order for the second time.

**The Hon. JOHN AJAKA (Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, and Minister for Multiculturalism) (15:15):** Last month I had the pleasure of representing the Premier at the New South Wales Lions Club annual gala dinner at Parliament House. As a long-term Lion, I was particularly pleased to attend this important charity fundraising event, which was also attended by many members from both sides of this Parliament. Lions is a great volunteering organisation, and it is my privilege to be the Minister in the New South Wales Government with responsibility for volunteering. There are at least 2.1 million volunteers in New South Wales, contributing an estimated \$5 billion in value to communities across this State each year. In so many local communities Lions clubs form the heart and soul of this volunteering effort.

Recently, I visited the flood-affected areas of Picton with the local member Jai Rowell and was greeted by a team of tirelessly working volunteers, coordinated by incoming Lions District Governor Sharon Bishop. Volunteers keep local communities strong and resilient. There are very few events that I attend where the Lions are not represented or where someone present has not been touched by the positive impact of the Lions clubs working to support local communities. Whether it is in Sydney, where the volunteering rate is more than 33 per cent, or in regional locations where the volunteering rate is 41 per cent, Lions Club contributions are well recognised and appreciated.

Help from the Lions Club spans many areas in local communities, including disaster and emergency relief, community services, fundraising to help build local parks and community and sports centres, as well as support for a variety of medical research initiatives. The difference that Lions clubs make is extensive. I am proud to say that the New South Wales Government has supported more than 70 local Lions Club projects across the State, with funding in excess of \$1 million as part of the Community Building Partnership program. On 9 May, during National Volunteer Week celebrations, I was delighted to launch the New South Wales Volunteering Strategy 2016-2020. The strategy contains a package of initiatives that will support volunteering organisations and recognise that everyone who wants to volunteer should be supported to do so.

The strategy will provide tools, resources and actions that support volunteers at key life transition points. It will support organisations to develop flexible and responsive volunteer roles and approaches that respond to people's changing circumstances. It will also encourage people who are newly retired and nearing retirement to volunteer. The development of a New South Wales volunteer recruitment website will provide support to people who want to volunteer to link up with organisations and opportunities. The strategy also will expand and enhance the successful statement of principle in recognition of volunteers. I am pleased that the Volunteering Strategy 2016-20 will be supported by an allocation of an additional \$2 million. I thank the Lions Club for all its great work. I thank all the volunteers in New South Wales.

### CAMDEN AND PICTON FLOODS

**Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (15:19:5):** I ask the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, representing the Premier, a question without notice. Has a recent storm severely damaged shops, businesses and homes in Camden and Picton? Have insurance companies refused to pay out on policies because of a debate over whether damage was caused by or as a result of a storm or a flood? Will the Government urgently intervene to ensure justice for the owners of residences and businesses in Camden and Picton?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (15:20:2):** I thank Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile for his question. Although I do not have

direct knowledge of whether discussions have taken place between insurance companies and the State Government, I certainly know that has been the case in relation to other storm events, such as 12 months ago in the Hunter and in other areas of the State. I understand that the Premier has visited the region on two occasions. The first occasion was the day after the storm when the Premier was without the media. The second occasion was the following day when the Premier visited the area with the media—

**The Hon. Niall Blair:** And the Prime Minister.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** —and the Prime Minister to highlight how bad it was. I will refer this important question to the Premier for a detailed answer because we need to know. The Hon. Lou Amato lives in that region and last night asked me about replacement of a council bridge that was washed away along with a large section of road. Earliest indications are that replacement could take 12 months. Sadly, when infrastructure of that magnitude is lost, it cannot be replaced overnight. Obviously, the Government will consider all options. The council has control. Conversations I have had with Roads and Maritime Services [RMS] officers and the Hon. Lou Amato indicate that the council is doing a really good job of taking control of the situation and working with the Government to ensure that the community is looked after.

Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile would remember the floods in the Hunter region. I am heartened when sometimes we can get the right people and things can be delivered pretty quickly. Mr Scot MacDonald does a great job of coordination as Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter and Central Coast. A retired Army officer was terrific as well with coordination. I know that a similar standard of coordination is a feature of the replacement work in Camden. In the Hunter region, the Government replaced a bridge in 10 months. Destruction of the bridge had shut off a community. The approaches to the bridge were not wiped out and the project was straightforward so other communities also had access. That bridge did not carry nearly as much traffic as does the bridge near Picton. The focus of the question asked by Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile was not exactly on infrastructure but, rather, on businesses and homes that have been adversely affected.

**Reverend the Hon. Fred Nile:** The businesses.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** Yes, the businesses. I take the question on notice and will pass it on to the Premier for a detailed response.

#### **CECIL ROAD BRIDGE**

**The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (15:23:5):** My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight. When will the Government help to replace the dangerous wooden Cecil Road Bridge near Orange Christian School where schoolchildren are forced to share the road with busy traffic?

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (15:24:1):** Many bridges across the State need to be replaced, and I am sure replacement of the Cecil Road Bridge also is important. Currently there are 4,600 projects underway across the State. There are 3,000 wooden bridges in the State, and many of those need work and repair. By way of background, I point out that more funding currently is being directed towards replacement of wooden bridges than at any time previously in the State's history. I cannot be expected to know every bridge at every site everywhere in the State. I accept that the question is genuine and honourable. I acknowledge that the Hon. Courtney Houssos does not have a track record of getting it wrong, unlike some others. I will take the question on notice and provide an answer.

#### **SYDNEY WATER PRICES**

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN (15:25:5):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Lands and Water. Will the Minister update the House on the final determination of Sydney Water's water pricing by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for the next four years?

**The Hon. NIALL BLAIR (Minister for Primary Industries, and Minister for Lands and Water) (15:26:1):** I thank the Hon. Trevor Khan for his question, particularly as it pertains to Sydney Water's customers. Last week the New South Wales Government welcomed the news that households in Sydney, the Illawarra and the Blue Mountains will save approximately \$100 a year on their water bills for the next four years. The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART] has released its final pricing determination into Sydney Water's pricing, which will bring down water bills across greater Sydney from 1 July 2016. That is a great win for the 4.6 million customers that Sydney Water services in New South Wales. I am proud that Sydney has the world's best drinking water. The Government is uncompromising in its commitment to deliver that world-renowned quality while ensuring that it also delivers lower water bills for Sydney families.

This is the first time ever that households in greater Sydney will experience a water bill reduction. We all know that every dollar counts when paying bills. The Government is determined to do whatever it can to ease cost-of-living pressures and a \$100 water bill reduction will go a long way towards doing that. After five years of



hard work, customers now are reaping the benefits of greater efficiencies gained by Sydney Water. Over the past four years, Sydney Water has worked to manage its business efficiently and make improvements that have enabled savings to be found and passed on to customers. Over the next four years, Sydney Water will continue to look for new ways to create a more flexible workforce that is better able to deliver customer value and respond to future risks. Sydney Water also will examine new technologies and continue its research to find new and more innovative ways to become more efficient as a business.

We must remember that while doing all that, Sydney Water continues to deliver high-quality services to its customers year on year and to deliver its infrastructure programs to protect the health of the community and the environment. For example, over the past four years Sydney Water has invested more than \$350 million on water infrastructure and leads the way in international research into predicting leaks and breaks which is worth \$16 million. In 2016-17, as outlined last Tuesday in the State budget, Sydney Water will continue its investments, with more than \$100 million being spent on its water network and assets—and that is just for the water system. Over the next year Sydney Water also will spend more than \$230 million on wastewater infrastructure to ensure that the wastewater system is maintained in great shape.

Let me remind you, this is on top of the \$2 billion that has already been allocated to Sydney Water for water and wastewater infrastructure over the last five years. This investment by the New South Wales Government shows our commitment to the people of this State to ensure they continue to receive excellent water and wastewater services. I congratulate Sydney Water on its hard work and commitment over the last four years. I am certain that Sydney Water will continue to innovate and improve while continuing to deliver high-quality services to its customers. This is great news for the customers of Sydney Water. As I said, this is a first for the State, with Sydney Water customers getting a reduction in their water bills. This reduction is not just \$100 for the next year but \$100 for every one of the next four years. This is fantastic news. I thank Sydney Water and this good Government. The people of Sydney are reaping the benefits.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** It is with a degree of sadness that I call an end to the final question time of the Hon. Sophie Cotsis—maybe. If members have any further questions, I suggest they place them on the *Notice Paper*.

#### **BARDWELL PARK TRAFFIC LIGHTS**

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (15:30:0):** Earlier in question time I was asked a question by the Hon. Lynda Voltz about traffic lights in Bardwell Park. Hartill-Law Avenue and Slade Road in Bardwell Park are regional roads that are managed by the Rockdale City Council. The council submitted a project to install traffic lights based on a known road safety issue that it had identified. This project is funded under the Walking Communities Program as part of the Active Transport Program. The total project value is \$400,000 with a 50:50 funding agreement. Roads and Maritime Services has agreed to provide \$200,000. The delivery of the project is the responsibility of the Rockdale City Council and it will determine when the lights will be installed.

#### **CECIL ROAD BRIDGE**

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (15:32):** Earlier in question time I was asked a question by the Hon. Courtney Houssos about the Cecil Road Bridge in Orange. It is a rail bridge and it is the responsibility of John Holland Rail. The company has plans in place to undertake repairs to the bridge on Cecil Road, Orange, in the latter half of 2016.

#### *Bills*

#### **APPROPRIATION BILL 2016**

#### **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2016**

#### **STATE REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (BUDGET MEASURES) BILL 2016**

#### **First Reading**

**Bills received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time and ordered to be printed on motion by the Hon. Duncan Gay.**

**The Hon. Duncan Gay:** According to sessional order, I declare the bills to be urgent bills.

**The PRESIDENT:** The question is that the bills be considered urgent bills.

**Declaration of urgency agreed to.**

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** I move:

That the second reading of the bills stand as an order of the day for a later hour.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Documents*

**PRINTING OF PAPERS**

**The Hon. NIALL BLAIR:** I table a report under the Residential Tenancies Act 2010, entitled "Residential Tenancies Act 2010: Statutory Review", dated 17 June 2016. I move:

That the report be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Committees*

**COMMITTEE ON THE OMBUDSMAN, THE POLICE INTEGRITY COMMISSION AND THE CRIME COMMISSION**

**Report: 2016 Review of the Annual Reports of Oversight Bodies**

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I table report No. 1/56 of the Committee on the Ombudsman, Police Integrity Commission and the Crime Commission entitled "2016 Review of the Annual Reports of Oversight Bodies", dated June 2016. I move:

That the report be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I move:

That the House take note of the report.

**Debate adjourned.**

**COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION**

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

**The Hon. LOU AMATO:** I table report No. 1/56 of the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission entitled "Review of the Health Care Complaints Commission Annual Reports 2013-14 and 2014-15", dated June 2016. I move:

That the report be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

**The Hon. LOU AMATO:** I move:

That the House take note of the report.

**Debate adjourned.**

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS**

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

**The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK:** I table report No. 1/56 of the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters entitled "Inquiry into the Final Report of the Expert Panel—Political Donations and the Government's Response", dated June 2016. I move:

That the report be printed.

**Motion agreed to.**

**The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK:** I move:

That the House take note of the report.

**Debate adjourned.**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES****Reference**

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** I inform the House that in accordance with the resolution of the House relating to the establishment of committees, the Standing Committee on Social Issues resolved to adopt the following reference from the Minister for Health, the Hon. Jillian Skinner:

- (1) That the Standing Committee on Social Issues inquire into and report on strategies to reduce childhood overweight and obesity, in particular:
  - (a) current approaches to reduce childhood overweight and obesity in New South Wales,
  - (b) strategies to assist parents and carers in enabling their children to make healthier food and beverage choices, including by participating in sport,
  - (c) measures to support 13- to 18-year-olds to make healthier food and beverage choices and be active, including by participating in sport,
  - (d) strategies to support health professionals to identify and address childhood overweight and obesity,
  - (e) coordination between NSW Government agencies to reduce childhood overweight and obesity,
  - (f) the potential for collaboration on strategies to reduce childhood overweight and obesity with the non-government and private sectors, and
  - (g) any other related matter.
- (2) That the Committee report by 3 February 2017.

**GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 4****Reference**

**The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK:** I inform the House that in accordance with the resolution of the House relating to the establishment of committees, General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4 resolved on 23 June 2016 to adopt the following terms of reference:

- (1) That General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4 inquire into and report on the performance or effectiveness of the New South Wales Government agencies responsible for the organisation, structure and funding of museums and galleries in New South Wales, and in particular:
  - (a) New South Wales Government policy, funding and support for museums and galleries, museum and gallery buildings and heritage collections, including volunteer managed museums and museums managed by councils;
  - (b) potential funding impacts on museums and galleries affected by council amalgamations;
  - (c) opportunities to revitalise the structure, reach, and impact of museums and galleries, and their research and collecting priorities;
  - (d) access to the collections of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, the Australian Museum and any other State collections held in trust for the people of New South Wales, and programs that promote physical and online access;
  - (e) the sale of the Powerhouse Museum site in Ultimo and its proposed move to Parramatta, and whether there are alternative strategies to support museum development;
  - (f) the development and transparency of advice to the Government on priorities for New South Wales museums and galleries;
  - (g) the impact of the efficiency dividend on the budgets of museums and galleries over the last 10 years, and funding levels compared to other States;
  - (h) the economic impact of museums and galleries on cultural tourism, and their role in supporting the visitor economy in Sydney and regional New South Wales; and
  - (i) any other related matter.
- (2) That the committee report by 24 November 2016.

*Bills***STEEL INDUSTRY PROTECTION BILL 2016****Second Reading**

**Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (15:41):** Before the luncheon adjournment I was outlining for the benefit of members the argument that the best way to preserve jobs in the steel industry is by growing a stronger economy and investing in a diverse workforce. I note that at the time the gallery was full of trade union bosses

but they have not come back from lunch, or they are on a flexi, or they have accepted the arguments of Government members that we are actually acting in their best interests for the future of their families. I outlined that the Government had supported the economy in New South Wales by creating nearly 142,000 jobs, which is nearly two-thirds of the national job creation. This State is pulling way above its weight. I should end my speech there. I have given the answer to the bill.

I am genuine in my response against any protectionism. I encourage those opposite to listen to the debate. Let us look at the New South Wales economy again. After five years of fiscal repair our budget is back in the black. The Government is investing more than ever before in infrastructure and its triple-A credit rating is safe. That attracts foreign investment which grows the economy and creates more jobs. There is a \$3.7 billion surplus. The Labor members opposite, who are not paying attention, may like to know what the word "surplus" means. It is certainly not a word the Opposition uses. Surpluses attract investment and security. The Government forecasts a \$2 billion surplus on average each year over the next four years.

In this budget a record \$73.3 billion is invested in job-creating infrastructure over the next four years. That will be invested in schools, hospitals, public transport, light rail—which The Greens oppose—and roads. Let me turn to the Government's record on supporting local jobs, as this is the misguided intent of this Jurassic Park bill. I note that Opposition members have sat like yachts becalmed in the water—or like whaling boats, which are obsolete—with no wind in their sails for the last few days. It must be soul destroying to see such a good budget. People may not see the jobs boon in infrastructure on Sid Enfield Drive, but they will see it on the M4 widening, on the M5 widening, on the new ramps on the M5 and on the light rail from the city to the eastern suburbs, and the jobs evident on the Sydney Metro Northwest construction site. There are tens of thousands of direct jobs and there are even more indirect jobs, including in steel manufacturing, because in the past three years the Government has invested \$26 billion in construction and infrastructure goods and services.

Over 70 per cent of the steel has been sourced within New South Wales based suppliers. In addition, 100 per cent of the steel used to reinforce tunnels for the Sydney Metro Northwest—7,000 tonnes of steel—is sourced from Australia. More than 90 per cent of the steel—that is, 550 tonnes—for the Sydney Metro Northwest sky train is sourced in Australia. The Labor members are talking to each other. They might like to listen to my contribution as it answers the question. The Barangaroo ferry hub used 800 tonnes of steel. The International Convention Centre has more than 1,000 tonnes of Australian steel.

**The Hon. Rick Colless:** How much?

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** It is 1,000 tonnes. To find a regional example we need go no further than the Kempsey bypass. Only Australian steel has been used to manufacture 400 steel piling tubes for that project. Those are just a few examples—I could go on for hours. Those opposite are embarrassed because they voted against the leasing of poles and wires, which is allowing the Government to invest in infrastructure. The Greens voted against this investment. The Government is growing the economy and jobs. The light rail was not supported by The Greens in this place, yet it supplies 1,800 jobs per year in construction; the Sydney Metro Northwest supplies 1,000 new jobs including—Labor Party members should get their badges out—a pre-employment program with TAFE providing students with skills to gain employment on the project. The Wynyard Walk supplies 900 jobs a year and WestConnex supplies 10,000 jobs. Those opposite voted against this. To quote the talented Minister for Finance, Services and Property, Dominic Perrottet, in the other place, who has responsibility for the procurement policies of this Government:

These projects mean local jobs, because we are the true Government of the worker, and our procurement policies are vital to ensure our massive infrastructure program delivers local industry.

He is not suggesting raising the Soviet Berlin Wall of protectionism for New South Wales. The Opposition may wish to pay attention at this point. Under Government procurement policies all tenderers for Government contracts over \$10 million must submit a small and medium enterprise participation plan. The plan describes how the tender will support local businesses and jobs. Tenderers who win a job must comply with the plan they submit and they will be monitored by the contracting agency. This is the way to ensure local jobs. This is a fine-tuned 2016 instrument, not the blunt sledge hammer from the 1950s that the Labor Party and The Greens are proposing.

Members opposite are economically trapped in the 1950s and The Greens look to the Soviet five-year plans with envy. The Government procurement policies are sophisticated and designed to support local jobs and local industry without compromising our obligations under international free trade agreements and exposing us to tariffs and sanctions. Our agencies are not permitted to mandate the use of domestic content or mandate supply under those agreements. The Hon. Lynda Voltz is misleading the House—I withdraw that—she has not been frank about how this arrangement stands.

**The Hon. Greg Donnelly:** You cannot reflect on that.

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** I withdraw the reflection.

**The Hon. Lynda Voltz:** Point of order: It is not just one reflection; that was the second reflection made of me. I ask the member to withdraw both of them.

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** I am happy to withdraw both. The only exemption is defence procurement, given the special nature of—

**Mr David Shoebridge:** Point of order. The member has to allow the ruling to be made. He should not talk over the Chair.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Bronnie Taylor):** Order! The member has withdrawn the comments.

**The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD:** Defence is exempt around the world because of national security issues. The Government procurement policies, such as this week's world-envied budget, is not about the short-term, as is this misguided bill; it is about the long-term future and continued economic growth of this State. We want jobs and growth for our State, and jobs and growth for the people of New South Wales.

**The Hon. RICK COLLESS (15:49):** I oppose the Steel Protection Bill 2016, and I will briefly explain two of my reasons for doing so. First, if passed, this legislation will significantly increase the cost of delivering many infrastructure projects in this State. As members have already said, the New South Wales Government is leading the nation in delivering road, rail, hospital and other infrastructure. As a result, it is the single largest procurer of steel in Australia. The Government is investing \$20 billion in infrastructure across the State over the next 20 years. One project on which that steel has been used is the Pacific Highway Kempsey bypass, which used 400 massive steel piling tubes that were produced in Brisbane. The majority of the steel used on the M4 widening project was Australian sourced, and significant quantities of Australian steel will be used on the Sydney Metro Northwest, the Wynyard Walk and the Barangaroo ferry hub.

If this bill is passed, the Government will be forced to purchase steel at up to 20 per cent more than the current market price. That money would be better spent delivering more road, rail and other infrastructure in this State rather than subsidising overseas steelmakers. Of course, this legislation would also reduce the amount of infrastructure that we can deliver for the people of New South Wales. The resulting cost would fall on the thousands of small and medium businesses supplying the Government because they will struggle with the massive burden of new red tape.

This legislation will impose a massive compliance burden on suppliers working on government infrastructure projects. They will be faced with much higher administration costs as a result of having to comply with onerous steel use reporting requirements. Those reporting requirements will apply to New South Wales Government agencies, local councils and construction suppliers. As a result, many agencies, councils and suppliers across New South Wales will face increased costs without reaping any benefit. If construction companies are no longer competitive because of these restrictions, they could refuse to bid for New South Wales Government projects. Of course, that will inevitably reduce competition and increase the cost of government infrastructure projects.

The onerous steel use reporting obligations imposed on suppliers and contractors in the construction industry will add to the complexity and cost of managing projects. Members should make no mistake, the New South Wales Government is already doing significant business with local suppliers. It purchased approximately \$26 billion in construction goods and services between 2012 and 2015. Of that, \$17.2 billion worth was purchased from New South Wales businesses, and most of the rest was purchased from Australian-based businesses.

My second reason for opposing the bill relates to another issue that has been mentioned by some members. I refer to Australia's obligations under its free trade agreements. Before the luncheon break the Hon. Sophie Cotsis said that she thought I would support the bill because of the protectionism espoused by the old Country Party. The Nationals have moved on from that; we have seen the light. We realised the benefits that would flow from free trade agreements when the agreement process commenced. Of course, Australia is a member of the World Trade Organisation and has signed agreements with various countries to remove tariffs and other restrictions on trade. Australians have benefited from the free trade agreements that have been signed over the past 30 years.

Free trade agreements benefit Australian businesses and consumers because they provide access to larger overseas markets. Several of the free trade agreements that Australia has entered into apply to government procurement by our State and Territory governments. For example, Australia's current agreement with the United States provides that government entities in either country must not treat the goods, services or suppliers of the other country less favourably than their domestic goods, services or suppliers when undertaking procurement. The

Trans-Pacific Partnership, signed by the Commonwealth Government in February 2016 and due to take effect later this year, contains a similar provision.

If this bill becomes law, all New South Wales Government agencies, State-owned corporations and local councils will be required to use domestically produced steel. It would thus require government entities in New South Wales to treat steel manufacturers and suppliers from countries with which we have free trade agreements less favourably than domestic Australian manufacturers and suppliers. It therefore requires New South Wales government entities to procure steel in a manner that breaches Australia's obligations under the free trade agreements that it has signed.

Countries with which Australia has free trade agreements may respond to a breach by taking retaliatory action in their markets. They could impose tariffs on exports such as agricultural products, natural resources, or professional services. Such retaliatory action would negatively impact the Australian and New South Wales economies because businesses would potentially lose access to profitable overseas markets. This bill and resulting potential retaliatory actions will also act as a disincentive to investment in our economy. It will not secure the long-term future of the steel industry. It is also likely to cause damage to and threaten jobs in other industries, while at the same time weakening Australia's trade reputation. For those reasons, I oppose the bill.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (15:55):** The Steel Industry Protection Bill 2016, which has been introduced by Mr David Shoebridge, is not the solution to the challenges that face the steel industry in Australia. In fact, if passed, it would compound them, and then some. Members opposite display rank hypocrisy in supporting a bill such as this. They have opposed at every turn this Government's determination to be the biggest steel buyer in this country. Opposition members proposed a plan during the last election campaign that would never have delivered \$20 billion worth of infrastructure for this State. The people of New South Wales would have ensured the delivery of half of that investment in steel procurement simply by electing the Labor Party. Under this Government, the State is moving ahead.

Members opposite have said that the steel industry supports thousands of direct and indirect jobs, that it is important for the economic and social fabric, and that it outsizes the impact on the supply chain in New South Wales and elsewhere. This bill is sponsored by The Greens, whose stated policy is to end the coal industry. What is the major component in the manufacture of steel? Of course, it is coal. The industry supports more than 100,000 direct and indirect jobs in our State. The Hon. Adam Searle said that a large number of businesses and communities supplying goods and services to the steel industry are located in Sydney's west and south-west, and in the Hunter.

Taking all of those pay packets out of the local area and away from the supermarkets and other industries will cause a death spiral for the Illawarra community and economy. It would be like throwing a rock into a body of water—the effects will ripple outwards across the New South Wales economy. These are the businesses and communities that sit on top of some of our State's largest coal-producing regions, and they are regions that The Greens would trash. We are talking about the central, western and southern coalfields.

**The Hon. Duncan Gay:** The Leader of the Opposition is also against coalmining.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** The Labor Party and The Greens are yet again in an alliance to kill coalmining in New South Wales. The Illawarra communities of Wollongong and Port Kembla sit on the southern coalfields of New South Wales. Many jobs in those communities are directly or indirectly connected to the coal industry. The Greens know that we cannot make steel without coal, and this Government is keen to ensure that New South Wales retains its strong coal industry. I am proud to say that the Government always has supported and still supports the Australian steel industry, and particularly the steel industry in New South Wales.

I will reflect a little on some of the important things that have been raised in the debate. That is because the New South Wales Government, as I said before, is the largest purchaser of steel in the nation. Almost 70 per cent of the Government's \$26 billion construction spend in the past three years—that is \$17.2 billion—went to New South Wales based suppliers. Of course, most of the rest went to other Australian suppliers.

The Government has sourced significant quantities of steel for major infrastructure projects from domestic suppliers. A recent example is the Sydney Metro Northwest—a project that we promised in opposition and are now delivering. When Labor was in government it promised the project, announced it, spent \$500 million on it and did nothing about. The Government sourced 100 per cent of steel for that project—roughly 7,000 tonnes that is used to reinforce tunnels—in Australia. More than 90 per cent of the steel used in the Sydney Metro Northwest skytrain—roughly 550 tonnes—was sourced in Australia. Consider some of the projects that the wonderful Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, the Hon. Duncan Gay, has delivered for the people of New South Wales—projects that The Greens and Labor oppose at every turn—such as the Gerringong upgrade.

**The Hon. Duncan Gay:** Projects that The Greens don't want. Dr Mehreen Faruqi says, "No light rail."

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I note the interjection from the Leader of the Government. If it was up to The Greens we would have 100 per cent Australian steel for zero projects. That is what The Greens are like: They oppose absolutely everything. On Wynyard Walk we have used steel sourced from Arrium Steel, which is based in Australia. For the Barangaroo ferry hub we sourced 800 tonnes of steel from Australia. The majority of the steel that is being used to support the girder installation on WestConnex and the M4 widening—another great project that the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight is delivering—was sourced in Australia.

Further afield—and another project delivered by the great Minister—400 massive steel piling tubes from Brisbane and Coffs Harbour were used on the Kempsey Bypass. They came from Australia. The steel girders on the Pacific Highway Emigrant Creek Bridge upgrade were also sourced in Australia. The people of our State and the steel industry are benefiting from the Government's infrastructure program. How has this been achieved? Has there been some big State edict? No. It has been achieved by a Government delivering in a competitive market and sourcing those products that are best suited for the purpose. Of course, some of those products come from Australia, as they should.

The bill wants us to turn our back on the world. We know that that cannot work. Australia may be an island but it is not isolated from the rest of the world. The bill is counterintuitive to the globalised marketplace. The Greens would have us believe we can just pretend the world does not exist—that we can turn our back on it. We want a steel industry in New South Wales that will innovate and become increasingly competitive. Any protectionist measures applied to the industry will hinder this goal. It has been said:

The strengthening of Australia's capacity for sustained strong growth requires much greater export orientation of Australian industry. This demands the continuation of our efforts to raise productivity and improve international competitiveness, as well as to pursue an active trade policy.

They are not my words but the words of Bob Hawke. As the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps mentioned, if Hawke and Keating were in this place they would be sitting on this side of the Chamber. They knew that Australia needed to reorientate itself; it needed competitive industries that would look not only at the very small Australian market but also to the world. That is Australia's trade history; Australia is a small market that has always tried to reach beyond its shores, whether in the nineteenth century, the twentieth century or today.

Then there are the free trade agreements that those opposite seek to jeopardise. The Hon. Rick Colless referred to this. There must be a moment of revelation when we realise that free trade provides Australia with so many more benefits and advantages than could any isolationist policy in a country of 24 million people. The global market comprises hundreds of millions of people. As the Hon. Shayne Mallard reflected earlier, consider the size of the United States market, the Trans-Pacific Partnership [TPP] and the provisions enacted in it. This is what it is about:

Our ability to provide jobs for our people will depend increasingly on the competitiveness of our industry. This is the most urgent challenge we face.

Those words are also from Bob Hawke. Those opposite would have us put up walls and forget about making our industries competitive—forget about making them look to the world. They would make it so our industries are propped up by government and operate in a safe, secure environment. But that safe and secure environment does not last long because, as Margaret Thatcher said:

... you eventually run out of other people's money.

We would jeopardise money belonging to the people of New South Wales if we were to increase steel production or purchasing costs by 20 per cent on State infrastructure projects. That cost would eat into the provision of hospitals, schools, roads and public transport in this State. That cost is too much for the people of New South Wales to bear. Not only that, we would jeopardise our free trade agreements, which we have fought for. They are some of the greatest achievements of the Coalition Government, particularly the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement, the Korea-Australia Free Trade Agreement and finalisation of the TPP under the great stewardship of Andrew Robb, who was a fantastic trade Minister. They are providing jobs and growth and an innovative, agile economy for our country into the future.

Australia cannot pretend that we are back in the 1950s. Australia cannot pretend that the world has not changed and continue to do things as we have always done them. We must be competitive. BlueScope Steel and Australian steel producers are going through a period of transition. We want them to survive, and that is why the Government has offered payroll tax concessions. We have given that relief so producers can transition and become more internationally competitive. They can focus on the things they do well—those areas where Australia has a comparative advantage—instead of continuing to do things badly and hoping that the Government will prop up the industry. That is what those opposite would have us do.

On this side of the House we are interested in having a sustainable employment market and sustainable industry in our State. We are the major supporters of industry in New South Wales. This State is the largest

purchaser of steel in the nation. We spend huge amounts through our program of purchasing steel from businesses in New South Wales and across the nation. The policy espoused by those opposite—the bill is sponsored by The Greens but supported by Labor—might lead one to ask whether perhaps a Labor State is already pioneering it. The answer is that no other State has mandated the use of Australian steel for government projects over a specific threshold as the New South Wales Greens propose in this bill.

**Mr David Shoebridge:** I think you forget about South Australia's procurement policy.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I said "over a particular threshold". That is a very big distinction. Those opposite want to talk about the submarines contract as well. The truth of the matter is—

**Mr David Shoebridge:** Read the fine print in this speech.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Read the fine print in your bill. If Mr David Shoebridge does so, he will find some potential flaws. Those opposite mentioned the submarines contract. We are talking about one contract and they are talking about another contract related to Defence. Mr Deputy President, you eloquently reflected earlier that Defence is exempted from free trade agreements for national security purposes.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Shayne Mallard):** Order! I point out to the Hon. Scott Farlow that the Deputy President did not speak earlier in the debate. The Hon. Shayne Mallard spoke earlier in the debate. It is important to observe the impartiality of the role of Deputy President. I bring that to the attention of the member and other members who have done it previously.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I will reflect that your alter ego, the Hon. Shayne Mallard, spoke earlier.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Shayne Mallard):** Order! To be clear, the issue is the impartiality of the Chair.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** I apologise for that reflection.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Shayne Mallard):** Order! According to sessional order proceedings are interrupted to permit the Minister to move the adjournment motion, if desired.

**The House continued to sit.**

### *Bills*

## **APPROPRIATION BILL 2016**

### **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL 2016**

### **STATE REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (BUDGET MEASURES) BILL 2016**

#### **Second Reading**

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (16:10):** I move:

That these bills be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have my second reading speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

#### **Leave granted.**

The NSW Budget included a number of new initiatives to continue the strong jobs growth in New South Wales. This included a refocusing of the Jobs Action Plan to businesses of 50 employees or less.

The jobs market has improved considerably since this Government came to office. Since April 2011, we have created approximately 338,600 jobs.

In the last year, 141,800 jobs were created across the State—almost two-thirds of the jobs created nationally. Before the last election we committed to creating 150,000 jobs in this term of Government. The New South Wales Government has met its election commitment in just 13 months, with 154,000 jobs created since April 2015.

Jobs growth in regional New South Wales has been particularly outstanding. Nearly half of all jobs created over the last year to April have been in the regions. Regional New South Wales has created more jobs than the total created in the regions across the rest of Australia.

The New South Wales unemployment rate, at 5.2 per cent, is the lowest in the country. Employment is forecast to continue to grow at an above-trend rate of 1 3/4 per cent in 2016-17 and 1 1/2 per cent in 2017-18.

These results have occurred with workforce participation picking up to near record highs.

The unemployment rate is expected to decline to 5 per cent over the next two years.

These fantastic numbers allow the Government to retarget the Jobs Action Plan to those businesses most in need of assistance.



To ensure the scheme is still providing maximum benefits to these businesses, the Government will re-target the scheme by restricting the payroll tax rebate to those businesses which employ 50 or less full time equivalent employees from 31 July 2016.

As an additional incentive to assist those small- and medium-sized businesses employ more staff, the value of the payroll tax rebate will increase from \$5,000 to \$6,000.

The grant will be paid as \$2,000 on the first anniversary and \$4,000 on the second anniversary, with the higher second year payment continuing to act as an incentive to retain the new employee.

The Jobs Action Plan is just part of what this Budget invests in the jobs of the future for New South Wales. The Budget also delivers:

- \$190 million over four years to the Jobs for NSW Fund. This fund taps the insights of leading private sector minds to drive Government policy, grow the economy and create jobs
- \$100 million over two years for the Smart, Skilled and Hired Program to help address youth unemployment. This Program will ensure our young people have the opportunity to participate in our strong jobs growth
- increasing the contestable vocational education and training [VET] sector by \$29 million and creating an extra 50,000 vocational education places
- a \$10 million social impact investment to target areas of the State with high youth unemployment
- a re-targeting of the Jobs Action Plan—this Bill enacts those changes.

Effective from budget day, the Government will also introduce foreign investor surcharges on stamp duty and land tax on residential real estate. The measures are expected to raise more than \$1 billion over four years and will fund essential services across New South Wales. These new measures will ensure the New South Wales property market continues to be an attractive destination for international investors while making sure that we are able to fund vital services into the future.

The Government will introduce a 4 per cent Transfer Duty Surcharge on foreign purchasers of New South Wales residential real estate. The surcharge will apply to any transfer of an interest in residential property. This measure is estimated to raise \$575 million over the four years to 2019-20.

Additionally, the off-the-plan concession, which allowed an up to 12 months delay in the payment of transfer duty, will be removed from budget day for foreign purchasers of residential real estate, raising \$239 million over the four years to 2019-20.

A Land Tax Surcharge will apply to all residential properties owned by foreign persons, effective from the 2017 land tax year. This means that any residential properties owned by a foreign person at midnight on 31 December 2016 will be subject to the surcharge in 2017.

The land tax surcharge will be applied at 0.75 per cent on foreign holders of residential real estate, with no threshold and no principal place of residence exemption.

There will be no changes to the current land tax arrangements. The land tax threshold and principal place of residence exemption will be unchanged for all current property owners including foreign investors.

The definition of "foreign person" will be consistent with the definition in the Commonwealth Foreign Acquisitions and Takeovers Act 1975.

The surcharge will not apply to Australian citizens no matter where they live, nor will it apply to permanent residents or New Zealanders who currently reside in Australia. That means they have to have spent at least 200 days in the 12 months in Australia.

The total revenue raised by these measures is currently estimated to be around \$1 billion over four years. This additional revenue will be reinvested back into New South Wales to help fund essential services.

These measures represent responsible financial management, providing the Government with additional revenue that can be used to fund essential government services.

I commend the bill to the House.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (16:10):** I speak on behalf of the Opposition in debate on the Appropriation Bill 2016, the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2016 and the State Revenue Legislation Amendment (Budget Measures) Bill 2016. I will not give as full an account as the Leader of the Opposition did in the other House. He not only gave a detailed critique of the missed opportunities and shortcomings in this year's State budget but also set out Labor's positive plan and outlined a series of initiatives that will inform Labor's deliberations going forward to the next election. Patients, students and aspiring home owners in New South Wales are the biggest losers in the budget handed down this year by the Baird Government. The Premier and the Treasurer will hoard more than \$8 billion in surplus taxes over the next four years but they have ignored a raft of health, education and housing affordability priorities.

The Government trumpets the low level of net debt but members opposite should note that when we look at the forward estimates, as the Government starts to spend the proceeds that were put into Restart NSW, by 2019-20 the net debt will rise rapidly to reach its highest level in two decades. There is talk about the infrastructure spend which, in the forward estimates, will be at its highest point this year. But over the next four financial years it will drop sharply and at the end of that period it will be at its lowest level in 12 years. The Government is trumpeting certain economic measures, but it is not investing in better schools or hospitals. I will give two examples. The Nepean Hospital in Sydney's west needs an upgrade estimated to cost \$370 million. In this year's

budget a mere \$1 million was allocated for planning. Concord Hospital has suffered a similar fate. It requires an upgrade costing approximately \$159 million, but only \$700,000 was allocated to it in this financial year.

The importance of hospitals and health care is being downgraded in the budget. Upgrades across the State are being delayed or they are allocated only token amounts of money. More money is allocated in the budget for building new prisons than for building new classrooms. This Government has failed to restore the funding cuts it started in its first budget in 2011, when \$270 million was slashed from school capital works funding. In fact, people with good memories will recall that nearly \$2 billion was cut out of the budget for school and TAFE education. Over the next 15 years more than 165,000 additional children will be in our public schools. Yet this budget reveals a shortfall of nearly \$11 billion in capital funding for necessary classrooms. At the rate the Government has set to meet this challenge, it will take 45 years to build the classrooms that will be needed in the next 15 years. In any person's language that is an utter crisis.

The Government has made a point of providing \$330 million for school maintenance over the next two years. It inherited a school maintenance backlog of \$156 million when it came to office in 2011. Today, that backlog stands at \$732 million. That happened on the watch of those opposite. The Auditor-General's report reveals that the maintenance backlog increased by \$195 million last year alone. No matter which way we cut those figures, the Government is slipping backwards, the backlog is getting worse, and it has no plans to close the gap. The attacks on TAFE, which is the publicly funded vocational education provider, continue. The attack on TAFE started under the O'Farrell Government, with more than \$1 billion cut from TAFE. The budget documents confirm an underspend in TAFE in the past financial year of \$313 million. Since 2012 the Government has sacked more than 5,200 teachers and support staff in the TAFE system and forecast enrolments are down by more than 126,000 a year compared with 2012.

A record of nearly \$9 billion in transfer duties was delivered in the 2015-16 budget on the back of Sydney's continuing property boom. That trend is forecast in the budget to continue, with stamp duty receipts totalling more than \$37 billion over the next four years. Let us consider the mishandling of those important financial resources by this Government. There is a blowout in the WestConnex project of \$6.8 billion, which is nearly the total amount of funding allocated to rural and regional New South Wales under the electricity privatisation process. That money has been squandered.

*[Interruption]*

**The Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane:** Point of order: The Leader of the Government should not interject. This is an opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to have his say about the budget papers.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Shayne Mallard):** Order! Members with the call will be heard in silence.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** In addition to the \$6.8 billion blowout in WestConnex, there is a \$1.5 billion blowout in the metro south project. The inner city fleet renewal is blowing out by more than \$1 billion. The Government is squandering the resources from the Sydney property boom. Despite the rivers of stamp duty gold, it has never been more difficult, because it is unaffordable, to get into the Sydney housing market. There is no measure in the budget to even attempt to square the shoulders of this Government to meet that challenge. While celebrating the surplus, there are no new measures in the budget to drive housing affordability or assistance measures for key workers such as police, nurses and teachers, who are finding it near impossible to buy a home. The only practical suggestion from the Government is for teachers to leave Sydney. On top of that is the fact that the First Home Owner Grant has been cut by \$5,000 since the beginning of 2016.

Despite the claim by this Government that it supports renewable energy projects across New South Wales, there is no line item of funding in the budget papers apart from the ongoing Solar Bonus Scheme and energy efficiency measures. No wonder New South Wales is now coming last in Australia with its performance in this area. In last year's budget the Government claimed to be committed to driving down electricity prices. It is instructive that no such claim is made in this year's budget papers. It is no wonder, because the Government has spent a small fortune in legal fees trying to overturn the determination of the Australian Energy Regulator, which would see significant cuts to electricity fees for businesses and individual home owners. Overturning that determination would drive up electricity prices and fatten the State-owned electricity assets for sale, which is against the public interest.

But all that pales into insignificance compared with the key challenge at the heart of this budget—which remains wholly unacknowledged and unaddressed—and that is State finances. By 2020 revenue will drop to its lowest level in 15 years. This is compounded by the billions of dollars in Federal funding cuts to schools and hospitals arising from the 2014 Federal budget. Those cuts will soon be felt in the New South Wales budget, but those opposite have no plans to meet that challenge. Compounding this problem further is the State's falling share

of GST, which accounts for around 25 per cent of the total revenue. To put that into perspective, stamp duty accounts for around 9 per cent.

By 2019-20 the share of GST allocated to our State will have fallen to an historic low of 26 per cent—more than five percentage points below the 2014-15 share of 31 per cent. If the New South Wales Government had managed to persuade its Federal colleagues to keep New South Wales' share of GST at 2014-15 levels, more than \$10 billion of extra GST revenue would flow to the New South Wales Treasury. I am using the New South Wales Treasury's own figures. The Government has gone easy on its Federal colleagues and New South Wales is being ripped off to the tune of \$10 billion in GST revenue over that period. As I have indicated, this will be compounded by the share of State revenue, which will drop to its lowest level in 15 years by 2020.

There is no plan in this budget or in the Treasurer's speech to acknowledge, much less address, this emerging and widening hole at the centre of State finances. At the same time, the State Government feels free to give away a range of existing long-term taxes that have historically been worth between \$400 million and \$500 million per year. The Government crows about lifting taxes for business. That is its choice. At a time of widening deterioration in State finances—through Federal funding cuts and the collapse of GST—the State Treasury has forecast that State revenue will decrease to its lowest level over the next four years. It is a time bomb at the heart of State finances—a point the Government refuses to acknowledge and that will come home to bite us. I will give a longer analysis of the shortcomings and missed opportunities in this budget during the budget estimates take-note debate.

**The Hon. Rick Colless:** Read the budget papers before you do.

**The Hon. ADAM SEARLE:** I remind those opposite that I could speak for another 29 minutes. I could stand here for a fair bit of the afternoon if they want to interject. On that note, I will end my contribution. I look forward to returning to the discussion on the State budget during the budget estimates debate in August.

**Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE (16:21):** On behalf of The Greens, I indicate our very real concerns about the budget that was delivered this week by the New South Wales Coalition Government. It is a surplus founded on a once-in-a-generation windfall from property taxes and asset sales that simply cannot be repeated in future years. Indeed, if we look at the projections we will see that the Government recognises that, because it has failed to consider properly how to deliver equitable and broad taxing, it will inevitably fall into deficit. The Government cannot rely indefinitely on continuing to sell the silverware. Everything that was not nailed down—and many things that were nailed down—has already been sold by this Coalition Government because of its ideological push to privatisation.

There is an absence of smart investment in the education of our young people, in our TAFE sector, in emerging industries and in the renewable energy future that is needed to secure the State into the future. I will deal first with some details about the attacks on TAFE. We now know from the budget that in the last financial year TAFE underspent its budget by \$269 million, and the cut in its forecast budget in this year's papers is a staggering \$175 million compared with last year's allocation. The amount of contestable public money available to for-profit vocational education and training providers is increasing from the \$526 million that was spent last year—a shameful allocation to the privatisation agenda of vocational education and training—to a staggering \$786 million in the coming financial year. More than three-quarters of a billion dollars is being spent on the failed experiment with privatised vocational education and training.

What have we received in return? There was a 20 per cent drop in the number of students with disability last year and there has been a 12 per cent drop in the number of Indigenous students enrolled in TAFE. Smart and Skilled is not smart and skilled; it is dumb and dumber. Across TAFE we have seen falling student numbers. In 2014 more than 530,000 students were enrolled in TAFE. That number fell to just under 429,000 in 2015. While the Government predicts a very slight increase in 2016—today—because of the Smart and Skilled program, under the Coalition there are 150,000 fewer TAFE students because of the flawed contestability, the increased fees and the hundreds of millions of dollars sent to private providers. We now know that last year an additional 499 full-time equivalent jobs were lost from TAFE. TAFE is under attack by this ideological push from the Coalition Government. The Nationals members in this Chamber should realise that the State will lose regional TAFEs unless we turn this policy around.

The Treasurer announced that some \$942 million will be provided over four years for new and expanded public schools. That was greeted with a lack of critical review by large parts of the media. When we look at the Government's departmental reports—its own assessment of what is needed to deal with the surging public school population in Sydney and across New South Wales—we discover that the Government is spending less than one-third of what will be needed over the next four years to deliver classrooms. Indeed, if this serious underspend in public education and in the necessary new public schools continues, instead of meeting the demand for about a

23 per cent increase in public school places by 2030, under this Coalition Government the schools needed will not be built until 2064—34 years after those public school buildings are required.

An embarrassing squandering of money will become apparent over the next two years from the failed Fit for the Future endeavour in local government. Over the next two years, Premier Baird is planning to spend almost \$600 million to sack councils, remove democracy and appoint hand-picked administrators in his continuing attack on local councils. The cost of the Baird Government's undemocratic forced amalgamation agenda is now finally being revealed. New South Wales taxpayers, far from getting some \$2 billion in benefits over 20 years, in just two years will be slugged \$590 million to destroy local councils and reduce local democracy. That is a shameful and disgraceful waste of money on a grand scale.

I turn now to our courts, our police and our justice system. There has been a bizarre misallocation of scarce tax dollars. Over the next four years the Government will direct \$3.8 billion to build and staff 7,000 new prison beds in the State. That is \$3.8 billion that cannot be made available to build the schools we need; \$3.8 billion that cannot be made available to improve public hospitals; \$3.8 billion that is not available to provide necessary public transport; and \$3.8 billion that has been wasted because of the Government's attack on civil liberties and the aggressive expansion of police powers. The emphasis on the law and order option is not just the fault of the Coalition; the New South Wales Opposition also often engages with that issue.

There has been a blowout in our prison population because more and more prisoners cannot get their day in court and are being held on remand. There are not enough judges and there are not enough magistrates. Rather than dealing with the shortfall in our courts, the Government has made a further cut—a cut of \$10 million—to the New South Wales court budget. The budget papers predict fewer hearing days in the Supreme Court, fewer hearing days in the District Court and fewer hearing days in the Local Court, which will blow out the prison population further. We will end up paying for that increase in the prison population. Because of that misallocation of resources—failing to have enough judges and magistrates—even more money will be squandered in the prison system.

Meanwhile, there have been further cuts to the Legal Aid Commission, with \$2.8 million slashed from criminal law services and \$4 million from civil law services. There have been cuts to prison education programs. The Government is seeking to sack every qualified teacher in New South Wales prisons. The effect of that is apparent in the budget papers where the Government estimates that inmate participation in education programs will fall from 35 per cent to just 28 per cent over the budget term. That gross misallocation of funds shows just how wrong-headed the Coalition's budget priorities are.

When it comes to planning, all we see is money being spent by the New South Wales Government to further remove community consultation in relation to the largest projects and those that have the most impact. The Government again wants to halve time taken to assess State significant development, despite that type of development having the biggest social, environmental and economic impacts. This Government wants to cut out the community entirely. Far from returning planning powers to the community, which is what the Government said it wanted to do in 2011, New South Wales taxpayers are paying the planning department to further reduce the community's ability to contribute and make submissions on planning proposals. Meanwhile, where else does the money go?

The Government has allocated \$41 million to the Greater Sydney Commission, which is headed by Lucy Turnbull, so that Ms Turnbull and the Greater Sydney Commission can confer, not with democratically elected councils about the future of greater Sydney, but with Premier Mike Baird's hand-picked administrators about reshaping the district plans and the planning future of New South Wales. The Government is spending \$41 million to have one appointee speak with a bunch of other appointees and entirely cut the community out of a say in the planning of Sydney's future.

This budget is a grossly wasted opportunity. It shows that the Baird Government is selling the family silver and every other asset it can put its hands on so that it can spend the money on sacking councils and giving hundreds of millions of dollars more to for-profit private vocational education providers. At the same time it is further savaging TAFE, making grossly inadequate allocations for our public schools, and excluding the community from district planning through the undemocratic Greater Sydney Commission. In short, it is a budget that will fail the future of Sydney, it will fail the future of the regions, and it will fail the future of New South Wales.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, and Vice-President of the Executive Council) (16:31:3):** In reply: I thank those members who contributed to debate on the bills.

**Mr David Shoebridge:** My pleasure.

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** Although Mr David Shoebridge's contribution was not one with which I agreed, courteous as I am on days such as this, nevertheless I will express thanks. These budget measures deliver the Government's continued commitment to strong fiscal management and creating jobs. A key priority of the Government remains strong job growth. To that end, the Government will refocus its successful Jobs Action Plan, which was introduced from 1 July 2011. To ensure that the scheme is still providing maximum benefits to businesses that are most in need of assistance, the Government will retarget the scheme by restricting the payroll tax rebate to businesses that employ 50 or fewer full-time equivalent employees from 31 July 2016. As an additional incentive to assist small- and medium-sized businesses to employ additional staff, the value of the payroll tax rebate will increase from \$5,000 to \$6,000. The grant will be paid as \$2,000 on the first anniversary, and \$4,000 on the second anniversary, with the higher second new payment continuing to act as an incentive to retain the employment of the new employee.

In addition to the changes to the Jobs Action Plan, the Government will introduce foreign investor surcharges on stamp duty and land tax on residential real estate. The Government will introduce a 4 per cent transfer duty surcharge on foreign purchasers of New South Wales residential real estate, which will be effective from budget day. Additionally, from budget day, the off-the-plan concession, which allowed up to 12 months delay in the payment of transfer duty, will be removed for foreign purchasers of residential real estate. Finally, a 0.75 per cent land tax surcharge will apply to all residential properties owned by foreign persons from the 2017 land tax year. This means that any residential properties owned by a foreign person at midnight on 31 December 2016 will be subject to the surcharge in 2017. The surcharges will not apply to Australian citizens, no matter where they live; nor will it apply to permanent residents or New Zealanders, who ordinarily reside in Australia.

The total revenue raised by the surcharges currently is estimated to be approximately \$1 billion over four years. The additional revenue will be reinvested back into New South Wales to help fund essential services. I commend the bills to the House.

**DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Shayne Mallard):** The question is that these bills be now read a second time.

**Motion agreed to.**

### Third Reading

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** I move:

That these bills be now read a third time.

**Motion agreed to.**

### Adjournment Debate

### ADJOURNMENT

**The Hon. DUNCAN GAY:** I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

### ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN AND DOMAIN

**The Hon. LOU AMATO (16:36:1):** In 1816 Mrs Elizabeth Henrietta Macquarie planted a tree on the shores of Sydney Harbour that was originally growing in a pot in the garden of Government House in Bridge Street, Sydney. Two hundred years later, the tree from the garden of Government House has grown into what we know today as the Royal Botanic Garden and Domain. Mrs Macquarie was the wife of Major-General Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of New South Wales. The tree that Mrs Macquarie planted affectionately became known as the "Wishing Tree". One hundred and fourteen years later, on 8 February 1930, the *Sydney Morning Herald* published an article by Gwen Meredith entitled "The Wishing Tree, Venerable and Romantic". The following is an excerpt from Ms Meredith's article:

And not only is it a figure of romance to the youngsters. Many a grown-up child has stood before it and woven dreams about its great gnarled trunk and spreading branches. Perhaps they, too, have confided their wishes in its safekeeping. What secrets it must have hidden away in its great heart. What tragedies and comedies, big and little, must it have known! What changes must it have witnessed in the city around it!

The old Wishing Tree has been silently standing and watching for over a hundred years—and its own history is as interesting as any romance one could weave about it. This great pine, towering in lordly might above the lesser members of its kingdom, came originally from Norfolk Island in a flower pot. I do not know anything about its antecedents except that they were members of the well-known Norfolk Island pine family. Removed at an early age from its native soil, however, this particular pine, after its journey in the flower pot, took up residence in the garden of the old Government House in Bridge Street. Here it thrived in its regal atmosphere until 1816, when Mrs Macquarie determined to transplant it to the position it now occupies ...

The planting of the Wishing Tree was in essence the beginning of the spectacular Royal Botanic Garden and Domain. However, as with all living things, the Wishing Tree declined with age. Sadly, it was removed in 1945. Today a specimen of the recently discovered Wollemi pine graces the same place where the original Wishing Tree once grew. This year marks the 200th anniversary of Sydney's most spectacular garden. A lot has happened since Mrs Macquarie planted the first tree. In the early days the garden gradually grew in splendour but had many setbacks along the way. During the latter part of the 1800s many plants were lost to drought and an inadequate supply of water for irrigation. Many losses also were incurred due to a lack of cultivation knowledge. However, as early as 1817, colonial botanist Charles Fraser was appointed to assist in the research and acclimatisation of exotic plants.

The University of Sydney did not have its Faculty of Science until 1882 and it was not until 1913 that its School of Botany was founded. Therefore the appointment of Charles Fraser in 1817 meant that the Royal Botanic Garden is the oldest scientific institution in Australia. The establishment of the School of Botany at the University of Sydney provided further research opportunities on the cultivation of native and exotic species growing in the garden. Two hundred years after the first planting a great team of horticulturalists, scientists, gardeners and many other professionals work together to maintain the jewel of Sydney in all its splendour. Situated on the foreshore of arguably the most beautiful harbour in the world, the Royal Botanic Garden and Domain is one of the great gardens of the world. Today the Royal Botanic Garden and Domain occupies a total area of 64 hectares and is home to a staggering 3,964 trees, 8,900 different plant species and over 67,100 plant specimens.

During the 2016 bicentenary celebrations of the Royal Botanic Garden, a new and exciting world-class attraction will open, the Calyx. The Calyx replaces the demolished Arc Glasshouse with a completely new design. The Calyx will provide different climatic conditions to allow the cultivation of a variety of plant species unable to be grown in Sydney's climate. A significant challenge has been to create a variety of stable environmental conditions ideal for a range of plants yet maintain comfortable surroundings for visitors. Extensive research has been undertaken on glass types and glazing to ensure optimal light transmission for healthy plant growth. The Calyx will also provide educational facilities and has been designed with easy entry, providing a no-barrier access for all. The Calyx's modular design and steel-frame construction allow for expansion that will be flexible, adaptable and responsive to future needs. Our Royal Botanic Garden and Domain is indeed one of the jewels of New South Wales, and the Calyx will be a world-class exhibition. To think that it all started with a great lady planting a single tree is simply astounding.

### FEDERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN

**The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK (16:41):** Since this is the last sitting day before the Federal election, I take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers who have selflessly helped our party with the Federal campaign so far, and the many more who will stand and hand out for the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party on 2 July throughout Australia. In fact, in less than three weeks, more than 500 volunteers have signed up to help in New South Wales, and several hundred more across Australia. It is heartening for our party when we have such dedicated and highly committed regional organisers.

No amount of dastardly betrayal of minor parties throughout Australia by the Liberal-Nationals Coalition, The Greens, and that closet Green, Senator Nick Xenophon, will keep our party from standing up for shooters, fishers, farmers, or any other group that feels betrayed or overregulated in pursuing its outdoor recreational activities, especially from a party that says it knows what is best. I would go so far as to say that the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party is the last remaining grassroots party representing all these interests. The Greens were successful in gobbling up the Australian Democrats through political bastardry many years ago, and they are now trying to lock out every other minor party from political representation in Australia.

The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party fears no-one, especially a party of zealots, left-wing radicals, and wannabe bomb chuckers, as Mr Jeremy Buckingham recently claimed himself to be in this House. The trouble for Mr Jeremy Buckingham is that the bomb blew up in his face, and we are still waiting for his gold-coin donations for the four venison sausages he ate for free. Though it may have seemed opportunistic at the time to change the voting system, I can guarantee that only Senator Nick Xenophon will come out ahead. The Liberal-Nationals Coalition will not take control of the Federal Senate, while The Greens will lose several seats. That is what happens when an incumbent government reacts in a kneejerk way to Greens Senator Lee Rhiannon's fallacies and her control agenda. One has to ask: How would Greens Federal member of Parliament Adam Bandt be feeling now?

It has been an eventful term federally over the past three years. One would think that whilst in opposition one would learn not to make the same mistakes that the incumbent Government previously made. Yet the current Federal Government has made exactly the same mistakes as the Labor Government. It rolled a popularly elected sitting Prime Minister, and whinged for years that it could not do what it wanted because of an obstructionist Senate, forgetting to point out, however, that it did exactly the same to the Labor Government when in opposition.

Negotiations can be successfully concluded only if there is good faith on all sides. The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party was only one phone call away. All Liberal Prime Minister Abbott or Liberal Prime Minister Turnbull had to do was pick up the phone and talk to us—we would have given them faultless advice on how not to deal with the crossbench and The Greens. The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party has been remarkably successful in negotiating with government and getting legislation passed into law. Indeed, for a party with only two members in New South Wales, our success is probably unprecedented.

**The Hon. Dr Peter Phelps:** It's not the size; it's what you do with it.

**The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK:** I acknowledge that interjection. Unfortunately, however, we could soon find ourselves in the uncomfortable predicament of having a Federal Liberal-Nationals government held hostage by either The Greens or Senator Nick Xenophon, or both. This would be a nightmare scenario and the last thing that any recreational shooter, fisher or farmer in this country would want. The anticipated changes to firearms, recreational fishing and farming practices would be disastrous. "Flak jacket Johnny" was bad enough—a Liberal Prime Minister Turnbull and Greens Senator Lee Rhiannon alliance would be a nightmare. Again I thank all our volunteers. Without their continual efforts and support, our party would not be what it is today and what we hope it will become in the future.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

**The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE (16:45):** Of the many distasteful actions of Premier Mike Baird's forced council mergers, broken promises and autocratic decision-making, perhaps the most distasteful has been his decision to deny millions of New South Wales voters their democratic right to select their own councillors. There is no better demonstration of the community anger at this denial of democracy than the rallies held across New South Wales on Saturday 18 June. Gloucester, Gundagai, Molong, Harden, Tumbarumba, and Oberon are just some of the places in regional New South Wales where these rallies were held. I, together with people such as Charlie Sheahan, Tim Kurylowicz, Jess Jennings, Vivien Thomson, and my colleague in the other place Kate Washington, joined those communities to call on the Baird-Grant Government to reinstate local democracy.

Despite the charade of one-person council meetings, of advisory groups whose membership of course had to be approved by the Premier's office, and the pretence of new logos and titles, the reality is that forcibly merged councils in New South Wales are being run by single administrators appointed by, and solely responsible to, Premier Mike Baird. As a former mayor I find it particularly distasteful that some of these autocrats are now referring to themselves as mayors. They rule by the power of the State, not the will of the people, and do not deserve this title.

When he announced his plans on 18 December last year, Premier Baird was asked repeatedly when elections for any forcibly merged councils would be held. He loudly proclaimed that they would take place in September 2016 with all other councils, and certainly no later than March 2017. But by the time the forced mergers were finally proclaimed, all this had changed. Premier Baird said no elections would be held until September 2017. There was no explanation for his change of heart. Yet the gazettal included the boundaries of the council, how many councillors would be elected and, if there were to be wards, what their boundaries would be. So there is no practical or logistical reason why these forcibly merged councils cannot go to an election in September this year.

The NSW Electoral Commission says it acts at the direction of the Government. The details of eligible voters are on the computer. The usual school halls can be booked. The staff to run the poll can be employed in the usual way. Even the administrator of the new Inner West Council has said that he would have no problem with council elections taking place early. If the elections were held in September 2016, like all other council areas in New South Wales, the operations of the new councils would be overseen by elected representatives responsible to their local communities, not just Premier Baird or Deputy Premier Grant.

Under Mike Baird, in those 19 councils that have been forcibly merged, more than 1.2 million eligible voters have been denied their right to select their local council representatives. In those 23 councils threatened with forced mergers, should they proceed, more than 980,000 additional voters will be denied their democratic rights. That would make more than 2.2 million eligible voters in New South Wales whose democratic rights are being trashed by Premier Baird.

We have all heard what is already starting to happen in the forcibly merged council areas. Volunteer groups are being dismissed, funding for services is being withdrawn, senior people are leaving, planning decisions are being made by the autocrat in charge and real estate is being eagerly eyed off for sale. Irrevocable decisions will be made by Premier Mike Baird's handpicked administrators and these decisions will haunt communities for years. That is why the shadow Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, Michael Daley, and I launched Democracy Watch, a webpage where anyone who is adversely affected by Premier Mike Baird's forced council mergers and

the decisions of his hand-picked administrators can contact us on a secure site. The web address is [nswdemocracywatch.org](http://nswdemocracywatch.org).

### STATE BUDGET AND ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE (16:49):** I congratulate the Government on the 2016-17 budget which has delivered for the people of New South Wales in the areas of economic management and good policy. I will focus on three issues in the budget relating to economic management. The foundation of that good economic management goes back as far as 2008. The Premier, who was then shadow finance Minister, and I as shadow Treasurer, focused on the fact that the Labor Government's expenses had grown faster than revenue. That became a core consideration for us when we were thinking about what a Liberal-Nationals Coalition would do in office. Gaining control of expenses and growth, and living within our means were fundamental to delivering a responsible economic plan. I am proud to have been part of that plan.

The second issue relates to the infrastructure spend but I will not list the infrastructure items. After 16 years of Labor governance we were facing a statewide crisis. But look at us now. Economic activity is driven by the greatest infrastructure program ever seen in New South Wales or, for that matter, in Australia, which is not only providing us with jobs and growth but also building for future generations. The job of members of Parliament is to work for future generations as well as for the prosperity of people today. The third issue that I will focus on is housing. When the Liberal-Nationals Coalition came into office, housing in New South Wales was a disaster and this was particularly so for those who needed social and affordable housing.

I have already noted some of the highlights relating to the infrastructure spend—a record \$73.3 billion over the next four years—but the housing outcome has been truly remarkable. In 1995 when the Liberal-Nationals Coalition won the election, there were more than 55,000 housing approvals. Labor had allowed housing starts to fall to the lowest levels in 50 years. The Coalition undertook a number of activities including a State building package. It also established the Housing Acceleration Fund. That fund was run by a Cabinet task force on housing supply which targeted infrastructure projects to ensure that housing could be delivered. Initially, \$181 million was allocated for projects and this year's budget shows that \$969 million is reserved for the Housing Acceleration Fund, which will support the delivery of tens of thousands of new homes—a truly remarkable effort and something of which this Government should be proud.

Housing is a fundamental part of this State's economic activity. The housing market in Australia contributes 11.5 per cent of economic activity, or \$182 billion of Australian gross domestic product. The housing market is the nation's second largest employer, creating 1.1 million jobs, which is more than manufacturing and mining combined, and it helps to provide homes for every Australian. In this year's budget the Government is seeking to modernise the State's planning system to make planning assessments simpler, faster and more inclusive. I support the continuance of the work being done to deliver a successful and prosperous State, prudent and responsible economic management, and the infrastructure, housing and jobs that are essential for this generation and for future generations.

### NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD RECIPIENTS

**The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE (16:54):** Three Indigenous human rights activists were recognised at the third annual National Indigenous Human Rights Awards [NIHRA] to a great audience at Doltone House in Pyrmont on 9 June 2016. The National Indigenous Human Rights Awards recognises some of the most outstanding work in the field of human rights and social justice. As the founder and convenor of the National Indigenous Human Rights Awards, I know that these awards recognise this nation's greatest struggle. This nation knows no greater rights struggle than that of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. These awards are dedicated exclusively to the First Peoples of this nation who continue to give their best in their struggle for social justice and human rights.

Today, as reflected in the report on the reparation for stolen generations, the descendants of the original custodians of this continent still fight to end poverty, to deliver hope, to rebuild identities, to reclaim culture, to reclaim language and to save lives. National Indigenous Human Rights Awards recognise those relentless social justice stalwarts and human rights champions for their courage and continued struggle to deliver Indigenous Australians a better and brighter future. The National Indigenous Human Rights Awards recognises three award categories: the Dr Yunupingu Human Rights Award; the Eddie Mabo Social Justice Award, in honour of the legacy left by the late Eddie Mabo; and the Anthony Mundine Courage Award, seeking to inspire courage in the face of adversity.

The recipient of the Dr Yunupingu Award was Broome-based Mangarayi and Maubiag man Dameyon Bonson, who is a suicide prevention advocate. In recent years he has done more to put the Aboriginal and Torres



Strait Islander lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer or questioning [LGBTIQQ] community on the national landscape than anyone else in the country. He said:

It's an absolute honour to be the recipient of the Dr Yunupingu Human Rights Award for Human Rights. I am encouraged now, more than ever, to continue to push for greater inclusion of the needs of the Indigenous LGBTIQQ.

Perth-based Noongar man Mervyn Eades was awarded the Eddie Mabo Social Justice Award for founding the prison to work program, Ngalla Maya. It is a program that changes lives by supporting, training and finding work for former inmates. Palm Island resident Lex Wotton received the Anthony Mundine Award for Courage. Lex Wotton is leading a class action by Palm Islanders against the Queensland Government and Queensland Police, alleging racism following the death in custody of Mulrunji Doomadgee in 2004, the police commandeering the island after the death, and the riots. One of the three judges, Dr Marcus Woolombi Waters, stated:

The Indigenous human rights awards acknowledge and pay respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have sacrificed, endured and retained strength and integrity against all odds in serving their communities.

Natalie Ahmat of NITV News presided over the awards as master of ceremonies. Ms Ahmat stated:

The National Indigenous Human Rights Awards are one of my favourite events of the year. It's incredibly important that we recognise and honour Indigenous Australia's inspirational grassroots heroes; the human rights and social justice warriors that work tirelessly to champion human rights for First Nations people.

On a personal note, it was also incredibly special for me to meet my cousin, the Dr Yunupingu Human Rights Award winner, Dameyon Bonson, in person for the very first time.

The sponsors of this year's awards include THF Wines, Crown Resorts Foundation, Rockdale City Council, Levitt Robinson Solicitors, Mitry Lawyers, Coverforce Insurance and ISJHR. I thank them and look forward to their sponsorship and to a bigger award ceremony in 2017, marking 25 years of Eddie Mabo's legal battle culminating in the legal doctrine of terra nullius being overturned. I look forward to this celebration on 3 June 2017 in honour of land rights campaigner, the late Eddie "Cookie" Mabo.

### BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION LEGISLATION

**Ms JAN BARHAM (16:59):** I live in the State's most biodiverse area—the far North Coast. Concerns have been raised with me about the Government's draft legislation and what it means to the value of biodiversity. I will provide a definition of "biodiversity" because it has relevance to the legislation. Biodiversity is the variety between all species of plants, animals, and microorganisms and the ecosystems within which they live and interact. The core of this issue is that biodiversity is an extremely complex concept. The Government has proposed legislation that suggests we can transplant or offset biodiversity despite the unique character of those many interactions. It is suggesting that our biodiversity can be picked up from somewhere and put down somewhere else. What the passage of the proposed legislation will really mean is that we will be able to destroy something in the naive or mistaken belief that we can recreate it somewhere else. As anyone with an understanding of science knows, that is impossible. Biodiversity and its unique chaos of plants, animals, organisms and microorganisms happens in situ. We cannot put it somewhere else.

Last week I attended a briefing by the Environmental Defenders Office and Nature Conservation Council on this issue. A number of similar briefings have been held across the State. The briefings held on the far North Coast were well attended. In fact, the numbers exceeded the capacity of the venue because people are very concerned about what is being proposed. People who live on the North Coast know that they live in a special part of the world. They have spent the past three decades trying to protect, preserve and enhance the area after the destruction inflicted over the past two centuries. There was widespread destruction of the big scrub, which covered the entire North Coast. That amazing vegetation was lost and can never be replaced. We also lost red cedars and other large trees that can never be replaced. Once we lose them, they are gone. We have lost hundreds of thousands of years of growth forever. However, as a result of 30 years of dedication on the part of a community that respects and understands biodiversity, there has been a degree of landscape enhancement. Nature corridors have been reconnected and we have achieved landscape-wide improvement of the environment.

The Government's proposed legislation removes existing protections and controls, including the no-go zones. I remember attending briefings more than a decade ago and being told that there would be red, green and amber flags that would determine where people could and could not go. I thought it was a bit naff. Why did the Government not simply rely on science and recognise things of value? That worked well, because it meant that high-value areas were no-go zones. The Government's current proposal suggests that no-go zones will no longer exist. We are concerned that anywhere will now be a go-zone if people pay money to destroy high-value areas or if we accept that we can relocate biodiversity. The proposition is that we can destroy one area and create a similar area somewhere else. That is nonsense. Scientists Steve Moreton, Andy Sheppard and Mark Lonsdale state:

The value that humans gain from biodiversity reminds us that, despite being predominantly urban, we are still intrinsically part of the natural world. We are a component of and therefore dependent on the ecosystem.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Shayne Mallard):** The question is that this House do now adjourn.

**Motion agreed to.**

**The House adjourned at 17:04 until Tuesday 2 August 2016 at 14:30.**