



New South Wales

Legislative Council

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Wednesday, 12 May 2021

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 12 May 2021

The PRESIDENT (The Hon. Matthew Ryan Mason-Cox) took the chair at 10:00.

The PRESIDENT read the prayers and acknowledged the Gadigal clan of the Euro nation and its elders and thanked them for their custodianship of this land.

Documents

PARRAMATTA LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

Noncompliance with Order for Papers

The PRESIDENT: On Tuesday 11 May 2021 the House ordered that, should the Leader of the Government fail to produce the unredacted final business cases for the Parramatta Light Rail project stage one and stage two in compliance with the resolution of the House, the Leader of the Government is to attend in his place at the table at the conclusion of prayers on the day following the passing of the resolution to explain his reasons for continued noncompliance with the order. I call upon the Leader of the Government to explain his failure to comply with paragraph (7).

Attendance of Leader of the Government in His Place

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts) (10:04): I refer to my statement in the House yesterday outlining my case against censure by the House. This Government, like successive governments before it, recognises and respects the importance of Cabinet confidentiality in the system of responsible government. The Premier's *Memorandum 2006-08 Maintaining Confidentiality of Cabinet Documents and Other Cabinet Conventions* is significant as it gives guidance to agencies for protecting the confidentiality of Cabinet documents. The memorandum states:

Cabinet is the central and highest decision-making institution in government. Its workings are governed by long established practice and convention.

... a convention at the core of the Cabinet system of government is the collective responsibility of Ministers for government decisions. Ministers are collectively responsible for all Cabinet decisions and must publicly support them, even if they do not personally agree with them.

The unauthorised and/or premature disclosure of Cabinet documents, including draft Cabinet documents (such as draft Cabinet minutes), undermines collective ministerial responsibility. It also undermines the convention of Cabinet confidentiality. It is accordingly essential that the confidentiality of Cabinet documents, including draft Cabinet documents, is maintained to enable full and frank discussions to be had prior to Cabinet making its decision.

This memorandum was issued by the Carr Government in 2006 and its operation has been continued by this Government. All government agencies are required to comply with this memorandum as they have been since it was issued by the former Government in 2006. The memorandum attaches a paper on Cabinet conventions in New South Wales compiled by Anne Twomey and Roger Wilkins. The paper discusses the convention of Cabinet confidentiality and its application to the production of documents to Parliament in light of the decision of the Court of Appeal in *Egan v Chadwick*. The paper states:

The power of the Houses of the Parliament to require the production of government documents is also derived from the principle of ministerial responsibility. While the courts have concluded that the Houses, in the exercise of their functions of legislation or the scrutiny of the executive, may require Ministers to produce government documents, this is subject to the requirements of cabinet confidentiality. The inherent powers of the Houses cannot be used to undermine the principle of collective ministerial responsibility by disclosing the deliberations of Ministers in Cabinet. This includes Cabinet documents which reveal the position that a Minister intended to put to the Cabinet.

I note that an order was passed by the House on 1 December 2005 in relation to Cabinet information concerning grey nurse sharks. In the event that any document falling within the scope of the order was not produced as part of the return to order, on the grounds that it formed part of a Cabinet minute or was held for consideration as part of Cabinet deliberations, the resolution required that:

A return be prepared showing the date of creation of the document, a description of the document, the author of the document and the reasons why the production of the document would disclose the deliberations of Cabinet as discussed by the Court of Appeal in *Egan v Chadwick*.

The response provided by the then director of the Premier's Department to that resolution is available on the Parliament's website. It states:

An index of documents not produced because of the Cabinet exemption has not been provided. After considering advice from the Crown Solicitor, the Government does not concede that the Council has the power to impose such a requirement. This Government, like successive governments before it, recognises and respects the importance of Cabinet confidentiality to the system of responsible government. Although production of the business cases cannot be compelled, the Government reserves its right and may take the view that it may become appropriate for it to release further financial information about this particular project in the future. In doing so, the Government must take into account the sensitivity of information contained within the business cases, noting that the premature release of such information has the potential to undermine effective procurement processes.

This could greatly compromise the State's objective of achieving value for money for the people of New South Wales, as well as the delivery of a light rail system connecting western Sydney. The Cabinet is yet to consider the Parramatta Light Rail stage two final business case. However, in the interest of transparency, the Government voluntarily provided redacted copies of the main bodies of the final business cases to the House. That summarises the position of the Government and that is the statement I make today.

Bills

PAYROLL TAX AMENDMENT (JOBS PLUS) BILL 2021 STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 2021

First Reading

Bills received from the Legislative Assembly.

Leave granted for procedural matters to be dealt with on one motion without formality.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I move:

That the bills be read a first time and printed, standing orders be suspended according to sessional order for remaining stages and the second readings of the bills be set down as orders of the day for a future day.

Motion agreed to.

Motions

DEATH OF BABY Z

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (10:11): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that on 10 March 2021 the New South Wales Coroner delivered its report from the inquest into the shocking and tragic death of Baby Z, conducted by Deputy State Coroner Magistrate Harriet Grahame.
- (2) That this House further notes that:
 - (a) Baby Z was just two years, seven months and six days old when he died at Wollongong Hospital in August 2012 from a traumatic head injury;
 - (b) the inquest into Baby Z's death attempted to understand the broader systemic failures that contributed to his death;
 - (c) Magistrate Grahame found that despite multiple reports that Baby Z was at risk of significant harm, he did not receive a face-to-face assessment by child protection caseworkers prior to his death;
 - (d) Magistrate Grahame stated that it is "both shocking and completely unacceptable" that around 70 per cent of children who are the subject of a Risk of Significant Harm report do not attract a statutory response; and
 - (e) Magistrate Grahame also stated that the responsibility for protecting children and young people "cannot be shifted by creating a culture where overworked or under-skilled staff can close reports, claiming a lack of resources or competing priorities".
- (3) That this House expresses its alarm regarding the tragic death of Baby Z and the Deputy State Coroner's findings regarding the New South Wales child protection system.

Motion agreed to.

Documents

NORTH WILTON

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (10:12): I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1111 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice by as follows:

- (1) Omit paragraph (c) and insert instead:

- (c) all declarations of conflicts or perceived conflicts of interest, relating to or from Mr John Brogden, relating to North Wilton or Mr Peter Brennan, CEO of Bradcorp, created since 1 January 2015.
- (2) Omit paragraph (d) and insert instead:
 - (d) all financial and valuation documents created since 1 January 2017 relating to the acquisition of North Wilton.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: 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 Minister for Planning and Public Spaces; Department of Planning, Industry and Environment; the Premier; Department of Premier and Cabinet; the Treasurer; Treasury; the Minister for Finance and Small Business; Department of Finance, Services and Innovation; UrbanGrowth NSW Development Corporation; Greater Sydney Commission; or Landcom relating to North Wilton:

- (a) all documents created since 1 January 2015 relating to the analysis and designation of Wilton as a Priority Growth Area, including any reference to North Wilton;
- (b) all UrbanGrowth or Landcom board papers created since 1 January 2015 relating to North Wilton;
- (c) all declarations of conflicts or perceived conflicts of interest, relating to or from Mr John Brogden, relating to North Wilton or Mr Peter Brennan, CEO of Bradcorp, created since 1 January 2015;
- (d) all financial and valuation documents created since 1 January 2017 relating to the acquisition of North Wilton;
- (e) all correspondence and communications, including to and from mobile phone devices using SMS or any messaging application since 1 July 2018 between the Mr John Brogden and Mr Peter Brennan; 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.

Motions

THE HON. JOHN AJAKA, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (10:13): I move:

That this House recognises and congratulates President John Ajaka on:

- (a) his outstanding service as President of the Legislative Council;
- (b) the impeccable way in which he has carried himself in the role in always placing the interests and integrity of the Legislative Council first and foremost;
- (c) the consistent impartiality and fairness in his decision making; and
- (d) being a genuinely decent and caring human being.

Motion agreed to.

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE WEEK

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (10:14): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) 8 to 14 May 2021 is Neighbourhood Centre Week; and
 - (b) the theme of Neighbourhood Centre Week is "Loneliness: The Solution is Community" in recognition of the one in four Australians who are lonely.
- (2) That this House further notes that:
 - (a) neighbourhood centres provide essential community infrastructure in communities across New South Wales;
 - (b) these centres provide flexible services and supports to fill critical service gaps in their communities;
 - (c) neighbourhood centres played an essential role supporting communities through great recent adversity, including through droughts, fires, floods, economic crisis and the pandemic; and
 - (d) neighbourhood centres are essential to building community resilience and social connection, and combating loneliness.
- (3) That this House thanks the many workers and volunteers who work in neighbourhood and community centres throughout New South Wales for the essential role they play in their community.
- (4) That this House calls on the Government to increase funding for New South Wales neighbourhood and community centres in the upcoming budget so that these centres can continue developing, supporting and serving the communities that rely on them.

Motion agreed to.

WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (10:15): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) Friday 2 April 2021 was World Autism Awareness Day;
 - (b) in 2007, the UN General Assembly unanimously declared 2 April as World Autism Awareness Day to highlight the need to help improve the quality of life of those with autism; and
 - (c) in 2021, the UN is drawing attention to the heightened inequalities the COVID-19 pandemic has uncovered for people with autism, particularly when it comes to income and wealth distribution, access to health care, protection under the law, and political inclusion.
- (2) That this House commits to:
 - (a) breaking down the barriers for people with autism in New South Wales to access income, housing, health care, education, legal protections, as well as political and social inclusion to the same level as everyone else in our community; and
 - (b) listening to people with autism about the changes that they want to see in New South Wales to make it a better and safer place to live.

Motion agreed to.

NATIONAL FAMILIES WEEK

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (10:15): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) Saturday 15 May 2021 is the United Nations International Day of Families;
 - (b) National Families Week in Australia is from 15 to 21 May 2021; and
 - (c) the theme of National Families Week for 2021 is "Stronger Families, Stronger Communities".
- (2) That this House further notes that:
 - (a) families come in all shapes and sizes, and may include one's biological family, non-biological family, or chosen family;
 - (b) there are many families in New South Wales who require greater levels of support from government to help them provide a safe and nurturing environment for children; and
 - (c) when families are properly supported, their communities are stronger, safer, and more resilient against adversity.
- (3) That this House calls on the New South Wales Government to:
 - (a) invest further in early intervention and support services for the families of New South Wales who need greater levels of support; and
 - (b) ensure families are properly supported when they provide out-of-home care for children who aren't safe at home.

Motion agreed to.

RAW FITNESS AND SPORTS TRAINING

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (10:16): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) Raw Fitness and Sports Training in Ballina hosted a 24-hour charity ride on 26 and 27 March to raise funds for two local charitable causes; and
 - (b) Raw Fitness raised \$8,000 for:
 - (i) Luca Amery, an 11-year-old boy in Ballina who has been diagnosed with stage 4 brain cancer; and
 - (ii) the Women's Health Refuge run by Momentum Collective.
- (2) That this House recognises:
 - (a) the bravery of Luca Amery who has a tough journey ahead with surgeries, radiation and chemotherapy; and
 - (b) the important work of the Women's Health Refuge in providing support, safe rooms and crisis accommodation to women and children experiencing family and domestic violence.
- (3) That this House notes that the fundraising event encouraged people to:
 - (a) ride on a stationary bike from 7.00 p.m. on Friday 26 March to 7.00 p.m. on Saturday 27 March; and
 - (b) support the cause in other ways such as:
 - (i) buying raffle tickets;

- (ii) attending a BBQ; and
 - (iii) making a gold coin donation.
- (4) That this House congratulates and thanks:
- (a) the more than 60 riders who cycled on two stationary bikes for the 24-hour period;
 - (b) local businesses that donated more than 35 prizes to the raffle;
 - (c) all those who volunteered, donated and participated in the fundraising; and
 - (d) the entire Raw Fitness team, especially owner Jemma Coulter, for the compassion and community spirit shown in hosting this important event.

Motion agreed to.

WARREN CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (10:16): I move:

- (1) That this House acknowledges the inaugural Warren Chamber Music Festival was held on 7, 8 and 9 May 2021.
- (2) That this House notes that the event was able to go ahead in part thanks to a grant of \$20,000 from the Tackling Tough Times Together grant from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal.
- (3) That this House acknowledges the festival consisted of four concerts held over three days and was an outstanding musical display of national quality.
- (4) That this House congratulates and thanks all those involved in the event including:
 - (a) all of the extraordinary performers:
 - (i) Sonia Anfiloff – Dramatic Soprano;
 - (ii) Marieanne Noonan – Mezzo Soprano;
 - (iii) Kiran Phatak – Flute;
 - (iv) Nick Evans – Clarinet;
 - (v) Greg Taylor – Bassoon;
 - (vi) Jessica Oddie – Violin;
 - (vii) Peter Clark – Violin;
 - (viii) Natalia Harvey – Violin;
 - (ix) Frances Evans – Violin;
 - (x) Katie Yap – Viola;
 - (xi) Charlotte Fetherston – Viola;
 - (xii) Thomas Rann – Cello;
 - (xiii) Alexandra Partridge – Cello;
 - (xiv) Daniel Dean – Double Bass;
 - (xv) Fiona Loader – Award winning Australian composer;
 - (xvi) Pacific Brass led by Ben Crocker; and
 - (xvii) Macquarie Conservatorium Youth Musicians from Warren and Gilgandra.
 - (b) volunteers and event organisers; and
 - (c) all venues that made their spaces available for performances, including Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Church Warren, the Collie CWA Hall and Window on the Wetlands Centre Warren.
- (5) That this House congratulates organiser Frances Evans:
 - (a) for coordinating a brilliant event;
 - (b) for creating an important cultural music experience in regional New South Wales; and
 - (c) for bringing an extremely high quality of musical performance and professionalism to Warren while also engaging with, and providing opportunities for, Macquarie Conservatorium students.
- (6) That this House hopes the festival continues into the future and wishes the Warren Music Festival continued success for the years to come.

Motion agreed to.

*Documents***BIOBANKS****Production of Documents: Order**

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON (10:17): I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1193 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice by omitting paragraph (d) and inserting instead:

- (d) all documents relating to:
 - (i) the consideration of the potential use of biobank offset credits relating to the Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke sites;
 - (ii) any public tenders and expressions of interest for offset credits relating to the Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke sites;
 - (iii) any documents which identify the Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke sites as potential biobanks from which credits might be purchased;
 - (iv) interests held by any employees of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment [DPIE] in biobank sites; and
 - (v) all correspondence with Eco Logical Australia.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Accordingly, I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within 42 days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents created since 1 January 2014 in the possession, custody or control of the Premier; the Department of Premier and Cabinet; the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces; the Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade; the Minister for Energy and Environment; the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment; the Biodiversity Conservation Trust; the Minister for Transport and Roads; the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads; Transport for NSW; or Sydney Metro relating to biobanks:

- (a) all documents, including correspondence, relating to the assessment and approval of the Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke Stage 1 and Stage 2 biobanks;
- (b) all documents relating to all trusts attached to the Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke Stage 1 and Stage 2 biobanks, including any document which discloses the beneficiaries of those trusts;
- (c) all documents relating to all fit and proper person tests undertaken prior to approval of Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke Stage 1 and Stage 2 biobanks;
- (d) all documents relating to:
 - (i) the consideration of the potential use of biobank offset credits relating to the Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke sites;
 - (ii) any public tenders and expressions of interest for offset credits relating to the Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke sites;
 - (iii) any documents which identify the Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke sites as potential biobanks from which credits might be purchased;
 - (iv) interests held by any employees of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment [DPIE] in biobank sites; and
 - (v) all correspondence with Eco Logical Australia.
- (e) all documents relating to advice, including offset advice, from Eco Logical Australia regarding the Western Sydney Growth Centres, including all advices, correspondence, phone records and meeting documents;
- (f) all documents relating to advice, including offset advice, from Eco Logical Australia regarding the Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan, including all advices, correspondence, phone records and meeting documents;
- (g) the following documents relating to the Henribark biobank (agreement 449):
 - (i) all fit and proper person tests;
 - (ii) all correspondence regarding establishment, assessment and approval; and
 - (iii) all correspondence or declarations regarding conflicts of interest.
- (h) the following documents relating to the Angophora Holdings Pty Ltd biobank (agreement 212):
 - (i) all fit and proper person tests;
 - (ii) all correspondence regarding establishment, assessment and approval; and
 - (iii) all correspondence or declarations regarding conflicts of interest.

- (i) all correspondence relating to the purchase of environmental offset credits from the Angophora. Holdings Pty Ltd biobank (agreement 212);
- (j) all documents relating to the biobanking interests of Robert Humphries of Eco Logical Australia;
- (k) all documents relating to withheld or suspended payments from the Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke biobanks, including documents which disclose reasons, the duration of time, and the biobanks Agreement ID number;
- (l) the management plans for the Meridolum, Hampden Vale and Hardwicke Stage 1 and 2 biobanks, including all documents which detail the financial allocations for Part A and Part B funds; and
- (m) 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.

Motions

RAMADAN

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE (10:18): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) Thursday 13 May 2021 is the first day of Eid al-Fitr, marking the end of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of fasting;
 - (b) Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, it is a month of fasting, a month of worship, and forgiveness; and
 - (c) there are approximately 1.9 billion Muslims globally, making Islam the second-largest religion in the world with over 600,000 Muslims in Australia, drawn from more than 60 different ethnic backgrounds, making Islam Australia's fourth-largest religion.
- (2) That this House wish all Muslims, and in particular the Australian Islamic community, Eid Mubarak.

Motion agreed to.

NETBALL WORLD CUP

The Hon. NATALIE WARD (10:19): I move:

- (1) That this House notes:
 - (a) the International Netball Federation Netball World Cup will return to Sydney in 2027;
 - (b) the 2027 Netball World Cup is the ninth addition to the New South Wales Government's initiative of "10 World Cups in 10 Years";
 - (c) this event is expected to deliver an estimated \$31 million to the New South Wales visitor economy;
 - (d) this will be the fourth Women's World Cup event secured for Sydney alongside the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020, FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 2022 and the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023; and
 - (e) the "Her Sport Her Way" strategy will continue to support and benefit women and girls playing community sport across New South Wales.
- (2) That this House thanks the more than 115,000 netballers currently taking to courts across New South Wales each week, supported by an army of volunteers, parents, carers, coaches and officials.

Motion agreed to.

BLUESFEST

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (10:19): On behalf of the Hon. John Graham: I move:

- (1) That this House notes that Bluesfest, one of the world's premier live music festivals, is a significant economic and cultural contributor to the Northern Rivers and New South Wales.
- (2) That this House calls on the Government to save Bluesfest 2021 with a targeted grant, and establish a broader festival interruption fund to support the music industry and small businesses reliant on it for survival.

Motion agreed to.

Committees

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 1 - PREMIER AND FINANCE

Report: Budget Estimates 2020-2021

The Hon. TARA MORIARTY: I table report No. 53 of Portfolio Committee No. 1 - Premier and Finance entitled *Budget Estimates 2020-2021*, dated May 2021, together with transcripts of evidence, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, and correspondence relating to the inquiry. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. TARA MORIARTY (10:20): I move:

That the House take note of the report.

Debate adjourned.

Documents

PARRAMATTA LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

Return to Order

The CLERK: According to the resolution of the House of 18 November 2020, I table additional documents relating to an order for papers regarding stage two of the Parramatta Light Rail project, received this day from the General Counsel of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, together with an indexed list of documents.

Claim of Privilege

The CLERK: I table a return identifying those of the documents received this day that are claimed to be privileged and should not be tabled or made public. I advise that pursuant to standing orders the documents are available for inspection by members of the Legislative Council only.

Business of the House

POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: I move:

That business of the House notice of motion No. 1 be postponed until Tuesday 8 June 2021.

Motion agreed to.

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 order of private members' business this day.

Motion agreed to.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES (10:24): I move:

That the order of private members' business for today be as follows:

- (1) Private members' business item No. 1170 standing in the name of Ms Abigail Boyd relating to the Greyhound Racing Amendment (Whole-of-life Tracking) Bill.
- (2) Private members' business item No. 1204 standing in the name of the Hon. John Graham relating to sales of public land.
- (3) Private members' business item No. 1202 standing in the name of Hon. John Graham relating to the privatisation of Newcastle Port.
- (4) Private members' business item No. 1185 standing in the name of the Hon. Emma Hurst relating to an order for papers regarding animal research.
- (5) Private members' business item No. 1130 standing in the name of the Hon. Peter Primrose relating to an order for papers regarding jobs created by the COVID-19 Recovery Plan.
- (6) Private members' business item No. 1134 standing in the name of the Hon. Mark Buttigieg relating to a further order for papers regarding Councillor Antoine Doueihy, Mayor of Strathfield.
- (7) Private members' business item No. 1066 standing in the name of the Hon. Mark Buttigieg relating to a further order for papers regarding bushfire reports by Noetic.
- (8) Private members' business item No. 1198 standing in the name of the Hon. Mark Latham relating to the misuse of trade union funds.
- (9) Private members' business item No. 1094 standing in the name of the Hon. Catherine Cusack relating to the Young Women's Leadership Seminar 2021.
- (10) Private members' business item No. 1200 standing in the name of the Hon. Anthony D'Adam relating to an order for papers regarding the proposed new primary school in Westmead.

- (11) Private members' business item No. 1176 standing in the name of the Hon. Mark Banasiak relating to an order for papers regarding the new Banksia Mental Health Unit at Tamworth Hospital.
- (12) Private members' business item No. 1105 standing in the name of Mr Justin Field relating to an order for papers regarding forestry operations in public forests.
- (13) Private members' business item No. 1182 standing in the name of Ms Cate Faehrmann relating to the establishment of a select committee on floodplain harvesting.
- (14) Private members' business item No. 1157 standing in the name of the Hon. Courtney Houssos relating to an order for papers regarding Macquarie Park Education Precinct.
- (15) Private members' business item No. 1159 standing in the name of the Hon. Courtney Houssos relating to an order for papers regarding primary schools in Box Hill and Gables.
- (16) Private members' business item No. 1158 standing in the name of the Hon. Courtney Houssos relating to an order for papers regarding Tallawong new primary school.
- (17) Private members' business item No. 1101 standing in the name of the Hon. Sam Faraway relating to the Australian Street Art Awards 2020.
- (18) Private members' business item No. 1112 standing in the name of the Hon. Adam Searle relating to an order for papers regarding senior executive roles and remuneration.
- (19) Private members' business item No. 1090 standing in the name of Mr David Shoebridge relating to an order for papers regarding transmission and connection lines for Snowy 2.0.
- (20) Private members' business item No. 1074 standing in the name of the Hon. Adam Searle relating to an order for papers regarding emails from the Premier.
- (21) Private members' business item No. 1089 standing in the name of the Hon. Adam Searle relating to an order for papers regarding land or property sales or disposal targets.
- (22) Private members' business item No. 1083 standing in the name of the Hon. Lou Amato relating to the Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery Program.
- (23) Private members' business item No. 1189 standing in the name of Ms Cate Faehrmann relating to an order for papers regarding Grey Nurse Sharks.
- (24) Private members' business item No. 1149 standing in the name of the Hon. Mark Latham relating to Vishva Hindu Parishad.
- (25) Private members' business item No. 1141 standing in the name of the Hon. Robert Borsak relating to an order for papers regarding aerial shooting of wild pigs.
- (26) Private members' business item No. 1186 standing in the name of the Hon. Daniel Mookhey relating to an order for papers regarding airline operations in New South Wales.
- (27) Private members' business item No. 1188 standing in the name of Ms Cate Faehrmann relating to coal and gas mining on the Liverpool Plains.

I indicate that it has been agreed that private members' business items at paragraph Nos (2) to (7) and (9) to (27) of the motion will be considered in the short form format.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Bills

GREYHOUND RACING AMENDMENT (WHOLE-OF-LIFE TRACKING) BILL 2021

First Reading

Bill introduced, and read a first time and ordered to be printed on motion by Ms Abigail Boyd.

Second Reading Speech

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD (10:30): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Back in 2017 we were assured that the greyhound racing industry was ready for reform and that every side of politics was keen to see an end to the cruel and unnecessary killing of healthy greyhounds. The McHugh Special Commission of Inquiry into the Greyhound Racing Industry in New South Wales had found that around 5,500 healthy greyhounds were being killed every single year in the 12 years prior to the inquiry in New South Wales alone. Mass graves have been uncovered across the State that are filled with the bodies of greyhounds killed in secret by the racing industry.

During the 2017 debate on the Greyhound Racing Bill, members from every party spoke about the importance of ensuring animal welfare compliance, and almost every member of Parliament explicitly mentioned

the necessity of whole-of-life tracking in ensuring that unnecessary wastage is ended. Indeed, on the day that the Government backflipped on the greyhound racing ban in October 2016 it committed to introducing whole-of-life dog cycle management. During the 2017 debate, the then Minister for Racing, the Hon. Paul Toole, stated that the bill would "enable the commission to implement whole-of-lifecycle tracking for every greyhound that enters and exits the industry".

However, the bill itself did not explicitly allow for whole-of-life tracking. In early 2020 the then CEO of the Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission [GWIC] established by the Greyhound Racing Act 2017 admitted that "when greyhounds are sold, retired, or given away to members of the public who are not industry participants, the Commission has no lawful right to intervene in any way in relation to those dogs". The unfortunate reality is that despite the Government's commitment to implement whole-of-life tracking for every greyhound, the legislation it proposed and which was then enacted does not allow for this. Since the greyhound racing industry's so-called reform, concerns about the number of dogs at risk of needless death continue because of GWIC not having the necessary legislative oversight. The unfortunate reality is that once a greyhound is no longer owned by someone directly involved in the racing industry, GWIC can neither see the dog nor act in its welfare, so greyhounds can and do still simply disappear.

The Government has attempted to bandaid over this situation with the recent announcement of a technological fix which will ensure that a greyhound cannot be removed from the Greyhound Register until added to the Companion Animals Register. I thank the Government for engaging with this issue. But while this will ensure that greyhounds cannot be transferred to a non-industry owner who fails to then register them as companion animals, it does not plug the very real gaps that are created by a system that transfers oversight from an independent body with a unique understanding of the risks to greyhounds to chronically under-resourced charities and local councils already dealing with oversight of literally every other companion animal in the State. Under the current legislation, the only way we would know if a greyhound that is no longer in the industry is mistreated, abused or has been killed is if someone with evidence of probable abuse contacts the RSPCA to inform it. The RSPCA has no proactive investigative powers, no ability to routinely audit owners of companion animals and no way of knowing about abuse without a whistleblower tipping it off. For most companion animals, RSPCA's powers are appropriate. But for greyhounds, they are not sufficient.

The McHugh inquiry found that between one-half and two-thirds of greyhounds bred by the industry are killed because they cannot or can no longer pay their way, and that over 80,000 greyhounds were just simply missing, presumably dead. While independent oversight has been introduced and rehoming efforts have improved since the 2016 inquiry, we cannot just simply trust that every single greyhound that leaves the industry on paper now moves into a happy new home. Currently, if a racing greyhound is injured during a race and subsequently retired from racing, but its owner, trainer or a bookie decides to keep it as a pet, GWIC is able to keep tabs on the dog and check on its welfare if it chooses to. If, however, that same greyhound is given to the dog owner's brother, or next door neighbour, or adult daughter, the commission has no jurisdiction to check on the dog no matter what it suspects may have happened to it. Around 17 per cent of greyhounds that retired from racing in the 2019-20 financial year were rehomed privately outside of industry or companion animal adoption processes, falling off the radar of the regulator. While, in theory, pet owners have an obligation to update the Companion Animals Register if their pet passes away, this cannot practicably be enforced.

The New South Wales greyhound racing industry is currently breeding just under 4,000 pups a year. Just over 700 industry greyhounds are reported as dying a year, and around 1,400 retire each year, including almost 250 dogs transferred privately to people not directly involved in the racing industry. In the last financial year, 239 dogs left GWIC's books in this way, and there is a very real possibility that some of those greyhounds were rehomed on paper and killed in reality, thanks to the loophole in the Greyhound Racing Act. I introduce this bill today to close this loophole.

The Greyhound Racing Amendment (Whole-of-life Tracking) Bill 2021 would amend the Greyhound Racing Act 2017 to expand the remit of the Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission to include oversight of all rehomed and euthanised greyhounds, not just greyhounds owned by or euthanised in the care of industry participants. Clause 3 (1) amends section 35 of the Greyhound Racing Act 2017 to insert a requirement for the NSW Greyhound Welfare Code of Practice to specifically address standards for rehoming and for euthanasia of greyhounds. Clause 3 (2) then amends section 35 of the Greyhound Racing Act 2017 to provide for an expanded definition of "greyhound" for the purposes of those rehoming and euthanasia standards.

A greyhound for the purposes of the Act as it currently stands is defined as "a greyhound that is owned or kept in connection with greyhound racing". This limits GWIC's remit to the oversight of only greyhounds linked to the racing industry at the present moment. The expanded definition provided for in this bill would give GWIC oversight of rehoming and euthanasia standards for greyhounds which are or have ever been connected to

greyhound racing, allowing investigation into the welfare of greyhounds even after they have been rehomed or euthanised.

I thank the tireless animal welfare advocates who have helped my office identify the legislative gap which needs closing, and in particular The Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds Inc. The coalition's ongoing advocacy and expert analysis continues to hold this Government, the greyhound racing industry, the gambling industry and corporations that sponsor the racing industry to account. I also thank those involved in greyhound rehoming programs, and in particular the dedicated community rescue organisations who facilitate the rehoming of so many greyhounds every year without a cent of public funding.

Organisations like my local Rescued Greyhounds NSW Central Coast are run on the smell of an oily rag and a deep compassion for the plight of greyhounds often left behind by the racing industry. I also acknowledge every person across New South Wales who has welcomed a greyhound into their family, embracing the need to provide a home for so many greyhounds after they are no longer wanted by the racing industry. Finally, I acknowledge the work of my colleague Dr Mehreen Faruqi, former member of this place and current Greens senator for New South Wales, in fighting for oversight and transparency for greyhounds. Mehreen called out the Government on whole-of-life tracking when the Greyhound Racing Bill was debated in 2017, and she continues to advocate for greyhounds in the Senate.

When the greyhound industry was brought back from the brink in 2017 the Government said that it had every intention of implementing whole-of-life tracking for every greyhound that enters and exits the industry. It was surely the belief of most of those who supported the 2017 bill that this would be possible. This bill provides a neat fix to the original drafting error that has prevented whole-of-life tracking from happening. The greyhound racing industry claims that it has cleaned up its act. If that is the case then extending the oversight of the Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission [GWIC], as provided for in this bill, will be a non-event. If it is not the case then we must act now to ensure the welfare of every greyhound in this State. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Motions

PUBLIC LAND SALES

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1204 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (10:41): I move:

That this House notes:

- (a) the more than \$23 billion in sales of public land since this Government was elected, including TAFE campuses, parks and public housing;
- (b) the promise by the Premier at the last election that there would be no further sales or otherwise "we would have told you", and
- (c) the launch of a Government property register of land for sale that serves as an a' la carte menu for property developers across the State.

A long line of MPs from both sides of politics have made their way to the electorate of Upper Hunter in recent weeks and it has been remarked upon in this Chamber. Many of those MPs have ended up in Burdekin Park, Singleton. The park has been the site of press conferences and candidate announcements as it is a familiar and recognisable part of Singleton. Anyone who sees it on the television instantly knows that they are in the centre of one of the most loved public spaces in Singleton and, indeed, in the Upper Hunter. It turns out that Burdekin Park is up for sale as part of a suite of properties listed by Minister Pavey in her recently launched government property register. This resolution seeks to draw attention to the properties listed in Upper Hunter and across this State.

More than 2,500 properties are listed on the index. The Government has a long record of privatisation across the board and this motion highlights that it is now further extending this privatisation and fire sale. It is the people of the Upper Hunter who will bear the immediate brunt of those sales. We know the Government's record and I will not spend time recapping it, but \$82 billion of public assets are already out the door. The Opposition is not opposed to every privatisation; sometimes it makes sense. But the scale of it is unbelievable and is only set to intensify. The \$82 billion includes the sale of Scone TAFE, the Port of Newcastle, Ausgrid, a range of power stations, a range of generators, WestConnex and the Land Titles Office—that was a scandalous blow to the property market and that will go wrong at some point. It also includes more than \$23 billion of public land that includes TAFE campuses, parks and public housing.

That was the record and it was controversial. It was an issue at the last election. The Premier was asked about it and during the key debate in the campaign she was clear about the Government's mandate regarding further sales coming into this term. The Premier said, "No, and if we were we would have told you upfront." That is, she would have done what Mike Baird, to his credit, did and be upfront with the public about further sales. We now see that the fire sale is on. Despite denials and despite the Premier's commitment to the people of New South Wales, properties are now going out the door. This Premier is no Mike Baird. To Mike Baird's credit he was upfront with the public. This Premier has done the opposite: She has said one thing but now the properties are heading out the door. In the Opposition's view, that is not in the public interest.

What does it mean for the Upper Hunter? It means that places such as the Denman Recreational Area, which includes the golf club, the pony club and league and cricket ovals, are up for developer bids. Simpson Park in Muswellbrook, with the beautiful Aboriginal reconciliation mural and the Muswellbrook cenotaph, is an important and sacred place, but it is up for sale under this Government. Burdekin Park, Gloucester cemetery and the Quirindi show society, race club and jockey club—all places that are important to local life—are up for sale under this Government. Murray Bain Oval in Scone, Singleton TAFE and Singleton golf course are also among the 2,500 properties on the register. The Minister is unapologetic, saying:

The Government Property Index provides a free one-stop shop for information on NSW government-owned property and will allow industry to put forward innovative proposals for that land to improve utilisation and benefits for local communities.

In other words, this is a menu for property developers across the State. The Government is not content with \$82 billion and rising in privatisations and property sales, and here is the list across the State and the Upper Hunter. That is the issue the Opposition seeks to raise today.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (10:46): The Government makes no apology for creating a property index of assets that the Government owns and holds. The index will allow the Government to put those assets to the best possible use by creating, potentially, diverse housing opportunities and maximising the use of government-owned assets in the public interest. A public index of what the Government owns will create absolute transparency in any transaction relating to government property. Members will recall the way that the previous Labor Government would deal with public assets: Someone's mate would knock on the back door and the Government would approve the sale of a government property. That is not the priority of this Government. It is absolutely open about what property it owns and has an index of what that property is—

Mr David Shoebridge: You give it away, like Vales Point for \$1 million. You just give it away.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: It is a transparent transaction.

Mr David Shoebridge: It is a gift.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Unlike those who would do it secretly, we recycle assets.

Mr David Shoebridge: Brazenly.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan): Order! Members who continue to interject will be called to order.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: This policy must rile those members because it has been so successful. We now have a new train line to north-west Sydney. We have so many new schools and hospitals because of public asset recycling as a component of the way that government does business. The fact of the matter is we have created a transparent process. We have identified the properties we own so that people can see how we deal with those properties. [*Time expired.*]

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE (10:49): On behalf of The Greens, I support the motion. If members want to get a sense of just how on the nose the Government's privatisation agenda is, it is the fire sale of some \$23 billion of public land—and that is just public land; it does not include its fire sale of electricity generators or the transmission lines. It used to be that if it was not nailed or bolted down it would all be sold, but this lot opposite are willing to unbolt anything and literally sell anything. The sale of the Land Titles Office was one of the most spectacular Thatcherite attacks we have seen from this lot. Of course, now that has found itself in all sorts of trouble, with the company seeking private equity just to keep it afloat.

There is literally nothing the Government will not sell. To understand just how on the nose privatisation is with the New South Wales public, consider that the Government cannot even call it privatisation now. It has come up with a new term: asset recycling. I do not know how much it spent on consultants—probably \$4 million, \$5 million, \$10 million of public money—to come up with that new term because every time Government members said "privatisation" the public just step back in disgust. As I understand it, asset recycling is where you sell off something the public owns and then build something that needed to be built anyhow. Normally you build

it in some kind of public-private partnership where very close mates of the Government benefit to the tune of tens of millions, hundreds of millions or billions of dollars. The term "asset recycling" is an admission of failure by the Government, which tries to bring the public along on its privatisation agenda.

Finally, the Berejiklian Government acts like these are the Government's assets—the Coalition's assets—and it can choose to just sell them whenever it wants. But they are not. These are public assets. This is public land, over which there should be a sense of trust and custodianship so that we hand on an improved public estate to future generations. Instead, this Government's obsession with privatisation—rebranded through its spin doctors as "asset recycling"—means that it will hand future generations a much diminished public estate, no income-producing assets and land sales like we have not seen from any previous government. It is all because the Government cannot help itself. It has never seen a public asset it has not wanted to sell.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD (10:53): Briefly, I support the comments of my colleague Mr David Shoebridge and reflect also on the last line of his contribution, when he said "the Government cannot help itself". However, it certainly can help itself, and that is one of the reasons we see so much privatisation. These privatisations, which lead to fewer assets being owned by government and more assets being owned by private interests, are very much in the interests of the Coalition Government and its mates from the big end of town and in big business. It is very much helping itself with this so-called "asset recycling". It is not asset recycling; it is asset gifting to private interests. It gets dressed up with this fancy name but the long-term trend is very, very clear. We are ending up with more public assets and essential public services being run by for-profit organisations and not being held in trust for future generations of this State.

As my colleague said, these are not the Government's assets to give away. They are not the Government's assets to sell. They belong to the public. They belong to the people of New South Wales. I am getting a little fed up with the tone we hear from this Coalition Government, which implies that somehow it is going around this State gifting things to people. According to Coalition Ministers, if you have been fighting for 30 or 40 years for a new school in your area you should be grateful to finally get something that, according to any other view of the way government should work, is yours by right. I support the motion, I endorse the comments of my colleague and I thank the Hon. John Graham for moving it.

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (10:55): I speak to the motion of the Hon. John Graham. Paragraph (a) of this motion relates to housing, which is the area I focus on today. Members of the Government often highlight how schools, hospitals, trains and roads are made possible not by new taxes but by asset recycling, which has been referred to in contributions by members opposite. We have increased the base of our public assets in this State by over one-third to more than \$1 trillion because of the asset recycling we have done. That is property that has remained in public hands, and it has significantly increased—not decreased. The other service provided by asset recycling is the delivery of new social housing. I am delighted to say that the quantum of social housing delivered in this State has increased by 10 per cent in the past 10 years.

The motion would have people believe the past 10 years have been a decade of sales and not a decade of growth, but this is not supported by fact. For the benefit of members, I cite some specific facts with regard to social housing. Some years ago the NSW Land and Housing Corporation, which owns and manages the State's social housing portfolio, commenced the sale of government-owned properties in Millers Point. Members will know that the decision was a controversial and emotive one—but it was the right one. I can tell members now that the sale of 419 dwellings from the Millers Point program has funded more than 1,800 new homes across the State. That is around five new homes for every home sold.

We are leading the country in a social housing revolution, putting a roof over the heads of those who need it most. Social housing stock has increased by 10 per cent in the past 10 years because of the way we have actively pursued the model we are delivering. The NSW Land and Housing Corporation relies heavily on property recycling to support capital expenditure, including funding for new social housing. It strategically sells the properties that are expensive to maintain, including heritage properties and properties that are no longer suitable for tenants. It is this funding model that then gets reinvested in more social housing and will allow us to deliver 3,200 new homes across New South Wales over the next five years.

But this is not just about building homes; it is about creating jobs for the community. We are proud to have the biggest social housing building program of any State or Territory across Australia, with projects that include mixed communities where social housing blends with private and affordable housing—the way of the future—with better access to employment, transport, community facilities and open spaces. I compare our performance with that of Victoria. In New South Wales we have 155,000 social housing properties. The next-largest State, Victoria, has 76,000 properties. Our investment is \$161 per capita, per year; in Victoria it is \$101 per capita, per year. The facts speak for themselves: This process is working. We are supporting the most vulnerable and we are very proud to do so.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Trevor Khan): Before I call the next speaker, I indicate to members that we have a problem with the clock. I will leave it to the Clerks to let us know when the 30 minutes for debate has expired. However, apparently the timer for the individual speakers is working so we will take it as we go.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (10:58): One Nation opposes the sale of public parks, but on the question of public housing we need to be realistic about the best way to lift people out of squalor. There needs to be an acknowledgement that the broadacre construction of Radburn scheme public housing estates in Campbelltown—you also see them in Mount Druitt and regional centres like Wagga Wagga—was a dismal failure. It was a hopeless, failed town planning experiment. For anyone to pretend that today or in recent years you could live in Claymore, Airds or those sorts of areas and that is somehow social justice because it is publicly owned is a complete delusion. Those areas were designed in the 1970s as public housing for working-class people. But with the recessions of the 1970s and the 1980s, manufacturing jobs dried up and it became welfare housing with all manner of social and economic problems.

My predecessor in the seat of Werriwa said, "Whatever you do, don't visit Claymore." I said, "Why is that? I'm from public housing at Green Valley. Why shouldn't I go to Claymore?" He said, "Your car will be damaged if you go there." The first thing I did was drive to Claymore and look around, and dedicated myself to the redevelopment of that estate. There is a paradox in the wretched Radburn scheme. The houses are around the wrong way because there are supposed to be nice community laneways. There is plenty of land in a place like Claymore. There is land everywhere. There are beautiful sloped building blocks that could be used. But the area's high level of housing density comes from the townhouses, which have been a failed experiment that you would not put your worst enemy in. I wouldn't even put Rose Jackson in there!

We have to be realistic about this. The model for housing redevelopment was developed by the Labor Party. Former local member and planning Minister Craig Knowles redeveloped Minto, which had plenty of spare land. He opened it up for private housing development and leased back the public stock to put the tenants in. By the end of it, Minto was a raging success. You cannot tell the difference between the public and the private housing, and the young people growing up there have a role model of someone in the street or their next door neighbour working. One of the happiest things I have ever seen was at Minto Public School, which is an area that had been known as the Bronx. They now tell me that they have kids going on to selective high schools and they have a long list of out-of-area enrolments.

Under a Labor government it was a raging success to sell some of the land and redevelop it for a mix of public-private housing stock. We should do the same at Claymore. The wretched O'Farrell Government knocked it off in 2011. The same thing happened at Airds. I have been working hard and urging the Treasurer to put more money in. Thankfully, he has. I have also been working with housing Minister Pavey to get things moving as fast as possible. We cannot take a blanket ideological view that every sale of public housing land is bad. Sometimes it is the only sensible way of redeveloping land in the true name of social justice.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE (11:01): I can tell from the words of the Minister and other Government speakers how proud they are of their privatisation achievements and agenda. I look forward to them promoting how proud they are of that agenda in the current Upper Hunter by-election. I look forward to what is being proposed appearing on leaflets, in the media and on various noticeboards so they can show how proud they are of their privatisation agenda for the Upper Hunter. As always, I like to assist Government members, so I will read out a list of some of the things that they propose to privatise.

The list includes the Denman Recreational Grounds, which includes the golf course, the pony club, the rugby league and cricket ovals and, on a separate DP, the Denman Children's Centre. It also includes Simpson Park in Muswellbrook, which includes the Aboriginal reconciliation mural and the Muswellbrook cenotaph; Jefferson Park in Aberdeen, which includes the McKinnon Oval and Aberdeen golf course; Burdekin Park in Singleton; Bennett Park in Dungog, which includes the tennis courts, skate park, netball courts and swimming pool; the cemetery in Gloucester; the show society, race club and jockey club in Quirindi; Wharf Reserve in Clarence Town; the Murray Bain Oval in Scone; the Singleton fire station; Singleton Public School; Singleton TAFE; Albion Park in Singleton; Singleton hospital; King Street Public School in Singleton; Singleton High School; and Singleton golf course. There may be others, and there may have already been bids received. I am grateful that One Nation members have indicated that they do not oppose the sale of parks.

The Hon. Mark Latham: No, we do oppose them.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Sorry, they do oppose the sale of parks but they have not said that they oppose the sale of any other assets. This is an issue for those in government. They are indicating that they are proud of it, so they should go out and promote it. They should doorknock and tell people what they are proposing

to privatise. We are here to help them and we are certainly going to indicate to people what they are proposing to do.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (11:04): I thank the Hon. John Graham for moving this motion. I will focus on paragraph (c), which is about the launch of a government property register of land for sale that the member described as an à la carte menu for property developers across the State. I was surprised to see that the web address www.nswforsale.com.au redirects to an actual government website with a register of properties for sale. I looked at the Shoalhaven, where I live, and I was absolutely astonished at the properties for sale. I am sure members of that community will also be astonished to know that the Government has listed 1,875 properties there. A quick glance showed me that about 20 per cent of them, or 382 properties, are zoned E1 in parts, which is land that is either national park, for national park or is a conservation area. Many other areas of substantial size are recreational reserves and the like.

The Hon. Peter Primrose put on record a range of other properties on the register in other local government areas including schools, public reserves and golf courses. It is shocking indeed. They cover substantial areas. In fact, the 50 largest properties that have some form of E1 zoning on them cover almost 20,000 hectares, which would be roughly the same area required for another 850,000 home lots. I understand that it is not the intention of the Government to expose the Shoalhaven to development of 850,000 properties, but I ask the question, and I am sure the community will ask the question: What is the intent of this? The Government has said that it wants to encourage the best economic use of land as part of the COVID recovery. I invite the Government to come to the Shoalhaven and ask the community about it. One of the best economic uses of the land would be to find a greenfield site for the Shoalhaven hospital.

How about a new public school for the Milton Ulladulla area? How about stopping the constant encroachment of urban development on the small areas of coastal forest that are left around our communities? They would be useful economic uses of land that the community would support. Someone said to me, "The Government is just being transparent. This land is always for sale anyway but normally just the developers know. Now everyone knows." That says a lot about the approach of this Government to public land. The community would have great ideas about how to use the land and they would be absolutely disgusted to see the Government just offering it all up. They will have to constantly be watching to see when the Government gets an unsolicited proposal for particular land. They will have to defend every single proposal that comes to the Government. Will they know about it? What are the conditions that will be considered in making decisions? None of it is public at all. We just have www.nswforsale.com.au. What a crazy way to do business in New South Wales.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK (11:07): I will share with the House a story about the management of personal assets, which has relevance to everyone's thinking about the management of public assets. It is the story of a dear, elderly relative of mine who was a hoarder. We have read about people with that difficulty. After her husband died, she was incapable of parting with any piece of her property. She had to keep everything and she accumulated things that she probably did not need. Over time, her garage filled up and she could not fit her car in it. The rooms in her house filled up. She ended up organising for someone to come and put an external laundry on the house, even though she had a perfectly good laundry inside. It was a sad and difficult situation, particularly because she was also caring for her disabled daughter.

It is difficult to assist people with that mentality, but it highlights that everybody needs a personal plan to manage their assets. Everybody needs to part with things that they are no longer using or no longer using well or that they need to update. Everybody understands that. But when it comes to managing publicly owned assets, there is a hoarder mentality that we must never part with any piece of land. Over the years things like the Government uniform shop have had to be privatised. There was a furniture shop that used to make all the desks for our government schools.

By relieving taxpayers of the burden of those assets, not only was income generated that could be used for things that modern schools need now, such as technology, but also the desks are able to be obtained forever at a much cheaper price. That released more money. It is called managing assets. Recycling assets is about constantly reassessing where we are at. That is what we all do in our personal lives—every family does. If it is done properly the overall value of the assets will increase, and that is precisely what has occurred in New South Wales. We can argue the strategy in the way the Hon. Mark Latham has done, but a blanket rejection of the principle of recycling and managing assets means we end up like my poor old Auntie Ursie, and that is not a good service to taxpayers.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON (11:10): Privatisation is a failed economic model. It has damaged the economy and hurt productivity. Those are not my words; they are the words of Australian Competition and Consumer Commission Chairman Rod Sims. It does not matter what the Government calls it—asset recycling, leasing, franchising—we all know what it is. The Government claims it wants a process to put these assets to the best possible use but it has no credibility on this issue and we cannot trust it. The Premier said prior to the last election, "We don't intend any more privatisations. If we did we would tell you." Then subsequent to the election

the Government promptly privatised ferries and many other things. Far from being transparent about its plans, we know from its actions that the Government is the exact opposite of transparent. It is trying to hide its true intentions from the community.

The Government has presided over the wholesale transfer of community assets from public ownership to the private sector. It cannot even do a good job of that, as we know from the Vales Point privatisation—which was an absolute disaster for the Government. It was sold for \$1 million and valued later at over \$700 million. It has blown \$22 billion of the money raised from privatisation on mismanaged projects. So much money has been wasted because Andrew Constance cannot deliver a project on time and on budget. There is an old saying, "If you can't measure it, you can't manage it." For the Liberal-Nationals Government it is, "If you register it, you can sell it." That is the intention, and the community knows it.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (11:12): In reply: There has been no apology from the Government over the proposed sale of the Denman Recreational Area, the Muswellbrook Cenotaph, the Burdekin Park in Singleton, the cemetery in Gloucester, the show society race club and Quirindi Jockey Club. There was an opportunity today to rule out any of those sales. Instead, there are no apologies and a defence of its position. The Government was not transparent; it did not say of course it is not selling the Muswellbrook Cenotaph. There were no apologies. That was the view put to the Chamber. What does Minister Pavey say? The Minister has been transparent. She said:

Not only will the GPI provide transparency and accountability for the State's vast property portfolio, it will encourage investment proposals through the establishment of a new public proposals process.

Minister Pavey said the public, councils, NGOs and developers could search for government-owned land and put forward innovative proposals to put the land to better use. It is a menu for property developers across the Upper Hunter and the State. None of those property sales was ruled out today in the Government's response. We do not object to every sale; some sales are sensible. But we object to bad deals such as Vales Point and WestConnex, which cost tens of billions of dollars to build but taxpayers pay hundreds of millions of dollars in tolls.

The Hon. Mark Buttigieg: Newcastle port.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I will come to the Port of Newcastle shortly. We especially object to the sale of public land. Everyone knows the fights to save public land and get it into public hands in the first place were hard won. These are precious spaces in towns and cities. Once they are given away or sold off to a developer there is no getting them back in public hands. Rather than keep them in public trust, out they go in a fire sale. In response to the public housing argument, I reject the idea of public housing suburbs. I grew up in one; I hate them. That is not how we should be building public housing these days. There will be cases where there should be a salt-and-pepper approach.

We object to the "For sale" sign being put up over thousands of properties—in this case in the Upper Hunter but it is happening right across the State. The developers win out of this process and public interest goes out the door. That is the concern the Opposition highlights. The Government had an opportunity to rule out any of those sales, and it ducked it. The Minister has the sales brochures out across the State. The Government still has a chance to save itself, as does every party in the Chamber, by supporting this motion and sending a signal to the people of the Upper Hunter that their areas will not be up for sale. [*Time expired.*]

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes24
 Noes15
 Majority.....9

AYES

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Banasiak | Graham | Pearson |
| Borsak | Houssos | Primrose |
| Boyd | Hurst | Roberts |
| Buttigieg (teller) | Jackson | Searle |
| D'Adam (teller) | Latham | Secord |
| Donnelly | Mookhey | Sharpe |
| Faehrmann | Moriarty | Shoebridge |
| Field | Moselmane | Veitch |

NOES

Amato	Franklin	Martin
Cusack	Harwin	Mitchell
Fang	Khan	Poulos
Farlow	Maclaren-Jones (teller)	Taylor
Farraway (teller)	Mallard	Tudehope

Motion agreed to.**PORT OF NEWCASTLE PRIVATISATION**

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1202 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (11:27): I move:

That this House notes:

- (a) the secret privatisation deal struck by the Government that restricts the development of the Newcastle Port to handle container traffic for 50 years; and
- (b) the economic impact of this deal on the farmers, manufacturers and wine exporters in the Upper Hunter.

Members in this Chamber have spent some time talking about privatisation. I have made it clear that the Opposition is not opposed to every deal; it is opposed to only bad deals. One could not get a worse deal than this port privatisation with its secret provisions, signed by this Government. It is a hammer blow to the economic future of the Hunter Valley and the whole north-west of the State. This was a bankers' deal, not one aimed at the economic growth of the State or at growing jobs across New South Wales in the long term. For the next 50 years those hopes have been sacrificed to spice up, lift and boost the short-term profit made by the State out of this deal. It is a hammer blow to the private sector in the north-west of the State and in the Upper Hunter to benefit the short-term bottom line.

What did the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission say about this secret deal? At one point it said the deal was brazenly anti-competitive, and that is also the Opposition's view. No wonder the Government took so long to come clean about the provisions of the deal, which was signed behind closed doors. It did not want the public to know. I can see why the Government did not want the public in the Upper Hunter to know because it is a hammer blow to industries there, which have been sacrificed on the altar of privatisation. The Government has sacrificed the future of farmers looking to export their produce from the Upper Hunter. Manufacturers, including those that work in the mining services industry, might have a bright idea for manufacturing that they would like to take to the world. Will they be able to do so through the Port of Newcastle? No, they will not, because the future of shipping—containerisation—is barred by this Government under this secret privatisation deal.

Our wine exporters produce some of the best wine in the world. Could wine be exported in a container out of the Newcastle port? No—not for the next 50 years under this Government's brazenly anti-competitive privatisation deal. We know this is big business already. In agriculture, in the Hunter region excluding Newcastle 3,200 people are employed. Agricultural production is worth \$310 million. In wine, more than 25 million litres of wine a year are valued at more than \$210 million. Of course, additional benefits are the viticultural and winemaking industries directly employing 7,000 people with another 10,000 indirectly employed, many of them in tourism. There are thousands of people in the mine services area who could be moving into manufacturing exports—

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: Do it.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —except for this deal; this hammer blow to their futures and their hopes. If they have a bright idea they are being told by this Government, "You have to ship that out of Brisbane. Don't bother shipping it out of a New South Wales port. Head to Brisbane", with all the time and costs that that involves. What has the National Party had to say about this? It is all over the place. The National Party is backing this deal, yet at the party's own conference in June 2019 it called for the scrapping of all obstacles facing the Newcastle terminal expansion plans. Nothing has happened; they are empty words. The Deputy Premier, John Barilaro, turned up to talk about the State's farmers. What does this mean for the State's farmers? Would they benefit from having a container terminal in the Hunter? Surely this would be to their benefit. "Absolutely", says the Deputy Premier, "That would be to their benefit". But nothing has happened. The deal has been done. The profit has been banked. Mike Baird's privatisation deal is done. The money is in the bank.

For decades to come, wine exporters, manufacturing exporters and farmers in the Hunter will cop it in the neck. Those jobs will not go to kids who are growing up in that part of the State. They will not have a share in the economic growth that could have occurred. We talk about the thousands of jobs that are already there. Think about how much bigger it could be if that deal had not been done; if the slight boost to the budget bottom line in the short term that looked good at the time had not been done, and instead we had let industries loose, given them a hand, and invested in serious economic infrastructure for the State. What a better future that would be for the towns and villages across this part of the State. The Labor Opposition has been quite critical of this deal but there is no better time to draw attention to it than now, given its very concrete impact and given the fear of the loss of future jobs in this region of the State.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (11:32): I congratulate the Hon. John Graham on moving the motion. Let us look at the history of this issue. When the Hilmer principles of competition were put together in collaboration between the Commonwealth and the States, no-one would have thought it would be necessary to write into them terms to prohibit what New South Wales has now done. That was unthinkable in the mid-nineties. To think that in privatising three ports—Newcastle, Botany and Port Kembla—a condition had to be written into the Hilmer principles that one port could not be penalised such that, if it went over a bare minimum level of container exports, it needed to pay a financial penalty to the other two ports that had been privatised. Nothing could be more anti-competitive.

The whole idea of competition policy is a level playing field—treat all equally—but for some reason this Government has done a secret deal and gone out of its way to punish Newcastle and punish the Hunter Valley. Would we not think that with Matt Kean announcing that coal has to end in 2035, wiping out tens of thousands of jobs in the Hunter Valley, this Government would be breaking its neck to find a viable employment-creating project such as the container terminal at the Port of Newcastle? The BHP site at Mayfield that was vacated years ago is still vacant. It is ready for a container terminal—the Minister for Finance and Small Business is nodding—except that the proponents wanting to build it would be punished financially for getting over a bare minimum number of containers after a week.

They would be punished for the rest of the year and the money would then go to their direct competitors at Botany and at Kembla, if they do one. What an outrage! Nothing could be more anti-competitive or more punishing for the Hunter Valley than holding back what some people call the transition to a different type of economic activity. The Hon. John Graham is right in saying that it punishes productivity right up the Hunter Valley and into northern New South Wales. Shamefully, at the moment some of our agricultural producers and manufacturers go through the Port of Brisbane to get their containers out. They could go through the Port of Newcastle, with all the productivity and efficiency gains that come from that.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has had to step in and take action in the Federal Court. We await the decision. One would have to think the Federal Court would out this for what it is—a shameful, secret, anti-competitive deal that disadvantages one part of the State that is crying out for new jobs. One would think, in anticipation of that decision and with an Upper Hunter by-election campaign underway, the Government would step in to say, "Look, we're fessing up here to the error. We're going to provide the resources that are needed to allow this container terminal to be built"—a project with many thousands of jobs, a \$1.7 billion project in its own right and a \$2.5 billion boost to gross domestic product. This is a great opportunity to do something for the Hunter. The Government has missed it and now we have to wait for court action.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (11:35): We can tell there must be a by-election somewhere in the Hunter because suddenly the Labor Party has started making some noise, spreading misinformation and pretending to care, for once, about Hunter jobs. The Port of Newcastle is the largest coal terminal in the world. The port is the backbone of the economy of the Hunter. The Coalition understands that. The New South Wales Government is very supportive of the diversification of this port into new markets. Recently I was at the port with the energy Minister to discuss the potential to export hydrogen in the future. The Hon. John Graham makes a flimsy argument to suggest that the Government is somehow strangling the economic prosperity of the Upper Hunter via the Newcastle port. The reality is that only this Government, only the Nationals-Liberal Government, has a clear plan and a strategy for ports across New South Wales to promote the successful coexistence of continued prosperity of the mining, agriculture and viticulture sectors.

The only risk of strangling or restricting prosperity comes from those opposite. The people of the Hunter know this. I am advised that there is no prohibition on the development of a container terminal at Newcastle. That was more misinformation coming from those opposite. Any decision to build a container terminal is a matter for that private operator. But I will say this: The New South Wales Government has a clear ports strategy that aims to reduce the cost of moving containers and, importantly, to reduce congestion in the surrounding areas of each of our ports. Newcastle port was aware of both the strategy and the terms of the Botany deed at the time. I am advised that the Government's policy aims to make better use of the existing capacity in roads, rail lines and

warehouses to lower transport costs for consumers and businesses and reduce the distance, cost and complexity of moving freight around our State. The Government's policy is designed to increase the proportion of containers moved by rail to improve efficiency and to keep trucks off our roads.

Let me quickly go to the facts. We heard misinformation so let me clean up some of it. The 2013 port commitment deeds with the operator of Port Kembla and Port Botany included an undertaking by the State to make payments to that operator if the Newcastle port handles in excess of 30,000 twenty-foot equivalent units [TEUs] as at 2013. In 2014 when the port was privatised the winning bidder agreed to pay an equivalent penalty to the State if it handled in excess of the capped limit. That limit is around 45,000 TEUs as at 2020. I am advised that the container throughput at Newcastle last year was 2,950. Let us compare that again: With a limit of 45,000, at the moment the Newcastle port is exporting only 2,950. The Government does not support the motion.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (11:38): In rising to make a contribution to this debate I will acquaint the House with a little history. It is not the first time the Opposition has raised this issue. I will take members back to the budget estimates hearings of 2015 and 2016. There I pressed the then Treasurer, who is now the Premier, about whether there was any limit, cap or restriction on the throughput at the Port of Newcastle. Her evidence to budget estimates was, "No. There is no legislated cap." I said, "But Treasurer, is there any cap or restriction?" "No", came the answer. Fast-forward 12 months and the port commitment deeds were made public. It was quite clear that it was a shameful and secret deal. The then Treasurer had known or became aware of the fact that there was this restriction on the development of the port but chose to try to withhold that information from the Parliament and the budget estimates process. It was only through the port commitment deeds becoming public that it became widespread knowledge.

The Parliamentary Secretary says that the Opposition is suggesting that the Government's policy is strangling the development of the port or the expansion of the port and the Hunter. Actually it is the information provided by the Port of Newcastle. It is the information put forward by farmers, manufacturers and other producers in the region and places north and west of it that would like the operation of the port expanded. The Parliamentary Secretary says there is no prohibition on the development of a container terminal. But of course there is a financial restriction, because to make it worthwhile the cap must go. On the point about how many twenty-foot equivalent units [TEUs] are currently going through the Port of Newcastle versus the cap, evidence from the port in years gone by is that with the cap lifted it could achieve and exceed the current TEU cap in a matter of a few years. The point is, it is anti-competitive; there is an artificial restriction. It was part of a commercial deal for the Government to gouge an extra dollar out of the successful proponent of the bid.

But who are the losers? The losers are the people of Newcastle, the Hunter and places north and west of those regions who do not have the port available for their exports. For a collection of parties that talk about free trade and the importance of competition and all of those sorts of nostrums that they like to peddle out in press releases and at business gatherings, they have been caught with their hands in the till and caught being the architects of a shameful, secret and anti-competitive deal. The people of the Hunter and parts north and west of the region are paying the price of the Government's shameful policy. It should be exposed. It should be rejected. Let us hope the Federal Court is able to set that shameful arrangement aside.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (11:41): I concur with the comments made by the Parliamentary Secretary. Firstly, the cap on the amount of containers going through Newcastle is not even being reached at the moment. There is no prohibition anywhere which prevents the operator from building a container terminal at Newcastle. That is a decision absolutely within the compass of the private operator. The New South Wales Government has a clear ports strategy. Opposition members can get up and say that they do not agree with the ports strategy, but the strategy aims to reduce the cost of moving containers and reduce congestion. The Port of Newcastle was aware of the strategy and the terms of the Botany deed when it entered into the purchase. A significant portion of the Port of Newcastle sale proceeds were used to revitalise Newcastle CBD and fund the Newcastle light rail, which has been a game changer for locals.

This Government has provided significant investment to the Newcastle region, much of which arose from the sale of the port. That includes \$852.6 million over the next four years for the Newcastle Inner City Bypass; \$780 million for the John Hunter Health and Innovation Precinct, including additional funding for the John Hunter Children's Hospital intensive care unit and the hospital car park; and \$6 million in 2020-21 to continue funding the Nelson Bay Road improvements. The Government is providing \$122.6 million over the next four years, including \$51 million in 2020-21, to continue planning and delivery of road projects in the Central Coast area like the Pacific Highway at Parsons Road to Ourimbah Street, Pacific Highway and Manns Road, planning for Narara Creek Road to Parsons Road, planning for the Pacific Highway and Wyong town centre, Manns Road, Central Coast Highway to Narara Creek Road and planning for the Central Coast Highway at Tumbi Umbi to Bateau Bay.

The \$3 billion NorthConnex project has provided motorists with a trip free of traffic lights from Newcastle to Melbourne. We have provided \$100 million for the Greater Cities and Regional Sports Facilities Fund; funding

for upgrades to the Newcastle East Public School; \$56 million for upgrades to the Newcastle Mater Hospital; \$604 million for pinch points, a portion of which was allocated to the Hunter; and \$195 million for the Maitland Hospital. Those projects do not come from nowhere. The Government makes no apology for asset recycling. It makes no apology for having a ports strategy and it says to the people of the Upper Hunter: We are the Coalition that has your interests at heart.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD (11:44): On behalf of The Greens, I support the motion moved by the Hon. John Graham. The current arrangements at the Port of Newcastle restrict development and diversification for both the port and the region. The conditions are effectively a protection racket which extracts prohibitive tariffs from users of the Port of Newcastle and pays them to the owners of Port Botany. It was a terrible decision on the part of the Government in 2013, and The Greens agree that it must now be overturned to allow for transition and diversification in the Upper Hunter. The Upper Hunter is ready to transition away from coal export. Global coal markets have been falling since 2013 and are now stagnant. Workers and their communities know that they must transition and they expect their governments to take all necessary actions to support that.

According to the former dean of UTS Business School, Professor Ray Green, manufacturing and industry in the Hunter are becoming more diverse and smaller in scale with highly globalised markets. A more diverse port with a functional and viable container terminal is required to facilitate imports and exports for those markets. A terminal is also essential for agriculture exports, a key component of the Upper Hunter economy. It will create 9,500 jobs, according to Lock the Gate, and \$6 billion in economic stimulus, according to a 2019 AlphaBeta study. Mining industry workers are ready to transfer their skills to transport, warehousing and manufacturing. The earlier we assist with that transition, the more just and equitable it will be.

The current arrangements at the Port of Newcastle increase costs for business, put more freight on our already congested roads and put a handbrake on the Upper Hunter economy, all to ensure a monopoly on container freight for NSW Ports and its investors. The effect of the deal is to double the cost of freight out of Newcastle. Newcastle basically has to pay Botany \$1 million per ship if three or more container ships leave Newcastle in a single year. I note that there seems to be some contrary information coming from the Government in relation to that. When it says there is a cap but there is not a prohibition, is the Government implying that the cap becomes a prohibition only in certain circumstances or that there is not actually a cap which can act as a prohibition? It feels like the Government is playing with semantics. It is not the role of government to prop up one port at the expense of another, nor to prevent diversification of infrastructure required by communities. The Greens condemn any privatisation that needs secret deals or protection rackets. Those deals must be exposed and overturned.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE (11:47): If this was such a great deal, why was it kept secret for so long as the Leader of the Opposition outlined? I was on the same budget estimates committee. Year after year we would make inquiries and seek information of the deal. That is on the record in *Hansard*, firstly from the then Treasurer and later on from subsequent Ministers. They were dragged kicking and screaming to get this information out of them. The other point is that the action by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is continuing. It has labelled the deal illegal and states that it has had "anti-competitive purpose and effect". That case is ongoing.

Almost one-third of New South Wales container exports already come from the Hunter and northern New South Wales, but they do not, and cannot, go through the Port of Newcastle. The containers come through Sydney. Imagine what it would do for jobs if the proponents who wish to build the new container terminal at Mayfield could actually do that and if it were to proceed instead of having an empty field. It would bring a voluminous number of jobs. I am pleased that the Government is saying that it can be done, so presumably that means it would not be encumbered by the provisions of its formerly secret deal.

Saying that the longstanding proposal to construct a container terminal at the former BHP Steelworks site at Mayfield should go ahead is a good admission by the Government. If that is what it is saying, good on the Government. However, it has not said that since 2013 when it made the secret deal. If the Parliamentary Secretary sought to clarify this with the responsible Minister, he would say, "No, that's not on." A container terminal at the Port of Newcastle would add an estimated \$6 billion to the New South Wales economy, create 4,600 jobs in the Hunter and northern New South Wales, and increase the exports of those regions by \$800 million.

The Hon. TREVOR KHAN (11:50): I make a brief contribution to debate on the motion, which I come to with mixed feelings because both of my children live in Newcastle. In fact, my son lives in Mayfield. The development site is well known to me, as is Industrial Drive. I am ambivalent towards the proposal because under the chairmanship of the Hon. Robert Brown I was a member of the parliamentary committee that looked into its viability. The Hon. John Graham and the Hon. Taylor Martin were also members of that committee. When we heard evidence at the inquiry of the CEO of the Port of Newcastle, a feeling of smoke and mirrors came over committee members. He said that he could bring forward any number at any time if it suited his case.

The development of a container port in New South Wales—or, indeed, anywhere in Australia—is dependent on containers coming in from overseas. The economic viability of a container port is based upon unpacking containers and distributing goods to a major market, which in this case would be Sydney. The port needs to be developed in tandem with a new rail line to Sydney or thousands upon thousands of trucks will travel down Industrial Drive to the M1 and on to Sydney. The essential problem with the proposal is that the proposed port's economic viability is based upon developing transport links. When Labor says, "We are going to do this," it has to find the bucks to duplicate the Newcastle to Sydney rail line and develop the road transport links that will get the containers out of Newcastle, onto the highway and down to Sydney. It would be great to see a container port developed in Newcastle but until those infrastructure problems are fixed, the project is a dead duck.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (11:53): In reply: I thank members for their contributions. I particularly thank the Hon. Trevor Khan, who is a member of the National Party, for his contribution. When members of his party weighed up the evidence and made their judgement on the deal at their supreme policy-making forum, they said, "We're all for it. Let things rip. Let the Port of Newcastle ship containers." In about three minutes they will have the chance to back in that conviction. I call on National Party members to act.

It is time to act so that the people of the Upper Hunter know where they stand. It is time to act so that the region's wine and manufacturing exporters, with all their bright ideas and high hopes, can export their products to the world through the Port of Newcastle. It is time to act so that, at some point in the future, farmers of the Upper Hunter can use the Port of Newcastle to export their products to a global market. After having weighed up the evidence at their party conference and confirming that they are all for a container terminal at the Port of Newcastle, backing this motion is their chance to deliver the benefits that the Deputy Premier promised to the wine exporters, farmers and manufacturers of the Upper Hunter. I will be interested to see what they do.

A number of policy arguments have been made during this debate. The Government says that there is no prohibition. Well, that is absolute nonsense—there is a penalty. And it is not just up to the private operator; the Government has tipped the scales in favour of other operators. In his contribution the Hon. Trevor Khan made a range of sensible arguments about the difficulties that would come with the Port of Newcastle handling container traffic, but why not leave that up to the market? Why not let the ports compete openly against each other? If possible, why not let the port develop in that way? Why tie its hands with a secret privatisation deal?

That is the question the Opposition is asking. We were asked whether the Opposition backs the Government's NSW Freight and Ports Plan but the problem is the plan ends in 2023. The secret privatisation deal runs for 50 years, which is how long the industries of the Upper Hunter will be constrained for. In the debate the Leader of the House read out a long list of projects that would be funded by the Government under its proposal, but not many were in the Upper Hunter. Again it sounds like businesses in region will miss out, with already very little of the \$800 million in royalties that travel down the M1 every year currently going their way. I commend the motion to the House.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes24
Noes17
Majority.....7

AYES

Banasiak	Graham	Pearson
Borsak	Houssos	Primrose
Boyd	Hurst	Roberts
Buttigieg (teller)	Jackson	Searle
D'Adam (teller)	Latham	Secord
Donnelly	Mookhey	Sharpe
Faehrmann	Moriarty	Shoebridge
Field	Moselmane	Veitch

NOES

Amato	Harwin	Nile
Cusack	Khan	Poulos
Fang	Maclaren-Jones (teller)	Taylor
Farlow	Mallard	Tudehope

NOES

Farraway (teller)
Franklin

Martin
Mitchell

Ward

Motion agreed to.

The PRESIDENT: Order! According to sessional order, proceedings are now interrupted for questions.

*Questions Without Notice***SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY**

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (12:05): My question is directed to the Deputy Leader of the Government, the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning. Given recent violent incidents at New South Wales schools, including a stabbing incident at Glenwood High School on 6 May, has the Minister instructed the Department of Education to conduct a review of safety and security within schools?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (12:06): I thank the Hon. Adam Searle for his question about what is obviously a very serious issue. I say to him and to all members of the House that of course the safety and security of students and school staff in our public schools is of the highest priority for me and the department. The carrying of weapons is unacceptable and illegal within New South Wales public schools, as the member would well know. I acknowledge that the question arises from an incident that occurred at a school last week. As the member would be well aware, it is the subject of a police investigation and is currently before the courts, and as such I will not go into detail.

I can share that last week the department reinforced to all schools the policy around weapons. It has also begun working with community representatives. I expect this work will be expedited quickly and, in the meantime, schools have been asked to contact the department if they need immediate support. We take these issues extremely seriously. We work closely with police and other authorities. The particular incident that the member referenced in his question is an ongoing police investigation and I will not go into any detail, but of course the safety and security of our students is incredibly important.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (12:07): I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate that part of her answer where she said that she has asked for the work to be "expedited quickly"? Will she tell the House what is the time frame for that work to be completed and made public?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (12:07): I will take the supplementary question on notice in terms of the time frame and come back to the member.

The Hon. WALT SECORD (12:07): I ask a second supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate that part of her answer where she referred to a weapons policy within the Department of Education? How long has that weapons policy been in place and what are the major aspects of that weapons policy?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (12:07): The advice I have is that the Summary Offences Act 1988 outlines the law in relation to the possession and use of knives in a school or a public place. In terms of how long that has been in place and any specifics in relation to that, I am happy to take that on notice.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The Hon. LOU AMATO (12:08): My question is addressed to the Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is supporting public libraries across New South Wales?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts) (12:08): It is Libraries Week and there is so much great news. Yesterday it was the State Library. Today I am going to focus on the fact that this is the second year of record increases that the Government has committed for the improvement of public libraries across the State. The Government is providing an additional \$60 million in support of public libraries over the four years from 2019-20, and that is the largest injection of State Government funding since the introduction of the Library Act in 1939.

The Hon. Walt Secord: That is not true.

The Hon. DON HARWIN: It most certainly is. Every council will receive its highest ever library subsidy payment this year, with two more years of increased finding locked in. The Public Library Infrastructure Grants program is a key component of the funding. On 30 April I announced the councils that are in receipt of \$6 million in grant funding for library infrastructure. All of the projects will enable councils to develop or improve library

buildings and mobile library services, which contribute to the role of libraries in providing books, information and safe, welcoming public spaces for the community. Twenty-five councils received grants under the program this financial year—20 of which, I am pleased to say, are in regional New South Wales. Let me talk about some of the projects that are funded, not just the regional ones.

Armidale Regional Council is receiving \$166,000 for the refurbishment of its library to create more open and usable spaces. Bellingen Shire Council is receiving \$482,800 to extend Dorrigo Library by 100 square metres, which will provide new children's and youth areas, a larger meeting room and an improved foyer with spaces for exhibitions and displays. Blacktown City Council is receiving \$400,150 towards the refurbishment of Blacktown library, with an improved children's area, enhanced programming spaces and better access—

The Hon. Walt Secord: When did Blacktown become regional?

The Hon. DON HARWIN: You were not listening. Do not interrupt if you were not listening. Blacktown library is receiving enhanced programming spaces and better access to the library's fiction collections. Liverpool Plains Shire Council is receiving \$500,000 towards the refurbished and extended Quirindi Library. The project will significantly increase the library's size, which will provide a meeting and studying area with improved digital capabilities. I am running out of time. Very fortuitously, Singleton Shire Council is receiving \$474,000. [*Time expired.*]

WOMEN AND RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (12:11): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women. Given the Minister's parliamentary answer on 18 March when she stated that only \$200,000 worth of grants out of the \$10 million Return to Work program for women had been spent by her Government, will she confirm how many women have received support through the scheme and how much money has been spent?

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women) (12:12): I thank the Hon. Penny Sharpe for her question and for her interest in this fantastic program because it is tailored to support unemployed women seeking to re-enter the workforce. Ten thousand women expressed interest in the program and all women who expressed interest were contacted by Service NSW Return to Work coordinators to determine whether they wished to apply. In direct response to the honourable member's question, approximately \$5.7 million in grants has been requested. On average, about \$600,000 per week has been going out through the program, with an average of \$4,443 per grant, per woman. Throughout March, April and May, 2,333 women booked appointments with Return to Work coordinators. I am pleased to inform the House that the program has been so successful that the Government is going to bring forward the \$5 million that was allocated for the next financial year to meet the demand for the program. It is an absolutely terrific program that has had a huge response.

I share with the Chamber some of the stories that have come out of it that I was unable to share during budget estimates. Tonya is 32 and was absolutely devastated when she was made redundant last July after working for a global travel company for 13 years. She is using her grant to complete a diploma of leadership and management. Debra is using her grant to return to study and work after leaving a domestic violence situation with nothing. She told her coordinator that the program has given her hope and there is now a future for her to support her children in a meaningful way. Sally is 58 and was in tears of joy after receiving her grant. She has been without work for 12 months.

She is well qualified, but needed some help finding her way back into the workforce. Margaret is 45 and has taken time out of the workforce to care for her child who has a disability. She is going to use her grant to get work in the disability sector. Jenny said that she is so relieved there is a grant. She wanted to upskill in a training course but did not have the funds to pay for it. Now she does. I am really proud of this program initiated by the New South Wales Government as part of the COVID response to help women get back to work. We know there is an enormous number of women out there who are so talented, so capable and have so much to offer. I thank the honourable member for her question.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (12:15): I ask a supplementary question. I thank the Minister for her answer and note that she provided more information about the program, which was very welcome. Will she please elucidate how many women have actually applied and how many women have actually received funds?

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women) (12:15): I think I was pretty specific in my answer, but I am happy to go back through it again. In answer to the honourable member's question, I responded specifically that 2,333 women have booked appointments with Return to Work coordinators throughout March, April and May. We have had \$5.7 million in grants that have been requested and, as I said, the program has already been so successful that we have brought forward the second part of it. This is a

really good story. This has actually helped women, and those case studies make that very evident. Some \$5.7 million in grants have been requested.

The Hon. Courtney Houssos: How many women?

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: How many women have received money?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR: The honourable member wants to know exactly how many people. I have given her the numbers, I have given her the people that have gone out and I have given her case studies. I am happy to take that part of the question on notice.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: Point of order—

The PRESIDENT: I understand the Minister's point of order. Members will cease interjecting. It is disorderly. The Minister must have an opportunity to respond. Is there something else the Minister wishes to raise?

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: She just keeps repeating the answer.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: It goes further than that. The Minister is entitled to answer the question in the manner that she sees fit, not in the manner that is dictated to her by those who want an answer they say she should give. I suggest that the interjections should stop. Directing the Minister to answer the question according to members' terms of reference is not the way this Chamber operates. The Minister will answer the question in the manner she sees fit.

The PRESIDENT: I uphold the point of order. Does the Minister wish to add to her answer?

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR: No.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (12:17): I ask a second supplementary question. In the Minister's answer she outlined that \$5 million will be brought forward to this financial year. Will she elucidate her answer and outline whether the \$5 million will also be available in the next financial year?

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women) (12:17): I really do not know how much clearer I can be. The Government had a \$10 million program that was announced over two years. We said we would put \$5 million in one financial year and we would put another \$5 million in the next financial year. The program has been so successful in the uptake by women—and I have given this Chamber real stories of people who have been helped; let us remember that when we get all absorbed in that.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister has the call and may answer the question as she sees fit.

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR: We have talked about how much money has gone out the door and the number of people we have helped. I answer the supplementary question, and I am very thankful for it. It is great to see this interest in such a fantastic initiative for women in this State. It is terrific to stand here and talk about real people living real lives that are actually helping them.

The Hon. Courtney Houssos: Point of order: My point of order is about relevance. The Minister is answering the question and the previous supplementary question, but is not directly addressing the question that I asked, which is: Will the Minister guarantee that the \$5 million will be available in the next financial year?

The PRESIDENT: I ask the Minister to be directly relevant to the question.

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR: I believe I am being directly relevant to the question and I have provided an enormous amount of information. Again, information about programs that are helping real people with real lives outside this Chamber and that have actually made a difference. It would be really positive if members opposite could agree that this is a good program and it is helping real people. I have made it very clear that the Government will be bringing forward the \$5 million.

POLICE OFFICER SUICIDES

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK (12:20): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Finance and Small Business, representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services in the other place. Has the Minister received a briefing regarding how many incidents of suicides or attempted suicides have occurred during the past 12 months by current serving and former New South Wales police officers? What immediate steps are being taken to stamp out a bullying culture that has resulted in four recorded incidents of suicide since 14 April 2021?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (12:20): The answer to the question is that I have not received such a briefing. But it gives me an opportunity to say that frontline workers

are a special focus of the Government and there are measures in place to make sure that adequate protection is offered. In last night's Federal budget significant emphasis was laid on the issue of mental health and the recognition of suicide as an issue worthy of significant funding. The short answer to the question is that I have not received such a briefing, but I welcome the contribution of the Commonwealth Government in last night's Federal budget towards supporting mental health issues throughout Australia.

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK (12:21): I ask a supplementary question. The Minister mentioned the Federal budget from last night. Can he please elucidate the exact detail of how that will help the situation of New South Wales police officers who are being bullied? Many are committing suicide.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: I submit that is a new question.

The PRESIDENT: I can take the Minister through the three-step test but—

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: Mr President, please take me through it. I think that is a new question.

Mr David Shoebridge: Are you taking a point of order?

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: Yes.

Mr David Shoebridge: Then it starts with, "Mr President, point of order" otherwise nobody knows.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The supplementary question relates to the answer given by the Minister in response to the original question from the Hon. Robert Borsak, in which the Minister referred to the Federal budget. It seeks to elucidate a part of the answer that was given on the details in the budget. It satisfies the three-step test. I invite the Minister to respond to the supplementary question.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (12:23): I reiterate the point that the Federal Government determines how it will allocate the money. This Chamber ought to welcome the Federal Government's contribution as acknowledgement of mental health as a serious issue in the community, and to the extent that New South Wales mental health agencies will be the beneficiaries of that funding, that is welcome additional funding for the State of New South Wales.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE (12:23): I ask a second supplementary question. In his response the Minister has said it is a matter that is being taken seriously and he referenced the Federal Government's initiative, but the question directed to the Minister was: Is the police Minister aware of the tragic number of suicides, including four incidents in just the last few weeks, amongst police officers and will the Minister seek a briefing or supply information to the House that indicates what steps the Government is taking to protect police from this dreadful spate of suicide incidents?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (12:24): With respect to the member's question, I am not aware what the police Minister is thinking. I have answered that I have not received a briefing. That is a completely new question. I stand by the answer I gave previously: We all ought to be applauding the acknowledgement of mental health as a serious issue in the Federal budget. We also ought to be absolutely sensitive and concerned about suicide rates—whether it concerns frontline workers or anyone else in this State. The issue of anyone taking their own life is something that we all ought to be concerned about and we ought to be taking steps to make sure that we seek to—

Mr David Shoebridge: You won't even take it on notice?

The Hon. Bronnie Taylor: Point of order: We are talking about a very serious issue in the question that has been raised in this Chamber at the moment. To have constant interjections when the Minister is answering the question on a serious issue like suicide is most disorderly. I ask that the member to be called to order.

The PRESIDENT: Minister, were you about to conclude your answer?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Has the President ruled on the point of order?

The PRESIDENT: Members understand that interjections are disorderly at all times. The Minister has the call.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I conclude my answer by saying this Government has demonstrated in spades that it has an appreciation of mental health as a serious issue in the community—whether it concerns frontline workers, farmers, regional workers or people without jobs. Anyone taking their own life affects us all. We ought to be concerned by those sorts of events, and today we ought to celebrate the Federal Government's contribution in last night's budget towards supporting mental health issues.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK (12:26): My question is addressed to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales Government is working to ensure that parents are able to make an informed choice about early childhood service for their child?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (12:27): I thank the Hon. Catherine Cusack for her question. I am sure that members are very well aware of the many benefits that children receive from attending quality early childhood education [ECE]. Research clearly shows that children who participate in at least 600 hours of quality early childhood education in the year before school have improved life outcomes in education, health, social and emotional wellbeing, as well as employment. The New South Wales Government is seeking to increase public awareness of those benefits and to encourage greater take-up and participation from families.

The Government has launched a new public awareness campaign, "Grow to learn, Learn to grow", to further highlight the benefits of participation in quality early childhood education and to encourage families to get their children enrolled in a quality service. The campaign is also aimed at lifting the profile of the profession so that families can understand just how important a role our educators play in a child's development. However, choosing a service is not always an easy task. Many families will need to consider things like their child's age, the times and days that their child might need care, service location and any healthcare needs of the service as well.

The Government is committed to ensuring that families make the best informed decisions about early childhood education and care for their children. That is why I am delighted to announce that we have launched a new early childhood education service finder to assist families to locate quality services close to them. The finder was built to address gaps in the existing sites, particularly the absence of community preschools on the Commonwealth Government's child care finder, and to provide reliable and user-friendly information about quality ratings. It is also part of the New South Wales Government's commitment under Brighter Beginnings—the first 2,000 days of life—to make it easier for parents to find the information that they need in one place.

Since the introduction of the new quality ratings graphic, the department has received significant positive feedback from families about it. Therefore, the new finder will also feature this graphic. When families and services collaborate together on the quality improvement journey, all children benefit. Our early childhood education and care finder's search results will display a provider's opening hours, address and contact details, number of approved places, National Quality Standard rating and also distance to the selected address. Search results also include a map so people can see providers that are close by. All they need to do is to input the address of their home to see a myriad of options nearby and their ratings. Parents are also able to search for a Before and After School Care site using the BASC Finder, again which simply requires them to input the name of their child's school.

I am also pleased to highlight the work that the department is doing with many services to uplift quality, with 82 per cent of services now meeting or exceeding the National Quality Standard. This is an increase from 74 per cent in the past 12 months. This is due to the commitment of the sector to increasing quality, together with a number of initiatives. It is my hope that the new ECE finder website will encourage more parents to enrol their children in an ECE service and provide them with all the information that they need to make an informed choice about where to send their child.

THE HON. DON HARWIN MINISTERIAL CAR USE

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE (12:30): My question without notice is directed to the Hon. Don Harwin. In the use of his ministerial car, has the Minister engaged in the practice known as "ditch the driver", where the ministerial car delivers him to his destination and the driver is then dismissed and sent home on public transport so that the Minister can keep the car for personal use?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts) (12:30): Since I became a resident of Pearl Beach, the driver has always returned to Sydney with the car. There is no instance of the driver being required to return to Sydney. Prior to that, as the honourable member knows, I lived in Elizabeth Bay, so I assume the question does not arise.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE (12:31): I ask a supplementary question. Has the Minister ditched the driver at Vincentia, requiring his driver to get public transport home from there, with all its obvious difficulties? If so, when and how often?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts) (12:31): After I became a Minister, I actually had to

sell my house at Vincentia because it simply was not going to be possible for me to undertake my work as a Minister being so far away from Sydney. It is a 2½-hour drive. The honourable member would be aware that there are significant evening commitments and weekend commitments when one holds the Arts portfolio. So I would have thought there were very few instances at all when I even went home to Vincentia from after I was appointed a Minister in January 2017 to when I sold the property within three or four months. There may have been one or two, but I doubt it was very much. But it was always the case that it was done with the agreement of my driver and it was always the case that he would never have to make his way from Vincentia to a railway station. Never. That never happened. It has simply just not been the practice.

There is a railway station at Bomaderry, as I think the honourable member knows. My driver at that time lived at Rockdale, and there are a number of trains that go between Bomaderry and Hurstville. My driver at the time did not regard it as a problem. That particular driver has not worked for the State Government in any capacity for some time now. If the member is suggesting that the article— [*Time expired.*]

The Hon. WALT SECORD (12:33): I ask a second supplementary question. Would the Minister elucidate his answer in regard to the revelation when he said "one or two" times this may have occurred? On those one or two occasions, how did the driver get back to Sydney? What time of day was it? Was it by full agreement with the driver?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts) (12:34): In terms of the last part of the honourable member's question, I made that very clear at the time. The honourable member might not be very aware of rail services to the Shoalhaven and the timetable, but Mr Justin Field would be well aware that there are infrequent services to the Shoalhaven and most of them are during work hours. When it was done, it would have only been done in the late afternoon so that the driver could get back to Rockdale by a reasonable hour. Any suggestion to the contrary is just simply wrong and there is just no way that particular driver would have been—

The Hon. Walt Secord: You're a repeat offender.

The Hon. DON HARWIN: It is just simply a lie to say I am a repeat offender. It is extremely offensive.

The Hon. Walt Secord: You break COVID laws. You disrespect drivers.

The Hon. DON HARWIN: I have never disrespected a driver. You are just a liar.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Walt Secord to order for the first time.

The Hon. Walt Secord: Point of order: I demand that the Minister retract calling me a liar in the Chamber. He is the liar.

The Hon. DON HARWIN: Mr President, I will withdraw after he withdraws that.

The PRESIDENT: Yes, I would ask you to withdraw.

The Hon. Walt Secord: I withdraw.

The Hon. DON HARWIN: In the interests of not taking up too much of question time, I will withdraw too.

The PRESIDENT: I thank you both.

The Hon. DON HARWIN: But, with the greatest of respect, to try to link me to what was printed in the newspaper on Sunday is fanciful. My former driver has been out of the employ of the Government for some time. He became a very close friend. My parents are still in contact with him. I really just completely reject any suggestion that I ever treated a driver with anything other than the utmost respect.

FEDERAL BUDGET AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

The Hon. WALT SECORD (12:36): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Finance and Small Business, representing the Treasurer. Given that the Sydney Metro West project is still largely unfunded and has already blown out to more than \$27 billion, why did New South Wales receive little funding in last night's Federal budget for public transport? Why did the State Government fail to make representations to the Federal Government in regard to public transport projects?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (12:37): I thank the member for his question. What a good budget it was. I endorse some of the comments made by the New South Wales Treasurer in respect of the Federal budget last night. The Hon. Dominic Perrottet said:

I welcome the Commonwealth Government's 2021-22 budget, which delivers more than \$3 billion in funding for road infrastructure projects in New South Wales, alongside tax relief and training initiatives designed to boost the economy and help drive unemployment below pre-pandemic levels.

The Commonwealth's strong focus on supporting working families and creating jobs was teamed with a strong focus on helping the vulnerable and those in need.

Josh Frydenberg has delivered a Budget which is the envy of many countries around the world, it's clear Australia is leading the pack—

The Hon. Walt Secord: Point of order—

The PRESIDENT: I call the Hon. Walt Secord on a predictable point of order.

The Hon. Walt Secord: My point of order goes to relevance. I listened respectfully and quietly for a minute and at no point in his answer did the Minister mention public transport projects once.

The PRESIDENT: I think the Minister was making some introductory remarks and would no doubt be drawing himself to the question.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Let us talk about some of the funding which was announced last night: a total of \$3.3 billion for priority road projects, including \$2 billion for the Great Western Highway from Katoomba to Lithgow; \$500 million for the Princes Highway, including the Jervis Bay Road intersection and stage 1 of the Jervis Bay to Sussex Inlet section; \$240 million for the Mount Ousley interchange; and \$229.4 million for the M12 motorway. There is a further \$162.8 million over three years from 2021-22 to support the clean-up of damage caused—

The Hon. Walt Secord: Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance. The Minister is now halfway through his answer and is yet to utter a single public transport project. The Minister has been allowed latitude to make his introductory remarks but he should now provide examples of public transport and the Sydney Metro West.

The PRESIDENT: I uphold the point of order. The Minister will focus on public transport.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: The question referred to attention that was drawn in the budget to small business.

The Hon. Walt Secord: Point of order: The Minister is misrepresenting my question. It relates directly to public transport.

The PRESIDENT: The question deals with public transport; it does not mention small business. I understand that the Minister does not have a copy of the question. I direct the Minister to be generally relevant to the question.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: The question should refer to small business as one of the great outcomes from last night's budget was the benefit delivered for small business.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I direct the Minister back to the leave of the question.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I ask for a copy of the question. I will address the second part of the question that I assume is directed to the Treasurer: Why did the State Government fail to make representations to the Federal Government?

The Hon. Walt Secord: Do not selectively quote. It says, "in regard to public transport projects".

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister has the call.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: The shadow Treasurer has no idea what representations the Treasurer made in respect to public transport options for New South Wales. Due to this Government, New South Wales is the beneficiary of a significant GST return which will benefit public transport options.

The Hon. WALT SECORD (12:42): I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate upon the reference in his answer to representations by the Treasurer. What representations and on what day did those representations occur?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (12:42): I love this question.

The Hon. Trevor Khan: Point of order: That is not a supplementary question. The Minister said that he was not aware of what representations the Treasurer had made. What the member asserted was said is incorrect and involves a new question, not a supplementary question.

The PRESIDENT: I uphold the point of order.

INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (12:42): My question is addressed to the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women. What is the New South Wales Government doing in recognition of International Nurses Day?

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women) (12:43): I thank the honourable member for his question. International Nurses Day is celebrated each year on 12 May, the birthday of the world's most famous nurse, Florence Nightingale. It is an important day, giving all of us the opportunity to recognise nurses and acknowledge the invaluable contributions they make to the health and wellbeing of all Australians and people around the world in all kinds of circumstances. In the 2019-20 budget the Government committed \$2.8 billion to recruit a total of 8,300 frontline health staff over the next four years, including 5,000 nurses and midwives. They have played a significant role in the response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Nurses have been at the very centre of our response to COVID—quite literally on the front line.

The 2020 Nurse of the Year was clinical nurse consultant Trish Lemin from the Mid North Coast of New South Wales. As the world was gripped by the reality of the COVID-19 emergency, Trish flew to Wuhan province, the epicentre of the pandemic. She did not hesitate to volunteer. The three-week mission brought 273 Australians, including 68 children, home. Once home, Trish and her team set about establishing testing clinics across the Coffs Clinical Network, developing effective models of care, establishing best practice procedures and implementing strict personal protective equipment and infection control guidelines. She then manned the front line alongside her colleagues. Trish is described as a go-to person in times of crisis. Trish says she just feels thankful for having a fulfilling and rewarding nursing career.

That example of a nurse's dedication to her job ties in perfectly with the theme of this year's International Nurses Day 2021: A Voice to Lead - A vision for future healthcare. The focus is to look at the changes to, and innovations in, nursing in response to COVID-19 and how these experiences will help shape and inform the future of health care. Through COVID, while many of us have been able to stay safe at home with our families, nurses have continued to go to work. We have seen thousands of nurses volunteer to undergo additional upskilling to enable them to contribute to the increased needs in our hospitals' intensive care units should they be needed. We have re-registered nurses such as me so that we are now able to help. It has been a great showcase for nurses in this State.

In the Illawarra and Shoalhaven region, the Shellharbour COVID-19 Assessment Clinic team was awarded Team of the Year for 2020 at the NSW Health Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery Awards. The skill and innovation used to set up testing facilities to meet the needs of all their community members included providing outreach services to vulnerable clients such as those with disabilities, people in quarantine and the homeless. This House recognises and congratulates the more than 50,000 nurses in the New South Wales public health system on the invaluable service they provide to the community every day and every year. [*Time expired.*]

MENTAL HEALTH AND CANNABIDIOL OIL USE

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (12:46): My question is directed to the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women. Cannabidiol [CBD] oil has been shown to offer relief for individuals suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD], anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues where conventional prescription drugs have failed. In New South Wales thousands of people, including veterans suffering from PTSD, cannot obtain CBD oil safely, cheaply and legally to treat their mental health issues. First, is the Minister aware of the benefits that CBD oil can have for treating certain mental health issues? Secondly, what steps is the Minister taking to make CBD oil available to those who need it in New South Wales?

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women) (12:47): I thank the honourable member for her question. I believe she is referring to cannabidiol oil and its use in treating PTSD. I acknowledge the member's commitment to this issue. We have had many discussions about this. I presume CBD oil is a scheduled drug under the Therapeutic Goods Administration and requires research before advice can be given on its use in a safe and appropriate manner. I do not have that advice with me from the Therapeutic Goods Administration. I do know that a lot is happening in this space regarding regulation and use of that type of oil. I do not know whether it is specifically that type of oil. It is being used successfully in trials with children who have an acute form of epilepsy. I am not sure whether it is the same oil; I will have to take that part of the question on notice.

I am consistent and firm in the use of any type of medication in any capacity. I have been a registered nurse for over 20 years and I am currently registered. I am very much of the belief that we must have science- and evidence-based decisions when we look at medication and its use. I stand by the Therapeutic Goods

Administration. We have a good system in this country of assessment and vigorous testing. I am not speaking specifically to the member's question but if we look at breast cancer, we can see the rigorous drug testing that has led to fifth, sixth and seventh lines of treatment. It is because of that process of testing and safety that we achieve the best outcomes. I think that we need the Therapeutic Goods Administration to advise us on that. The Commonwealth is responsible for that and is responsible for that advice. However, I thank the honourable member for her question.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (12:49): I ask a supplementary question. Would the Minister elucidate her response in relation to not knowing too much about the CBD oil itself? Will she commit to getting a briefing from her department on what CBD oil is and its benefits to mental health?

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women) (12:50): I thank Ms Cate Faehrmann for her supplementary question. She has asked the question and I am going to ask for advice. But my absolute, resolute stance is that this goes through a procedure that is rigorous, transparent and tested by research, which is done by the Therapeutic Goods Administration. It is a matter for that body to provide advice on. But, yes, the member has piqued my interest and I will definitely be asking for a brief on that particular substance. However, as I said, it comes under that advice. We have had this discussion on numerous other medications before. I have actually met with people whom the member asked me to meet to discuss these things and my response has always been very consistent. But I thank the honourable member for her question and her advocacy in terms of mental health.

FEDERAL BUDGET AND FEDERAL OFFICE FOR WOMEN

The Hon. TARA MORIARTY (12:51): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women. What is her Government's response to concerns from New South Wales women's organisations that last night's Federal budget cut \$7.1 million from the Federal Office for Women?

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women) (12:51): I thank the Hon. Tara Moriarty very much for her question. I have to say that this Federal budget has been one of the most significant for women ever presented in this country. We have seen a doubling of funding for domestic violence services, which I think has been well needed. I applaud the sector in New South Wales for the work it has done to advocate for that. The announcements on child care have just been enormous. We know that one thing that contributes to the disparity in wages for women is child care. I also note that child care has been a big policy platform for the Labor Party. It has constantly advocated for it, in terms of its support—

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: Child care is not just for women.

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR: I beg your pardon? Child care is important for all families, but particularly for women in this space. I am answering in the context of being a Minister for the portfolio of women, but of course it is for everybody. When we look at this absolute policy in the Federal Government and what has happened—I had discussions with the Federal Minister for Women, Senator the Hon. Marise Payne, who is an outstanding person. She has absolutely advocated to push this budget forward for women. I think that women are at the centre of this Federal budget and I am very grateful for that. I think it is a fantastic initiative. Initiatives we are looking at, such as boosting apprenticeship commencement, are going to help jobs and will really help women and the community, which is also a real positive. I am quite surprised by the question.

We are also looking at better treatment and services for those living with eating disorders. We know that eating disorders inordinately affect women more than men. These are very debilitating illnesses, not only for the person suffering from them but also for the family. The budget also provides \$16.6 million over four years for the National Women's Health Strategy, with a particular focus on endometriosis, which again affects multiple women and their ability to have children. It is often a silent disease and is very debilitating. We are putting that front and centre. We are looking at \$13.7 million to expand the Women and Infants Research Foundation, which will reduce the rate of preterm birth associated with a higher risk of perinatal mortality and long-term neurological disability, including cerebral palsy. These are really important initiatives. It is the first time in a very long time that women have been significant beneficiaries in a budget. [*Time expired.*]

JOBS GROWTH

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (12:54): My question is addressed to the Minister for Finance and Small Business. How is the New South Wales Government helping businesses to create more jobs in New South Wales?

The PRESIDENT: Order! Members are to remain silent. The Minister has the call.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (12:55): The shadow Treasurer and I have one thing that we always concentrate on.

The Hon. Walt Secord: Jobs, jobs, jobs and more jobs!

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: It is like a Pavlovian dog, isn't it? I welcome that interjection by saying the Government is focused on the delivery of jobs. The New South Wales Jobs Plus Program is part of this plan. The \$250 million Jobs Plus—

The Hon. Walt Secord: Point of order: As much as I would love to hear about the Jobs Plus Program, it is actually legislation that is before this Chamber. There are rules about pre-empting debate. In fact, the legislation passed the lower House last night and is before this House and scheduled for debate on Thursday morning. I ask that you rule it out of order.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: To the point of order: The bill that is before the House is a payroll tax amendment bill. This is a much bigger program than just the payroll tax part of it. To the extent that there may well be payroll tax incentives offered in support of the Jobs Plus Program, the program is more than just the payroll tax and the amendment being debated pursuant to that Act.

The Hon. Walt Secord: Mr President—

The PRESIDENT: I have heard enough on the point of order.

The Hon. Walt Secord: To the point of order: I make a key observation.

The PRESIDENT: You may do so very quickly.

The Hon. Walt Secord: Jobs Plus is in the title of the bill.

The PRESIDENT: I urge the Minister to be careful in his response in relation to any business before the House.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: The \$250 million Jobs Plus Program is expected to create or support up to 25,000 jobs by June 2024 and includes a variety of support measures, including payroll tax relief. But more importantly—

The Hon. Walt Secord: Point of order: The Minister was warned not to flout your ruling. In fact, the bill relates directly to payroll tax, and he referred to payroll tax in his answer. He is flouting your ruling.

The PRESIDENT: I think the Minister was about to move on. The Minister will continue.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: The program also includes access to a Jobs Plus concierge service to help businesses efficiently navigate and access government agencies and programs, and affords short-term—less than 12 months—access to free or subsidised government accommodation and spaces. The first round of successful applications includes Baxter Healthcare, Australia's only local manufacturer of intravenous medical fluids, which will invest in a major expansion of its advanced manufacturing facility in western Sydney. This will support more than 600 existing jobs in New South Wales and create approximately 80 new jobs by June 2022. Another successful firm, SpeedX, is a biotechnology company that will look to establish a new global headquarters in New South Wales, including relocating manufacturing capabilities from the United States to Sydney, which will create almost 200 jobs by June 2024.

In October 2019, with the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones, I had the pleasure of meeting with members of the Australia and New Zealand senior management team at Baxter Healthcare's facility at Old Toongabbie. This major expansion of a key medical manufacturing facility in New South Wales will help strengthen national supply chain resilience and to support continued export growth of Australian-made medicines. The message is clear that New South Wales is open for business. There is more work to be done, but our plan for a prosperous post-pandemic economy is all about getting people back to work and creating jobs, jobs and more jobs. I thank the members for their attention, and I applaud the shadow Treasurer for his attention to the standing orders.

LAND CLEARING

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (12:59): My question is directed to the Leader of the Government, representing the Minister for Energy and Environment. Last year there was a case of rural land clearing on the corner of Jervis Bay Road and the Princes Highway—specifically lot 3, DP 24495 in the Shoalhaven local government area. At the time of this clearing, the land in question was mapped category 2 sensitive land on the Native Vegetation Regulatory Map. That classification has now been removed from the map. What date was the category 2 sensitive land protection for that lot changed? What was the reason for the change?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts) (13:00): No doubt I have driven past that deposited plan more than a thousand times, but this has obviously happened in the four years since I left the Shoalhaven, so

I am not familiar with the circumstances. I do not have a briefing note with me, so I will have to ask the Hon. Matt Kean to provide the member with an answer as soon as possible.

TEACH.NSW SCHOLARSHIPS

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (13:01): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning. Given projections show that New South Wales will need at least another 11,000 teachers by 2030, how many people have become qualified teachers as part of the teach.NSW scholarship program? How many are now employed full time in New South Wales public schools?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (13:01): Encouraging and attracting teachers to our schools is very important. As the member is aware, the department has a range of initiatives in place to attract people to teaching, including active promotion of teaching as a career through teach.NSW, teacher education scholarships, sponsored training programs and our teach.Rural scholarships because it is important to attract teachers to rural and regional communities. In addition, the new teach.MathsNOW and Inclusive Practice in Education scholarships were launched in 2019, with the first cohorts of successful scholars commencing study in 2020. The member has asked a specific question about the number of scholarships that have been awarded and the number of people now teaching in the system. I will take that specific detail on notice. I do not have those figures with me. I will do that and come back to the member with a response.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (13:02): I ask a supplementary question. Would the Minister elucidate that part of her answer where she spoke about the different types of scholarships, including the teach.MathsNOW and the teach.Rural scholarships? What are the different types of scholarships? How many are on offer for 2021? How many were on offer last year?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (13:03): Again, I am happy to take that detail on notice and come back to the member with an answer on the different scholarship types, the number that has been awarded and those who are currently completing their teaching degree, master's degree or whatever part of their study they are up to. They were launched only in 2019 and the first cohorts commenced study last year.

The Hon. WALT SECORD (13:03): I ask a second supplementary question. Would the Minister elucidate her answer in regard to the workforce plans that she mentioned?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (13:03): A range of initiatives are in place to attract our teachers. I know that the department is doing a lot of work in continuing to refine and improve its strategies to achieve ongoing success to meet the needs of school communities and teachers. It is also working on a strategy to ensure a sustainable supply of quality teachers over the next 10 years. These are important issues that I speak regularly about with not just the department but also our stakeholder groups and individual schools and principals when I visit them. Teaching is a great career, and we want to do everything we can to encourage our best and brightest to come into the teaching profession. A range of scholarships are available, which I will provide more detail about on notice to the Hon. Courtney Houssos. I am sure the Hon. Walt Secord can look at that as well.

We are also doing some work on what we can do to get people in different careers to consider coming into teaching. It is important that we look into attracting people who might want to make a mid-career transition into teaching, particularly in areas where we need to attract and retain teachers of certain disciplines. Earlier this year we announced our FASTstream Program, which is open for applications at the moment and is about giving current and prospective teachers the opportunity to fast-track their careers to become a principal within 10 years. There is good interest in that so far, which is exciting.

A lot of work is being done, but there is more to be done. We are working on our strategy over the next decade and we are looking at many exciting things. It is an important area, so it is good that we are doing this work to ensure that we have a pipeline of teachers coming through and that we attract the best and brightest into our schools. We know that the quality of the teachers standing in front of children in classrooms every day has a massive impact on student outcomes. That is why we are investing in our teaching workforce.

ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES TRUST

The Hon. WES FANG (13:06): My question is addressed to the Aboriginal affairs Minister. Will the Minister update the House on the recent activities of the Aboriginal Languages Trust?

The Hon. DON HARWIN (Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts) (13:06): The Aboriginal Languages Act 2017 commenced on 5 March 2020 following months of consultation with Aboriginal communities, peak Aboriginal

organisations and other stakeholders across New South Wales. The Act is a true reflection of the Aboriginal community's aspirations for their languages and is the first such legislation passed in Australia. The Act establishes the Aboriginal Languages Trust, which will, in partnership with community, drive a focused, coordinated and sustained effort to grow and expand Aboriginal language activities in New South Wales. The trust is managed by a board of nine leading New South Wales Aboriginal speakers, educators and advocates. It is the only statutory body in Australia supporting Aboriginal languages. I am pleased to welcome respected Aboriginal leader Clare McHugh as the trust's new executive director. Clare is a proud Gamilaroi and Dhungutti woman from Redfern who has extensive leadership and community experience.

In April the trust released for consultation its first ever draft five-year strategic plan. Once in place, it will guide the growth and nurturing of Aboriginal languages in New South Wales. An ambitious consultation plan is now underway, with feedback on the draft plan being sought from Aboriginal language centres and organisations, peak Aboriginal bodies, other community language stakeholders as well as the community more broadly. Consultations will take the form of surveys, face-to-face meetings, individual discussions and a planned gathering later this year. With hundreds of individuals involved in teaching, learning or reviving Aboriginal languages across New South Wales, it is crucial that the trust's plan is informed by Aboriginal community voices as custodians of their own languages.

The strategic plan is also key to the Government's actions to address the Closing the Gap target aimed at increasing the number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken. This year we have had an overwhelming response to the Aboriginal Community Language Investments Program, with over 60 applications. The grants provide an exciting opportunity for community to grow, revitalise and expand language teaching, speaking and learning at the grassroots level. I look forward to the trust's final strategic plan being finalised in early 2022, which will mark a significant step for the revitalisation of First Nations languages in New South Wales.

The time for questions has expired. If members have further questions I suggest they place them on notice.

Supplementary Questions for Written Answers

WOMEN AND RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (13:09): My supplementary question for written answer is directed to the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women. How many women have received funding under the Return to Work program?

Questions Without Notice: Take Note

TAKE NOTE OF ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I move:

That the House take note of answers to questions.

FEDERAL BUDGET AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

THE HON. DON HARWIN MINISTERIAL CAR USE

The Hon. WALT SECORD (13:10): Last night the Federal Government delivered its budget, the third budget of Federal Treasurer, Josh Frydenberg. The community was very hopeful that the Berejiklian Government would secure funding for public transport infrastructure projects. Sadly, we were disappointed. I point to the Sydney Metro West. It is still largely unfunded and the budget has blown out to more than \$27 billion. It was disappointing that the Federal Government did not provide any financial assistance. Despite the Minister for Finance and Small Business revealing a list of road projects, there was not a single public transport project. It is disappointing because clearly the Berejiklian Government did not make any representations or submissions to the Federal Government to provide funding for public transport projects.

This morning the Premier finally conceded that the cost of the Sydney Metro West would be at least \$25 billion and that the project would take 10 years to build. That would bring that public transport link to completion in 2031. NSW Labor wants improved rail links between Sydney, Goulburn, Queanbeyan and Canberra. It was also disappointing that there was a lack of detail or a response from the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women when it was revealed that last night \$7.1 million was removed from the Federal Office for Women.

I refer to the use of ministerial drivers. A bond develops between a Minister and their ministerial driver. A respect occurs. I remember Premier Bob Carr had a driver, Merv Pringle, for years. They were a partnership. They treated each other with respect and dignity. There would be two coffees in the car every morning. They

would buy each other coffees and they respected each other. Mr Carr would never have dumped his driver on the South Coast and made him fend for himself to get back home.

During question time we received other text messages from whistleblower drivers saying that this is not the first time. Why would the Minister refer to his parents in his answer? There were serious questions to answer. Did the Minister allow his parents to use his ministerial driver? The Minister has serious questions to answer about the use of ministerial drivers who are provided by the New South Wales taxpayer. They are not people that he can abuse and dump on the side of the road because he wants to go from party to party.

The Hon. Don Harwin: Point of order: I did not interrupt the Hon. Walt Secord, even though there were several things I would contest. Now he is seriously reflecting on me in a way that has no foundation in fact. I ask that he be called to order.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: To the point of order: The material that I canvassed in my answer related directly to the take-note debate and the answer that the Minister gave. There were three questions: a question, a supplementary question and a second supplementary question. All the material related to that. He in fact was the person—

The Hon. Don Harwin: That was not my point of order.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You introduced your parents into the debate.

The Hon. Don Harwin: That was not my point of order.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Walt Secord to order for the second time. The Hon. Walt Secord will not make any imputations against members other than by way of substantive motion. The member was straying outside those principles.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (13:14): I take note of an answer given by the Leader of the Government, Special Minister for State, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts to an excellent question about public library funding. There is \$60 million in support for libraries over four years. As the Minister highlighted, this is the largest injection since the introduction of the Library Act 1939. I particularly mention some libraries in the Upper Hunter electorate. My good friend and colleague the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning was able to join me in Quirindi, Muswellbrook and Singleton as we rolled out funding to the libraries across the Upper Hunter on behalf of Minister Harwin.

As the Minister highlighted, \$500,000 goes towards the refurbishment and extension of the Quirindi Library. Those projects in regional communities are fantastic. Libraries play an important part in communities, whether in the city or the bush, but particularly in the bush. The Quirindi Library will be a centrepiece of the CBD in the main street. In excess of half a million dollars funds the project that is already underway to extend the library. It will provide a significant piece of legacy infrastructure for the Quirindi community.

The Minister and I moved on to Singleton and met with mayor Sue Moore. Nearly \$475,000 goes towards the already impressive Singleton Library to enhance it by upgrades to the lighting and the ceiling. It will also provide for new air conditioning, and electrical upgrades and improvements. We moved on to Muswellbrook, where \$89,000 is provided to extend the children's area and connect the indoors to the new, covered area outside. I met Lauren, the acting librarian at Muswellbrook Library, who is a fantastic person doing a fantastic job.

The Minister and I were joined in Singleton by the Hon. George Souris, now State Library NSW President. It was great to have him in that role in his home town of Singleton. He was able to see this injection of money going into libraries across the State. He is a huge supporter of libraries across New South Wales and a former member for Upper Hunter. He was certainly very supportive of it. The Government has been bagged out about not doing things well. This is a great example of the Government delivering legacy infrastructure into regional communities, just like the Upper Hunter.

INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY (13:17): I participate in the take-note debate specifically in regard to the answer given by the Hon. Bronnie Taylor about the celebration of the 2021 International Nurses Day. What an important day that is to recognise in the calendar each year. As indicated by the Minister, this year's theme was Nurses: A Voice to Lead. In reflecting on this, it is important that the voices of nurses in New South Wales, who play such an integral role in the delivery of medical care and overall wellbeing to the citizens in the State, are listened to. I mention four areas that are relevant to the celebration of this very important day.

Portfolio Committee No. 2 is inquiring into health outcomes and access to health and hospital services in rural and regional New South Wales. It has already heard detailed evidence dealing with the concerns of nurses, enrolled nurses, nurse practitioners and midwives about matters that people would be very concerned about if they were aware of them. The purpose of the inquiry is to provide the ability to ventilate a range of issues that have been identified and that are raising some big question marks over the way in which health services are delivered in the State.

Turning to a related matter, the Hon. Courtney Houssos is undertaking an inquiry into the Public Health Amendment (Registered Nurses and Nursing Homes) Bill. I draw the attention of members to the recent testimony of nurse practitioners, registered nurses, enrolled nurses and their representative organisation, the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association, with respect to the difficulties faced in nursing homes, particularly by people at the end of life. In its testimony, the Palliative Care Nurses Association raised major concerns about the inability to deliver proper palliative care in nursing homes when, in fact, there can be periods of time overnight when no nurses are rostered on duty. Finally, we have heard contradictory information on the issue of nurses in schools. The Minister said that 100 nurses would be immediately put into schools, but the inquiry most recently heard testimony from the New South Wales advocate that it would be only 50 nurses. It is important to clear up whether it is 50 or 100 nurses that are about to be put in schools. [*Time expired.*]

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The Hon. LOU AMATO (13:21): I take note of an answer given by the Special Minister of State, Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts, the Hon. Don Harwin. In today's digital world, many view libraries as a secondary source of information. A simple Google search will give us all the information we need. Sadly, nothing could be further from the truth. Many times a Google search will reveal an article that contains correct information, but often we find ourselves reading a post from an unqualified writer expressing their own version of the truth. Asking Google to provide articles with proof the Earth is flat will return over 47,600,000 results. It is not very encouraging. Public libraries are important as they not only provide educational resources free to everyone but also preserve history and, more importantly, truth.

We all know the importance of libraries. I cannot imagine how this Parliament could function without the wonderful service its own library provides. The Government is mindful of the importance of knowledge and the role of our public libraries in ensuring that access to them is freely available to the community. I commend Minister Harwin and the Government for ensuring that our libraries remain repositories of knowledge. In 2019-20 the Government provided an additional \$60 million over four years in support of public libraries. These funds are in addition to the recurrent \$23.5 million per annum already provided. In 2019-20 Public Library Infrastructure Grants totalling \$6 million were provided to 20 councils to improve library buildings and information technology infrastructure.

The Government has provided the largest injection of funding since the introduction of the Library Act 1939. The management of the funds will be administered by the State Library of New South Wales. For 2020-21 the package includes subsidies totalling \$28 million, grants totalling \$6 million and connectivity support of \$2 million. During the same period the Government announced Public Library Infrastructure Grants totalling \$6 million for 25 councils.

TEACH.NSW SCHOLARSHIPS

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (13:23): I take note of an answer given by the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning today in response to my question about the impending significant and unbelievable shortage of 11,000 teachers across our public school system. Modelling by educational economist Adam Rorris, which was commissioned by the Teachers Federation, showed that we will need 20 per cent more teachers—that is, 11,000 more teachers—across New South Wales in the next decade to accommodate projected growth. In response the Minister provided the House with the usual grab bag of keywords provided by the department. There are "strategies" and "conversations with stakeholders", but there is still no clear workforce plan for how we are going to find an additional 11,000 teachers. I pay tribute to not only the Teachers Federation but also the Secondary Principals Council because Craig Petersen has been raising these issues, as he said, for more than eight years.

The shortage of teachers first cropped up in remote schools and then moved to other regional schools. Now it is in disadvantaged schools in Sydney. Even schools on the Northern Beaches are having trouble recruiting teachers. The shortage of teachers used to be in mathematics and science and now it is English, physical education and across all subject areas. How can students learn if their teacher is not trained in the subject matter that they are supposed to be imparting? We know that passionate mathematics teachers who love the subject matter can communicate it far more effectively than someone who does not have that same passion for what they are trying to teach our students.

This comes off the back of the Auditor-General's report, which shows that we will run out of classrooms in the same decade. In this Chamber the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning likes to talk about the Government's building program but the reality is that the Auditor-General and the Teachers Federation have shown that we will not have enough teachers and classrooms and we are not accounting for the growth that our public school system is experiencing. It is remarkable that in the twenty-first century we have to come to this Chamber and appeal to the department and to the education Minister to provide our students with teachers and classrooms because students in brand new schools across western Sydney are learning in libraries already. Where is this Government's plan to actually build the classrooms and train the teachers that our students need? [*Time expired.*]

MENTAL HEALTH AND CANNABIDIOL OIL USE

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (13:26): I take note of an answer given by the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women to my question on cannabidiol [CBD] oil. I was disappointed to hear the Minister was not aware of the benefits of CBD oil, given the mental health crisis in New South Wales. There is an increasing number of people with post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD], anxiety and depression and this medicine is being found to be highly effective in treating those conditions. My office has been contacted by a number of people with personal stories, quite a few of whom are advocating for a change in the law. It is pertinent for the Minister to hear from people who have those conditions, one of whom is a frontline emergency services worker who contacted me. I am sure that the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women would be hearing from her department and advisors about some of the cutting edge and innovative solutions to our mental health crisis. I am sure her department and advisors are also hearing these stories.

After a 14-year career, that emergency services worker had PTSD as well as sustaining a long-term chronic pain injury. One day he woke up to find he was taking 14 tablets a day and had a high level of alcohol intake. He said that as a last resort he moved to a medical cannabis program and quickly got off those 14 tablets a day and is down to almost zero alcohol intake. He said the program has saved and reunited his family in a way that has broken his heart. He is a respectable community member of almost 30 years standing. A pensioner was in a similar situation, with PTSD and anxiety. I am very glad that the Minister has undertaken to be briefed on the situation and I urge her, given the mental health crisis that this State is facing, to do so as quickly as possible. The Minister should get evidence from not only science but also patients.

Thousands of people in New South Wales are experiencing the benefits of this. I certainly hope to hear that the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women will become an advocate for removing the regulatory barriers that exist when it comes to accessing CBD oil in New South Wales.

The Hon. Walt Secord: Mr President—

The PRESIDENT: Is any other member seeking the call?

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: Mr President—

The PRESIDENT: Quickly, Mr Secord.

The Hon. Walt Secord: Under Standing Order 89, I wish to briefly speak a second time. I was misrepresented.

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: Point of order—

The Hon. Walt Secord: Standing Order 89 allows a member to speak a second time if they are—

The PRESIDENT: I will hear the point of order from the Hon. Shayne Mallard.

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: There is a set time for this debate. That response can be done at the end of that set time.

The PRESIDENT: Is the Hon. Walt Secord willing to yield?

The Hon. Walt Secord: Yes, if that is the case.

WOMEN AND RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM

THE HON. DON HARWIN MINISTERIAL CAR USE

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (13:31): In this take-note debate I refer to a question asked by the Opposition and directed to the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women. Interestingly enough, somehow the question must have been leaked to the Opposition because it was a question I had intended to ask Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women. We had to scramble to obtain a new question for me to ask on International Nurses Day, to which the Minister gave a great Florence Nightingale answer. I wish to focus

on the answer given by the Minister to the Opposition's question relating to the Return to Work program, which I think is a fantastic program.

Members may recall that when it was announced in November last year, the Return to Work program was a response to the impact of COVID, particularly on women in the workforce. I note that women are overrepresented in the casual workforce and in sectors that were really hard hit by COVID, such as casual retail and hospitality. I know very well those areas in which people were out of work and often unable to obtain assistance through various programs. Of the \$10 million allocated to the program, \$5.7 million has been taken up in grants. For women who qualify, \$600,000 is disbursed each week to assist them to overcome barriers that prevent them from undertaking gainful employment. From that \$600,000, a total of \$5,000 grants are made each time.

The Hon. Wes Fang: Wow.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Yes. Women have successfully used the grants for everything to assist them to get back into the workforce. The money has been used to defray costs of short courses, textbooks, stationery and professional attire, child care, transportation, technology, office equipment and relocation. Despite the aggressive scepticism shown by the Opposition when the question was asked, I am pleased that the Minister informed the House that to date 2,333 women have taken up the grants to re-enter the workforce. The women have worked through Return to Work program coordinators at Service NSW. I congratulate the Minister on that program, which supports women who qualify for assistance aged 16 years and upwards. I would like to see it continue as we move out of COVID and into COVID recovery.

Finally, I wish to comment on what I consider to be a low point during question time: the ministerial driver shenanigans. The article in *The Daily Telegraph* referred to by the Hon. Walt Secord is flimsy and lacks substance. It is hearsay and rumours. It is underlined by an industrial dispute that is putting Ministers under pressure. I note that the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, the Hon. John Graham and the Hon. Courtney Houssos asked questions about substantive policy matters, which is the way to win Government from Opposition—not going down into the gutter, as the Hon. Walt Secord did.

FEDERAL BUDGET AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

THE HON. DON HARWIN MINISTERIAL CAR USE

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (13:33): I would have liked the Minister for Finance and Small Business, on behalf of the Treasurer, to explain in detail and account for every tete-a-tete that the Treasurer apparently has had with his Federal counterparts to secure funding for the Sydney Metro West—a vital transport project. The fact that the Minister for Finance and Small Business could not nominate even one instance of the Treasurer picking up the phone to Mr Frydenberg and Mr Morrison and saying, "Help us build this train," means that the only conclusion we can draw is that he is asleep at the wheel when it comes to this particular project. That is disappointing. We need someone to be driving the New South Wales train hard when it comes to securing Federal dollars for this project. When it comes to this particular project, it is Team NSW: Labor Opposition members have done our part. At two successive elections we secured commitments from Federal Labor to help add \$6 billion to this project.

No matter who the Prime Minister of the week happens to be or who the Treasurer of the week happens to be under the conservative national Government, at no instance has the Coalition Government in New South Wales been able to get a cent of Federal money for this project. What is the consequence of that? It is that this project is not being built. As a result, we have hundreds of thousands of commuters in western Sydney dealing with immense congestion, which comes at a time when they would otherwise be spending time with their families or earning an income. When Labor talks about transport projects, it is not because we like trains. It is because we like people to save time. We want them to be able to have that choice and that liberty in their own lives.

The fact is that, at best, we had an elliptical reference to additional GST revenue being hypothecated to this project, which is a flimsy assertion. That money is not going to deal with the education crisis referred to by the Hon. Courtney Houssos, and it is not money that will be used to do with our immense and growing pressure of regional and rural hospitals—nine of which do not have doctors, as the Hon. Walt Secord has pointed out. That GST money is to pay for the ordinary functions of government. That has been settled position for a long time. It is not there to pay for the capital items of the budget. The fact that the Government has had to resort to diverting operational funding to capital projects means that it has a funding black hole that it does not know how to solve. This Government should be working with its Federal colleagues to get this project built. This is a job-creating project.

This is a project that will create a plethora of construction work. It is the marquee and signature program of an incoming Labor Government. It is our priority project to make sure that the pressure western Sydney families

are under is alleviated. Finally, on the question of drivers, I spent my formative years representing drivers. They should always be treated with respect. To leave any of them by the side of the road under any circumstances is disrespectful, regardless. In truth, if a person respected their drivers, they would show ordinary human levels of care, which apparently they have not. [*Time expired.*]

FEDERAL BUDGET AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

WOMEN AND RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM

The Hon. WES FANG (13:36): I take note of answers given today. I note also that I have not much time. I believe I have only 48 seconds. Firstly, I take note of that the contribution by the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, who said that members on the Opposition side of the House have done their share. Opposition members have had Federal Labor commit funding for the program. As the Hon. Rose Jackson said last night, that is like Voldemort committing money to Harry Potter. It does not exist because neither Labor nor Voldemort is in government and it is an absolutely pointless claim. I also note that the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women referred to fabulous program that she is rolled out to get women back to work. We heard derision from those members of the Opposition who do not respect women enough to understand that the program is a fantastic way for the Minister to get money back to women. Yet the Hon. Courtney Houssos criticised. [*Time expired.*]

[*Business interrupted.*]

Rulings

EXPLANATION OF SPEECHES

The PRESIDENT (13:37): I inform members that I have sought advice from the Clerk. I will allow the Hon. Walt Secord to briefly speak a second time but he may not introduce a new matter. Standing Order 89 is very narrowly cast:

A member who has spoken on a question may only speak a second time to explain a matter on which the member has been misquoted or misunderstood. The member may not introduce any new matter.

The Hon. Walt Secord has the call.

[*Business resumed.*]

Questions Without Notice: Take Note

THE HON. DON HARWIN MINISTERIAL CAR USE

The Hon. WALT SECORD (13:37): I speak under Standing Order 89. I was misrepresented by the Leader of the Government and Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts in relation to ministerial drivers. He said that I referred to his parents. He introduced the subject of his parents. He said that I had made claims involving dropping off a driver at Vincentia. He said that he dropped the driver "once or twice on a Friday at Vincentia". I thank of the House for its consideration. I thought it was important to clarify those remarks.

TAKE NOTE OF ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (13:38): We have the naysayers-in-chief on the Opposition side of the House, but there is good news on the Government side of the House. There is also good news from the Federal budget but those opposite continue to try to talk New South Wales down as we have heard in this Chamber each and every day. Whether the Hon. Walt Secord talks down job figures or the Hon. Daniel Mookhey talks about imaginary trains that Labor apparently built, when the record of this Government's achievements is queried, all one has to do is walk 100 metres down the road to Martin Place and see the metros being built.

We can see the infrastructure that is being built all across New South Wales, such as the North West Rail Link, the continuation of the metro and the continuation of the Sydney Metro West project. People can see building all across this State, and down to Sydenham with the Sydney Metro City & Southwest project. But when we look at what members opposite come to the table with we find that they have absolutely nothing. They have conversations with their Federal Labor counterparts where they talk about what they do. Effectively, the Opposition is playing *SimCity* with its imaginary cities and what it provides them.

On this side of the Chamber, the Government has shovels in the ground, it is building infrastructure and the programs are rolling out. The Opposition had another misfire when it asked the dixer that the Hon. Shayne Mallard asked about the Return to Work program. That program is going so well the Government has brought forward funding to get more grants out the door this year. That is not a program that is not being subscribed to; it is a program that is going so well it is getting more women into employment. That can be seen in the employment

figures where women are returning to work in numbers higher than pre-COVID levels, which is good news. The Hon. Bronnie Taylor talked today about how successful the program is.

The Hon. Wes Fang: A great Minister.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: A great Minister. That program is providing money to enable women to get back into work and into new jobs. It provides money for everything from short courses to textbooks, stationery, professional attire, child care, transportation technology, office equipment and relocation costs. I have even heard that a massage table was covered as people have decided to start careers as masseuses. Those are the kinds of items that are being provided to get people into jobs. On the topic of jobs, the Hon. Damien Tudehope outlined the Jobs Plus Program and the jobs the Government is providing through that. Jobs, jobs, jobs—that is what New South Wales is all about.

The Hon. Wes Fang: And more jobs.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: And more jobs. Baxter Healthcare and Speedx were the first cabs off the rank for the Jobs Plus Program and they are creating more jobs in New South Wales. In consultations with businesses we have heard their frustrations with Labor States. They are coming into New South Wales and wanting to be part of this State. They know that the New South Wales Government has the gold standard when it comes to managing the pandemic. They also know that it has the gold standard when it comes to the future and they want to be part of it.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Written Answers to Supplementary Questions

COOLER CLASSROOMS PROGRAM

In reply to **the Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS** (11 May 2021).

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning)—The Minister provided the following response:

The New South Wales Government's Cooler Classrooms Program is a five-year, \$500 million commitment to deliver cooling, heating and fresh air ventilation systems at more than 900 New South Wales public schools.

In the Upper Hunter electorate, 19 schools have had works completed:

- Blandford Public School
- Cassilis Public School
- Denman Public School
- Jerrys Plains Public School
- King Street Public School
- Martindale Public School
- Martins Creek Public School
- Merriwa Central School
- Mount Pleasant Public School
- Muswellbrook High School
- Muswellbrook Public School
- Muswellbrook South Public School
- Paterson Public School
- Quirindi High School
- Sandy Hollow Public School
- Scone Public School
- Singleton High School
- Walhallow Public School
- Gloucester High School

A further 13 schools are in design, at tender or in delivery:

- Aberdeen Public School
- Belltrees Public School
- Blackville Public School
- Gresford Public School
- Kirkton Public School
- Quirindi Public School
- Scone High School
- Singleton Heights Public School
- Singleton Public School
- Spring Ridge Public School
- Vacy Public School
- Wallabadah Public School
- Willow Tree Public School

The PRESIDENT: I will now leave the chair. The House will resume at 3.00 p.m.

Private Members' Statements

GREEK INDEPENDENCE

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (15:01): This year marks a number of significant milestones for the Greek community. On 25 March Greek Independence Day was held to commemorate 200 years since the beginning of the Greek Revolution, which ended 400 years of Ottoman occupation. Preparations for the bicentenary began years ago, but due to the global pandemic most events had to be abandoned. Last year the member for Canterbury, the member for Rockdale and I wrote to the Premier to ask that this important date be marked by the projection of the Greek flag onto the sails of the Sydney Opera House. Similar projections have occurred for a range of other significant and cultural events. The request was refused. In March Opposition leader Jodi McKay made the same request to mark the Greek Festival of Sydney and during question time I asked the arts Minister if the Government would reconsider its position, but the Government obstinately refused the request. Finally, the Opposition launched a public appeal and, only days before the start of the festival, the Government relented.

On the night of the projection I was proud to be at Circular Quay with my family. I was a little emotional as I saw the thousands of parents with young children, teenagers in groups, grandparents and even priests there to celebrate 200 years of Greek freedom and commemorate the lives lost in the struggle. Spontaneous Greek dancing broke out underneath the sails of the Opera House as the colours of the Greek flag were projected above. I saw countless people FaceTiming with relatives and friends around the globe. The atmosphere was incredible. Soon we will commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the Battle for Crete. On 20 May 1941 German paratroopers attempted their first airborne invasion. Greek and Allied troops, along with the local civilian Cretan population—some armed only with pots and pans—tenaciously inflicted such losses that Hitler was reluctant to ever do it again.

Greeks and Australians have only ever fought together in wartime to defend freedom and democracy, yet the brave Australians who fought on Crete and elsewhere in Greece are known as the forgotten Anzacs. I pay tribute to the Joint Committee for the Commemoration of the Battle of Crete and the Greek Campaign, its chair James Jordan and secretary Nick Andriotakis for their tireless work to commemorate and raise awareness of the battle. Historian Dr Michael Bendon gave the keynote address at the recent annual Anzacs of Greece luncheon, which was generously hosted by the Hellenic Club Sydney and its president, Nick Hatzistergos. Dr Bendon reminded the audience that 18,000 Australian Army personnel served on Crete and elsewhere in Greece—a figure that does not include navy personnel or Australians who served in British units—and that 85 per cent of Australian prisoners of war were taken prisoner there. Dr Bendon also spoke about innovative plans to use augmented reality through an app to allow visitors to Crete to better understand the battle.

WEE WAA HIGH SCHOOL

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK (15:04): I speak once again about Wee Waa High School. I received a letter from year 12 students at the school and the content is devastating. The students have shown courage and resilience in reaching out to me at a time when they should be focused on much bigger things. By writing the letter, they have shown that they continue to endure something that the Department of Education is trying to stamp out and ignore. I commend the students. As the letter is lengthy I will not read it directly onto the record, although

I would like to. It was written with a maturity that belies the age of the students. Last week the Minister had very little of substance to say in answer to my questions and the questions of the Opposition in relation to Wee Waa High School. However, she dared to tell members that we had the story wrong and that there was a lot of misinformation circulating around the issue.

The Minister also dared to tell members that student outcomes were the Government's main priority and that the community was being consulted regularly. What I have read in my office this week puts those comments to shame. Last week the Minister stated that the Government had taken steps to remove students and staff from the Wee Waa High School site and had provided facilities at the nearby Wee Waa Public School to ensure not only their safety and wellbeing, which is of critical importance, but also their continuity of learning. Here is the students' version of events:

Over the past six months, us senior students have been tossed around the town to various locations; including a business office space in the main street of town for all the world to see. At one point, we were literally eating our recess in the gutter. Half of the time we would wake up in the morning not knowing if we were working from home that day, down the main street, or in a semi useable classroom. As of right now the entire senior student body is crammed into the school's demountable library; that's at least 4 classes running at the same time. It is noisy, it's uncomfortable, it's unproductive, distracting, and it makes it extremely hard to focus on our studies. I know that most of us find it difficult to get out of bed in the morning and find the motivation to learn.

In another statement the Minister said:

We need to make sure we listen to that school community and work closely with them as we manage through a very complex issue.

Here, again, is the students' version:

The communication between the department of education and the school and wider community, including us students, is unfortunately all but non-existent. Usually, the majority of our year is enthusiastic and excited to come to school, yet it has come to the point where we quite literally do not want to be there anymore. It is too overwhelming.

I hope the Minister is listening. Let us listen to another paragraph from the letter:

We understand that this whole situation is higher than our school deputy and principal, it is not their fault that the higher departments haven't stepped up to the plate. They say they're working to reach a solution, but from what we have seen, not much is being worked to.

The students go on to say they feel abandoned. They are receiving notifications about their education through Facebook messages just hours before they are due to attend classes. In response to being told they could not bring anything to school, the kids wrote:

Our hats and temporary bags had to be left outside on the ground, and here's the real kicker: it rained that day. Everything got saturated.

This is a disgrace and I have read only half of their heartbreaking letter. If any member wishes to see the letter, I will happily make it available.

CAIRNS MEN'S SHED AND INDIAN MYNA TRAP

The Hon. LOU AMATO (15:07): Following my contribution to the adjournment debate last night regarding Indian myna bird control, I have some good news to report. I asked my staff to research the current control methods that are being used across Australia to reduce the impact of this feral pest, and that research led to the Cairns Men's Shed. Men's sheds play a vital role in offering support to men isolated through tragic circumstances such as separation and divorce. They are dedicated to supporting men's health and mental wellbeing through mateship and community engagement. The members of the Cairns Men's Shed put their minds to developing an effective Indian myna trap that could be fabricated by other men's sheds. After developing and testing the trap, Cairns Men's Shed liaised with local councils, which agreed to purchase the handmade traps for around \$75. The traps can also be borrowed from councils by local residents, who have the option of purchasing them to keep their yards free of Indian mynas. Local veterinarian clinics have agreed to euthanise any trapped mynas free of charge.

Use of the traps is estimated to have reduced the population of Indian mynas in Cairns by more than 90,000 birds, meaning that native birds are now returning to backyards in Cairns. The building of the traps has engaged the members of the Cairns Men's Shed to provide a much-needed community service and the money raised has been used to further men's health and support. The Cairns Men's Shed kindly provided my office with the complete plans and instructions for how to build the traps and has given us permission to distribute the plans to all men's sheds in New South Wales. It has also given permission to distribute the plans free of charge to any New South Wales resident who wants to build their own trap, with the only proviso being that the plans cannot be used for commercial production outside a men's shed. My office has already provided the plans to East Hills Men's Shed, whose members are keen to start their own production project.

We are ready to tackle the Indian myna problem. To make the plan effective, Sydney and suburban councils must get on board with the project and the humane euthanasia of caught birds at veterinarian clinics needs to be arranged. We understand that eradication is probably too great a goal. However, effective control gives our native birdlife much needed help. If anyone would like a copy of the Indian myna trap for distribution to their local men's sheds or if they would like to build their own, please get in touch with my office. Finally, I thank Cairns Men's Shed for its support and for providing my office with the plans to build Indian myna traps.

WORKERS RIGHT TO DISCONNECT

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (15:09): On 6 May I made a contribution to an adjournment debate about workers' right to disconnect, where I briefly explored the issue of technology leading to the creeping intrusion of work into personal and family time. Mobile phones and emails contribute to the growing expectation that workers should respond to queries or tasks from co-workers or their supervisors even well outside reasonable business hours. This is, of course, part of a wider problem of the intensification of work, particularly during the pandemic. But the phenomenon was well established before then. We are seeing the complete erosion of any linkage between people's working hours and their remuneration.

Obviously there was always a direct connection for wage earners, but not so for so-called professional and salaried staff, who were just expected to "do the job". Particularly in the public sector, where restructures lead to fewer and fewer people doing the same or, indeed, more work, technology leads to the intensification of work, including longer work hours without recompense through either additional pay or additional leave entitlements. This is creating a work health and safety [WHS] problem that neither State nor Federal industrial relations systems appear able to deal with. The regulator does not have a great track record on issues of this kind. This was very much exposed during an upper House inquiry upon which the Hon. Catherine Cusack, I and others served into allegations of bullying and WorkCover and in the recommendations it made.

Using the criminal law of the WHS legislation or relying on the work safety regulator is wholly inadequate in enabling workers to navigate these issues properly with their employers. Looking at our State industrial relations system—even though it no longer has coverage of the private sector for industrial relations purposes—because work health and safety is a non-excluded matter under the Fair Work Act, we could expand the role of the Industrial Relations Commission and the types of disputes it hears, conciliates and arbitrates on to include work health and safety matters. Workers and their unions would then have another mechanism to navigate the difficult issues to do with workloads, work management and the work health and safety impacts that the intensification of work and increasing work hours—through technology and for other reasons—have on individual workers, to their personal cost. We need to think creatively, we need to think flexibly and we need to provide another mechanism. The burden on workers is becoming intolerable.

UPPER HUNTER BY-ELECTION

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK (15:12): Given that this will be my last private member's contribution before the Upper Hunter by-election—

Ms Cate Faehrmann: I thought you were going to say you were resigning.

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: Don't get excited. It is only appropriate that I shed some light on the disgraced former Upper Hunter Nationals member, Michael Johnsen, and the abysmal failure of The Nationals to deliver for the region. Over the past four weeks I have spent considerable time in the Hunter campaigning for our candidate, Sue Gilroy. It has been lost on many why we are having this by-election. It is because the former Nationals member, Michael Johnsen, brought great shame to The Nationals and to this Parliament. There have been accusations of rape, sexting on government time and organising escorts during question time, and defiling our great and historic Jubilee Room. It is lucky we live in a time when hand sanitiser is so readily available.

I have not heard a single peep from the Deputy Premier, John Barilaro, or The Nationals candidate, David Layzell, regarding their party colleague and now disgraced former member, Michael Johnson. They were only too happy to stand and campaign alongside him at the last State election. As they scoot around the electorate trying to bribe and con their way to victory, the very least they could do is apologise to the electorate for the shame their colleague has brought upon them. The latest information we received is that Michael Johnsen enjoyed a bonfire using The Nationals A-frames as fuel, forcing The Nationals to go cap in hand to the Liberals asking for a lend. The request was initially refused but then agreed to on the proviso that The Nationals left a deposit for each A-frame.

The Upper Hunter is one of the most prosperous and naturally abundant regions in New South Wales, yet the return it gets from its resources is minimal. The roads in and around Dungog shire are Third World standard; medical services in most areas are non-existent, with mothers giving birth on their way to hospital; and many towns are still experiencing water restrictions because of a failure to provide proper water infrastructure. Let us

not forget that it is The Nationals who, together with their bedfellows, the Liberals, have held the seat for 90 years and have failed to deliver for the people of this electorate.

The former disgraced member, Michael Johnsen, will now continue in the fine tradition of ex-members of this Liberal-Nationals Government by moving on to greener pastures—if only the pastures in our regions were just as green. As reported in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 10 May, Johnsen Consulting is now up and running with Mr Johnsen's wealth of contacts in Parliament. Given the cosy photo of him with John Barilaro and Gladys Berejiklian, I am sure that they have his back. The electors of the Upper Hunter need to make this Government a minority government. Their votes really will count on 22 May.

DILLWYNIA CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK (15:15): On Friday 5 March the corrective services Minister, Anthony Roberts, invited me to visit Dillwynia Correctional Centre. Given my longstanding advocacy for the Women's Justice Network, I was immensely grateful for the invitation. The event was initiated by our wonderful Governor, the Hon. Margaret Beazley, AC, QC, who had requested the opportunity to tour the facility and meet inmates. It warms my heart to know that we have a Governor who takes such an interest in these issues, and I thank her for it. She is truly a Governor for all citizens in all situations, which should inspire all of us who seek to serve in public office. We began in the visitors area with a briefing about the development of the facility and how it coped during the COVID lockdown—a period of great hardship for prisoners, who went months without contact with families.

The prison governor, Emma Smith, showed us tablet computers that are issued to women in the lower-security wings. This has transformed their ability to interact with family not only during the pandemic but also in some cases on a daily basis—for example, checking in with their kids when they get home from school. It is obvious that when mum goes to jail there is no intention to punish her children too, but they inevitably experience significant hardship. These tablets reduce that sense of loss, which is wonderful. I was introduced to Faith Slatcher, who is acting in a new position created to coordinate female prisoner policy across the system. That is something women's groups have called for for years because women make up only 5 per cent of the system. Mainstream policy can often create huge problems by overlooking gender-specific issues.

One female prisoner I spoke to is applying for jobs while she is in custody, which is a completely new initiative. Corrective Services has partnered with businesses where there are labour shortages, particularly warehousing and storage businesses in western Sydney that do not mind hiring people with criminal histories or can work with that. This is an astonishing improvement for female prisoners and their opportunities post-release. I spoke to long-serving female staff about culture change in their organisation, their love for their jobs and their pride in the way the female prison system has transformed in this State.

Dillwynia is trialling discharge planning that is undertaken while women are still in prison so the community-based people who manage them after they leave are connected with them before they leave. This makes a huge difference in arranging things like housing, which relieves the impact on children because plans can be made in advance to ensure that schooling is not interrupted. I told Minister Roberts it is a wonderful and unexpected surprise that these changes have taken place. It is a fantastic story and I am pleased that the visit occurred during International Women's Week. I thank the Minister and his commissioner and congratulate them on these efforts.

NSW AMBULANCE

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (15:18): Urgent action is required to address critical issues with our ambulance service to ensure that New South Wales gets the medical attention it needs and deserves. Our paramedics are under enormous pressure due to inadequate resourcing by the Berejiklian Government. On Monday 26 May the New South Wales ambulance network went into complete crisis. People were left waiting for ambulances for 45 minutes when they required critical assistance. A cardiac arrest is considered critical and an ambulance is meant to be there within 10 minutes, not 45 minutes. Chronic underfunding and understaffing resulted in 60 incoming emergency 000 calls but only 14 ambulances were available to help.

The Sydney Morning Herald reported that a patient waited 16 hours for an ambulance. That is simply appalling. These chronic issues will only increase over the winter months as the flu season worsens. The latest Bureau of Health Information statistics confirm that ambulance call-outs are at a record high across the State. The Government is not meeting the needs of our communities when it comes to ensuring that our ambulance service is appropriately resourced and staffed. Labor's shadow health Minister Ryan Park has rightly been calling on the Liberal-Nationals Government consistently to urgently increase investment in our ambulance service, including fast-tracking recruitment.

The Health Services Union has also been calling on the Government to employ further staff and address vehicle shortages. The union has been alerting the Opposition to the dangers of an inadequately resourced ambulance service for some time. Together with Mr Ryan Park, I have heard from paramedics that they are constantly stretched to the limit and overwhelmed, often performing their lifesaving work without breaks. We need to listen to our first responders who dedicate their lives to coming to our aid. They are on the ground, day in and day out, saving lives and keeping our communities safe. They know when they have not been provided with adequate resources.

Not only are our paramedics under enormous stress but they are also disgracefully underpaid. New South Wales paramedics and control centre officers remain the lowest paid in the country. The Liberal-Nationals Government thanked these heroes for their hard work and sacrifice during the bushfires and the pandemic by making the cruel and heartless decision to slash their pay last year. Our ambulance officers deserve better. Lives should not be put at risk because of the unacceptable understaffing of our ambulance service. Labor will continue to call on the Berejiklian Government to commit more resources urgently. It is vital that our communities can access essential ambulance services when they need it most.

WOMEN'S SAFETY

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD (15:21): Some particularly silly comments have been made in this Chamber recently about the prevalence of sexual assault in New South Wales. Sexual assault is notoriously under-reported. In August 2020 the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reported that in almost nine out of 10 incidents, women who experienced their most recent aggravated sexual assault by a man in the past 10 years did not contact the police—nine out of 10. That is not new information; the Australian Bureau of Statistics has acknowledged it for decades. There can be a number of reasons for not reporting a sexual assault to the police. People might struggle to understand the complexity behind this if they have never been sexually assaulted. Many women feel ashamed or embarrassed. Social stigma and victim blaming play roles in making women feel that they were in some way responsible. That totally undeserved shame often takes decades to unpick and is incredibly common in the aftermath of sexual assault.

Women may not report the incident because they fear that no-one will believe them; or that the police and court procedures will be too gruelling; or because they are worried about putting themselves in more danger in confronting the perpetrator in court. Despite the chronic under-reporting of sexual assault, on any reading of the statistics we know for sure that women are right to be concerned about their personal safety in New South Wales. The trends in the data do nothing to alleviate those concerns. According to the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, sexual assault reports have gone up by 10.1 per cent in the past 24 months and up by 7.4 per cent over the past five years. Indecent assault rates have also increased by 3.3 per cent in the past five years. Reports of intimidation, stalking and harassment have increased by 9.1 per cent over the past 24 months. Overall, at least one in six women will experience at least one sexual assault after the age of 15.

So what possible purpose would one have for arguing that the statistics overstate the numbers of sexual assault in New South Wales other than to devalue the lived reality of women in New South Wales and their calls to make this State a safer place? It may come as a surprise to some members in this place, but women in New South Wales are not comforted by whether or not the violation they experienced is pedantically labelled as one particular criminal offence or another, or how it ends up appearing in official statistics. What they care about is being safe. They are not.

Put another way—and contrary to what some here would say—women are scared to walk the streets. It is not because of statistics coming out of the mouth of the police commissioner; it is because of their lived reality. For example, Mission Australia's *2019 Youth Survey* report found that almost half of young women surveyed felt unsafe walking alone after dark, and one in five young women reported concerns about personal safety. The fact is that women are not safe—not on the streets, not at work and not in their homes. We cannot fix what is not acknowledged. If we are to improve the safety of women and allow all women full access and participation in all aspects of life, we must recognise the very real gender disparities in personal safety.

GREAT WESTERN HIGHWAY

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (15:24): We have heard great news about the Blue Mountains and Central West New South Wales over the past two weeks, and this was particularly highlighted in last night's Federal budget. It was announced in the 2021-22 Federal budget last night that the upgrade of the Great Western highway will make up the majority of a \$3 billion outlay on New South Wales road transport projects, supporting a State plan for a better connection between Sydney and the Central West. The Morrison Government has committed \$2 billion to the upgrade of the Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Blackheath on the eastern side of the corridor, and between Little Hartley and Lithgow on the western side.

The Federal Government expects construction to start in 2022 and to be completed by the middle of 2026. This follows the exciting announcement made last week by the Deputy Premier, John Barilaro, and the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, Paul Toole, that investigations are now underway to make an 11-kilometre tunnel the central component of an upgraded Great Western Highway between Katoomba and Lithgow that will form the longest road tunnel in Australia. Deputy Premier John Barilaro stated that the plan for the 11-kilometre tunnel with an estimated cost of \$8 billion is:

... an immensely complex and ambitious plan, but we're working hard to make it happen because we know what a difference it will make to the lives of commuters, to regional businesses who need access to Sydney and vice versa ...

This tunnel is the missing link in the upgrade of the dual-lane highway across the mountains. The current single-lane carriageway from Katoomba to the west of the mountains is the last single-lane major highway access to Sydney that needs to be upgraded. The western end of the tunnel will emerge near Little Hartley, and from that point onwards the Federal Government will help fund the highway upgrade through to Lithgow. The Great Western Highway upgrade will bring enormous benefits to road safety and support nearly 4,000 construction jobs over the construction period.

I ask members on the opposite side of the House: Where does the Labor Party stand on this groundbreaking highway upgrade project? Is Labor for it or against it? Labor members have been very ambiguous. Does the Labor Party support the safety benefits that this project will bring? Does it support the nearly 4,000 jobs that this project will create in the Blue Mountains and the Central West? Does it support the confidence that this Government has in the economic future of the Central West of New South Wales? The State and Federal coalition governments are investing billions of dollars into this major infrastructure project and into the Blue Mountains more generally, and yet Labor members—State, Federal and local—are never happy. All they do is complain and oppose the project.

Even this morning Labor members were complaining in *The Blue Mountains Gazette* about the \$2 billion Great Western Highway upgrade. "Not good enough", they said. What is their track record? It is appalling. Only the Coalition Government can and will deliver this major infrastructure project, and only the Coalition Government can be trusted to deliver on this groundbreaking economic project for Central West New South Wales and the Blue Mountains.

ARAB-AUSTRALIAN WOMEN

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE (15:27): Last night I was delighted to celebrate Arab-Australian women in literature and mainstream journalism at a great gathering of community leaders, Arab media representatives as well as a host of colleagues, including the guest speakers—the Hon. Bronnie Taylor, Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women; and Ms Trish Doyle, the shadow Minister for Women. Members of Parliament including Jodi McKay, the Hon. Penny Sharpe, Mr David Shoebridge and other colleagues were also in attendance. Women worldwide continue to contribute greatly to the social, economic, cultural and political development of modern-day societies, yet genuine gender parity continues to elude many Western women and particularly so migrant and Arab women in the West.

The emcee on the night was none other than Majida Aboud Saab. I acknowledge the great work of Ms Saab, who is a pioneer in multicultural broadcasting. Her contribution to multiculturalism exceeds 37 years, and she is loved by many. The event sought to recognise the following successful Arab-Australian women. Dr Randa Abdel-Fattah is a prominent Australian-Palestinian advocate and a multi-award-winning author of 11 books that have been published in over 20 countries. Ms Sara Saleh is a poet and writer who has been published in English and Arabic in various national and international outlets.

Dr Mariam Farida is an academic learning facilitator at the University of New South Wales and an expert in Middle East affairs. Antoinette Lattouf is a senior reporter who has worked on a range of programs in both commercial and public broadcasting media. Fatima Kdouh is a sports reporter who now calls *The Daily Telegraph* home. Jennine Khalik is a social media and content manager who previously worked as reporter, investigative journalist and producer across NewsLocal, *The Australian*, Crikey and ABC newsrooms for over eight years. Mram Ismail is an award-winning journalist, podcaster and a digital content producer at SBS Arabic24. May Rizk is a journalist with cross-functional experience in TV, radio, print and online media. Finally, Sahar Mourad is a motivated young journalist who worked for Microsoft as an editor at MSN and the *Daily Mail* Australia amongst others. It was a treasure trove of successful women and a great celebration. I thank all the people who attended, all the community leaders, and the journalists and media who were present supporting this important event.

*Documents***ANIMAL RESEARCH****Production of Documents: Order**

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1185 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. EMMA HURST (15:31): 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 created since 1 January 2016 in the possession, custody or control of Regional NSW or the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales relating to animals used in research:

- (a) all documents, including correspondence, relating to welfare concerns or complaints regarding animals used in research in New South Wales received by the Department of Primary Industries or Animal Research Review Panel;
- (b) all documents relating to all actions or investigations, including all outcomes, responses, reports or final determinations, undertaken by or for the Department of Primary Industries or Animal Research Review Panel in response to welfare concerns or complaints regarding animals used in research in New South Wales; and
- (c) 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.

This motion is seeking documents relating to welfare concerns or complaints made about animals used in research in New South Wales. As I have said many times previously in this place, there is a serious lack of transparency in the animal experimentation industry. That is particularly concerning, given that taxpayer money is given to that industry. Last year 1.6 million animals were used in animal research in New South Wales and over the past five years approximately 17 million animals have been used in research. Even though much of this experimentation is funded by taxpayer money, the industry is shrouded in secrecy with very little information disclosed to the public. While the New South Wales Government claims to have a compliance regime set up to monitor the welfare of animals in research, headed up by the Department of Primary Industries and the Animal Research Review Panel, in reality it relies heavily on industry self-regulation and self-reporting.

If we think about the places that animals are experimented on—they are locked in laboratories hidden far from public view—how would anyone know whether a breach of animal welfare regulations was occurring. Facilities are inspected only every four years. When they are inspected, it happens with significant notice, giving the facility plenty of time to fix or change any issues that could have been occurring for up to four years prior to the inspection. When a complaint or concern is raised by the Animal Research Review Panel or the Department of Primary Industries [DPI] we know that it is serious. We know that something has really gone wrong if an animal welfare issue reaches that level. It likely involves a whistleblower from within the institution or something so serious and obvious that it has come to the attention of someone involved in the institution who has been unable to obtain resolution. I strongly believe when taxpayer money is being used, the community has a right to know what that money is funding, which means significant transparency.

That is why I am seeking today documents relating to animal welfare concerns and complaints that have been raised or investigated by the Animal Research Review Panel or the DPI. The order for papers is reasonably confined and is only seeking documentation for the past five years. If the industry is well regulated and compliant, there will not be many documents to produce. If there are boxes and boxes of complaints and concerns, there is more reason to make those documents public as that would indicate a serious problem with the treatment of animals. Finally, I note that this document request is important in the context of the Government's current animal welfare action plan.

By the end of the year it is proposing to introduce a new and modernised animal protection Act that combines all current pieces of animal welfare legislation, including the Animal Research Act 1985. If we are to have a sensible debate about how the regulation of animals in research can be improved as part of this modernised legislation we need to understand how well the current regime is working and we need that transparency to understand and ensure that the new Act is doing what it is supposed to do. I urge all members to support this call for papers.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD (15:34): On behalf of The Greens I make a contribution to debate in support of this motion. I endorse the comments made by the Hon. Emma Hurst. The Greens are committed to ensuring the welfare and wellbeing of all animals and we stand against the cruel and unnecessary use of animal experimentation in medical research. We urge that there be a focus shift towards the availability, effectiveness and funding for alternative research methods and technologies. I know that many other countries have moved away from animal testing in medical research and it begs the question: Why can we not do the same? If it is a matter of cost I find

that very concerning. We agree with the Hon. Emma Hurst and believe that the public deserves to know what is being done with public money.

Greater transparency over what is being done with the money would enable the public to decide whether this type of research aligns with community expectations. Having that understanding and knowing exactly what the money is being spent on, we will be better able to work out whether there are alternatives to the type of research that is being done with our money. Ultimately this comes down to a lack of transparency from this Government on the spending of significant amounts of money. It is time that the details were open so that we can be on the same page and have a sensible and informed debate about this money. The Greens support the motion.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (15:36): On behalf of the Government I make a contribution to debate and indicate that the Government is opposed to the motion. The Government is committed to ensuring the highest standards of animal welfare. In New South Wales the use of animals in research and teaching is regulated by the Animal Research Act 1985, which sets out stringent requirements to protect their welfare. The honourable member referenced the Animal Research Review Panel. I am glad she did because it is an important provision that the Government has in place and its work is publicly available. The panel is a 12-member ministerially appointed body under the Act and includes scientific, government and, of course, animal welfare representatives. It is responsible for the investigation of matters relating to the conduct of animal research, including investigating any complaints made.

A part of the panel's responsibilities includes the requirement to provide a publicly available annual report to the Minister for Agriculture. Within that report is detailed information on the panel's work and activities as it carries out its responsibilities, including the complaints process. The Government works closely with enforcement agencies to ensure that our strict animal welfare standards are upheld. It includes the RSPCA, whose chief inspector has investigated more than 4,500 animal cruelty complaints and has now also been appointed to the panel. Members can have confidence that this is an issue that the Government takes seriously. It has put in place all measures to ensure the highest standards of animal welfare for animals used in research. The information is already publicly available. For this reason, the Government opposes the motion.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE (15:38): I make a brief contribution and indicate that the Opposition supports the motion. The Government has listed a number of what it believes to be its achievements. I therefore see no reason why it would not want that advertised by providing the information that is being sought.

The Hon. EMMA HURST (15:38): In reply: I thank Ms Abigail Boyd, the Hon. Taylor Martin and the Hon. Peter Primrose for their contributions to the debate. I leave the matter with the House.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

COVID-19 RECOVERY PLAN

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1130 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE (15:39): 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 searchable electronic format if possible, created since 1 January 2020 in the possession, custody or control of the Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Finance and Small Business, Treasury or the Department of Premier and Cabinet relating to jobs created by the COVID-19 Recovery Plan:

- (a) all documents, whether in paper or electronic form, relating to the modelling, assumptions or outcomes which informed the Government's claim that 88,000 direct jobs over four years and 145,000 direct or indirect jobs per year over an unspecified time frame will be generated by the infrastructure pipeline;
- (b) all documents, whether in paper or electronic form, detailing the specific projects or programs and the specific job numbers (direct and indirect) for the specified time frame of each project or program that comprise the \$100 billion infrastructure pipeline;
- (c) all documents, whether in paper or electronic form, detailing meetings, minutes and outcomes that refer to the \$100 billion infrastructure pipeline and the direct or indirect jobs purportedly created or supported by this pipeline;
- (d) all documents, whether in paper or electronic form, including tenders and contracts, internal and external, for work that provided advice, specifications, briefings or other for the 88,000 direct jobs over four years and the 145,000 direct and indirect jobs per year over an unspecified time frame claim; and

- (e) 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.

I note that I sought to have this matter handled by formality this morning, but that was rejected. The last New South Wales budget was labelled "Creating jobs and securing our future". With a name like that, you would think it would be relatively easy to find out how many jobs the Government will have a hand in creating through the COVID-19 Recovery Plan. But of course the Government has fought my attempts at every turn. Instead I am told, through reference to the budget website, that there will be 145,000 direct and indirect jobs created every year by the \$100 billion pipeline alone. I regularly visit the "Pipeline of Projects" page of the Infrastructure NSW website to look at what projects or programs are coming on tap to create those promised jobs. The fact is that the Government cannot actually tell us how many jobs will be created by its so-called infrastructure pipeline. The more you delve into it you see it in fact operates as the Government's equivalent of a magic pudding. NSW Treasury advice to the Government specifically states:

Employment estimates should be described as "jobs supported by/associated with" government spending. Terms such as "created/caused/induced by" should be avoided. Direct or flow-on jobs will not necessarily occur in the immediate vicinity of the project.

Effectively, we have a government that does not care if New South Wales taxpayers' money actually creates employment or supports business in New South Wales. The COVID-19 Recovery Plan media release says that so many jobs will be created, but it is careful to not say how many, over what period of time, or even if they will be created in Australia let alone in New South Wales. Despite the advice of his own department, the Treasurer cannot get it right. The Government media release regarding the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital redevelopment reads:

The \$750 million redevelopment of Royal Prince Alfred Hospital has been brought forward by one year, after the NSW Government accelerated the project.

Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said the acceleration of the project will create thousands of jobs, which is crucial to the State's COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

Guess what Treasury officials said in email correspondence? That the media release should actually state 850 jobs, not over 3,000 as proposed in the original release, and definitely not the thousands that the Treasurer claimed. Let us assume for a moment that the jobs promised by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals can actually be delivered. Based on NSW Treasury advice, I estimate them to be somewhere between 75,713 to 125,165 jobs, but that estimate includes direct and indirect jobs. My estimate coincides with the 88,000 direct jobs over four years that the Premier mentions in the COVID-19 Recovery Plan, but some of the projects in the pipeline do not start construction within the promised four years. While my estimates charitably also include the pipeline projects that are listed as being merely "in planning", some may never even get off the ground. In reply to a budget estimates question, the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney said that the infrastructure pipeline arises from "full-system econometric modelling of the economy". Let us leave aside whether that is actually in New South Wales or Australia wide. He went on to say:

The estimated employment effect of combined infrastructure and State stimulus measures is 145,000 on average per year over five years.

Applying basic maths, over five years the total number of jobs created should be 725,000. Or should it be over four years as claimed by the Premier and Treasurer? Regardless, I can find only 100,000 jobs. So where are the other 480,000 to 600,000 jobs coming from? How were they calculated? How many of them will be direct, secure and stable jobs and how many will be in New South Wales or even within Australia? That also challenges the claims that the Deputy Premier made that there is a specific tranche of funding for regional jobs. If Treasury cannot guarantee that they will be created in regional New South Wales, how can the Deputy Premier continue to try to justify those claims? That is why we need the information that I have called for in this Standing Order 52 request. The Government should release the information voluntarily, but it will always revert to cover-up and spin when challenged.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (15:44): Undertaking to fulfil a Standing Order 52 request is a highly resource-intensive process for government that in this instance would divert time and resources away from Treasury's core function of providing economic advice. Given the ongoing uncertainties facing the State, it remains critical for Treasury staff to be unencumbered in providing timely advice on matters of great importance. Additionally, Standing Order 52 requests run the risk of disrupting Treasury's ability to provide frank and fearless advice in the future.

As an example, the last request that the Treasury team complete required participation from five members of the Macroeconomic Analysis, Research & Strategy branch alone, including the Chief Economist. The team members were required to review thousands of emails and documents, which occupied dozens of work hours that could have been better put towards policy work to benefit the people of New South Wales. Other teams were also

forced to undertake similar reviews. That is why the Government opposes this order. We are well aware of the arrangements between the crossbench and Labor in this place, so we will await the result.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (15:46): We hear the same arguments trotted out time after time. The Government has been in receipt of one request by the Opposition for 12 months now. When I came to this place I was bemused that documentation originates in electronic format, yet the Government complains about the cost and labour intensiveness of public servants printing all of it out. We made the request to deliver the original documents in electronic format and make everyone's life easier. But Government members have the temerity to argue that it costs too much, it takes too long and it is a waste of resources. They should give the documents to us electronically. That will save most of the cost and we will all be happy. We will also be able to search the documents much more easily, but perhaps there are other agendas.

This order is very reasonable. The Government is quasi-campaigning on creating jobs but we are being told that it does not want to show us the economic analysis behind it. How are the jobs being created? On what basis does the Government justify that 88,000 direct jobs will be created over four years and 145,000 direct or indirect jobs over an unspecified time frame? It is reasonable that the Opposition would ask where those jobs are coming from and where the economic analysis is. Government members put themselves up as the doyens of economic management, the economic rationalists and the hard-nosed managers who get all the modelling done first. They should show us the modelling. It is not that hard. If it is there, they can press a button, give it to us to look at and we will be good to go. I do not buy any of the confected outrage about the Opposition asking for modelling that the Government should have if it wants to justify that it is not trying to con people that it is creating more jobs than it is.

The Hon. WES FANG (15:48): I feel compelled to contribute after the extraordinary commentary from the Opposition Whip. The Opposition Whip has come into this Chamber and made a number of derogatory allegations against the Government. I ask him to reflect on what we as a Government have delivered to this State. Instead of saying that we have "conned" people he ought to realise that this Government has kept people safe. This Government has kept people employed. This Government has continued to be strong and stable and leads a State that has been delivering for the people of New South Wales. For the Opposition Whip to make those comments about this Government is highly improper. Mr Assistant President, I ask you to guide him to not reflect on what great work the Government is doing for the people of New South Wales.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE (15:50): In reply: I will not raise my concern that I was not included in the attack by the Hon. Wes Fang. I think he needs to be counselled to ensure that he does so in future, for the sake of my reputation. However, I urge members to please listen carefully to the Parliamentary Secretary and take his advice. He has indicated that the information is available. What he challenges is whether it should be supplied to members of Parliament who are seeking to look at what the Government itself says is at the very core of its economic management: jobs, jobs, jobs, jobs. I have raised the issue. I say the information is there and I take the advice of the Parliamentary Secretary. I urge members to make it available to people—ideally in electronic format, but if not in electronic format it is there. I take the advice of the Parliamentary Secretary and I think it should be followed. I urge members to support the motion.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

COUNCILLOR ANTOINE DOUEIHI

Production of Documents: Further Order

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1134 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (15:52): 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 electronic format if possible, excluding any documents previously returned under an order of the House, in the possession, custody or control of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment or the Minister for Local Government relating to Councillor Antoine Doueihi, Mayor of Strathfield:

- (a) all correspondence, briefing notes, or meeting notes relating to investigations into Councillor Antoine Doueihi, Mayor of Strathfield;
- (b) all correspondence, briefing notes, or meeting notes relating to any allegations that Councillor Antoine Doueihi, Mayor of Strathfield breached the code of conduct;

- (c) all correspondence, briefing notes, or meeting notes relating to any allegations that Councillor Antoine Doueihi, Mayor of Strathfield engaged in misconduct; and
- (d) 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.

This is a follow-up to an earlier motion under Standing Order 52 concerning the Mayor of Strathfield, Councillor Antoine Doueihi. As my colleague the Hon. Adam Searle has rightly pointed out in the House with respect to Councillor Doueihi, holding the office of mayor is a very significant civic responsibility. It is essential that individuals who hold that office are not under any cloud of suspicion. It is in the public interest that documents relating to how the councillor's conduct has been handled by the department and the Minister are made available. We need to hold the Government accountable by ensuring that the information available to be disclosed regarding Councillor Doueihi is provided.

I offer some background to the House. On 9 December 2017 Councillor Doueihi was elected to Strathfield Municipal Council as a Liberal councillor. He previously served as Deputy Mayor of Burwood Council. *The Daily Telegraph* reported that in 2013 Mr Doueihi pleaded guilty to carrying out development without consent. He was fined \$43,000 by the Land and Environment Court of New South Wales when he was a Burwood councillor. Councillor Doueihi added four additional boarding-house rooms to his Burwood Road development, which might have earned him hundreds of thousands of dollars in extra income over time. He is also the co-director and equal shareholder in DB and DD Sutherland Developments, a company that developed a 24-apartment complex in Sutherland worth an estimated \$7 million to \$15 million.

In November 2012 Doueihi purchased property from Parramatta council for \$2.5 million. The Liberal mayor at the time, John Chedid, signed off on the deal. The company that bought the property was Crown Developers Pty Ltd, of which Councillor Doueihi is a former director and was a shareholder. We now know that a five-storey apartment block sits on that site. Following a two-year investigation, the Office of Local Government [OLG] has accused the councillor of failing to declare his extensive property and business interests and has referred the matter to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. It was reported by the Telegraph:

The significant number of omissions from his returns suggest that Cr Doueihi either wilfully sought to conceal his interests or that he failed to give due care and attention to the accuracy, detail and content of the disclosures required.

In a document obtained by *The Daily Telegraph*, Tim Hurst, Deputy Secretary, Local Government, Planning and Policy stated, "I am satisfied that Cr Doueihi has engaged in misconduct." Media reports suggest that the OLG thinks that the councillor did not declare his interest in six trusts and 13 companies. These companies are mainly related to property development. Although Tim Hurst said the department was in receipt of allegations that Councillor Doueihi was a developer and had failed to declare this in his electoral information, in answers to questions on notice Mr Hurst said the commission had not responded to the referral six months after receiving it. From the time that the complaint was made to the OLG regarding Mayor Doueihi it has taken eight months simply for an investigation to be authorised. It is deeply concerning that the Government took this long to deal with this issue. That is why it is vital that the order for papers proceeds.

In budget estimates in March Minister Hancock refused to answer questions about why such a serious matter was not dealt with for so long. During budget estimates Minister Hancock did confirm that she will not be banning property developers from council. Recently it has also been confirmed by *The Sydney Morning Herald* that the councillor has given thousands of dollars to the Liberal Party, even though there is a clear ban on developers making donations. Councillor Doueihi donated almost \$10,000 to the Liberal Party team that was running for council in Strathfield during the 2017 local government elections and has given other amounts to the party since this time. Although this was on the public record, and despite his misconduct, the Minister said she was not aware of the donations, which is problematic.

It is in the public interest to have further information about investigations or allegations relating to the breached code of conduct or to misconduct. These are matters that the OLG has investigated. The Minister told us at budget estimates that she did not have any conversations regarding this character or this investigation with the deputy secretary of the department, Tim Hurst, on the basis that she is supposed to be at arm's length from the departmental investigations. The Opposition thinks the idea that she would not have known about any of this stuff is questionable. We want to see that correspondence, which is what the motion goes to.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (15:58): I am amazed that the Hon. Mark Buttigieg would even contemplate moving such a motion in this place. The Government will, of course, be opposing this Standing Order 52 request. I encourage colleagues from all parties in this place to support the Government in opposing it if they value the integrity of any independent investigative body in New South Wales. What the member is asking this afternoon is equivalent to asking ICAC or the Ombudsman to hand over all paperwork regarding an open and active investigation. For what reason does the member presume he is entitled to view material and evidence that is currently before an active investigation?

Under the Local Government Act 1993 the function of the departmental chief executive of the Office of Local Government is twofold: First, they provide advice to the government of the day; and secondly, they act as an integrity body for the local government sector in New South Wales. The Government is committed to upholding the highest standards of conduct, integrity and ethics in the State's local government sector. Investigative functions conferred upon the Office of Local Government within the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment are a key mechanism for ensuring this. However, it is clear from the motion before the House that it seeks access to the underlying investigative material concerning an ongoing and active investigation being undertaken by the OLG that is before the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT]. Investigation material contains information that informs decisions the deputy secretary and NCAT make under the Local Government Act. Councils, the Ombudsman and the Independent Commission Against Corruption each have the power to request that the deputy secretary take disciplinary action on the basis that grounds exist to warrant such action.

There are established processes, procedures and rules that govern how the investigation is to proceed. Serious sanctions can be imposed against councillors subject to these investigations, including suspension and even disqualification from civic office. Therefore, these matters require thorough investigation and detailed preparation to ensure successful and appropriate outcomes. It is paramount that all investigations are handled with sensitivity and that procedural fairness is afforded. There is oversight of these activities by the courts and NCAT. That is their role. The public release of information would deny the subject of the investigation the procedural fairness that is otherwise afforded by the mechanisms in the Local Government Act. That could lead to legal challenges by persons detrimentally affected by the public release of this information. There is quite a bit more material to go through.

I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my speech in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The Legislative Council should not lend itself to an action calculated to circumvent statutory protections to the vital work of an agency. The information sought by this motion seeks access to material which is defined by the Government Information (Public Access) Act [GIPAA] as being excluded information—this is because it is information relating to the complaint handling and investigating functions conferred on the OLG under the Local Government Act. Section 6 of the GIPAA confirms that there is a conclusive presumption that there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of this excluded information. Excluded information is used by the OLG in a variety of ways, all of which are directed to ensure that the objects of the Local Government Act are achieved. As part of its preliminary inquiry function the OLG relies on excluded information to inform a decision about whether or not particular investigations should be conducted.

In providing advice about how certain complaints might be resolved, excluded information informs how the OLG provides guidance to the sector. If the OLG decides to investigate a matter then the excluded information is used as part of the investigation itself. Where relevant, when excluded information becomes evidence in support of a determination in relation to a complaint, whether through a determination by the deputy secretary or following proceedings in NCAT, the detail of the material becomes known as part of the statutory processes. In this way procedural fairness is accorded to the person who is the subject of the material. If the excluded material becomes evidence, then the person affected will have their "day in court". The statutory protections to this type of information are so strong that under the GIPAA an access application cannot be made to the OLG for excluded information. In fact, an access application for excluded information is not a valid application as it is made in contravention of the Act.

This motion seeks to circumvent this specific and strong statutory protection. Each piece of information caught by the call is excluded information so the public interest considerations against disclosure outweigh the public interest considerations in favour of disclosure. If information is provided in answer to the call and made public, then this will detrimentally affect the ongoing investigation as it will pre-empt the work of the agency. This type of call will impair the ability of the OLG in the future to gather information about the subject of an investigation from informants and complainants confidentially. Most people who make complaints or provide information are reluctant to do so unless they can be assured of confidentiality to the greatest extent possible. Without this information many investigations would not proceed. Even when a complainant's identity is known, the investigation process still needs to respect procedural fairness rules. I have every confidence in the OLG to carry out its investigative functions properly and effectively and this motion will do nothing but jeopardise its ability to do so now and in the future.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (16:01): One Nation does not support this Standing Order 52 call for papers, even though it is our inclination generally to offer support when there are matters of genuine public interest to be explored. The Parliamentary Secretary, the Hon. Taylor Martin, made the relevant point that there is an independent investigation underway. We must limit the Standing Order 52 process when it drifts into duplicating investigations that other proper government bodies are conducting and when we become some sort of court, investigator and jury on a matter that is being handled elsewhere, I presume, in a proper, diligent way. This councillor has been of longstanding interest to the Labor Party. I met him once very briefly at a Maronite function, so I cannot say I know much about him or the details of this matter.

It does seem to be part of a Labor Party hit job in the electorate of Strathfield. It must be endorsed by the local member and Leader of the Opposition, Jodi McKay. Maybe there is too much politics involved and she is worried about this chap. But if an independent investigation is underway, let us leave it at that. There are possibly other matters in Strathfield that could be investigated. I would like to know how the State member wrote a letter of migration support for a convicted paedophile, but we are not going to make a Standing Order 52 call for papers about that. Perhaps it is wise to leave the Strathfield matters to the proper tribunals and processes.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (16:02): I was in the budget estimates hearings when this matter was raised with Minister Hancock. I reiterate yet again the point she made—which I also made in budget estimates hearings—that Ministers are not aware of individual members' donations. In our political party there are hundreds and hundreds of councillors, members of Parliament, State and Federal Senators, and lower House members. Their obligation is to disclose donations to the party headquarters, and the party headquarters discloses to the authority. It is not the responsibility of the Minister for Local Government to be aware of councillor donations. It is a party matter. That is a fact. It is also a fact that is agreed by the Labor Party. That is the defence the Labor Party uses whenever these matters come up on its side. It is fact and practice that the individual disclosure is with the party machine—the machine with the electoral authority. It is unfair to repeat the allegation that was aired during budget estimates hearings—which was refuted—that the Minister should have been aware, or it is hard to believe she was not aware, of donations with regard to that councillor. I put that on the record.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (16:04): In reply: I remind honourable members what we are talking about. This matter was referred to the Office of Local Government [OLG] in January 2019. It took 18 months to conduct the investigation, which was the subject of the original Standing Order 52 call for papers. We are in receipt of information; it is a privileged document. Procedural fairness is talked about. We already have those papers and the details of the investigation. This is about what Minister Hancock did or did not know and what interactions occurred between her and the secretary, Mr Hurst, regarding this character. It beggars belief that the Minister would not have known donations were made or that the Electoral Commission had said he had made a false declaration. It was all over the news. The Electoral Commission told the OLG what had happened.

Then there is the defence of "I can't be expected to know". Everyone knew what this bloke was up to. The Minister for Local Government is in charge of the department. This particular iteration of the Standing Order 52 call for papers is trying to ascertain whether there was any communication with the Minister, who has a responsibility to the public to make sure things of which she has oversight are done in a proper, transparent way, regardless of whether she had any conversations. The Standing Order 52 call for papers will turn up whether she had conversations. That is all we are asking for. To be quite frank, it beggars belief that a Minister of the Crown would not have had discussions with the secretary of her department about such a high-profile case.

To take up the Hon. Taylor Martin's point, the fact that this matter is at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal [NCAT] will not bias procedural fairness. It is before NCAT now. We are not asking for the ongoing NCAT investigation to be delivered in the Standing Order 52 call for papers. We are asking for correspondence and details pertaining to the investigation—specifically, the communication between the Minister and the secretary of her department. There is no bias to the investigation. The Hon. Shayne Mallard talked about the Minister not having to be across all issues regarding donations. As I said, it is on the public record—in the media and the Electoral Commission reported it. I think the request is more than fair.

We are pursuing our obligations to the people of New South Wales. It is not about the electorate of Strathfield. We would make this call if this sort of thing were to happen in any other electorate. I commend the motion to the House. It is a shame that One Nation is not supporting our Standing Order 52 call for papers that goes to genuine probity. We will press the case and not give up until we get to the bottom of the matter. If the Minister has nothing to hide, if she has not been talking to her secretary, presumably the papers will turn up that fact and we will go away.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes21
 Noes17
 Majority.....4

AYES

Banasiak	Field	Moselmane
Borsak	Graham	Pearson
Boyd	Houssos	Primrose
Buttigieg (teller)	Hurst	Searle
D'Adam (teller)	Jackson	Secord
Donnelly	Mookhey	Sharpe
Faehrmann	Moriarty	Shoebridge

NOES

Amato	Khan	Nile
Cusack	Latham	Poulos
Fang	Maclaren-Jones (teller)	Roberts
Farlow	Mallard	Taylor
Farraway (teller)	Martin	Ward
Harwin	Mitchell	

PAIRS

Veitch

Franklin

Motion agreed to.**NOETIC BUSHFIRE REPORTS****Production of Documents: Further Order****The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG:** I move:

That private members' business item No. 1066 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.**The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (16:17):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that the return to the order of the House of Wednesday 18 November 2020 regarding bushfire reports by Noetic, received on Wednesday 9 December 2020, did not produce any reports from Noetic as ordered.
- (2) That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within seven days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents, excluding any documents previously returned under an order of the House, in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Resilience NSW, the NSW Rural Fire Service, the Office of Emergency Management, or Fire and Rescue NSW relating to bushfire reports by Noetic:
 - (a) all documents prepared by Noetic relating to call taking and dispatch models and fire emergency communication centres in New South Wales; and
 - (b) 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.

I will not labour the point. I understand that the Government will accept this request made under Standing Order 52. It is on the basis that the original request for a specific report pertaining to the functionality of emergency call centres for bushfire response was not forthcoming in the original return to order. This Standing Order 52 request seeks to extract that specific report.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES (16:18): The Government does not oppose the motion.**The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts):** The question is that the motion be agreed to.**Motion agreed to.***Motions***TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP FUNDS****The Hon. MARK LATHAM (16:19):** I move:

- (1) That this House condemns the Labor Party practice of using trade union slush funds to interfere in other union and party elections for ALP factional purposes, given that this misuse of union funds comes from:
 - (a) syphoning off trade union membership fees;
 - (b) donations from companies that are then given enterprise agreement concessions at the expense of the workers;
 - (c) selling anti-worker enterprise agreements, such as the \$307,000 the CFMMEU official Jeff Drayton created with the shelf company Valley Labour Services; and
 - (d) other illegal activities such as staff training front-groups.
- (2) That this House further condemns the way Labor MLCs have participated in and benefited from these illegal practices, given that control of union numbers is integral to the control of Labor Annual Conference and Administrative Committee numbers, which determine upper House and some lower House ALP preselections.

This motion is really a request for the Australian Labor Party [ALP] to reconsider and drop its business model of pilfering money off union membership fees and illicitly sending it into election and factional campaigns. In the

Upper Hunter that practice has blown up badly on Labor and the activities of its candidate, Jeff Drayton. In this debate we need to answer one of the great mysteries of the past fortnight: Why are so many Labor members jumping with such enthusiasm to defend the indefensible? I note that shadow Treasurer the Hon. Walt Secord and a number of other members have not participated in this debate but direct union and party officials have piled in. Mr Drayton has now given six or seven different excuses about the dodgy enterprise agreement, none of which are valid or coherent, and none of which stack up against the facts.

One has only to ask one question: Why would OneKey pay \$307,000 for a shelf company enterprise agreement signed by Mr McTaggart and Mr Drayton? Why would a labour hire company pay over \$300,000 for this enterprise agreement? It certainly was not on the basis that the labour hire company thought it was pro-worker or generous to workers' entitlements, or that it was going to cost the labour hire company a lot of money in paying out leave entitlements and other arrangements that would be beneficial to coalminers. This certainly was not a great deal for the workers; it was a very weak deal. It was solely on that basis that OneKey paid \$307,000.

The Leader of the Opposition said it was complicated and made all sorts of excuses to Jordan from the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union [CFMEU] Northern Mining and New South Wales Energy District. She tried to argue in part that it had nothing to do with the union, with Jordan or with his officials. One has only to look at the document itself to see how bad it was. Paragraph 7.5 (4) states that casual employees are not entitled to annual leave or any other forms of paid leave, including for paid personal carers leave, paid compassionate leave, paid community service leave and long service leave. I suppose a labour hire company would pay \$307,000, given the fact that it does not have to pay all those leave entitlements in the workplace. Paragraph 7.5 (5) states that casual employment can be terminated by either party by giving a minimum of one hour termination of an employment—job insecurity writ large.

I suppose one would pay for that, if one was a labour hire company in the Upper Hunter, through the coalmining industry. That is very clear in the way it has been answered. I have been struck by the number of coalminers, former coalminers, unionists and former unionists who have contacted our office to complain about Mr Drayton at the Mount Arthur mine and at other places. The most damning assessment of what has happened inside the labour movement has come from Vern Faulkner—a 2016 Australian Workers Union [AWU] life member. For 40 years he has been a union organiser, an industrial officer and a former national secretary. He originally wrote on my Facebook page:

This exposes the shameful fraud of the contractors' agreement which rots the workers, with the author now the candidate in the by-election. Despicable!

Indeed, despicable Drayton. That is what Vern Faulkner, a quite respected union official over the years, has had to say about it. I posted the comment:

Thanks for that, Vern. That's a truthful assessment of what's gone on here.

He then posted:

Correct again, Mark. Drayton is a tainted candidate. The shonky enterprise agreement exposes him and the CFMEU.

Indeed it does. Those words were spoken by no less than a union official—an AWU life member—who for 40 years has been a union organiser and a former national secretary. One has only to look at the disgraceful history of CFMEU Mining & Energy. This union was once headed by John Maitland who went to jail over the Doyles Creek training mine—supposedly another sham to try to help the workers, but it was a swindle in collaboration with a Labor government. As a result of this debacle, the CFMEU ended up owning 16 per cent of the labour hire company Tessa Group.

The CFMEU mining division, which says it is the gamekeeper in the Hunter Valley, actually owns a fair share of the Tessa Group labour hire company. That proves that it is not the gamekeeper at all; it is the poacher. Why would anyone want to belong to the CFMEU in those circumstances? John Maitland, who was jailed for corruption after the infamous Doyles Creek training mine incident, was in collaboration with the former Labor Government and ended up owning 16 per cent of the Tessa Group, which is supposed to be the archenemy. We have listened to all the rhetoric about bad labour hire companies and bad casual labour, but he owns one-sixth of the Tessa Group.

Nobody held a gun to Jeff Drayton's head to sign this enterprise agreement, but another 50 of them are signed by CFMEU officials entrenching casual and labour hire in the coalmines of the Upper Hunter. So they actually part-owned a labour hire company. In the case of Mr Drayton, he struck up a relationship with Jonno McTaggart from SubZero. They were both working at the Bengalla mine. That notorious shelf company enterprise agreement speaks for itself. Money does not lie; money talks with exactitude about what is going on. Out of all this the Labor Party decided to run Drayton for the Upper Hunter by-election. His first statement as a candidate was to end the demonisation of coalmines and coalminers. After looking at his how-to-vote card on the pre-poll

stations we found out that he is allocating a second preference to Tracy Norman and a third to Kirsty O'Connell. Tracy Norman is an anti-coal green Independent. Malcolm Turnbull is running Kirsty O'Connell's campaign. She is another anti-coal green Independent.

Unfortunately, Drayton cannot lie straight in bed. What a level of deception for him to say, "I am for the coalminers and I am for the coalminers." When he is asked where he thinks the voting preferences should go, he indicates that he has a preference arrangement with Norman and O'Connell. He says he does not want to demonise the coalminers but these demonisers-in-chief want to throw tens of thousands of workers on the scrapheap, creating mass unemployment and social distress. I do not think Drayton and the Labor Party are fooling anyone. For 10 years they have been moving against coal and I suppose they have now split their constituency. After 10 years of moving against coal, the penny dropped in the Hunter Valley. Nobody believes the facade of wheeling out Drayton—the author of the \$307,000 shelf company enterprise agreement and the bloke giving preferences to those who would destroy the mining industry in the Hunter—to say that 10 years of rhetoric was a brief aberration and we can trust them to look after miners and the coalminers.

Why would anyone belong to the CFMEU in those circumstances? Why would anyone pay it money? A lot of people are wondering why they did and how badly they were let down by Drayton and others at the CFMEU Northern Mining and New South Wales Energy District. No wonder union coverage in the private sector in Australia is down to 9 per cent. It is 14 per cent overall which, no doubt, is propped up in some part by the public sector but in the private sector it is down to 9 per cent. Maybe it is 5 per cent in ALP-affiliated unions. The point of this motion is to enforce something that Rodney Cavalier argued inside the Labor Party over many decades. The Hon. Anthony D'Adam mentioned Cavalier in his inaugural speech and said that he was one of his guiding lights. Cavalier made the valid point, which I am reinforcing in my motion, that there is a poisonous relationship between the ALP and its affiliated unions.

It is a dud deal for union members who pay their fees if officials are channelling them into the ALP, as the CFMEU is now doing in this campaign. It is spending lots of money to back Drayton. It is spending the money of union members to back someone who is preferencing the anti-coalmining candidates. It is a dud deal for the unions. It is no wonder union coverage in Australia has fallen to a single digit. It is a very bad deal for the Labor Party because it is tied to a 5 per cent interest group. If you are beholden to a group that covers no more than 5 per cent of the workforce, you are 45 per cent short of an electoral majority. That is the point Cavalier has made time after time. It goes to the fact that most of these characters wear two hats.

When we look at a union official who is hustling around on the rise—someone like Drayton—trying to enter Parliament, we can see how he has worn two hats: the hat of the union official—and he has not been all that distinguished with what he has done but it can be guaranteed that some of the \$307,000 from the construction division of the CFMEU went to individuals or into union slush funds; and now the hat of a candidate for elected parliamentary office. The crossover is a dud deal for the members on every front. They are paying their union fees for the CFMEU to campaign for this bloke and they have also paid his salary as a union official to do them in with enterprise agreements entrenching casual hire labour and doing away with entitlements.

Rodney Cavalier was spot-on. He has mounted a 30-year critique and year by year, election by election—particularly with the Upper Hunter by-election—we would have to say he has been 100 per cent right. Of course, the campaign funds or the slush funds that go into other union elections and factional deals are all about the Labor Party conference numbers. If you can interfere in someone else's union election and get your numbers to the conference floor, that is the Labor equivalent of Photios dust: You end up controlling the upper House preselections. That is the business model, but it is a business model that does not stand up to scrutiny. Of course, it highlights the biblical impossibility of serving two masters. It is time to call the model off. It is time to answer about where the \$307,000 went. You can be guaranteed some of it went into a slush fund somewhere; the construction division of the CFMEU has been doing that.

When union officials wear two hats—one hat notionally representing the workers and the other hat acting as an ALP factional chief—it is as messy and improper as it gets. Why are ALP members in this Chamber defending Drayton's indefensible dirty deal with the shelf company? Unfortunately, culturally it has become part of their business model. I will provide some examples. Coming into the 2011 election the Electrical Trades Union [ETU] made a \$500,000 loan to the Labor Party—this was a factional deal organised through Sam Dastyari; it might have been denominated in Chinese currency but it was \$500,000 Australian equivalent. It was paid to the Labor Party campaign using ETU members' money, with no meeting, no minutes and no approval from the management committee. It was just waved through.

The Hon. Adam Searle: Point of order: The Hon. Mark Latham is straying way beyond the subject matter of the motion and is abusing the forms and forum of the House to ladle abuse all around. Mr President, I ask you to draw the Hon. Mark Latham back to the particular matters that are enumerated in his motion. There is plenty of abuse already contained in the motion for him to be going on with in the remaining time.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: To the point of order: This is directly relevant. In terms of abuse, the poor old Mayor of Strathfield was copping it earlier on, so it is time for members opposite to be held to account. Labor members are not uncomfortable abusing those who are not here. At least I am doing it to their face.

The Hon. Adam Searle: To the point of order: There is no mention of the ETU or that particular transaction in the motion. When we examine the substance of the motion and the member's contribution, the subject matter is clear. I ask that he be called back to the ambit of that subject matter.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mark Latham's comments are within the wide ambit of the motion, particularly as the motion refers to union funds being misused and the like. I ask the Hon. Mark Latham to continue.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Thank you, Mr President. When old mate from the ETU, Mark Buttigieg, was asked about this \$500,000 transaction with the Labor Party at the royal commission, it was written up that he claimed to be at meetings subsequent to the loan being arranged. The loan was put through in December 2010. This document states the honourable member—

claimed ... to have a recollection of the ... Loan being approved by the Executive and by State Council.

in a statement dated 22 April ... he claimed to have a recollection of discussions ... at meetings ... some ... time ... [in] February 2011... The statement was unsigned.

I suppose it was wise to leave it unsigned. It is described here that "Mark Buttigieg's evidence has no materiality". I am not a lawyer but I assume "no materiality" means that it was all BS. I am assuming that is the layperson's interpretation in western Sydney. It goes on to say, "The most sympathetic view of Mark Buttigieg's evidence"—

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam: Point of order: The member appears to be descending into a personal attack on a member of this House, which we all know, if he wants to do so, must be done by way of substantive motion. The motion is not about Mark Buttigieg. The member should desist from making personal attacks.

The PRESIDENT: I uphold the point of order. A substantive motion needs to be moved in relation to the member if we are to bring in a member of this House. In general there is no concern but if there is specific mention of a member of this place, it needs to be done by way of a specific substantive motion. The Hon. Mark Latham has the call.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Thank you, Mr President. I was reading from the public document of the royal commission's report—which laid aside the evidence, so I suppose that ends the matter there with thudding conclusion. The second example of Labor's unsatisfactory business model to which I draw the attention of the House is pilfering money off trade union members.

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam: Point of order—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: This goes to the motion. These points of order are frivolous attempts to try to disrupt debate.

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam: The Hon. Mark Latham appears to be relying on a series of documents, none of which are available to other members of the House. If he wishes to rely on documents he should seek leave to table them in the House.

The PRESIDENT: There is no point of order. The Hon. Mark Latham has the call.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I am happy to table the report of the trade union royal commission—the one that looked at corruption. It is on the website.

The PRESIDENT: I add that if the Hon. Mark Latham is quoting from significant sections of a document it might be wise to identify it, if indeed it is a public document.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Some other documents were sent to me about a thing called the McLean Forum run by the Transport Workers' Union [TWU]. It raised hundreds of thousands of dollars siphoning members' union fees via the officials' payroll and donations from transport companies, which then undoubtedly in return got soft enterprise agreements. So all those hardworking garbos, truck drivers and other transport workers had part of their membership siphoned off into the official payroll paid into the McLean Forum slush fund and there were also lavish fundraisers where the companies paid in. This is the point that Cavalier makes consistently: You cannot wear the two hats. You cannot be raising these funds from your membership illicitly as a trade union official to try to help yourself factionally inside the Australian Labor Party. This is the conflict of interest that brings them down.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars in the McLean Forum was used in four different non-transport ballots—such as the Health Services Union [HSU] election. What has that got to do with the Transport Workers' Union?

Imagine being a garbo in western Sydney working hard, paying your union fees and finding out the money was channelled into the HSU election. It also happened in the Queensland TWU election—a different State. They rolled some person they did not like. The Flight Attendants Association campaigned using this slush fund and also Tony Sheldon to become President of the Australian Labor Party.

The Hon. Scott Farlow: Senator Sheldon.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: This is how it works, you see. He interfered in all these other union elections with the slush fund money. He built up his numbers at the Labor Party conference and became a senator. That is the business model—and that is the problem. Who was the bagman and campaign director for this? When I was sent this by a very senior union official, I have to say I was shocked because I quite like the Hon. Daniel Mookhey. He is a lively presence around this Chamber and an effective performer but I had to look five times to check whether that was really his name—

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam: Point of order—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: —because the person had a personal credit card and many thousands of dollars in reimbursements—indeed, tens of thousands of dollars in reimbursements.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Anthony D'Adam rises on a point of order.

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam: The Hon. Mark Latham has been warned about this before. He is now proceeding to attack another member of this House. He knows he has to do that by way of substantive motion. He again chooses not to do that. He needs to be called to order.

The PRESIDENT: I did not hear exactly what the member said because I was speaking to the Clerk.

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam: The member was referring to the Hon. Daniel Mookhey in relation to allegations against the TWU.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mark Latham may continue. I will listen carefully to his contribution.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It is a matter of public record that the Hon. Daniel Mookhey ran The McLean Forum; he was the campaign director and the fundraising person. He was the chief of staff at the Transport Workers Union. There was another official there at the time the funds were being raised and that was Sam Crosby. He evacuated from the Federal division of Reid and did a runner over to the Federal division of Barton; I hear he is sniffing around for the Federal division of Fowler. That is the Labor Party system. If a person illicitly takes money off of the membership, puts it into other factional ballots in the union movement and builds up their numbers at the annual conference, they can become a senator or an MLC or maybe get a lower House seat.

I urge the Labor Party, as the members' mentor Cavalier has done for decades, to abandon that business model. It is a failed model that is internally corrupted and contradicted. It has blown up in the Upper Hunter by-election with Jeff Drayton, who has been part of shameful activities. I feel sorry for those poor mine workers and anyone paying fees to the CFMEU. The CFMEU is putting out advertising for Drayton, who is preferencing the people who closed down those workers' industry and sent them down to Centrelink. Drayton institutionalised casual labour, abolished permanent leave entitlements and put in a system of one hour of notice for getting the sack. That is the shame of what Labor has become.

For the CFMEU to be saying, "It has nothing to do with us" or "It is really One Nation that did it" or "It is complicated"—those are just absurdities. It is time for this old political party to wake up to itself, get rid of the corrupted business model and get back to a clear separation. People can either be a union official or they can be a Labor Party person; they cannot be both. They cannot wear the two hats and pilfer funds off members to spend inside the Labor Party for factional purposes. It is a shameful model and it should come to an end.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (16:41): Last week I introduced a bill relating to the disclosure on the public record of underpayments of payroll tax. As part of that, there has been a significant amount of discussion on wage theft. I think there is common ground on this side of the Chamber and on that side in the belief that employers who do not pay their employees entitlements under an award should be outed and shamed. I foreshadow what those opposite will say: Not only should they be outed and shamed but also their conduct should be criminalised. We may have a difference about where they should be criminalised: whether it should be in New South Wales or whether—

The Hon. Adam Searle: I have a proposition to put to you.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Good. We will no doubt have that discussion. I am very interested in that proposition and in making sure that people do not lose what they are entitled to be paid as a result of an award and that employers are not engaging in a practice to remove workers' entitlements. In respect of the motion from

the Hon. Mark Latham, I start with the premise that not only is there an entitlement to wages under most awards; there is also generally an entitlement to employment conditions that dignify the practice of work. My ancestors fought very hard for proper working conditions for workers.

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam: You should be ashamed.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: We have already had that discussion. The dignity of work should be inherent in every workplace and in every condition. Those entitlements can be stolen. If an agreement is entered into that deprecates the entitlements of workers, it is analogous to stealing their money. If their working conditions, which have been potentially hard fought for over time, are stolen and they are subjected to lesser conditions, that practice is analogous to stealing money from them. Last week the Chamber debated the matter of a union official who negotiated an employment agreement. I know that the Hon. John Graham will say that the agreement was an improvement on what the workers had before and I know that the Hon. Adam Searle will say, "What was going on in the mine beforehand was shocking and this agreement represented an improvement in their conditions and in circumstances where they were casual workers."

The reality was that they entered into an agreement to enshrine a practice where workers were left without any ability to get notice for when they were going to be dismissed, they had no leave entitlements and a whole series of things were given away pursuant to the agreement. There is no doubt that that agreement then had value because it was signed by a fellow called McTaggart and the union official who signed the agreement and is aptly described as having white-linen fever: Take them out to dinner a few times and they like the lifestyle. Once you are with Mr McTaggart at the races or wherever he goes, all of a sudden you like the lifestyle and ask, "How can we help each other?" That is pure speculation, but it has a—

The Hon. John Graham: It is pure speculation.

The Hon. Adam Searle: No, it is invention.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: No, it has a flavour of truth about it. The two of them get together and they negotiate that agreement, which has value. The agreement purports to be for a labour hire company for a mine in the Hunter Valley. They then sell the agreement because it is the only asset that they have, and they receive \$307,000 for the sale of that agreement. We know that. No-one has ever told us where that money went. Today we are hearing that those workers have been sold out pursuant to that employment agreement. No-one knows where the money went, except that it may well have gone into some slush fund, into the pocket of a union official or to a variety of other things. No-one is prepared to tell us. That represents a practice that was outlined by the Hon. Mark Latham and it is how money gets into the union coffers.

The motion has significant merit. The motion is effectively, as the Hon. Mark Latham outlined, exactly what Rodney Cavalier fought against. When union officials get into bed with employers and they join each other in devising ways and structures for the purposes of taking money, which they either raise by union fees or alternatively by selling enterprise agreements, that is when we are effectively stealing from workers. There is a tried and tested model of that happening and I point to a number of examples. Former union boss John Maitland netted a cool \$6 million under the guise of promoting mine safety thanks to his shonky dealings with then New South Wales Labor Minister Ian Macdonald.

The national secretary of the Transport Workers Union Tony Sheldon was forced to defend a payment of \$7,000 from the TWU's slush fund for his personal campaign to run for Labor's national presidency. Michael Williamson from the Health Services Union spent five years in prison for plundering \$1 million from union funds for his own purposes. He not only paid himself \$500,000 a year—more than triple what other union bosses are paid—but the union also employed his brother, son, sister-in-law, his long-term mistress and a member of her family. Former Secretary of the National Union of Workers Derrick Belan inherited his position from his father and was sentenced to four years in jail for misappropriating union funds on tattoos, botox, cruiser boats, cars and motorcycles. Health Services Union Secretary Kathy Jackson was convicted of stealing more than \$100,000 from the HSU after being accused initially of 169 offences, including misappropriating union members' fees for personal flights, hotels and more.

The Hon. Adam Searle: Didn't your side of politics say she was a heroine, a whistleblower and a person of high regard?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: You do not like hearing this, I know, but it is the model. And who could forget National Secretary of the Health Services Union Craig Thomson? He misused union members' money by making a series of cash withdrawals totalling \$10,000 and spending over \$28,000 on prostitutes, pornographic movies and other personal expenses. According to *The Sydney Morning Herald*, he also used his HSU credit card to fund his election campaign. The Labor Party and the unions have a long history of misappropriating union funds for their own purposes. That kind of behaviour is rewarded with plum spots in the Australian Labor Party

for Parliament. What a disgrace! The unions are also just as content to misuse their members' money to politically assassinate those they do not like. We need look no further than the Leader of the Opposition in the other place, who certainly has a friend in the Health Services Union.

The Hon. Adam Searle: Point of order: The member is attacking a member of the other House not by way of a substantive motion. The Leader of the Opposition in the other place is not part of the motion and therefore the member is straying beyond its terms. He is engaging in an attack on a member of the other place and he should be called to order.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: To the point of order: I have not engaged in any attack.

The PRESIDENT: I think the Minister is on the verge of doing so. I caution him in relation to what has been put by the Leader of the Opposition. If a member wishes to cast aspersions on another member, it must be done by way of substantive motion.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: In that case, I will refer to the comments of the secretary of the Health Services Union. He said, "We need a shake-up of people and policies, and we need it now." Even former Labor Premier Morris Iemma described the circumstances as "heartbreaking". He said:

The sense of despondency is palpable. These numbers are basically an indication that the last 10 years have been a complete waste of time.

There are questions that need to be answered about the Labor candidate for Upper Hunter. I respect the Hon. Rose Jackson's defence of her party's pick, but why will Mr Drayton not defend himself when asked about this by journalists?

The Hon. John Graham: He already has.

The Hon. Adam Searle: He already has.

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: He has.

The Hon. John Graham: Don't you read the paper?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Well, let's go to his defence. On 14 April 2021 I saw a social media post by the Leader of the Opposition featuring Mr Drayton that said:

When you launch a by-election campaign on your birthday, there'd better be cake! Congratulations and happy birthday to our candidate Jeff Drayton ...

The Hon. John Graham was also there in his capacity as the shadow Minister for all things music. I am sure that he graced all those present with a rendition of *Happy Birthday*. In light of what has been disclosed to the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, how can members opposite be sure of when Jeff Drayton's birthday is? It begs the question: If Jeff Drayton cannot provide his correct birthplace and birthdate on official government documents, how can the good people of the electorate of Upper Hunter be expected to trust him to represent them in the halls of this Parliament? How can the people of New South Wales have confidence in him?

The situation is dire for Opposition members. The Labor Party is well past its use-by date. The working families of the electorate of Upper Hunter deserve better than yet another union official being parachuted into Parliament by Labor. They deserve better than a Labor Party whose recent exploits on behalf of workers are exactly that—exploits. It has sold out workers' rights through its shonky enterprise agreements. Only the Liberal-Nationals Government is on the side of the workers of New South Wales, and it has the credentials and track record to prove it.

Last week in the other place the Treasurer said that jobs are booming in regional New South Wales. Prior to COVID-19 the unemployment rate in regional New South Wales was 4.9 per cent. At the height of the pandemic in March last year the unemployment rate rose to 5.8 per cent. The unemployment rate is now back at 4.9 per cent because New South Wales has been under the health and economic management of the Liberals and The Nationals. Our State is the envy of the world. The Government is delivering for the people of New South Wales, particularly the residents of the Upper Hunter.

Over the past two fiscal years it has funded major projects, including the Muswellbrook land and fire station, stage two of the redevelopment of Muswellbrook Hospital, upgrades to the New England Highway and the Singleton bypass. On top of this, the Liberal-Nationals Government will deliver a new \$12 million fit-for-purpose police station at Singleton, stage three of the Muswellbrook Hospital redevelopment—which was recently announced by the Deputy Premier and The Nationals candidate for Upper Hunter, David Layzell—and a brand-new purpose-built fire station for the Kayuga Rural Fire Brigade, which will have room to store two trucks and house the modern facilities that our firefighters need.

This Government respects workers. Liberal and Nationals members work tirelessly on behalf of workers. We do not take money out of their pockets by way of union fees to be used for our own purposes. We want to make sure that workers' terms and conditions are respected and looked after by ensuring that the facilities they work in are fit for purpose. Jeff Drayton's time is up. Labor Party members should acknowledge that the CFMEU model that he uses—which has now been exported to the mining industry—is not one that they want to embrace. They will say One Nation had a chance to outlaw the model but let us focus on the practice, which Labor members need to condemn. I urge those opposite to support this motion because the Labor Party needs to reform its approach to unions. If they do not believe that is the case, maybe an inquiry or a royal commission is needed to tell them.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (16:56): On behalf of the Labor Opposition, I reject this motion in its entirety. Therefore, I move:

That the question be amended by omitting all words after "That this House condemns" and inserting instead:

the Liberals, Nationals and One Nation for voting in Federal Parliament to weaken employment laws for workers, including casual workers in the New South Wales coalmining industry.

I speak against the substantive motion and in favour of the amendment, and in so doing I take issue with what has been said by the Hon. Mark Latham and the Leader of the House. The motion is a travesty of the forum and forms of this House because not only does it involve abuse but also it makes assertions without evidence. The second paragraph of the motion asserts without a skerrick of proof that members on this side of the House have participated in illegal activities. No member on this side of the House has any knowledge of or has been involved in any of the alleged illegal practices. The assertions in the motion do the Hon. Mark Latham and the Government members who are supporting it no credit. Let us disassemble some of the parts of the motion. There is no evidence to support the alleged practices that the Hon. Mr Mark Latham spoke of in his contribution, just assertion after assertion based on hearsay.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: You wouldn't let him tell you.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Well, he did have an opportunity to address that. Subparagraph (a) references "syphoning off trade union membership fees" without any evidence or details—it is just an assertion. In his contribution the Hon. Mark Latham addressed the allegations made in subparagraph (b) of the motion that there were concessions in enterprise agreements in return for payments. Again that is an easy attack to make and again he has provided no evidence to substantiate his claim. Mr Drayton signed the enterprise agreement as an official of the union, an issue which has already been canvassed in this House three or four times. Because the Black Coal Mining Industry Award did not permit casual employment, there was a very real chance that the entitlements of workers were not able to be recovered at law. The enterprise agreement, which represents an improvement to the existing wages and conditions, was struck to provide a secure legal basis for workers to receive their working entitlements because the award that covered the work otherwise prohibited casual employment.

The origins of this arrangement are clear and they are clearly in the interests of those workers. It is also a matter of record that the agreement was sold by Mr McTaggart and any benefit was yielded by him. Mr Drayton has made it clear on the public record that he did not financially benefit. Yet the Leader of the House was suggesting that "they" benefited—using the collective term—and attacking Mr Drayton again without any evidence whatsoever. From the information we have it does appear that when the agreement was on sold it was used to undercut wages and conditions elsewhere, but that was not with the involvement of Mr Drayton. It was clearly a misuse—and a misuse permitted by the existing state of the law.

I note that in the High Court today the mining and energy union promoted its case in the matter of *WorkPac Pty Ltd v Rossato & Ors*. The decision of the full Federal Court essentially established that an alleged casual worker in the mining industry was in fact not a casual and was entitled to various additional entitlements of employment. The employer, as is their legal right, has now taken the matter to the High Court. What is being argued about is the misuse of casualisation where people are effectively termed "casuals" but are really permanent and ongoing workers who are not being given their proper legal entitlements. Why is that important?

It is important because in the wake of that decision, when industrial relations [IR] laws were passing through the Federal Parliament, the Liberals, The Nationals and their handmaidens—Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party—voted to ensure that whatever flowed from the Rossato case did not flow through to casual workers in the coalmining industry in any subsequent matter. It is a startling legislative intervention to cut workers entitlements, to turn off the tap and to make sure that so-called "casual" workers in the coalmining industry in the Upper Hunter and New South Wales more generally are not able to maintain back pay cases. One Nation members are so embarrassed about it that they have resorted to repeatedly attack Mr Drayton, the Labor candidate, who has said that if he is elected to Parliament he will introduce legislation to stamp out those practices—practices that the Liberals, the Nationals and One Nation have aided and abetted in Federal Parliament.

They are all so embarrassed—pretending to be the workers' friend while sticking in the legislative knife. It is just outrageous that they come to this place to deduce the reputation of Jeff Drayton who has either been a worker or has fought for workers' rights his entire working life. This misuse of parliamentary privilege to slander him does no credit to the Leader of the House and the former Leader of the Government in this place. Shame on all of those opposite and shame on One Nation for bringing this matter before the House for the third or fourth time with no evidence beyond assertion built on assertion. Paragraph (1) (d) of the motion says "other illegal activities". No illegal activities have been identified or put forward, yet this matter was not addressed in his substantive—

[*A member interjected.*]

Do not interrupt! It was not addressed in his substantive contribution because the whole thing is a work of fiction—a complete collection of lies and misinformation. Paragraph (2) makes allegations that elected members on this side of the House have participated in illegal activity. Once upon a time that would have been an allegation that any member of Parliament would have been very slow to make against another member of Parliament, yet the Leader of the House, the representative of the Government, has spoken in support of this motion. Let's see how they vote.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: Point of order: I made no such allegation against any of those opposite. The suggestion that I have associated myself with an allegation against any person ought to be withdrawn. I have not done that.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am prepared to accept the Minister's word. But the motion says what it says, and unless I have misunderstood the Government's position, the Leader of the House has indicated that the Government will be supporting this motion. If that is not correct, perhaps the Leader of the House should clarify the Government's position on the motion.

The PRESIDENT: The motion makes reference to Labor MLCs as a group; that is not disorderly. It is when members refer to an individual that we have a problem with substantive motions and disorderly conduct.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: That is the point—

The PRESIDENT: I did not hear particular names being mentioned. I thought it was by way of the group reference.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: It was said that we were making specific allegations against members opposite. I made no such specific allegation.

The PRESIDENT: I will listen very closely.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I did not raise the point that it was disorderly, by the way. There are only 14 Labor MLCs in this place. The motion clearly makes allegations of illegal activity against us. The Government is either going to vote for this motion or it is not. I hope that it is not. As I said, making or supporting an allegation against another member of Parliament of actively engaging in illegal activity without any evidence is a heavy allegation. Indeed, I would argue that it is a misuse of the privileges of this House. The votes will fall where they may, but how far have the standards of civility and the privileges of this House fallen when any member feels it is okay to allege criminality against another member of Parliament without even offering any evidence in debate?

There is no evidence even from the Hon. Mark Latham that any one of us knew about any allegations or participated but it is in the motion that we participated and benefited from illegal practices. That is an outrageous allegation. It is outrageous to come before this House without a skerrick or scintilla of evidence against any of us—whether we are individually named or named as a form of collective abuse. I hope the Government does not support this because that would be—

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: Point of order: The Leader of the Opposition correctly made the observation that he took—

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Mr President, the clock is still running down on my time. It was stopped when points of order were taken on Government members.

The PRESIDENT: I did note that; it was a mistake. I believe the practice is to continue the clock at this point in time, but I will reflect on that in consultation with members.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: The Leader of the Opposition has said that he did not take a point of order about the content of the notice of motion at the time it was moved and debated by the mover of the motion. To be now suggesting that in some way it is out of order in circumstances—

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: No, I did not. For clarity, I was not saying it was out of order. I was saying it was a terrible diminution in the standards of this House.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: If he wanted to make that claim, the appropriate way would have been to say that it should have been ruled out of order.

The PRESIDENT: There is no point of order. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I did not take the point of order because it did not occur to me that the Government would support such an outrageous proposition. We will see where the votes fall. I am happy to meet these allegations head-on because they are without foundation or substance and no evidence has been offered by the—

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: Point of order: On education, where the honourable member sought to make a case in respect of specific allegations, the Hon. Anthony D'Adam got to his feet and sought to take a point of order—

The PRESIDENT: What is the Minister's point of order?

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: That is a mischaracterisation of what the true circumstance was.

The PRESIDENT: There is no point of order.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Perhaps the Leader of the House is hard of hearing, but I was actually referring to the fact that there is no evidence in relation to the allegation that Opposition members participated in illegal schemes. That was the point I was making. I was not talking about any other point.

The PRESIDENT: Members will direct their comments through the Chair. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I have established the basis upon which the Opposition says every one of these matters, when examined or held up to the light, is not worth the sand it is written on—if I could use that mixed metaphor. There is no evidence in support of any of these matters and there is certainly no evidence in support of the collective allegation made against Labor MLCs. This is just a cheap and shoddy political hit job—the third or fourth in the past week or so—by members opposite and their political allies ahead of the Upper Hunter by-election.

They are using parliamentary privilege to traduce the reputation of the Labor Party and the party's candidate in the Upper Hunter in circumstances where they are clearly trying to make up for and hide their own deep shame and embarrassment about the way their Federal parties in the national Parliament have voted to cut casual workers' rights in the coalmining industry—the very issue upon which Mr Drayton is staking his campaign. I urge honourable members to support Labor's sensible amendment to refocus the motion that has been moved today to properly place condemnation where it belongs in this matter—those opposite and their Federal colleagues—and to reject this shameful use of parliamentary privilege to engage in the character assassinations we have seen, individually and collectively.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (17:11): I foreshadow that I will move a further amendment to the motion.

The PRESIDENT: The standing orders state that a member who has already spoken in the debate may not move an amendment. The Minister may speak to the amendment moved by the Hon. Adam Searle, if he wishes to do so.

The Hon. WES FANG (17:12): I move:

That the question be amended by omitting in paragraph (2) the words "Labor MLCs" and inserting instead "individuals".

The PRESIDENT: Would the Hon. Wes Fang like to speak to his amendment or to the substantive motion?

The Hon. WES FANG: I will reserve my rights.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (17:13): I welcome the Government's intervention, as I understood the amendment—and feel free to correct this—in withdrawing the allegation against MLCs and suggesting that this allegation might instead attend to some individuals.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: I outlined some.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. But I think that is a welcome intervention, given the concerns that the Leader of the Opposition has expressed about the level of proof that would normally be attached to such a motion.

I strongly support the views of the Leader of the Opposition and I agree with that statement. I was less upset by some parts of the earlier debate and what I saw as some of the greatest hits of last week's debate in this Chamber and a discussion which has been rolling on for decades inside the labour movement. I was brought back to many of the debates around dusty town halls with tiny little chairs that I have engaged in over time as a party member.

[A member interjected.]

I was hoping to distract the member and encourage him to talk about Matt Kean, but I was unsuccessful in doing that. To be fair to the member, he did tail up the Minister for a whole week last year, so it was probably reasonable that he did not stick to it this time. Why is it, though, that this poor individual Jeff Drayton has attracted so much controversy and so much debate in this House? I can only suggest my view which is that he is doing a stellar job on the campaign trail in the Upper Hunter and members on the opposite side of the House know their best chance in this world of getting a result is to have a go at Jeff Drayton. The truth is they will have to do better than what they have managed today. We have heard the old material minus some of the best bits. For instance, the suggestion that any of this money might have travelled to Jeff Drayton did not really feature today. That heated suggestion disappeared into thin air by the time it got to this week. So it was the old material minus some of the highlights from last week, which is the way I see it.

I was interested in the view that has been suggested about a soft-handed mining and energy union that is easy to knock over. I am not sure that is the view of any company in the Hunter Valley. I am not sure that is the view of some of those international mining companies as they look around the world at the workers they deal with. That is just not the view. The mining and energy union in Australia is well regarded by its workforce and it is regarded with some apprehension by some of the toughest employers around the world—and good on them.

I will not refer to all the arguments that the honourable member made, but I will say this: He referred to many of the arguments that have rolled through the labour movement over time, but he missed this one: You could never preselect a blue-collar worker in the modern Labor Party. In truth, that is why I am so glad Jeff Drayton is running for Labor in the Upper Hunter. There have been a whole lot of baseless allegations about where Labor stands on coal or coalmining communities or blue-collar workers, and I am really proud of the fact that Jeff Drayton is standing for Labor at this Upper Hunter by-election. It is good for the Labor Party, it is good for those communities and it is good for seriously tackling the issues that the State has to face, such as its economic and climate change challenges. The fact that people in those communities can have a solid voice that they trust is a huge boost to this Parliament. That is one of the reasons I will be campaigning to see Jeff Drayton elected.

So some of the greatest hits but it was really old material, and I am sorry to say that. It sounds like Stuart Bonds has maybe turned the tap off on the information. He has been running this information for years up in the Hunter. It has been old news up there, and we have not seen or heard any new material today. I presume that is because he has quit One Nation, appalled by the sort of deal that has been described. It was not a hypothetical hit on those coalminers' pockets. This was real money out of the pockets of casual miners. It was money that should have been owed to them in back pay and that they should have been able to claim but will never see as a result of changes in the law backed by the parties that stand here on the high horse with the view they have put to the House today.

In the face of a furious barrage of character assaults, Jeff Drayton is rapidly becoming famous in Macquarie Street. I just wanted to defend the man I have met on the campaign trail. He has worked as a coalminer. He lives on a farm, running cattle. He had his early start in the wine industry and he is not too bad backing the horses. It sounds to me like the electorate of Upper Hunter described in a single individual. My observation is that he has been cool, calm and collected on the campaign trail. What has impressed me most is that the people who he works with to fight for mine workers' rights and entitlements regard him as a leader. They are used to working together and backing each other up and they look to Jeff Drayton as a leader. That is how they regard him and that is how he is regarded in his local community. I place that view before the House, given the barrage of character assaults this poor fellow has received as he has rapidly become famous.

I can only represent my own view, but I am sure I speak for all 14 Labor MLCs when I say that I condemn any illegal activity, whether inside the labour movement or not. I have argued the case to reform the Labor Party. Every political party has to change, reform and improve. Specifically, I have taken on some of the sharp practices. Some of the individuals named in the debate today I have personally moved to suspend or expel or expel for life from the Labor Party. I do not want to diminish the fact that any political party has its problems. Every political party has to tackle those issues. I encourage the Government to do so and I encourage Labor to do so. I will not bother the crossbenchers with this view. It is important to do and the team I work with here are all committed to that. That is my observation. It is a team of people who are dedicated to that reform inside the Labor Party.

I have enjoyed the greatest hits over the past few weeks but my suggestion is that we leave it to the people of the electorate of Upper Hunter to settle the issue once and for all. We can leave it to them to settle the issue as

to whether they are getting a fair shake of the sauce bottle as hundreds of millions of dollars from royalties head down the M1, especially out of Singleton and Muswellbrook. That community's concern is that so little goes back. That is the central debate. All of the parties have expressed a view about that and put forward their competing concerns. In the end that will be the issue that people vote on. It will not be this enjoyable greatest hits backwards and forwards ping-pong on issues that are important but, ultimately, somewhat arcane for the voters of Upper Hunter. I look forward to seeing how it unfolds. I trust that the people of Upper Hunter will get it right. The political parties in Macquarie Street should watch closely and respect their views.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (17:22): I make a contribution on the substantive issues at hand. I was one of the subject matters in the contribution by the Hon. Mark Latham. In terms of value for money, I place on the record that the Hon. Mark Latham spoke of the \$500,000 loan that the Electrical Trades Union [ETU] made to the Australian Labor Party and alleged that members were ripped off and did not have a clue. That loan was fully repaid at an interest rate of 8 per cent. At the time the market was around 4 per cent to 5 per cent. I was part of the State council that made that decision. I would say that is pretty good value for members. When I was asked about it at the royal commission, my comment was "It was like lending money to a family member". Guess what? Unions affiliate to the Labor Party by virtue of paying affiliation fees and for that they get political buy-in.

They get to have a say in the policies and philosophy of the Labor Party. Heaven forbid that a party created by working class people would have an affiliation with the trade union movement. It is inconceivable, surely. Heaven forbid that unions should get 50 per cent of the floor at a Labor conference and feed directly into and influence policy, probably more than in any other working class labour party in the world. There are situations in which the party becomes divorced from reality and from its working class base, like it did in Queensland not too long ago. In those situations, the union movement campaigns against the party on the basis that it has lost its way and then the party realigns with its industrial base, does the right thing and ends up winning government.

What do members think is happening in New South Wales? What do they think is happening in the Hunter? Labor is running a person who has fought for working people all his life. He has worked harder than most people in this Parliament. He has been on the tools and in the mines and now he is working his guts out representing workers. The people in this place want to drag his name through the mud—why? That is because they are embarrassed that they had to throw two coalminers under the bus, but two was not enough so they want to throw three under the bus.

The Hon. Mark Latham knows well how that works. This is a bloke who was hoisted onto the precipice of power. He was on the precipice of being prime minister on the platform of a party that took trade union money to campaign on behalf of working people, but now he wants to reject that philosophy and the party that gave him that career and the potential to represent working people. We are now expected to believe he has had a Trumpian epiphany and will stand up for working-class people. They do not buy it and the people of the Hunter will not buy it. All anyone has to do is look back at what we have seen over the last couple of months. As I said yesterday during the take-note debate, before I was interrupted by the Hon. Natalie Ward on a point of order—

The Hon. Natalie Ward: Point of order: I ask the honourable member to withdraw his comment. A member of this Chamber is entitled to take a point of order. The member's comment reflected on me in a pejorative way to say I was interrupting him when I had no alternative but to take a point of order in the circumstances. It was not done in order to interrupt the member; it was simply done to take the point of order, which I am entitled to do. I respectfully ask that the honourable member be directed to withdraw the comment.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: To the point of order: I am prepared to withdraw the comments so that I do not have my time taken away again. I will continue.

The Hon. Natalie Ward: To the point of order: With respect, it is not sufficient to be prepared to withdraw that comment so that the member can continue. The basis of my point of order is that the member took a pejorative view of my taking a point of order. I am entitled, as a member of this House, to take the point of order and the basis for doing so is in the content of my point of order. It is not designed to interrupt the member and I ask that the member withdraw his comment unreservedly on that basis and no other.

The PRESIDENT: I ask that the member withdraw his comment unconditionally.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: I withdraw the comment unconditionally. There was a coalminer up there by the name of Simon Turner. It beggars belief that a personality and an intellect with the force of the Hon. Mark Latham would not have had conversations regarding Federal policy with his colleagues in the Federal Parliament, Senators Malcolm Roberts and Pauline Hanson. This bloke, Simon Turner, was trotted out time after time on behalf of people in the Hunter and elsewhere on casualised labour and how companies were using, as the Hon. Adam Searle pointed out earlier, the classification of casual labour with people on full-time patterns of work. People who are effectively working 40 hours per week in a full-time pattern that would normally entitle them to

annual leave, long service leave and sick leave—all those things that a full-time employee can expect to get—are employed on a casual basis.

They were classified as casuals under laws that were backed in by them and their corporate donors who do not affiliate with them so we do not know who really backs them. We do not know where their political interests lie because they do not have the guts to say, "We donate to the Liberal Party and we believe in their political philosophy", but when a trade union does it and nails its colours to the mast, the Liberal Party has an issue with it. The same people who introduced laws to truncate the ability of casual workers to claim those entitlements come in here and try to relieve their embarrassment by besmirching Jeff Drayton. This is what Simon Turner had to say:

I was disgusted and felt betrayed at the highest level ... It's a complete backflip from representing Hunter coal miners. They made no changes to the IR bill.

He is talking about One Nation, backed in by the conservatives in the Federal Parliament. He continued:

What Senator Roberts actually did is make casual employment legal for everyone in Australia. Everyone who goes for a job can now legally be put on as casuals regardless of the hours they work.

If one coalminer being thrown under the bus was not enough, they had to go for two. Stuart Bonds, the erstwhile candidate for One Nation, spoke out against his own party's voting stance against the people that he wanted to represent: coalminers and casual workers. They were disendorsed because they disagreed with Mr Bonds' pro-worker stance. Mr Bonds said:

I can't justify it. I won't justify it. It doesn't appear to be a 180—it is a 180 ... It is not enough to fight for mines and mining companies, you must fight for the miners inside the mine as well.

Actions speak louder than words. People need to look at the actions of One Nation in relation to working people. They have thrown two coalminers under the bus and they are now attempting to throw Labor's candidate Jeff Drayton under as well. They used Simon Turner in an attempt to fool working people into thinking they cared about the pay and conditions of casual workers in the Hunter. They then threw him under the bus and voted with the Federal Government against the ability of casuals to claim their entitlements. Yesterday I spoke about a woman who cleaned for Mr Bonds.

The Hon. Mark Latham: Cleaned what?

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG: She cleaned his house. She told me about how he got skewered by text message saying, "You are no longer required." We all remember the outrage a few years ago when maritime workers on the wharves were sacked by text message. These people are doing the same thing. Then they try to traduce the reputation of a stand-up bloke like Jeff Drayton, who will do a great job in this Parliament. The Labor Party often gets criticised for not throwing up working-class people. This bloke is more in touch with reality than most people in this Chamber. He comes from the tools, he knows what it is like to work for a living and he knows how to represent working-class people. One Nation members have voted with their partners in the conservative Federal Government in this mass crime against hundreds and thousands of workers. They voted for the Industrial Relations Omnibus Bill which disenfranchises thousands upon thousands of casual workers. If people in the Hunter want to know what is going on here, they should look not at what people say but at what they do in the Federal Parliament.

The judge who presided over the royal commission and tried to drag trade unions' reputations through the mud and destroy the trade union movement was one Dyson Heydon. We all know the reputation and credibility of that person. Some members want to use the judgements in that kangaroo court to try to besmirch the reputation of people like me who know what it is like to work for a living and to represent working people. We will not cop the hypocrisy. Members opposite can do this day after day; we are up for it. The people in the Hunter will see straight through it and they will vote for our candidate, Jeff Drayton. Whether or not they vote in large enough volumes to get us over the line I do not know, but he is the best candidate we could have chosen because he is the real deal. If members opposite want to attack him every day, we are up for it. Let's sit for another week.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD (17:34): I feel it necessary to comment on this matter. Welcome to the murky waters and black ops run by some union officials who denigrate the work of the union movement and sell out workers. Previously, workers signed up to a union with the hope that being part of a collective would guarantee them a decent wage, workplace protections and opportunities for a better life for them and their family.

The Hon. Mark Buttigieg: You wouldn't know what a union is.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I was a member of a union. It is the reason I joined the Liberal Party! I spoke about the Shoppies in my inaugural speech. When an individual takes out a membership with a union, there is a social and financial contract that the rights of the worker come first and that the union works for them. Because of people like Jeff Drayton, that trust is gone and the contract is broken. With all of the conjecture and hyperbole in this Chamber, why don't we just look at the facts? The numbers do not lie. According to the

Australian Bureau of Statistics, trade union membership has generally declined since 1992. From 1992 to 2020, the proportion of employees who were trade union members fell from 40 per cent to 14 per cent. Jeff Drayton's dodgy deals have sold workers out. It is just one example in a sorry series of union officials preying on workers for personal gain. The *Financial Review* documented the work of Jeff Drayton in a 2018 article with this opening sentence:

The Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union signed off an enterprise agreement for the mining industry that paid below market rates and was later purchased by global labour hire giant Fircroft for more than \$300,000.

It was none other than Labor's candidate for the Upper Hunter, Jeff Drayton, who sought to tie workers to that agreement. It was the swindle of the century. It was an agreement signed with a labour hire company that provided casual work on just above the minimum wage with worse conditions and looser entitlements. It was then flogged off to the highest bidder—just like the rights of the workers they sought to represent. All of a sudden workers' rights were no longer sacred but a commodity to be traded. When the rights of workers are commercialised and people become payment, a race to the bottom ensues. The real losers are the workers who turn up every day to do a backbreaking job and who put their trust in a union that their labour will be rewarded only to learn that their memberships are being bundled up and sold off. It earned someone a ticket to a Labor preselection.

Over the past week, a protection racket has popped up to condone the business model of the Labor Party and rogue union officials. Members opposite do not want to hear it because they do not like hearing about the misdeeds of their masters. It is obvious that the Opposition benches in this place have become the union arm of the Labor Party, with almost every single Labor member in this place listing union affiliations on their Parliament website. Those who do not list union affiliations have likely seen the writing on the wall and are hiding from that terrible fact. The unions have bought their way onto the Labor benches, with the sole purpose of disrupting the Government's agenda of giving power to the workers. We are standing up for the everyday worker by improving workplace safety, by increasing wages and by creating more jobs than ever before while the union-backed Labor Party wants to control workplaces with an iron fist. It is a case of do as we say, not as we do.

Look at what happens when a Labor Party member dares to speak out against the unions. When the Leader of the Opposition criticised the Health Services Union and the Australian Workers' Union for publicly undermining her, they withdrew their support. Health Services Union boss Gerard Hayes went so far as to say it could no longer justify giving money to Labor. He said, "Our union is relentlessly member focused. We no longer believe affiliation to NSW Labor represents value for money." It is common knowledge that Chris Minns sank his leadership ambitions the day he entered Parliament when he said the Labor Party needed to represent people who were not from unions. Well, did that not upset the financial backers? We are yet to hear a Labor MP stand up for the rights of workers in the Upper Hunter for fear of upsetting their union backers.

Even I will admit, as a former member of the Shoppies, that once upon a time there was value in union membership. But the Labor Party and the unions are now the modern-day Icarus: They have flown too close to the sun. One of the greatest tragedies of humanity and a fair and functioning society is that there are certain people who are always going to be lazy and who are always going to be greedy. This deadly combination is too common within the unions, as the fat cats with no work ethic secure the good jobs and must hold on to them—at any cost to those around them—to satisfy their lifestyle. If only they put as much effort into productive work as they do into dodgy deals, we might imagine how much better the world could be. However, they fill Labor benches with their minions.

I do not believe the Labor Government of old would not have stood for this, with the duty of care for the worker and dislike for overinflated salaries at the forefront of its agenda. How times have changed. Rather than acting as a Praetorian Guard for workers in New South Wales, the Labor Party is more interested in filling the benches of Parliament with officials deft in tricky tactics and backroom deals—"You're the guy for us. You know how to do the deal. Give it to us and we will put you in here." Never has it been more pertinent to say—and I do not say this as a compliment—that it is the same old Labor. Nothing has changed. It is appalling. I support the motion.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (17:41): I make a short contribution to debate on the motion of the Hon. Mark Latham, a representative in this place of Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party. Of course, this motion is a political stunt. It is a by-election stunt designed to distract from the actions of One Nation in the Federal party. If the member has any evidence of the wrongdoing outlined in this motion he can provide it to the various organisations that are mentioned. They have processes available within their organisations for their members to raise these issues and have them dealt with—or, if it goes to that level, he is absolutely free to go to the authorities. However, he brings it to this Chamber because it is nothing more than a political stunt. Members will recall this is a party whose representatives, at risk of breaking Commonwealth laws around foreign interference, sought \$20 million in political donations from the National Rifle Association on a trip to the United States.

The Hon. Mark Buttigieg: That's okay, they're not affiliated.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: That is alright, they are not affiliated. Good point. Its members come into this place and talk about selling out the interests of union members but, of course, they were prepared to sell out the interests and safety of the Australian public at large and undermine democratic processes in doing so. It is all well and good for them to move this motion but we can see what this is really about. I will not support the motion as moved but I will support the amendments. I use this issue to reflect a little on the relationship between the union movement and the Labor Party. I do so cautiously because I have not been a member of the Labor Party, though I have been a member of the union movement in the past. I had an interesting experience back in 2011 when as a lowly member of The Greens at that time—not as a member of Parliament—I was a strong advocate for the Barry O'Farrell donation law proposal that sought to—

The Hon. Adam Searle: Shame!

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: Yes, we will get to that bit. The proposal sought to ban corporate and organisational political donations. It seemed to me a good thing that aligned with Greens policy at the time to support individual-only donations. It was controversial—but, of course, it was not the corporations that were most concerned about it. One might have thought they would have been; they had the most to lose. We hear about a lot of money flowing to political coffers, particularly from the big mining companies, and I have railed against that. It was Unions NSW that ultimately took those laws to the High Court. The laws sought to ban corporate and organisational donations by limiting them to being taken only from individuals on the electoral roll, but in effect that also banned affiliation fees. I acknowledge that it went right to the structure of the relationship between the union movement and the Labor Party.

It pains me to say that the unions were successful in that High Court challenge. To be honest, I do not think the Government argued the case particularly well. I think it lost a bit of skin on its side as well through this process. Ultimately, for those members who want to go back and have a look at it, the relevant sections were held to be invalid because they restricted the amount that a political party might spend on electioneering but did so in a way that would have restricted the party's maximum spending if an affiliated organisation had made similar expenditure. Of course, that really only directly targeted the Labor Party and the way it organises.

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: What a surprise!

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: I still thought it was a good idea. It meant that the party had that maximum electoral expenditure reduced if its affiliated organisation spent, but the High Court struck down this clause on the basis that it was not possible to see how the provision furthered an anti-corruption purpose. I think that goes directly to the points raised in this motion by the honourable member. At the time there was a lot of pushback on me. I stood up for myself in the arguments; however, the High Court spoke. But it was put to me by many members of the Labor Party and people in the union movement that it is difficult when we use legislation to go after one political party and the way it organises itself.

Ultimately, the members make up all of our political parties—for those of us who are in political parties. Political parties move with the times and shape themselves with the ideas of those members. I do not discount the fact that there are different opinions within the membership of the union movement in what political parties support in any particular election campaign or what issues they get behind. It is a reality that unions have chosen to remove or retain their affiliation with the Labor Party at different times—and they are clearly free to do that. I think that goes to the point here.

I find it just a bit absurd that we bring these hyper-politicised motions to this place. They are just designed to disrupt and distract from other issues in order to grab some headlines or buy some space in this by-election fight. Such debates are not in the interests of the broader public, which expects members to come to this place and do their job. However, to those being critical of the relationship between the union movement and the Labor Party—and potentially saying that the members are being diddled through that relationship—I say that the last time we really saw a political campaign run by the union movement in Australia that upended the Liberal Party was WorkChoices. The members of all of those unions, affiliated or not, came together with a single-minded purpose. They did not seem at all distracted by this relationship with the Labor Party. They were focused on the issues at hand. I think perhaps that is ultimately what scares those members opposite and motivates some of their political actions in this House today. I will not support the motion as put but I will support the amendments.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance and Small Business) (17:47): By leave: I speak to the amendment moved by the Hon. Wes Fang. During the contribution of the Leader of the Opposition he forcefully put the point that an aspersion was cast on those 14 MLCs opposite. To the extent that he suggested we were naming or suggesting that any member opposite was involved in this practice, that may well be a matter for each of them. However, certainly it was not the intention when I made my contribution to identify any specific

member opposite as being involved in any of these practices. If they are, the suggestion made by the Hon. John Graham is absolutely right: They ought to be dealt with.

If there has in fact been any practice where a union official was using funds inappropriately to further potential opportunities to be elected to this place it ought to be dealt with in the severest possible terms. I support the amendment moved by the Hon. Wes Fang to give clarity that on the Government's side there is no specific identification and certainly no reference to any member opposite in connection with an allegation that any person was involved. However, it is a matter for them whether they have been.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (17:49): I speak briefly to the amendment moved by the Hon. Wes Fang. The Opposition does not support the substantive motion but welcomes and supports the amendment. It is an appropriate amendment, given the exchange that has occurred between the Government and the Opposition on this point. I fully support the comments made by my colleague the Hon. John Graham that dodgy practices and illegality have no part in any political party. It is certainly the case that as far as I am concerned as leader of my party in this place I would never support any such activity.

In my time in the Labor Party I have been resolutely opposed to those kinds of practices, and previously practising law as a barrister in the industrial field I also had no association with any schemes or arrangements of the kind that have been suggested in this debate. We on this side of the House are resolutely opposed to any of the kinds of practices that have been discussed in this debate or are the subject matter of this motion. We reject the assertions in the motion but we say that if such practices occur anywhere—whether it is the trade union movement or any political party—they should be utterly rejected and dealt with according to the full force of the law, and that should be a commonly held position in this Parliament.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (17:51): I make a brief contribution to debate on the motion. I feel compelled to after hearing some of the previous speakers in the debate. I speak as a member of the Labor Party that was formed over 125 years ago as the parliamentary wing of the trade union movement. That is something in history that we are incredibly proud of on this side of the House, and it is certainly something that we pay tribute to regularly. But it is not just a question of history. Our party works in close partnership with hardworking trade union officials who are on the ground each day advocating for workers. I heard one of the previous speakers imply that the time of the union movement has passed, that it is something that should be relegated to the annals of history. Yes, it is true, we often talk about the fact that it is the trade union movement that delivered things like the weekend, the eight-hour working day and paid leave, so many of the things that we consider to be our way of life.

Now they continue to campaign on issues including Boxing Day trading, safety for our emergency service workers and paid parental leave. They also inform public policy on other areas that are affected by their union workers, for example, gas reservation policy and the inquiry we are currently having into the future of work—very ably chaired and initiated by my colleague the Hon. Daniel Mookhey—looking at some disgraceful practices that are occurring within the gig economy. These are genuinely nineteenth century working conditions that are being exposed only because of the work of the Transport Workers' Union and people who are prepared to stand up and risk their jobs and livelihoods to ensure that we have safe and fair working conditions, as we should in the twenty-first century in New South Wales.

There are bad apples in any organisation. I absolutely condemn them, as the Leader of the Opposition just has. There is no place for them. However, this side of the House will not be lectured by the party of Chris Hartcher, the party of John Sidoti, the party that lost its entire Hunter contingent to endemic corruption practices because of the way that they behaved. We are debating this motion because the Government's disgraced former member for Upper Hunter was forced to resign, causing a by-election. I stand here in solid defence, shoulder to shoulder with hardworking trade union officials who fight and campaign every day on behalf of their workers, as they should. As parliamentary representatives of the Labor Party we stand on their shoulders. We have campaigned long and hard on a range of issues and we will into the future. We remember that they are the people that we represent and work with and they are the people that we should think of when we talk about the trade union movement in New South Wales and Australia.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (17:54): I thought we dealt with this issue last week. We are back again for more it seems. The only inference I can draw from the decision to move this motion and for it to attract such support between the Coalition and One Nation is really because as the prospects of both of those parties sink into a quagmire in the Upper Hunter the desperation grows in the Macquarie Street Parliament. Using the rostrum like this to engage in the politics of smear only points out to the voters of the Upper Hunter that neither the party moving the motion nor the Government that is supporting it has anything of any substance to say to those workers about their jobs and their job security. We thus find ourselves again drawing on the same Trump-style misinformation campaign waged using institutional authority and the apparatus of the Parliament in order to get some credibility that they otherwise could not obtain by themselves. That is the only conclusion I draw.

Nevertheless, I address the substance of the motion. If the people who are moving the motion had genuine care for the workers of Australia they would not have gone to the Federal Parliament to vote to take away additional entitlements earned by the trade union movement that benefited every casual worker in this country. Millions of casual workers got access to paid leave, holiday pay and sick pay. One Nation and the Coalition would not have used the Federal Parliament to snatch what those workers won on the picket line and in the tribunals, using the power of Parliament.

I can assure members that if One Nation or The Nationals return a candidate in the Upper Hunter we can only assume what happened in the Federal Parliament will be repeated in Macquarie Street. They will use the power of their office to take away more conditions from workers and workers' organisations. That can be relied on because that is effectively what they are saying. A Coalition today that engages in the politics of smear is an anti-worker Coalition tomorrow that will take away rights that working people have struggled for centuries to win. That can be relied upon.

I was listening closely to the debate and I appeared, I featured. I was flattered to feature as one of the people who have apparently benefited from some of the aspects that have been described. Reference was made to an organisation which I proudly contributed to, to assist in the return of honest union officials in the trade union movement. One of the funds that was singled out and I was attacked for was the very same fund that was used to drive out Michael Williamson and Kathy Jackson from the trade union movement. I have spent more time fighting to remove Michael Williamson and Kathy Jackson from the trade union movement than pretty much everyone, with the exception of perhaps two serving officials of the Health Services Union. One of the proudest things I ever did was making sure that Michael Williamson and Kathy Jackson have no role in the organised labour movement. I would do it again, and again and again. Equally, part of the same fund was used to make sure that people like Derrick Belan had no part to play whatsoever.

When my colleague the Hon. John Graham says we have no tolerance for that type of behaviour in our movement, these are not just words that we say in Parliament; these are deeds that we carried out, well before we arrived here. My involvement in those campaigns—which I remain incredibly proud of—was investigated by Dyson Heydon's royal commission. I have nothing against that. I will be clear about this: I pit my character and the character of everyone involved in that effort to drive Michael Williamson and Kathy Jackson out of that union against Dyson Heydon's any day.

We will face a hundred Dyson Heydon inquiries into those activities because we are proud of the fact that inside our movement we deal with our own. Can the same be said of the Liberal Party and the National Party? No, not at all. Because there is a member of their ranks currently sitting in a parliamentary seat despite a major ICAC investigation into his conduct. If the Government came to this place with clean hands it would not have allowed John Sidoti to sit in a Cabinet position for 18 months; it would have removed him. If the Government were sincere in its actions it would never have allowed a person like Michael Johnsen to besmirch the office he held and the Parliament that belongs to the people.

The Hon. John Graham: He might have needed reputation management.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I accept the interjection from my colleague the Hon. John Graham. Michael Johnsen could put on a better show than we have witnessed today. I hear that he is now offering his strategic consultancy services. Perhaps there might be some clients on the other side of the Chamber who are willing to avail themselves of those services. I have seen photos of some of them on his website. They have the gall to talk about funny money in the same week as we see the first criminal charges being brought against the people involved in the Eight by Five scheme that has been referred to. In the very same week the Director of Public Prosecutions is prosecuting the activities that took place on the Central Coast those opposite have the gall to lecture Labor on integrity. As I have said on three occasions, the Opposition will listen to the Government on integrity when it deals with Daryl, Michael and Sidoti. Until then the Government has no credibility whatsoever.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (18:00): In reply: I thank all members who have contributed to this debate. I am always inspired by the Hon. John Graham and his career aspirations because he has a fine career ahead of him as a music reviewer. With all his references to the greatest hits and his expertise in that area, he is truly the Glenn A. Baker in waiting—

The Hon. John Graham: That's high praise.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: High praise, indeed. Beyond that, it is important to clarify a few matters. It is a long while since I have followed in detail Senate debates and outcomes. But my understanding of the decision of the industrial relations bill was to give an historic right for casuals to convert to permanent employment. On top of that there was a union ambit claim that was capped because it was right across the economy and would have sent the place broke. That is my understanding, but it is certainly not relevant to what is happening

in the Upper Hunter, where the issue with Jeff Drayton is crystal clear. Why would anyone pay fees to the CFMEU for an outfit that had John Maitland jailed in collaboration with Labor Ministers, signed over 50 of these enterprise agreements to entrench casuals and had the infamous one sold on to One Key for \$307,000? We have a bloke say he is going to stop the demonisation of coalminers and then give his preferences to the candidates who are demonising coal, along with their campaign director, Malcolm Turnbull. None of this adds up.

The Hon. John Graham asked: Why Jeff Drayton? Representations have been made to me and my office by people—members would be surprised as to their identity—in this building and beyond in the Labor movement. They have concerns about this bloke and the facts make it clear that those concerns are legitimate. In closing the debate, what Vern Faulkner had to say bears repeating. He said of the Labor candidate in the Upper Hunter, "This exposes the shameful fraud of the contractors agreement which rots the workers, with the author now the candidate in the by-election. Despicable!!" When I responded to that remark, he said:

Correct again Mark. Drayton is a tainted candidate. The shonky enterprise agreement exposes him and the CFMEU.

That is clearly on the public record. I was interested in the observations of the Leader of the Opposition about standards of civility. Just last week two of the people he leads in this place were shouting hysterically at the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones, who was seated in the chair, in a manner that could be regarded as intimidatory. If it had been in a domestic setting under the laws of this State the police would have been called and those members would probably have been arrested. I am afraid it is a bit late in the scene to talk about civility after what happened on that shameful Tuesday night last week. I am not going to wear that.

The Hon. Adam Searle: It was shameful but not for those reasons.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones won the ballot twice. For two Opposition members—men—to attack a woman like that, we will not hear any more of this talk about respect for women in politics. That was as aggressive an act of intimidation as you will see in public life. The Hon. Adam Searle says there is a lack of civility here. No, we will not put up with that double standard for a nanosecond. Beyond that, the question of illegality has been raised. Let me make it crystal clear: It is illegal to take union members' money and use it for purposes that union members knew nothing about and that had nothing to do with the trade union.

The Hon. Adam Searle: So report it if that is true.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: That is the law and they are facts. The Hon. Daniel Mookhey made a confession that he involved himself in the Health Services Union [HSU] election. If he wants to do that in his own time away from the Transport Workers' Union [TWU]—

The Hon. Adam Searle: He did.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: He used money supplied by the McLean Forum—hundreds of thousands of dollars from membership fees, fundraisers with the corporations. It was all documented in the royal commission into trade union corruption. I do not think a garbo who is a member of the TWU gives two hoots about what is happening in the Health Services Union. They want the TWU to represent them. They work hard in a job that is not the best standard of work, earn their money, pay their union fees and they expect every single official of the TWU to be working in their interests. If an official thought that Kathy Jackson and Michael Williamson were no good—and certainly they were crooks—they should go raise their own money in their own time and involve themselves in that union.

This is the sin that the motion identifies: Union officials think they are unionists at large—"I'm going to make the judgement about every single union. The HSU, I'm going to pay Gerard Hayes a stipend." For what? Just for running he got over \$10,000 from fees of garbos and others in the Transport Workers' Union. He is in the Health Services Union. That puts the lie to what Labor has said in this debate. You cannot be the unionist at large. You have a legal and an ethical responsibility. [*Time expired.*]

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): The Hon. Mark Latham has moved a motion, to which the Hon. Adam Searle and the Hon. Wes Fang have moved amendments. The question is that the amendment moved by the Hon. Adam Searle be agreed to.

Amendment of the Hon. Adam Searle negatived.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): The question is that the amendment moved by the Hon. Wes Fang be agreed to.

Amendment of the Hon. Wes Fang agreed to.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion as amended be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes18
 Noes21
 Majority.....3

AYES

Amato	Harwin	Mitchell
Cusack	Khan	Nile
Fang	Latham	Poulos
Farlow	Maclaren-Jones (teller)	Roberts
Farraway (teller)	Mallard	Tudehope
Franklin	Martin	Ward

NOES

Banasiak	Field	Moselmane
Borsak	Graham	Pearson
Boyd	Houssos	Primrose
Buttigieg (teller)	Hurst	Searle
D'Adam (teller)	Jackson	Secord
Donnelly	Mookhey	Sharpe
Faehrmann	Moriarty	Shoebridge

PAIRS

Taylor

Veitch

Motion as amended negatived.*Documents***CORE INTEGRITY****Return to Order**

The CLERK: According to the resolution of the House of 5 May 2021, I table documents relating to an order for papers regarding Core Integrity, received this day from the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, together with an indexed list of documents.

*Personal Explanation***HEALTH SERVICES UNION**

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (18:17): By leave: I wish to be clear that my efforts to remove Michael Williamson and Kathy Jackson from leadership positions in the Health Services Union were undertaken voluntarily in my own time. There was never any form of corporate fundraisers whatsoever, nor for that matter was any union member's money used in that campaign, as described earlier in the House.

*Motions***YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR****Debate resumed from 5 May 2021.**

The Hon. TARA MORIARTY (18:18): The last time this motion was debated, the debate was interrupted when I was mid-sentence so I will continue where I left off. This Young Women's Leadership Seminar was a successful event attended by around 45 students from 20 different schools and a further 600 students registered online. It was held in this Chamber and broadcast to students who were unable to attend in person. On behalf of the Opposition I say, "Well done!" to all who participated. I thank the schools who facilitated attendance. Well done to the Parliament's People and Engagement branch for organising the event. I thank the Hon. Catherine Cusack for moving the motion and recognising all the participants. Good luck to all of the young women leaders who participated. We very much look forward to seeing what you do in the future.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.*Documents***WESTMEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL****Production of Documents: Order**

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1200 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM (18:20): I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1200 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice by omitting "21 days" and inserting instead "28 days".

Leave granted.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Accordingly, I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within 28 days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents, created since 1 January 2018, in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning or the Department of Education relating to the proposed new primary school in Westmead:

- (a) all reports, briefings, memorandum, emails, email attachments and correspondence specifically relating to the proposed new primary school in Westmead;
- (b) all reports, briefings, memorandum, emails, email attachments and correspondence held, sent or received specifically relating to the Government's consideration of sites and land for the proposed new primary school in Westmead;
- (c) all correspondence, emails, briefing notes or House folder notes in the possession of the Office of the Minister for Education related to the proposed new primary school in Westmead; and
- (d) 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.

This order for the production of papers relates to a single school infrastructure project, which was a promise to build a new school in Westmead. That promise was made by the Government in the lead-up to the last election. It served a political agenda at the time. The Government never intended to keep that promise. The Government has sought to use a budgetary artifice to indicate that a project is underway by way of allocating planning money. That is a Clayton's budget allocation; it is a Treasury bureaucrat's trick. It creates the illusion that the Government is doing something when actually it is doing nothing. It is a deception that has been played on a number of communities and Westmead is one of them.

The problem at Westmead has been created by the Government, which overpromises and underdelivers. It is a problem that has been created by the School Infrastructure agenda being driven by political imperatives, rather than need. That issue was highlighted recently by the Auditor-General. The School Infrastructure program needs a dose of transparency. Communities deserve to know where projects are up to and where they are in terms of the priority list. Communities should be given the information they need. If a project has been delayed, they should be provided with the reasons why that project has been delayed.

I have pursued the matter in a number of forums, including estimates, a question on notice and questions without notice. Each time, the Minister has been afforded an opportunity to provide a full and frank answer to the reasonable questions held by members of the Westmead community. Each time, the response has been wanting. I have listened repeatedly to the Government make arguments in this House with regard to Standing Order 52. If a more respectful approach was taken to the other transparency mechanisms that are available to this Parliament, perhaps there would be less of a reliance on Standing Order 52. I urge the House to support the motion.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (18:23): I make a brief contribution to debate on the motion. I have spoken with the honourable member about it and have indicated to him that the Government will not be opposing the motion. In regard to the honourable member's reference to planning for this project being a Clayton's budget allocation, I have spoken in the House many times about the process the Government goes through to build schools. Planning is part of that; of course we need to spend money on planning. I object to the inference that this is a Clayton's budget allocation and not a real commitment. In regard to the member's comments about the Government underdelivering when it comes to School Infrastructure projects, that is just not the case. We on this side have delivered more than 100 schools since we have been in government and I think the results speak for themselves. The Government will not be opposing the motion.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

BANKSIA MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1176 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK (18:25): I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within 28 days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents in the possession, custody or control of the Ministry of Health, the Mental Health Commission, the Minister for Health and Medical Research, or the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women relating to the new Banksia Mental Health Unit at Tamworth Hospital:

- (a) the final Clinical Services Plan;
- (b) all draft versions of the Clinical Services Plan;
- (c) all data and modelling referenced in, or relied upon to draft or inform, the Clinical Services Plan;
- (d) all correspondence with all stakeholders relating to the new Banksia Mental Health Unit, including correspondence with members of parliament;
- (e) all documents, including official minutes, for all meetings relating to the design, planning, consultation and project management of the new Banksia Mental Health Unit;
- (f) all briefing material provided to the Minister for Health and Medical Research, or the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women;
- (g) all documents relating to all consultation undertaken, including:
 - (i) all submissions;
 - (ii) all documents relating to the community consultation strategy and its implementation; and
 - (iii) all documents relating to the clinician consultation strategy and its implementation.
- (h) all documents relating to the regional requirements for mental health care; 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.

The Banksia Mental Health Unit at Tamworth Hospital needs to be purpose-built for the area it is to service. That should be a no-brainer. There have been increasing rates of youth suicide in our regions and the closest options for children in those horrific situations are facilities in Newcastle, and those are often maxed out. Tamworth Hospital currently has no child and adolescent mental health wards. The director of mental health services is quoted as saying that it took a \$1.5 million private donation to the new Banksia Mental Health Unit to fund "a new separate pod for children, adolescents and vulnerable people". The announcement does not provide any new beds; they will simply be part of the 25 beds already announced. The director of mental health services is quoted as saying that there is no intention of setting up a child and adolescent unit in Tamworth and there are enough beds available at the Newcastle facility.

A clinical services plan would provide answers to the very burning questions about why this unit is not being purpose-built for the area it will be servicing. It should be made public to provide clarity to the Hunter New England Health District. The plan apparently does not support any new general-purpose or young persons' mental health beds before 2031. No-one has seen the plan, though. To appease community pressure, the member for Tamworth and the Hunter New England Local Health District have misrepresented the pod as a dedicated children's mental health unit, yet it only came about because of community pressure, and the details surrounding it are unclear. There is much community concern that the facility will not cater to local youth. The community deserves to be treated better.

According to modelling by Hunter New England Health, the Tamworth region will not need a single additional acute mental health care bed for the next decade. Because of that, the new Banksia Mental Health Unit will not contain a single additional adult acute care bed. It will just contain the same 25 general-purpose beds as the existing one. That simply does not cut it. Consultation and data, as far as we are aware, only assessed the demand in the New England region instead of considering the whole wider catchment of the hospital. We need to

know why those decisions have been made. As usual, the Government has not been forthcoming, so here we are again with another order for the production of papers.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (18:27): The Government will not be opposing the motion.

The Hon. TARA MORIARTY (18:28): On behalf of the Opposition, I support the motion. It is really important that this House and the community of Tamworth and its surrounds, who will rely on the Banksia Mental Health Unit, get a better understanding of the plan for the unit and whether it is suitable for the needs of the community, as the Hon. Mark Banasiak said. The mental health support needs of the Tamworth community and the broader region are significant. On a far too regular basis I hear from people and desperate families who use the system in that region. They are calling out for help, particularly for children and young people. There are barely any services for children and young people. The community tells me that there is not enough adequate mental health support to meet the needs of the local community as it is. Far too often people have to travel to Newcastle and elsewhere for basic care or they are left languishing on long waiting lists, which is simply not good enough.

The local health district has indicated that the plan for the unit is not what is actually required for the future of the community and that what is actually needed is more support for young people and adolescents. The two local members, who both happen to be Ministers in the Government, have raised concerns publicly in the local newspaper. The member for Northern Tablelands and the member for Tamworth have both indicated that they have concerns about whether the plan will be fit for purpose. The Opposition supports the call for papers to see what planning has been done for the Banksia Mental Health Unit, whether the Ministers are right, whether the mental health Minister is not listening and whether the local members are advocating properly through Cabinet and Government processes rather than being lions in the local newspaper and not actually delivering the services needed for their communities.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): I will now leave the chair. The House will resume at 8.00 p.m.

NATIVE FOREST MANAGEMENT

Production of Documents: Order

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1105 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (20:01): I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1105 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice as follows:

- (1) In paragraph (2) insert "or Regional NSW" after "the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment".
- (2) Omit paragraph (2) (a) and insert instead:
 - (a) all documents relating to the sustainable yield review of NSW Coastal Hardwood Forests found at https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1299388/fcnsw-sustainable-yield-report-2019-20-wildfires.pdf.
- (3) Omit paragraph (2) (b).

Leave granted.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: Accordingly, I move:

- (1) That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within seven days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces or the Natural Resources Commission relating to the terms of reference for the Natural Resource Commissions advice on forestry operations in public forests under the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval [IFOA]:
 - (a) the terms of reference for the Natural Resource Commissions advice on forestry operations in public forests under the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval [IFOA] after the 2019-20 bushfires, as requested by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and as referred to on the website, www.nrc.nsw.gov.au/ifo; and
 - (b) 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.

- (2) 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 created since 1 January 2020 in the possession, custody or control of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment or Regional NSW relating to the sustainable yield review of wood supply from public forests:
- (a) all documents relating to the sustainable yield review of NSW Coastal Hardwood Forests found at https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1299388/fcnsw-sustainable-yield-report-2019-20-wildfires.pdf; and
- (b) 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.

I understand Government will not oppose the motion as amended, which I appreciate. This order for papers under Standing Order 52 goes to two issues. The first relates to the terms of reference for a review that is being conducted by the Natural Resources Commission into the operation of the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval. The second relates to the documentation and process around the sustainable yield review undertaken last year by Forestry Corporation. I hope for the support of members. The documents will be valuable to the inquiry that is about to get underway into the future of the timber industry in New South Wales. Not only will they be beneficial for the public to see; they will also inform the deliberations for members in that inquiry. I commend the motion to the House.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (20:03): The Government will not oppose the motion.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (20:03): The Opposition will support the motion.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Business of the House

POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: On behalf of Ms Cate Faehrmann: I move:

That private member's business item No. 1182 outside the order of precedence be postponed until a later hour.

Motion agreed to.

Documents

MACQUARIE PARK EDUCATION PRECINCT

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: On behalf of the Hon. Courtney Houssos: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1157 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (20:04): On behalf of the Hon. Courtney Houssos: 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, created since 1 January 2017, in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning or the Department of Education relating to the Macquarie Park Education Precinct project:

- (a) all reports, briefings, memorandum, emails, email attachments and correspondence specifically relating to the Macquarie Park Education Precinct project;
- (b) all reports, briefings, memorandum, emails, email attachments and correspondence specifically relating to land use, land acquisition, land sale or exclusivity agreements regarding land in Macquarie Park; and
- (c) 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.

I will not speak to the motion. It seeks documents that are well set out in the order for papers and should not be controversial. I will leave my remarks there but reserve my right to speak in reply should the need arise.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (20:05): I have had a conversation with the Hon. Courtney Houssos about this motion. I have indicated to her what I will now indicate to the House, which is that the Government will not oppose the motion.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

BOX HILL AND GABLES PRIMARY SCHOOLS**Production of Documents: Order**

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: On behalf of the Hon. Courtney Houssos: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1159 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (20:06): On behalf of the Hon. Courtney Houssos: 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, created since 1 January 2017, in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning or the Department of Education relating to proposed primary schools in the suburbs of Box Hill and Gables:

- (a) all reports, briefings, memorandum, emails, email attachments and correspondence specifically relating to proposed public schools in the suburbs of Box Hill and Gables;
- (b) all reports, briefings, memorandum, emails, email attachments and correspondence specifically relating to land use, land acquisition, land relinquishment or agreement regarding land in Box Hill and the Gables development; and
- (c) 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.

As with the previous motion, this is a simple order for papers and relates to the proposed public schools in the suburbs of Box Hill and Gables. The scope of the documents sought are set out in the motion. It is similar to the previous motion and should not be controversial.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (20:06): As was the case with the last motion, the Government will not oppose this motion.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

TALLAWONG PRIMARY SCHOOL**Production of Documents: Order**

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1158 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (20:08): I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1158 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice by omitting "21 days" and inserting instead "28 days".

Leave granted.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Accordingly, I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within 28 days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents, created since 1 January 2017, in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning or the Department of Education relating to the Tallawong new primary school:

- (a) all reports, briefings, memorandum, emails, email attachments and correspondence specifically relating to the Tallawong new primary school;
- (b) all reports, briefings, memorandum, emails, email attachments and correspondence specifically relating to land use, land acquisition, land relinquishment or agreement regarding land in the suburbs of Tallawong, Schofields and Rouse Hill; and
- (c) 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.

I understand my colleague has already moved two of the calls for papers under Standing Order 52 in my name. I appreciate that he did that in my absence. This order for papers relates to a proposed new school in western Sydney. The documents sought are outlined extensively in the motion. I have had discussions with the Minister and I understand that the Government will not oppose this motion because of the amendment to allow more time for the information to be collected. I commend the motion to the House.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (20:09): The Government will complete the trifecta and not oppose the motion.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.*Motions***AUSTRALIAN STREET ART AWARDS**

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1101 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (20:10): I move:

- (1) That this House acknowledges that:
 - (a) on 4 March winners of the 2020 Australian Street Art Awards were announced across eight categories;
 - (b) Condobolin's Utes in the Paddock was awarded Best Sculpture Park or Trail at the 2020 Australian Street Art Awards; and
 - (c) Utes in the Paddock began as an idea from Burrawang West locals, Jana and Graham Pickles, eight years ago and has made Condobolin a destination in the Central West of New South Wales.
- (2) That this House congratulates Lachlan Shire Council, Jana and Graham Pickles, the local community and all the artists involved with this unique piece of art in the heart of New South Wales on their contribution to tourism in Condobolin and across the region.

This motion highlights one of the many positive projects that is bringing new life to our regional communities in the heart of New South Wales. For some, winning a category at the Australian Street Art Awards may not seem like a big deal, but for the community of Condobolin, the Lachlan Shire Council and the two locals who started it all, this success was the recognition of years of hard work. Utes in the Paddock was a concept brought to fruition by Jana and Graham Pickles of Burrawang West Station, which has significantly increased visitation to the Central West region. It is fantastic to see it awarded the 2020 Best Sculpture Park or Trail at the Australian Street Art Awards, which was announced in March this year.

This new category is for a collection of original 3D pieces, which are promoted together as an experience in a park, outdoor gallery, garden or along a short or long trail. The pieces must be on view to the public and do not need to be sculpture in its traditional form. They can be any 3D artwork, including works created by the community. Members who have made their way to Lachlan Valley Way near the intersection with The Gipps Way outside of Condobolin to see Utes in the Paddock know that this display ticks all the boxes and then some. For those who have not been fortunate enough to make it out to Condo, put simply, Utes in the Paddock is a series of old Holden utes painted by prominent Australian and local artists from the Central West.

How did this quirky and intriguing display come about? While travelling Route 66 on a trip across the United States, Graham Pickles and his wife, Jana, were drawn to an unusually popular attraction named Cadillac Ranch, located in the west of Texas. Intrigued by the ranch's popularity, the Utes in the Paddock concept grew from a what-if into a reality. As happens with many projects in regional communities, the locals got right behind it and utes were donated by residents from the area, with many of Australia's most gifted outback artists donating their time and talent. The possibilities of the project were then realised. Originally in Ootha, the Lachlan Shire Council saw the potential in what Jana and Graham had created and purchased a 25-acre block on The Gipps Way for the outdoor gallery—a move that has increased visitation to Condobolin and the wider region and brought great benefits to local businesses and the local community.

There are 17 utes in total, each with a unique take on life in the outback, reflecting not only the artist but also some iconic symbols of rural and regional Australia. The Utes include: *Go Vegemite* by Rob Keen; *Drizakubra* by Belinda Williams; *Emute* by Peter Browne; *Utezilla* by Jim Moginie and Stephen Coburn; *Clancy Stops The Overflow* by Peter Mortimore; *Ute of Arms* by Brad Brown and Scott Edwards; *Wiradjuri 'Uth' Story* by the Condobolin Youth Services; *The Stockman* by Michael Jones; *Cool Running Backed by Ned* by Paul Blahuta; and a favourite of many visitors and locals alike, *Dame Edna's Looute* by Karen Tooth, which is as it sounds—Dame Edna reading the paper whilst using outdoor toilet facilities. Utes in the Paddock is not the only piece of amazing artwork in the region; its success has inspired and encouraged other local community groups and councils to bring more art-based attractions to the region.

Sculpture Down the Lachlan will see the installation of 14 large-scale sculptures over an area of 100 kilometres from Forbes to Condobolin along Lachlan Valley Way, connecting to Utes in the Paddock and a new visitor information centre for the Lachlan Shire Council. Both projects are supported by the New South Wales Government. Having been to the site with Lachlan Shire Council, it is exciting to see its vision for a tourism precinct that will bring people to see both art trails, visit the towns and shop at local businesses along the way. Whilst I am sure Sculpture Down the Lachlan will also be a contender for this category of the Australian

Street Art Awards in the future, Utes in the Paddock started it all. I acknowledge the hard work, time given and vision of not only Lachlan Shire Council but also Graham and Jana Pickles, the artists and, of course, the community for driving this wacky idea to the success it is today. I commend the motion to the House.

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (20:15): I support the motion and thank the Hon. Sam Faraway for bringing it to the House. The 2020 Australian Street Art Awards recognise the incredible artistry of people in communities across Australia and their immense talent in projecting ideas and concepts on a large scale. They recognise not just talent but the profound ability to be thought provoking in spaces that the community engages with every day as they go about their lives. Legal street art is an intuitive way to weave arts and culture into the fabric of local communities. Art galleries and cultural institutions are of course incredibly valuable, but they cannot always offer the same level of interaction as works on the street, or certainly not accidental interaction with art.

Congratulations must go to all the winners in this year's awards, with a special mention to Condobolin's Utes in the Paddock—the only New South Wales artwork to be recognised as a gold winner this year. The Lachlan Shire Council, Jana and Graham Pickles, the local community and all the artists involved are absolutely deserving of recognition through this award. I also extend my congratulations to New South Wales silver award winners this year, including Chainsaw Art in West Wyalong, Walcha Open Air Gallery, the Gunnedah *Rainbow Serpent* and The Big Football, which is a tribute to the Daniher family.

Regional New South Wales is well known for its unique street artscapes and people travel for miles to see them. Whether that be the Barraba Silo Art or the murals at Eugowra, regional New South Wales has successfully created tourism experiences to share life on the land or the coast with anyone who visits where we call home. I particularly acknowledge a well-known street artist in the Northern Rivers called NITSUA, who creates extraordinary artworks that immerse you in the piece the moment you see it. His work is incredibly distinctive throughout the region, is profoundly connected to the community and embodies the experiences of local people. For example, in Rappville in northern New South Wales the local public school became a shelter for nearly 100 people during the Black Summer bushfires when 44 local homes were destroyed. On the wall of the school there is now a mural of a phoenix rising from the ashes. Principal Kathleen Collis recently said of the artwork:

The community wanted something that was uplifting and fitting for what we'd all experienced. We've got a marvellous phoenix which stands pride of place in the centre of our school building and it says on each side 'we will rise'. And that's what we're doing—bit by bit, day by day, step by step, we are rising.

Street art is uniquely entrenched in the experiences of the community in which it resides and embodies a notion of local identity. I strongly support the motion.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (20:17): On behalf of The Greens, I support the motion on the 2020 Australian Street Art Awards. The Greens support any programs that recognise the contribution of public artworks in New South Wales. However, these awards also offer an opportunity to question Government policies and attitudes that censor many outdoor art practices and are indicative of the Government's failure to embrace diversity in our local arts communities. New South Wales has a long history of street art, including the half a million "Eternity" text works of veteran Arthur Stace; the BUGA-UP campaign by guerilla graffiti group members, such as former MP Arthur Chesterfield-Evans; and subversive and political paste-ups and stencils of the 80s and 90s. While often illegal, these practices have informed and developed the type of large public murals we now see applauded in the Australian Street Art Awards. Despite this historical link, the Government has been enforcing a zero-tolerance policy on the majority of street artworks for over 20 years.

The Graffiti Control Act 2008 prohibits any artwork in public spaces without permission and even allows councils to remove publicly visible artworks from private property without the consent of the owner or occupier, effectively making decisions on our behalf about which artworks are worthy of our viewership. "Graffiti" typically refers to stylistic and cultural characteristics of a subcategory of street art, but the notion of graffiti has now been inextricably linked to illegality in government legislation. The policy of criminalising graffiti creates a hierarchy that elevates sanctioned or commissioned artworks over less formal street artworks that are usually created by younger, underprivileged artists without access to opportunities that would "legalise" their works. As a result of this censorship, we mostly see street murals with mainstream appeal and miss out on more diverse and spontaneous forms of creative expression.

State and local governments' insistence on eradicating graffiti and sanitising our public spaces is expensive and ineffective. Preventing graffiti in one local council area has been shown to move artists on to another and, in some cases, increase instances of graffiti. Graffiti artists also spend less time on pieces to avoid being caught, resulting in more of the quick tagging and etching that is most often associated with vandalism. Instead of paying lip service to street art while spending millions on its removal, the Government could try implementing policies that support positive outcomes of the art form, such as public wall space, youth engagement programs, identification and protection of important artworks and requiring owner permission before removing artworks

from private premises. However, The Greens do join in congratulating Lachlan Shire Council and all of the artists involved for this particular outdoor art project, Utes in the Paddock, which sounds fantastic.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (20:21): I make a brief contribution to speak in support of the motion moved by the Hon. Sam Faraway. I congratulate Jana and Graham Pickles, Lachlan Shire Council and particularly that local community on all the work that has been done. I am sure they are all very proud in Condobolin to receive that specific award. We are all very proud in Gunnedah as well because, as the Hon. Ben Franklin said in his contribution to the debate, the *Rainbow Serpent* in Gunnedah won the 2020 Best Rural Art Silver Award at the same awards, which is very exciting for the whole community and particularly those involved in that project.

The *Rainbow Serpent* sculpture is a lovely outdoor artwork. It is right in front of our creative arts gallery, our Civic and our town hall. It really is a fantastic sculpture and artwork, and it has turned the area into a really lovely precinct. The community uses those facilities a lot. In the past we have done pre-poll voting in the area. Anyone who particularly remembers what it is like to spend a long time doing pre-poll would appreciate that anything that makes the area prettier or more attractive can only be a good thing. It is a really lovely addition to our town. I once again congratulate everyone involved in that project in Gunnedah, as they were also successful at the 2020 Australian Street Art Awards.

The Hon. WALT SECORD (20:22): As the shadow arts Minister, I speak in support of the motion moved by the Hon. Sam Faraway involving the 2020 Australian Street Art Awards. I understand that the awards were across eight categories, which all featured very strong entrants.

The Hon. Taylor Martin: Name them.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I do not want to embarrass those entrants by just picking one or two, but I understand there was a very strong field out there.

The Hon. Adam Searle: We congratulate them all.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I congratulate them all. Street art is a very wonderful way of encouraging local artists to share their inspiration with the community. I join the Hon. Sam Faraway in congratulating Lachlan Shire Council, Jana and Graham Pickles, the local community and all the artists involved in this unique and wonderful project. I wish them much success and I hope that the project goes from strength to strength.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (20:23): I speak in support of the motion moved by the Hon. Sam Faraway. I too congratulate Lachlan Shire Council, Jana and Graham Pickles, the local community and all the artists involved in Condobolin's Utes in the Paddock on winning the Best Sculpture Park award at the 2020 Australian Street Art Awards. I have not seen the sculptures personally, but it is always great to hear in this Chamber about the local community projects across rural and regional New South Wales that work together to develop ways to draw visitors to their towns. I am looking forward to seeing Utes in the Paddock at some point.

I take the opportunity tonight to congratulate one of the nominees for the 2020 Australia Street Art Awards, the Pokolbin Distillery, which was nominated for its mural *Threatened Species of the Hunter* in the category of Best External Mural. The 30-metre mural was created by Zest Events International, whose creative producer is Andi Mether, and artist Thomas Jackson. It spreads across the entire wall of the distillery and showcases three threatened species in the Hunter region: the regent honeyeater, the swift parrot and the Pokolbin mallee. The judges said:

This mural is a great example of where well conceived, beautifully designed and well executed street art works as an eye-catching educational tool.

It is not the only mural in the Hunter Valley wine country. Liberal Cessnock councillor Rod Doherty and Lesley Morris from Towns With Heart have reminded me today that Kurri Kurri and the surrounding areas feature over 60 outdoor murals that tell the story of the people, events and places that have shaped the town of Kurri Kurri. The creation of these murals was commenced by Towns With Heart in 2003. The Murals Project has been a huge success for the local town. It has improved the quality of the landscape, provided a strong identity and pride for the local community and increased visitation, tourism expenditure and employment in Kurri Kurri while telling the area's history. I once again congratulate Condobolin's Utes in the Paddock on its success at the 2020 Australian Street Art Awards, and I hope that it inspires other regional and rural towns to develop creative ways to encourage visitors to their region.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (20:25): In reply: I thank the Hon. Ben Franklin, Ms Cate Faehrmann, the Hon. Sarah Mitchell, the Hon. Walt Secord and my colleague the Hon. Taylor Martin for their contributions to the debate. Lachlan Shire Council and Jana and Graham Pickles will appreciate that acknowledgement. Off the back of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which people travelled through the regions in caravans and four-wheel

drives or essentially holidayed in their own backyard, this is a very good way to showcase regional communities. Utes in the Paddock is on display at the massive intersection coming into Condobolin.

It is also where the New South Wales Government is supporting Lachlan Shire Council to build a new visitor information centre in addition to showcasing the Lachlan sculpture trail, which will be right down the Lachlan Valley Way from Forbes to Condobolin. I suggest to those who have not yet had a chance to go that it will definitely be worth having a look when it is all finished. It is absolutely fantastic. The State Government has opened three of the sculpture trails in conjunction with Forbes Shire Council. Some of the numbers that have been recorded at those sculpture trails are absolutely fantastic. Once again, I thank all members who have contributed to the debate. I commend the motion to the House.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Documents

SENIOR EXECUTIVE ROLES AND REMUNERATION

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1112 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (20:28): I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within seven days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents created since 1 January 2020 in the possession, custody or control of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment; Transport for NSW; or the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning relating to senior executive roles at the Land and Housing Corporation, Infrastructure and Place division of Transport for NSW and School Infrastructure NSW:

- (a) all documents relating to the role descriptions and evaluations, including work value points and recommended salary ranges for all senior executive roles in the Land and Housing Corporation;
- (b) all documents relating to the total remuneration of each senior executive in the Land and Housing Corporation by role (names may be omitted);
- (c) all documents relating to the role descriptions and evaluations, including work value points and recommended salary ranges for all senior executive roles in the Infrastructure and Place division within Transport for NSW;
- (d) all documents relating to the total remuneration of each senior executive in the Infrastructure and Place division within Transport for NSW (names may be omitted);
- (e) all documents relating to the role descriptions and evaluations, including work value points and recommended salary ranges for all senior executive roles in School Infrastructure NSW;
- (f) all documents relating to the total remuneration of each senior executive in School Infrastructure NSW (names may be omitted); and
- (g) 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.

The documents are reasonably self-explanatory. The history of this order for papers emerges from a line of questioning during not only this year's budget estimates but also those of previous years. It is about identifying the primary data underpinning certain answers that have been given to questions that have been asked. The relatively short time frame is because these documents should be well known to the government agencies, as these matters have been queried in some detail in the past. I urge the House to support the motion.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (20:29): The Government will not oppose the motion.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

SNOWY 2.0

Production of Documents: Order

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE (20:30): I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1090 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice as follows:

- (1) In paragraph (a) omit "disclose" and insert instead "set out".

- (2) In paragraph (b) omit "relating to" and insert instead "setting out".
- (3) In paragraph (c) omit "documents relating to the consideration of" and insert instead "advice, briefs and reports (including drafts) that consider the".
- (4) In paragraph (d) omit "disclose" and insert instead "set out".
- (5) In paragraph (e) omit "documents relating to" and insert instead "advice, briefs and reports (including drafts) setting out".

Leave granted.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: 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 created since 1 January 2017 in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Energy and Environment; Minister for Planning and Public Spaces; or Department of Planning, Industry and Environment relating to the planning and development of the transmission and connection lines for Snowy 2.0:

- (a) all documents which set out the statutory or planning constraints upon the transmission connections from the Snowy 2.0 power station through Kosciuszko National Park, including but not limited to the 2006 Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management;
- (b) all documents setting out any proposed amendments to the Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Management;
- (c) all advice, briefs and reports (including drafts) that consider the leases and licences related to the transmission and connection lines for Snowy 2.0 subject to part 6 of the Snowy Hydro Corporatisation Act 1997;
- (d) all documents which set out the construction options considered for the transmission connection to the Snowy 2.0 power station, including potential routes, voltage, overhead and underground options;
- (e) all advice, briefs and reports (including drafts) that consider the costs and benefits of overhead and underground transmission options; 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.

I thank the National Parks Association for its assistance in working through this process. This information will be useful in assessing how the Snowy Hydro project is proposing to link to the grid through a highly ecologically sensitive national park. We appreciate the cooperation of the Minister's office in determining a set of Standing Order 52 terms that we can all live with.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning) (20:31): The Government does not oppose the motion.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (20:31): The Opposition will support the call for papers. We also broadly support the project. We have met with the National Parks Association and asked questions of the relevant Ministers in relation to planning and execution of the issues raised by Mr David Shoebridge. The documents sought and the answers they may give are an important part of a proper evaluation of the project. The project is supported in principle by the Opposition. The Opposition will support the motion.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE (20:32): In reply: I thank both members for their contributions to the debate.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

THE HON. GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN AND EMAILS

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1074 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (20:33): I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within 28 days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents created since 1 January 2020 in the possession, custody or control of the Premier or Department of Premier and Cabinet relating to emails from the Premier:

- (a) all emails to or from members@premier.nsw.gov.au email account; and
- (b) 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.

The documents sought are in relatively short compass relating to emails to and from a particular email account operated in the name of the Premier. This email account and the traffic in and out of it has been the subject of

some public interest and inquiry. In order that it be an informed discussion, we seek these documents to better evaluate the communications to and from the Premier around those issues. I will not delay the House further. That is the basis upon which we seek the documents.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (20:34): As members would expect, the Government strongly opposes this motion. The motion is not reasonably necessary for the House to fulfil its scrutiny function. If passed, it would be invalid and beyond the powers of the House. The motion asks for "all emails to or from" an email account in the Premier's office since last January. No subject matter is given, nor is the scope limited in any other way. The motion is a fishing expedition that would undermine public confidence in the integrity of this House. We accept that the Legislative Council must be armed with such powers as are reasonably necessary for the proper exercise of its functions. However, the Legislative Council's powers are not limitless. The House has only such powers as are reasonably necessary for it to effectively perform its functions as a House of scrutiny. The opinion of the Solicitor General and Ms Mitchelmore of counsel dated 9 April 2014 has been tabled in the House and published. The advice notes:

It would be reasonable in our view, to query or dispute an order that contained an impractical deadline or referred to no specific subject matter in relation to the documents sought ... or referred to a subject matter that was so broad and unwieldy as to place great practical difficulties on compliance.

The motion is a fishing expedition without limitation. Accordingly, this House is unable to properly consider the necessity of the resolution and whether it is reasonable when the scope of the order is so vague and imprecise. The motion is therefore invalid and beyond the power of the House. It should not be supported by members.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (20:35): In reply: I am not aware of any test as to the subject matter or that it be defined. The location of the documents is sought. These are matters of public record and public controversy and in order that discussion be properly informed we seek the documents. It should not require a great deal of effort on the part of the Government. To avoid the shredding of entire forests, if that is how much traffic has gone through this email account we would welcome the provision of documents in electronic format. That is not something we can direct the Government to do. I look forward to the day when returns are electronic. I urge the House to support the production of these papers.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes23
Noes16
Majority.....7

AYES

Banasiak	Graham	Pearson
Borsak	Houssos	Primrose
Boyd	Hurst	Roberts
Buttigieg (teller)	Jackson	Searle
D'Adam (teller)	Latham	Secord
Donnelly	Mookhey	Sharpe
Faehrmann	Moriarty	Shoebridge
Field	Moselmane	

NOES

Cusack	Khan	Nile
Fang	Maclaren-Jones (teller)	Poulos
Farlow	Mallard	Taylor
Farraway (teller)	Martin	Tudehope
Franklin	Mitchell	Ward
Harwin		

PAIRS

Veitch	Amato
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Motion agreed to.

PUBLIC LAND AND PROPERTY SALES

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1089 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (20:48): I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1089 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice as follows:

- (1) Omit "1 March 2019" and insert instead "1 March 2017".
- (2) Omit wherever occurring "land or property sales or disposal targets" and insert instead "land or property sales, disposal, or divestment targets".
- (3) Insert after paragraph (a):
 - (b) all documents, including reports, analysis, briefing notes, correspondence, or other records, relating to the sale, disposal, or divestment of vacant, surplus, or residual land relating to the WestConnex project.

Leave granted.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Accordingly, I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within 28 days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents created since 1 March 2017 in the possession, custody or control of the Premier; the Treasurer; the Minister for Finance and Small Business; the Minister for Customer Service; the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning; the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education; the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services; the Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts; the Attorney General; the Minister for Police and Emergency Services; the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections; the Minister for Local Government; the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation; the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans; the Minister for Health and Medical Research; the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women; the Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade; the Minister for Transport and Roads; the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads; the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces; the Minister for Water, Property and Housing; the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney; the Minister for Energy and Environment; the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales; the Department of Premier and Cabinet; Treasury; the Ministry of Health; Transport for NSW; Sydney Trains; NSW TrainLink; State Transit; RailCorp; Sydney Ferries; Port Authority of New South Wales; Office of Transport Safety Investigations; the Department of Customer Service; the Department of Education; the Department of Communities and Justice; the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment; or Regional NSW relating to land or property sales, disposal, or divestment targets:

- (a) all documents relating to land or property sales, disposal, or divestment targets of departments or agencies;
- (b) all documents, including reports, analysis, briefing notes, correspondence, or other records, relating to the sale, disposal, or divestment of vacant, surplus, or residual land relating to the WestConnex project; and
- (c) 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.

This Government controversially privatised the Scone TAFE site and has put up for sale significant amounts of government-owned property, in what might be described as a fire sale. I am reminded of politics in the late 1980s where the catch cry was, "See New South Wales before Greiner and Murray sell it." That was a reference to an earlier fire sale of government-owned assets. The Government, having been emboldened by various privatisations—electricity, Land and Property Information, and half of WestConnex—is now moving to try to identify other assets that it can sell, starting with land, which is quite easy to sell without necessarily drawing public ire or opprobrium. The sheer scale of it is staggering. We seek those documents so we can better understand the plans of the Government and where they are up to, and to inform not only debate in this place but also public discourse around the alienation of publicly owned lands.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (20:50): It will be no surprise that the Government strongly opposes the motion. The resolution is not reasonably necessary for the House to fulfil its scrutiny function. The motion asks for:

- (a) all documents relating to land or property sales, disposal, or divestment targets of departments or agencies ...

The motion asks for this information from every Minister as well as from 16 agencies. The scope is totally unreasonable and will duplicate effort and cost across our Government. I suggest to the Hon. Adam Searle that the motion should instead select a more reasonable number of agencies and the responsible Ministers only. We accept that the Legislative Council must be armed with such powers as are reasonably necessary for the proper exercise of its functions. However, the power of this House to compel the production of State papers is an extraordinary one. It should be exercised with the utmost care and restraint and following a careful assessment by members of the significance and relevance of the documents for parliamentary proceedings. It should not be used to conduct a fishing expedition or to divert scarce resources away from programs and services that actually help

the citizens of New South Wales every day. The motion therefore is unreasonable and should not be supported by members.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE (20:52): In reply: It is the sheer scale of the Government's effort to divest itself of property that gives rise to the breadth of the motion. However, since the sessional order that enables the variation of Standing Order 52 requests was put in place, which provides for a structured dialogue between government and members, Opposition members have engaged very constructively with government where reasonable requests have been made. We maintain the call in its current form, as amended. If any difficulties arise, my door is open for Government members to discuss it should there be a need to do so.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes23
Noes16
Majority.....7

AYES

Banasiak	Graham	Pearson
Borsak	Houssos	Primrose
Boyd	Hurst	Roberts
Buttigieg (teller)	Jackson	Searle
D'Adam (teller)	Latham	Secord
Donnelly	Mookhey	Sharpe
Faehrmann	Moriarty	Shoebridge
Field	Moselmane	

NOES

Cusack	Khan	Nile
Fang	Maclaren-Jones (teller)	Poulos
Farlow	Mallard	Taylor
Farraway (teller)	Martin	Tudehope
Franklin	Mitchell	Ward
Harwin		

PAIRS

Veitch

Amato

Motion agreed to.

Motions

INDIGENOUS POLICE RECRUITMENT

The Hon. LOU AMATO: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1083 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. LOU AMATO (21:03): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) the NSW Police Force and TAFE NSW have been doing exemplary work in partnering to create career opportunities in the NSW Police Force for Indigenous people;
 - (b) the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Hon. David Elliott, MP; the Commissioner of Police, Mr Mick Fuller; and TAFE NSW have been dedicated and committed to formulating the Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery program [IPROWD]; and
 - (c) the Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery program is committed to achieving the following objectives:
 - (i) supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to join the NSW Police Force or other Justice and Emergency Services agencies; and

- (ii) the IPROWD program is designed to prepare students for the University Certificate in Workforce Essentials [UCWE], the Associate Degree in Policing Practice [ADPP] offered by Charles Sturt University [CSU] at the NSW Police Academy, or other vocational and study pathways.
- (2) That this House acknowledges:
- (a) the unique and wonderful cultural heritage of the Aboriginal people;
 - (b) the significant contribution of Indigenous police officers in serving the State of New South Wales; and
 - (c) the contribution of all of our police and emergency service personnel who have dedicated their lives in service to the state of New South Wales.

New South Wales has endured some pretty tough times. We had the drought that seemed to never end, the worst bushfires in living memory and now the pandemic. Sometimes it is difficult to see the positives. We have in recent times made much progress as a nation in embracing our Indigenous history. Our ancient land has a history of human occupation that spans tens of thousands of years. The First People to call Australia home have a unique culture that we as Australians have come to appreciate and embrace. The struggles of the Indigenous people and their survival strategies in the harsh and unpredictable climate of Australia is a story of courage and determination. These struggles have been woven into the stories and spirituality of Australia's First Peoples. We are blessed to have come to a place where we as a nation have begun to understand the beauty and fortitude of a people who, despite all the challenges the harsh and ever-changing landscape of Australia presents, have become part of the very landscape itself.

In times past many, either through ignorance or racial discrimination, have failed to acknowledge the greatness of our Indigenous brothers and sisters. Sadly many injustices were perpetrated causing a great social divide between the First Peoples and those who followed. We have at least learnt the errors of our ways and today the new paradigm is one of embracing all peoples with respect and dignity, understanding that united as a nation we can achieve great things. There is still much work to do but we have at the least made inroads into true reconciliation and forgiveness. For many of us, myself included, we have found great joy in the unity of our people working together for a better Australia built on peace and prosperity. For many Aboriginal people, the fruits of prosperity were not easily accessible. We have seen the disproportionate rates of incarceration of Indigenous youths, which we must address. As a nation, we demand equal opportunity and justice for all and we will not tolerate any injustice targeted at any group under any circumstances.

I commend the New South Wales Government on the Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery program. The program works towards increasing the number of Aboriginal people who have the opportunity to serve our great State in the NSW Police Force and other emergency service agencies. TAFE NSW is providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with targeted education programs to prepare students for the University Certificate in Workforce Essentials, the Associate Degree in Policing Practice offered by Charles Sturt University at the NSW Police Academy or other vocational and study pathways. The good people of New South Wales have agonised over the reports of Aboriginal deaths in custody. Our hearts are troubled over the disproportionate number of incarcerated Indigenous people. We can no longer tolerate the inequity that so many of Australia's First Peoples suffer.

Many Indigenous youths have taken the path to serve New South Wales as police officers. These officers have a strong commitment to turning the tide on the disproportionate number of Aboriginal people facing incarceration. These dedicated officers, who understand the challenges faced by Indigenous people, will be the role models for our Indigenous youth. Their example will be a guiding light for those who wish to take up the challenge and serve the people of New South Wales. The Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery program is a positive step forward in paving the way for more Aboriginal youth serving our great State in the NSW Police Force. As a nation we have taken the road to embrace the wonderful heritage of our First Peoples. United as a people, we are all enriched by the human history of this land, which has endured for 40,000 years. We are proud of our Aboriginal people and give thanks to those who have taken up the challenge of serving our State as police officers and emergency service personnel.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (21:07): I thank the Hon. Lou Amato for moving this motion and commend him for his speech, which expressed the sentiments of many members of the House. The Indigenous recruitment program is fantastic. At the moment just 4 per cent of employees of the NSW Police Force are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and this program is one of the ways that the police service is seeking to boost that figure. The program runs for 18 weeks, during which students are engaged in academic, fitness and leadership training. It is a holistic program to try to bring Indigenous students in the police system. I thank Gomeroi man Peter Gibbs, who in 2008 founded this program, and I pay respect to his sister, whose death in police custody in 1997 was the impetus for the program. Since then, the program has had an incredible impact on the number of Aboriginal students coming through and considering the police force as a career.

Since 2008 more than 700 Aboriginal students have enrolled, many of whom have gone on to serve with the NSW Police Force, either as sworn or as unsworn officers, or are working in many other government agencies. The Hon. Lou Amato has already made this reflection, but I agree with it: There has been much progress but there is much, much more to do. I thank those members of the House who served on the Aboriginal deaths in custody anniversary review inquiry, which I had nothing to do with as a member of this House but I thought it was a remarkable report. I thought it was a really good intervention in the public discussion around the issues just to ask, decades on: How far have we come? The answer is not nearly far enough.

I raise one of my key concerns about the program. It is not all good news when it comes to this program. My ask of the team sponsoring the program is: Can they ease up a little bit on the fitness? I have come across a couple of the students working their way through the program down at the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence. There is a boxing program and it is where the Redfern kids gather before they go to school or to work. They are down there boxing and learning fitness. It is fantastic. Some of those graduates are a little too good on the fitness scale and a little bit rough with the gloves. If the program could just calm down on the fitness I would be a whole lot happier!

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (21:10): I support the motion moved by the Hon. Lou Amato. I thank him for this important motion, which I hope is supported by members on all sides of the Chamber. The Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery [IPROWD] program is a bold initiative to support Indigenous Australians to join the NSW Police Force and other emergency and justice services. Countless evidence shows that when we see or recognise ourselves in the society in which we live, we are more likely to feel a sense of belonging to where we see ourselves represented. I believe this partnership between TAFE, the NSW Police Force, Charles Sturt University and the Australian Government is a crucial step forward in Indigenous representation and breaking stereotypes and cycles of disadvantage.

Since 2008, more than 700 Aboriginal students have enrolled and, as of last year, more than 160 graduates have joined the NSW Police Force, while others are now employed by the Australian Federal Police, Australian Border Force, NSW Corrective Services and other emergency services. Other students have moved into careers within local and State governments or moved on to complete further study at a tertiary level. I am proud that in my home region of Northern Rivers Lismore TAFE offers this program to help Indigenous members of our community into a rewarding career. As a quality educator and service provider to over 30,000 people, Lismore TAFE is at the heart of the local and broader community and continually empowers students to reach their full potential.

Throughout the Northern Rivers, our First People belong to the Bundjalung nation. Their culture and history offer so much to our community and I am thrilled that the IPROWD program in Lismore gives local Aboriginal people the chance to create a bright future. Last year TAFE NSW senior manager of Aboriginal engagement Sharon Taylor said of this program, "If people grab it by the horns and give it a go, it can literally change their lives." That is the power of positive collaboration between government, emergency services and educational institutions. The holistic approach of the program has meant that students emerge with improved skills in literacy, numeracy, communications, IT and finance. Graduates have also reported they feel more confident in themselves and their capabilities, and TAFE NSW continues to offer post-course support to help with job applications and the recruitment process, as well as further study. This is a wonderful program that deserves the full and wholehearted support of every member of this House. I proudly support the motion.

The Hon. LOU AMATO (21:13): In reply: I thank the Hon. John Graham and the Hon. Ben Franklin for their valuable contributions to this very important debate. We are living in a new era of inclusion and cooperation, which undoubtedly will strengthen our State. Our Indigenous peoples have been blessed with over 40,000 years of culture and connection to our wonderful land. We are thankful that we have come to a place where we can share in this past and, united together as Australians, continue to make New South Wales great. I commend the New South Wales Government for the Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery program. We all look forward to the contribution of more Aboriginal police officers serving the great State of New South Wales.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Documents

GREY NURSE SHARKS

Production of Documents: Order

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1189 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (21:15): I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House within 28 days of the date of passing of this resolution the following documents created in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, Minister for Energy and Environment and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment relating to grey nurse sharks:

- (a) all documents, correspondence and advice created since 1 June 2020 relating to breaches, written warnings and penalty notices in all water within the critical habitat of grey nurse shark at Fish Rock Cave, New South Wales;
- (b) all research and advice since 1 January 2018 relating to:
 - (i) the impacts of fishing on grey nurse sharks; and
 - (ii) the role of sanctuary zones to protect their populations; and
- (c) 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.

This request for papers under Standing Order 52 in relation to grey nurse sharks is necessary, first, to ascertain just what is happening with the most serious risk to grey nurse sharks in New South Wales waters—and, unfortunately, that is fishing. In 2018 the CSIRO estimated the population of grey nurse sharks to be between just 1,700 and 2,200 sharks. Along the east coast of Australia grey nurse sharks are particularly at risk to the point that every single shark that encounters a hook matters. This call for papers is related specifically, as stated in paragraph (a) of the motion, to the critical habitat of grey nurse sharks at Fish Rock, New South Wales. I have been diving at Fish Rock in New South Wales and I have been very close to grey nurse sharks. Fish Rock is critical habitat; it is where they go to feed, breed and rest on the bottom of the ocean as they are feeding. I have seen a shark with a very fresh hook in its mouth. Sharks can die as a result of hooks.

The Greens have been contacted by members of the community who are concerned about some of the compliance in relation to potential breaches by fishing vessels. It is important we obtain as much information as possible so that, if we need to, we can do more to protect the sharks and ensure compliance occurs, as well as ensure that people are not fishing where they should not be fishing. That is a very good reason to support this call for papers. I commend the motion to the House.

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (21:17): I oppose this motion on behalf of the Government. The New South Wales Government is committed to protecting critically endangered species, which is why grey nurse sharks are totally protected in New South Wales and Commonwealth waters. Harming or fishing for them is illegal and substantial penalties await those who do so. If you catch a grey nurse shark, you must release it carefully, causing the least possible harm. For first offences, maximum penalties of \$22,000 and/or six months' imprisonment apply, and \$44,000 and/or 12 months' imprisonment for a second or subsequent offence.

We on the Government side of the Chamber have no problem with being transparent about the issuing of those penalties. They are in place to protect this endangered species. But, as Ms Cate Faehrmann may be aware, we have already provided information requested through this motion when we received a Government Information (Public Access) Act application from a member of the public. So why do we now need to go through an unnecessary and wasteful Standing Order 52 process? The information revealed that in 2020 there were 17 sanctions for offences at Fish Rock and Green Island. Further, the information showed that since June 2020 New South Wales Department of Primary Industries fisheries officers issued 25 penalty notices and 23 written cautions for offences reported at the Fish Rock grey nurse habitat site. Why are those opposite now requesting this information and wasting the time of parliamentarians and the money of taxpayers?

We are committed to protecting our endangered species, whatever they are, including the grey nurse shark. That is why, following research on the behavioural response of grey nurse sharks to recreational fishing gear, the Government announced a review of grey nurse shark protection arrangements. As a result, some changes were made to recreational fishing and spearfishing arrangements at a number of locations along the New South Wales coast, including the Fish Rock critical habitat area. Line fishing using bait is now prohibited in the area as is the taking of many species of fish by spear or spear gun within 200 metres of Fish Rock. The Government works to protect this endangered species through a range of means and it has been open throughout the process. The New South Wales Government has already worked collaboratively to provide information on penalty notices issued at Fish Rock, so there is nothing to be gained by passing the motion. It is for that reason that the Government opposes it.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (21:20): I thank the Parliamentary Secretary for his contribution. I know he is one of the members of the Government who takes conservation issues seriously. The Opposition supports the motion. I was surprised to hear the Parliamentary Secretary say that the Government is opposing it. It seems like

a specific resolution that is pointing to a particular place in New South Wales. With the number of offences he mentioned—17 sanctions in 2020 and 25 penalty notices since June 2020—this order for the production of documents will barely produce half a ream of A4 paper after the Government has assembled the correspondence and advice relating to those penalties. Because of that, and given that the member is seeking the research and advice that might be relevant to it, the Opposition is happy to support the motion.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (21:21): In reply: In situations in future when a request under the Government Information (Public Access) Act is similar to this motion, I urge the Minister to discuss the extent of the motion with me. There have been 17 sanctions and 25 penalty notices, and that is quite a lot considering how at risk grey nurse sharks are. I understand that there is more information to be uncovered. I thank everyone who spoke in the debate.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes20
Noes18
Majority.....2

AYES

Banasiak	Field	Moselmane
Borsak	Graham	Pearson
Boyd	Houssos	Primrose
Buttigieg (teller)	Hurst	Searle
D'Adam (teller)	Jackson	Secord
Donnelly	Mookhey	Shoebridge
Faehrmann	Moriarty	

NOES

Cusack	Khan	Nile
Fang	Latham	Poulos
Farlow	Maclaren-Jones (teller)	Roberts
Farraway (teller)	Mallard	Taylor
Franklin	Martin	Tudehope
Harwin	Mitchell	Ward

PAIRS

Veitch

Amato

Motion agreed to.

Motions

VISHVA HINDU PARISHAD

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1149 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (21:32): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) at the budget estimates hearing of the Portfolio Committee No. 3 - Education on 3 March 2021, Mr Shoebridge alleged that Vishva Hindu Parishad was a "right-wing Hindu organisation that is considered a military extremist religious organisation by the CIA" and was running Special Religious Education [SRE] in New South Wales public schools;
 - (b) later that day the Secretary of the New South Wales Department of Education informed the committee, "regarding the Vishva Hindu Parishad organisation, the New South Wales Department of Education has close connections with the NSW Police Force. We have police officers who work with us. We are informed by them that the organisation that you have spoken of today is not identified as a terrorist organisation or a terrorist organisation in New South Wales. They are not known as an organisation of concern in New South Wales. Where NSW Police are aware of any concerns regarding any group or organisation known to be in our schools, they advise us immediately. On the

specifics of the two schools you raised today, I am informed that in Toongabbie Public School there is usually a teacher with a Hindi background in the rooms while each stage of the group SRE is conducted ... The groups are held at different times so that the teacher can attend. At William Dean, there is also a teacher present at all times when that SRE takes place"; and

- (c) the New South Wales Minister for Multiculturalism, Hon. Geoff Lee, MP, has written to Mr Shoebridge advising him he has caused great upset among members of the Hindu community and that, "my agency, Multicultural NSW, has enquired with NSW Police Force and the Department of Education and I am advised that VHP is not a known terrorism group within New South Wales".
- (2) Further, that this House:
- (a) supports Minister Lee in his written request to Mr Shoebridge as follows, "At a time when promoting community harmony is critical, your comments have unfortunately created divisiveness and distress. Whilst I am hopeful this was not your intention, I encourage you to consider the impact your comments have made and apologise for any offence they may have caused"; and
- (b) calls on Mr Shoebridge to withdraw his comments and apologise to the Hindu community, especially at this time of great concern and heartbreak caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in India.

I can report to the House a world first, a unique global circumstance: The Greens are relying on the Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] as their source of information. Who would have thought that in smearing a peace-loving religious organisation teaching Scripture in our schools, the source of information relied upon by Mr David Shoebridge was the CIA?

The Hon. Taylor Martin: The CIA set him up.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Well, we would love to see his file at the CIA. Apparently he has some information there. The subject of the motion was expressed perfectly by the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, who not long ago in this place said:

There is no evidence that the VHP in Australia is anything other than a voluntary organisation of men and women who teach Hindu children about their religion. So says the NSW Police Force; so says the Department of Education. The allegations that were made at budget estimates have hurt many people in the Hindu community.

On behalf of the Labor Party he was urging Mr David Shoebridge, who made those allegations, to reconsider his remarks. Budget estimates hearings are designed to hold the Government accountable, not to slur a peace-loving community with false allegations.

The Hon. Daniel Mookhey: Well, that is very eloquent.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It is; that is very true. It is good to see the Labor Party rejecting CIA-sourced information and instead doing its own original research to ensure that the facts are known in the Legislative Council of New South Wales and the broader New South Wales community. I commend the honourable member for that. It is hard to believe Greens members are in the stranglehold of the CIA and projecting that information against a fine community group. I chaired one of those budget estimates hearings. There was a second one, the multicultural budget estimates hearing, where the CIA-loving Mr David Shoebridge used the same slur. At the education committee, the outgoing secretary of the department, Mr Scott, who has moved on to wrecking the University of Sydney, said of the allegation against the Vishva Hindu Parishad [VHP]:

On the specifics of the two schools you raised today, I am informed that in Toongabbie Public School there is usually a teacher with a Hindi background in the rooms while each stage of the group SRE is conducted ... The groups are held at different times so that the teacher can attend. At William Dean, there is also a teacher present at all times when that SRE takes place.

That is a comprehensive safeguard against any problem. The feeling from the police and the education department is that there is no problem. VHP Australia has 155 teachers who volunteer their time every week to teach children about their faith. Those teachers are contributing to Australian society and to the schools in which they teach. Two months on they are still very disappointed with Mr Shoebridge's baseless and hurtful allegations. For the member to be in collaboration with the CIA is one thing. That is very unusual indeed. But at least in the Australian circumstance he should have checked with the police here, the department of multicultural affairs and the education department. He would have found out that he had been misled by the CIA. Strange days indeed for The Greens.

The motion calls on Mr Shoebridge to retract the statements that he made and apologise to VHP Australia and the Hindu community for the hurt that has been caused, particularly at a time when that community is very worried about the situation in India. I think it was perfectly summed up by the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, who said that budget estimates are to elicit information from the Government and to hold the Government accountable, but in making this kind of false allegation, maybe the honourable member has made an honest mistake. Maybe the CIA gave him misleading information. But in the Australian circumstance he should have the integrity to withdraw his comment, to apologise and ease the hurt on this community. From what we can see, there is no evidence that the slur is accurate. He should ease the hurt on this community, which is already suffering from COVID in India.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (21:36): Like the Hon. Mark Latham, I was at one of those budget estimates hearings, where I heard Mr David Shoebridge's outrageous slurs. As we know, Vishva Hindu Parishad [VHP] is a registered incorporated charity in New South Wales with no paid staff but over 250 volunteers who dedicate themselves to supporting the community and, in particular, special religious education [SRE], which we know to be a bugbear of Mr Shoebridge. Vishva Hindu Parishad aims to promote activities of culture, community arts, community languages, heritage, civilisation, education, aid and relief. It operates in schools throughout New South Wales. We now have over 187,000 Hindus in New South Wales, of which 34 per cent are under the age of 14. One of the key phrases of Hinduism—I am sure the Hon. Daniel Mookhey will speak about this—is "Vasudhaiva kutumbakam", which I am sure to have pronounced incorrectly, which means "The world is one family." We did not see that on display.

VHP's SRE program—teaching Hindu dharma—is fully approved by the NSW Department of Education. Vishva Hindu Parishad advises that it currently services around 80 schools. All of the teachers are fully trained volunteers, who are mostly the parents of studying children, and all undergo mandatory Working with Children Checks and regular ongoing annual training. We heard from the Department of Education that teachers are placed in classrooms. On two occasions in budget estimates, Mr Shoebridge made shocking claims about the organisation that carried the implication that it was an extremist religious organisation. What did Mr Shoebridge base those claims on? The Hon. Mark Latham was talking about the CIA, but it was an old edition of political pressure groups in the CIA *World Factbook* on India. But guess what was also listed in the same edition of the CIA *World Factbook* under Australian political pressure groups in the same category? Trade unions and environmental groups.

VHP is not listed in the current edition of the CIA *World Factbook*, and Mr Shoebridge has not put forward any allegations or evidence of any illegal actions, extremist positions or issues with them. This is just pure divisive politics. If only Mr Shoebridge took as hard a line against illegal and unethical actions, such as damaging historical statues, supporting and encouraging those who assault police and those who steal workers' rights, and supporting convicted criminal Marxists, anarchists and antifa members—all actions undertaken by Australian political pressure groups listed in the document that he quoted from in estimates. The Department of Education has worked with VHP as an approved partner since October 1998 and confirmed that it considers the group to be a longstanding and upstanding partner, fully recognising the contribution of its volunteers in SRE. Further to this, the NSW Police Force has confirmed that VHP is not a terrorist organisation and it has no concerns about the group. The right thing for Mr David Shoebridge to do is stand up in this House and say sorry.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE (21:39): The Greens oppose this motion. My office has had repeated concerns raised with it from across the Indian diaspora about the rise of right-wing extremism in the community directly connected to extremist nationalist political movements in India. One of those organisations from India is Vishva Hindu Parishad [VHP]. So extreme are those concerns that VHP was recognised as a military extremist religious organisation in the CIA's 2018 *World Factbook*. There is a reason for this. It is because of the divisive political positions adopted by that organisation, as well as its far-right history.

I will not repeat the appallingly sectarian statements made by M. S. Golwalkar, one of VHP's founders, in publications such as *Our Nationhood Defined* in 1939 and *Bunch of Thoughts* in 1966. It is sufficient to note that they extolled racial theories and promoted Islamophobia. Given this, I look forward to hearing Vishva Hindu Parishad Australia openly disavowing itself from this history and those statements, including the extremist positions adopted by VHP in India at the moment. This is a step of good faith that is much needed. The threat of far-right extremist groups in our society is real and concerns about it must not be shut down by motions like this.

I also note the recent arrest and charging by the NSW Police Force of a suspect in relation to an attack on young Sikh Australians in Harris Park and the concerns that that violence was related to extremist nationalist and sectarian politics. These concerns are real. The Greens have always supported and will always support the values of tolerance and acceptance that underpin multicultural Australia. These principles have been directly challenged by the Coalition in recent weeks by the offensive and targeted travel ban on India ordered by the Morrison Government.

Just this morning, the Coalition in this Chamber rejected a motion calling for solidarity with India and support for the Indian people during the COVID-19 crisis that is sweeping that country. In opposing that motion, the Coalition also refused to support the calls from across the Indian diaspora for the immediate end to the travel ban. The hollowness of this motion in light of the appalling response by these same politicians to the human tragedy that is engulfing India is obvious to all. It is not without irony that this motion is presented by Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party, given the appalling and repeated attacks that party has made on multiculturalism, immigration and minorities over the years.

I say to any part of multicultural Australia that if you are looking for support from Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party you are looking in the wrong place. Finally, I note that The Greens have longstanding concerns about the lack of oversight of special religious education [SRE] in Australia. It is delivered without any

supervision or scrutiny by the Department of Education. These concerns cover all special religious education in public schools. However, while ever SRE is available we also firmly believe that it must be open to all faiths and all religions equally and without discrimination.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (21:43): I do not have any divine authority, but I cannot help but notice that Hinduism has some new friends tonight. I assure them that we will consider their contribution as we decide their next lives, in due time. We appreciate their contribution. I spoke on this issue last week and at a time when the entire Australian Indian diaspora is going through a crisis. I spoke well before the issue was politicised. Because in a time of crisis, when so many people are turning to their faith, faith organisations should not come under attack unless it is based on fact. But it is not like the circumstances in India have gotten any better since then. This week a major media publication depicted Ganesh, one of the most important Hindu deities, being smashed with a hammer as a way to send a signal to Australians about what is going on in India.

I do not necessarily ascribe a particular motive to that decision, but it has caused great offence to a lot of people this week, including the Hindu Council of Australia. Labor is not interested in joining a culture war. Labor is not interested in engaging in a tit for tat, especially when so many people are battling incredibly hard in India right now, including my own family members. As I said last week, we are far more interested in expressing solidarity with the people of India. We are equally clear that we should be expressing solidarity with the faith organisations that are helping them.

I did not think that the member who made the comments in budget estimates did so on the basis of fact. After he made those comments, I met with the Vishva Hindu Parishad and its teachers and I met with the Hindu Council of Australia. I think I have met with five groups about these particular remarks, and I have spoken to at least two temples about them. These remarks have undoubtedly caused offence. The member needs to reflect on that, and if any member wishes to use any forum to make allegations then they should do so on the basis of fact. Equally, it is just as wrong for members of any political party to take the view that we would politicise this for no reason.

I appreciate the Hon. Mark Latham repeating the comments I made last week. I thought they were eloquent, particularly when I heard them again. But there was another thing that I said. The fact that there is religious education for Hindu children in New South Wales schools is an immense achievement of the Hindu community. That was not available when I went to school. I spent countless hours in non-scripture classes because it was not possible for me to access that education. I went to school in the same area as the two schools that are the subject of this debate, so I know them well. It is an immense achievement of every Hindu religious teacher and volunteer who is providing that education. They are like my mums and aunties. That means a lot in our culture. I know these people; they are not extremists. It is not right to paint them with that brush. Not only does the member who made the comments need to reflect on this but so do the members who are seeking to politicise it in a time of crisis.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (21:46): In reply: There has been no attempt to politicise the matter or get involved in a culture war. It is a simple matter of fact and correcting the record, as the substance of the honourable member's comments indicated. I moved this motion for the simple reason that I chaired the Portfolio Committee No. 3 - Education meeting where this most serious slur was made against teachers at the William Dean and Toongabbie schools.

We know that Mr David Shoebridge has a hatred of special religious education. He seems to have rolled that into false information about the VHP—to the point where he is trying to link that organisation that has received a truthful, honourable set of references from the Hon. Daniel Mookhey to an attack on a Sikh person in Harris Park without any evidence that it was involved whatsoever. But Mr David Shoebridge is not content with just slurring these teachers because of his completely irrational pathological hatred. This evening he has extended the slur to say that they have somehow been involved in an attack in Harris Park. There is no evidence of that whatsoever. This is a member of Parliament living in fantasy land.

Mr David Shoebridge: Point of order: I accept the position put by the Hon. Daniel Mookhey in this debate, and I accept in good faith his views about the teachers at the organisation.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): What is the point of order?

Mr David Shoebridge: The member is seeking to deliberately mislead the House. It was not my statement making that link. The concern was about right-wing extremism.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): There is no point of order.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: The truth is we all make errors in public life. You deal with a lot of information and you try to put a lot of material into the public arena. Everyone makes mistakes. It is not that hard to say, "I got this wrong. I am sorry." I am incredibly impressed by the great achievements of these schools. The

Indian Hindu community works hard and makes a great contribution, particularly in the small business sector, and they have got something that they are proud of in our schools. It should not be diminished in this way. It should not be slurred in a manner that is completely beyond any factual information and record before the House. I say to Mr David Shoebridge that it is not that hard to say you have got this wrong and apologise to a community who clearly deserve that apology in all the circumstances. Be a person of honour. Be a man. Step up and say you are sorry.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Documents

AERIAL SHOOTING OF WILD PIGS

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1141 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK (21:50): 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 Department of Planning, Industry and Environment; the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales; or the Minister for Energy and Environment relating to an aerial shooting trial on wild pigs conducted in the Gwydir Wetlands State Conservation Area in May 2020:

- (a) unedited original video footage of all shooting operations;
- (b) pilot flight records of each shooting operation;
- (c) the following records regarding the animals shot:
 - (i) gender;
 - (ii) number of lactating females; and
 - (iii) number of dependent young;
- (d) all documents regarding the approval of the research project by the Animal Ethics Committee Murdoch University (O3103/19);
- (e) all correspondence and comments prepared by the Department of Primary Industries and the NSW National Parks Animal Ethics Committee regarding the research project by the Animal Ethics Committee Murdoch University (O3103/19);
- (f) any formal assessments of the suitability of the ammunition and projectiles used in the aerial shooting trial, including:
 - (i) Speer®130grain, lead-based non-bonded core, hollow-point projectiles; and
 - (ii) Lehigh Defense Control Chaos® 115 grain lead-free copper-based hollow-point projectiles;
- (g) results of the ballistics tests conducted on both projectiles at the public shooting range near Nowra in October 2018;
- (h) speed of incapacitation scores for all pigs shot;
- (i) all, full-field, uncropped lateral radiographs of each pig shot; and
- (j) 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.

The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party has been seeking details on the Government's aerial shooting programs for over 12 months, yet the Government continues to avoid providing any answers. The order for papers is prompted by the recent publication of a scientific paper that tested 115 grain projectiles for shooting feral pigs from helicopters. Our concern is that 115 grain varmint bullets in a 308 calibre cartridge are well below the 130-150 grain projectiles recommended for pigs. The use of frangible varmint-style projectiles may have led to unacceptable adverse animal welfare outcomes and we are keen to investigate the relevant documents and data to see if this was the case.

My experience with hunting and shooting for over 50 years with many calibres and bullet weights makes me doubtful that using bullets of such a light weight and construction is adequate or humane. I fear that fragmentation tests are or were being used as a surrogate and alternative to properly placed killing shots using sturdier lead core bonded projectiles of appropriate weight, such as 130 or 150 grain lead core soft point Spitzer bullets. Convenience and fragmentation are no substitute for bullet placement often encountered when shooting from a flying platform such as a helicopter. Moreover, internal fragmentation is more likely to cause a slower

death by internal haemorrhage rather than the shock of impact and energy release of a more sturdy projectile. Fragmentation and bleeding are no substitute for a quick, clean kill rather than the slower internal haemorrhage-induced death that current practice encourages. We must review the source and so-called science that seeks to justify the current practice of shooting from helicopters.

The Hon. EMMA HURST (21:52): I indicate that the Animal Justice Party will be supporting this Standing Order 52 request. This is a rare moments when the Animal Justice Party and the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers party are somewhat on the same page. Aerial shooting is almost always a bloodbath. I have heard some shocking stories of the extreme and prolonged suffering of animals as the result of botched aerial killing. The Animal Justice Party is absolutely opposed to aerial shooting in all circumstances. With that in mind, I will move an amendment to the motion that will ensure that records of any adverse animal welfare outcomes will be captured by the call for papers. Therefore, I move:

That the question be amended by inserting after paragraph (i):

- (j) all records of adverse animal welfare outcomes.

I understand the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party will not oppose the amendment. We welcome this opportunity to examine the documents surrounding the operation that took place in May 2020. I urge all members to support the Standing Order 52 request as amended.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (21:54): The Government does not oppose the motion moved by the Hon. Robert Borsak.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (21:54): Labor supports both the call for the papers and the amendment.

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK (21:54): In reply: Obviously the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party supports the amendment. I commend the motion to the House.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): The Hon. Robert Borsak has moved a motion, to which the Hon. Emma Hurst has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): The question is that the motion as amended be agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

AIRLINE OPERATIONS

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I move:

That private members' business item No. 1186 outside the order of precedence be considered in a short form format.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (21:55): 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 created since 31 March 2020 in the possession, custody or control of the Premier, the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Treasurer or Treasury relating to airline operations in New South Wales:

- (a) all documents relating to all negotiations and agreements with Qantas Airways Limited regarding their operations in New South Wales;
- (b) all documents relating to all negotiations and agreements with Virgin Australia Airlines Pty Ltd regarding their operations in New South Wales; and
- (c) 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.

Last week, Alan Joyce kindly announced a deal—it seems on behalf of the New South Wales Government—in which he apparently has received a set of benefits in order to get the headquarters of Qantas in Mascot. But, as he proclaimed, this deal will remain secret, which is remarkable. It is remarkable in two ways: first, that the deal was not announced by the New South Wales Government and, secondly, that the CEO of a corporation is telling the people of New South Wales what they are entitled to know. This is the same CEO who last year, under the cover of the pandemic, outsourced thousands of jobs. He did not remove those jobs. He did not make them redundant. He outsourced them, and in doing so he spread the phenomenon of insecure work to previously secure jobs.

We have debated this in the House before. At the time of that debate here we made it very clear that if any taxpayer assistance is to be provided to Qantas or, for that matter, to Virgin, it should be conditional on the return of job security. That is it. That is the position. The Opposition is not saying that there is no need for this deal or that it is a bad thing, necessarily. It should be conditional on the return of job security, but we have no idea whether it is or not because Mr Joyce and the New South Wales Government have decided it is not right to tell us. The Opposition has a very simple view: This could be the best deal in the world, but taxpayers should know about it. If taxpayers are paying for it, taxpayers have a right to see it. That is the basic proposition that the Opposition brings to the House today.

If the Government thought this was such a good deal for New South Wales, it would reveal it—the Government would have nothing to hide. Let us be clear here: The Government says that this deal was necessary to save jobs. So why is the Government not telling us what it did? What exactly has the Government got to hide in not being able to shed light on the deal? I understand that this is a position that has been adopted by other State governments, including Labor governments. Those governments should disclose too, but ultimately it is a matter for those States to decide the appropriate response to their government's decisions. In this State—the biggest State—when it comes to something like benefits packages, people should have a right to see it.

What message does this send to other businesses in New South Wales? What message does it send to the businesses that do pay taxes, that do provide jobs—secure, casual and other work—that are not asking for a handout, and that have not conspired to game a scenario where they effectively play a game of chicken with the NSW Treasury in which the Treasurer and the Treasury blinks? What does it say to those businesses who are today trying to repay the payroll taxes that have been deferred—those thousands who are struggling with that debt—when they learn that Qantas has got a special deal and they do not even know what it is? It is unfair to those businesses and to all the other taxpayers who are not getting a similar handout.

It is not like this has been a cheap deal for New South Wales either. We learned, through budget estimates, that NSW Treasury has spent at least \$1 million just on advisers on these deals—\$1 million to hire advisers to the Treasury to work out what the deal is with Qantas and Virgin. Virgin did not get a deal, and no-one knows what has happened with Rex—we do not know where we are up to with Rex and I have not sought that information in this particular Standing Order 52 call for papers. It is a complicated industry.

Nevertheless, we find ourselves again in a scenario where a government has done a secret deal with Qantas. It is costing taxpayers. It is a deal that is being funded by business taxpayers as much as anyone else. The Opposition is being told that apparently it cannot see which other businesses are paying payroll tax. We reject that proposition. The people have a right to know. The taxpayers who are paying for this deal have a right to see the deal. It is disappointing that the Government has not voluntarily released this information. Therefore we find ourselves in a position where the power under Standing Order 52 is required in order to obtain this information. Fundamentally, Alan Joyce should not be deciding what taxpayers get to see or not see.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Courtney Houssos): According to sessional orders, proceedings are interrupted to permit the Minister to move the adjournment motion if desired.

The House continued to sit.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (22:00): It is interesting to think what the members opposite would be saying if we were to have lost Qantas. Then think of Virgin. Arguably, it has been the only COVID-related policy of the Opposition, as Jodi McKay said that Gladys Berejiklian must save Virgin when Virgin went into voluntary administration—an airline that at the time was majority owned by Chinese shareholders based in Queensland. Somehow Labor's policy has been that the New South Wales Government must save Virgin. Today the Opposition has come into this Chamber wanting to know details of private negotiations that took place between the New South Wales Government, Qantas and Virgin to keep jobs in New South Wales. The Labor Party wants to know the ins and outs of negotiations that are still ongoing.

We, of course, had the good news last week that Qantas is staying headquartered at Mascot. That is good news for the people of New South Wales. I am sure the Treasurer would have liked to have done a little bit more on that but he is in isolation at the moment. He was not able to celebrate as much as he would have liked. The New South Wales Government and the national carrier have reached, let me stress, an in-principle commitment for the airline to keep its national headquarters in Sydney. Qantas and the State of New South Wales have a long and enduring relationship, which began when the Flying Kangaroo moved its headquarters to Sydney before the Second World War in 1938. The in-principle commitment with Qantas follows the completion of the airline's property footprint review that was announced in the wake of the significant challenges that the company faced because of COVID-19, which is still not over.

Excitingly, it is not only Qantas headquarters that will remain in New South Wales as part of recent negotiations. In a further boost, Sydney will be the exclusive launch city of Qantas's ultra-long-haul, non-stop flights to cities such as London and New York. The in-principle commitment between New South Wales and Qantas also includes the construction of a new flight training centre with aircraft simulators to be based in New South Wales from 2023; plans for expansion of the Qantas Loyalty team in Mascot; and Qantas working with the New South Wales Government to develop a comprehensive Indigenous and diversity employment program. This, of course, is an in-principle agreement. Details between the State and Qantas are still to be finalised. The Government is delighted to continue our longstanding and mutually beneficial partnership. However, there would be nothing beneficial about disclosing documents of a process that is still underway.

With respect to Virgin, after the airline went into administration in April last year the Government offered a financially responsible package to the administrators and the bidders. Bain made a deal with the Queensland Government which means that Virgin will remain headquartered in Brisbane. The New South Wales Government will continue to search for ways to bring jobs to our State but only if it provides value for money for the people of New South Wales, as the taxpayers of the State would expect. During the Virgin administration process in 2020, the project team was required to enter non-disclosure agreements with Virgin Australia and its administrators, Deloitte, to gain access to information relevant to the situation. It would materially negatively impact the State's ability to undertake any form of commercial negotiations with the private sector if the premise of entering into a non-disclosure agreement is voided. Accordingly, the Government strenuously opposes the Standing Order 52 motion.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (22:03): In reply: I appreciate the contribution of the Parliamentary Secretary. I reject everything that has been said by others in the debate on the motion. I commend the motion to the House.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes23
Noes16
Majority.....7

AYES

Banasiak	Graham	Pearson
Borsak	Houssos	Primrose
Boyd	Hurst	Roberts
Buttigieg (teller)	Jackson	Searle
D'Adam (teller)	Latham	Secord
Donnelly	Mookhey	Sharpe
Faehrmann	Moriarty	Shoebridge
Field	Moselmane	

NOES

Amato	Harwin	Nile
Cusack	Khan	Poulos
Fang	Maclaren-Jones (teller)	Taylor
Farlow	Mallard	Tudehope
Farraway (teller)	Mitchell	Ward
Franklin		

PAIRS

Veitch

Martin

Motion agreed to.

Adjournment Debate

ADJOURNMENT

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Hon. TARA MORIARTY (22:13): This week National Mental Health Commission CEO Christine Morgan commented, "Just as we expect to get unwell physically, every Australian now realises that their mental wellbeing can be negatively impacted." I could not agree more with that statement. If the last year has taught us anything it is that taking care of our mental health is just as important as our physical health. People more than ever are reaching out for services when they are feeling unwell. The National Mental Health Commission confirmed that in January this year mental health services such as Lifeline, Kids Helpline and Beyond Blue clocked up more than 112,000 calls. That is an increase of 38 per cent in calls from January 2019. The demand for mental health services is happening at a rapid rate. The growing need for services is particularly prevalent in rural and regional communities hardest hit by drought, bushfires and the pandemic.

For example, in 2019 over 17,000 people in the Hunter region presented to emergency departments, making up 3.11 per cent of all emergency presentations. This was an increase of 1,672 from the year before. In the same region, 16.4 per cent of people acknowledged that they were experiencing high levels of psychological distress—an increase from 2018. The shift in people's thinking and the need for specific services should be a catalyst for governments everywhere to dig deep and fund mental health services. In November 2020 the Productivity Commission released its report on the current state of our mental health system. The report laid bare the impacts that poor mental health has had on people and their communities, and the risk if we do not invest more in the sector. It has acknowledged that in one year mental health and suicide cost up to \$70 billion to our economy. That is in addition to the emotional devastation and tragedy of every life lost.

The Productivity Commission report also articulated the steps required to reform our mental health system and things that our Government should be doing now to adequately support people in the mental health system. It called for steps to make our mental health system more person-centred, working for everyone and supporting people living with a mental illness at every step of the way. Those services need to be affordable, accessible and flexible to properly support people across the community. We know that people's experiences with mental health are different. There is no "one size fits all" to supporting people through mental illness. The care that people need changes over time. The Productivity Commission report calls for a seamless system, where there are no gaps in care to ensure that people are assisted to manage a mental illness throughout their life or as their condition changes. This could be done through integrated community mental health hubs, more step-up step-down places, aftercare initiatives and elevating local solutions.

It calls for a focus on early prevention and early intervention. Mental illness is presenting in our children earlier in life. I have talked about this before. If we understand and are able to assist people early on, particularly children, we can minimise the harm mental illness can have on people's way of life throughout their life. The Productivity Commission report calls for a new national mental health and suicide prevention agreement. The agreement would see States and Territories work towards improving mental health and suicide outcomes for all Australians. The outcomes would hold State and Territory governments accountable on the delivery, funding and monitoring of mental health services. The report calls for more support to boost rural and regional mental health workforces so that people living in those communities have the same access to physical mental health professionals as people in major cities. The recommendations will ensure that people can get the right service at the right time in the right place.

Six months on from one of the largest reviews into the mental health sector, the State Government has not been forthcoming with solutions at the scale and speed needed. It has been quiet on the findings and has made no commitment on the role that it will play to implement the recommendations of the Productivity Commission report. New South Wales still spends a smaller proportion on community-based mental health services than any other State at \$80 per capita, which is well below the national average. To meet the demand for services, a re-think of our mental health system is needed. Only through substantive reform can we better support people and allow them to prosper in their communities into the future.

Rural and regional communities like those in the Upper Hunter need a drastic boost in dedicated mental health resources in their regions so that they can get the right care closer to where they live. The New South Wales Government must play its part in supporting the wellbeing of people in the State. It can do this by acting now to support the implementation of the Productivity Commission report's recommendations. The Federal Government has started this process. The money announced last night is welcome. It is time that the New South Wales Government stepped up to do that too.

TRIBUTE TO DR NORMAN THOMPSON

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (22:18): I pay tribute to and remember a dear friend of mine, Dr Norman Thompson. Norman passed away on 22 March after a sudden illness. I met Norman through The Greens. I knew of him through his work as the director of the Greens NSW Democracy for Sale project and particularly the work he did

in support of Lee Rhiannon when she was a member of this place. I am sure many members are familiar with his work. It did not matter what side of politics you came from. If you were doing the wrong thing when it came to political donations, Norman was going to find out and bring it to public attention. He had a forensic mind and approach to his work. The Democracy for Sale website became an essential tool, particularly for the media, to scrutinise political donations.

The Hon. Don Harwin: It was not always right.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: I acknowledge the interjection by the Minister. If the government of the day—Labor for much of that time and the Liberals for a bit—had published in full all of the donations in a way that was searchable, we might have been well advanced. But thankfully Dr Thompson did. Without it, we would simply not have been able to make those connections about what was going on. The work of that project—and I know many people were involved, but Norman was central to it—was critical in shaping what has become a political consensus in New South Wales. It has led this State to have some of the strongest political donations laws, a ban on developer donations, and strong donations and expenditure caps. The public owes Dr Norman Thompson a debt of gratitude for his determination, as a volunteer and in his retirement, to bring these issues to light. He has made a significant contribution to genuine long-term change for the benefit of our democracy.

Norman and I became political allies and friends through a challenging internal debate within the party over The Greens' position on the O'Farrell political donations laws in 2011. I was a strong supporter of the reforms while many others in the party wanted to oppose them. Norman supported the position the party ultimately took to support the reforms. In doing so, he very much found himself on the outer with people he had been very close to in the party. I think it is fair to say that Norman was really hurt by that experience. But our friendship was strengthened, and we collaborated on party issues and co-authored a number of opinion pieces, including on political donations and energy policy.

I cannot talk about what Norman meant to me without citing the role he played in supporting my preselection to fill the casual vacancy left by the passing of Dr John Kaye. I know the high regard in which the late Dr Kaye is held by many in this place—as he is by me, as someone who worked for him and with him for many years. As such, I have never spoken about the media story that ran during that preselection about John's thoughts on my candidacy. Due to preselection rules I was not able to respond at the time, but Norman did give quotes. In doing so, he defended John's legacy, the processes of the party and my integrity. I hope I live up to Norman's expectations with what I do in this place.

It is hard to explain to people who are not involved in organised politics the intensity of some of those internal debates, the all-consuming nature of those organisational battles and the nature of the relationships that form from them. Our relationship was forged in that fire, but the intensity sometimes disguises the narrowness of those relationships. I learnt a lot about Norman's life at his funeral—about his early years growing up in Florida in the United States, and his time as an academic in London and then teaching psychology at the school of behavioural sciences at Macquarie University. I learnt more about his work as a community activist in Darlinghurst, where he lived. I knew Norman was heavily influenced by Buddhism, but I did not know how important his faith and meditation practice were to him. His kindness and compassion were obvious clues that I did not miss.

I knew about his love of travel, but did not realise quite how extensive his travelling experiences were. It occurred to me while listening to his partner, Andrew, speak at his funeral of how COVID-19 had taken away the last opportunities that Norman and Andrew had to travel together—especially to Japan, which I know Norman visited often and loved very much. I wish I had learnt more about his life from Norman himself. During the many breakfasts we had at Bills in Darlinghurst in the past few years I regret that we did not speak more about him. He loved me to keep him up to date about what was going on in politics, and I guess I obliged. But ultimately I missed out on getting to know Norman better.

I had the great privilege of being one of the last people to speak with Norman. I was at the skate park with my son when he called. He took such an interest in learning about Banjo's life and hearing about politics. He asked me about what I was doing. I got the sense that he knew it was the last time we would ever speak. Norman leaves behind his partner of many years, Andrew Wells, and so many friends, colleagues and students whose lives he touched. He will be very much missed.

TRIBUTE TO JAN HULBERT

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (22:23): Tonight I also pay tribute to someone very special: the late Jan Hulbert. Many members in this Chamber may not have heard her name, but in Bangalow you would struggle to find someone who had not heard of or had the pleasure of meeting Jan. Jan was born in the Bangalow Hospital in 1938, and until the day she died she shared a firm passion for the town she called home. She was involved in

every corner of Bangalow, from the show society, school reunions and centenaries to the parks trust, organising the debutante balls and raising money to build the Bangalow Sports Fields. Jan was the kind of person that every town craves to make things happen. She was the key cog in the engine room of Bangalow, with an amazing get-up-and-go attitude. She could always be found anywhere the community was—whether it was at local markets, fundraisers or the Moller Pavilion at the show. You could not miss her because her famous 1964 EH Holden would be parked in its regular spot.

Jan's Holden was synonymous with her. She owned the car for more than 55 years, so everyone knew when Jan was driving past. Bangalow was incredibly fortunate to have her close to the beating heart of town and her energy will be nearly impossible to replace. From all accounts it seems Jan picked up her can-do attitude from her early days growing up on a dairy farm. During milking, toddler Jan would always accompany her parents and would be popped into a box nearby for safety, but from the age of six Jan learned how to milk a cow and she was still doing this at 82 years of age.

Helping the community started for Jan at the young age of 4½. It was midway through the school year and Jan became a student at Possum Creek School because they needed one more pupil to keep the school open. Ever since then, she was a person who always selflessly served others. At the age of 15 she met her future husband, Roy, and they married four years later on 14 September 1957. Together they shared four children, 12 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. The fourteenth of September has since become a beautiful tradition in the family, with two of their children and one grandchild also choosing to get married on that very day. In 1983 Jan joined the Bangalow Show Society, which has been described by many as her passion in life. In her eulogy, her daughter-in-law Bronwyn described it like this:

For anyone that knew her, she would be at the Bangalow Show in the Moller Pavilion every year making sure that all the show visitors were well fed. If you were one of her favourites you might have scored an extra serve of plum pudding, or fruit salad, or both. ... And as a family, if we couldn't find her, we could pretty much guarantee that she would be over at the showgrounds somewhere, planting something, cleaning something, fixing something or meeting someone.

Not being one to be kept still, the COVID-19 lockdown was not going to deter Jan from doing the things that mattered most. As an "essential service" herself before the pandemic, during COVID Jan was always visiting someone, ringing someone, cooking for someone or just making sure her friends were okay. She made sure that those who relied on a phone call, a cake—perhaps her famous caramel tart—or just a friendly face did not miss out.

I appreciate that I am running out of time tonight. However, there will never be enough time to define the impact that Jan Hulbert had on the Bangalow community. She has been described as a walking history book of Bangalow and the go-to person if anyone ever needed to know anything about the town. She was honoured with life memberships of the Bangalow P&C, the Bangalow Sports Association and the Show Society. She was awarded Byron Shire Citizen of the Year and in 2000 she was presented with the Australian ANZAC Award for her compassionate service to her community. An exceptional woman and a champion of Bangalow and the broader Northern Rivers, she will be deeply missed. I extend my sympathies to her family and her many, many friends. In this month's edition of *The Bangalow Herald* is Jan's recipe for her famous caramel tart and, although I am sure I cannot do it justice, I am very much looking forward to making it in memory of a local legend. Vale, Jan Hulbert. Thank you for all you have done.

TAMIL GENOCIDE REMEMBRANCE DAY

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM (22:27): On 18 May Tamil people around the world will observe Tamil Genocide Remembrance Day. The day marks the final days of the Sri Lankan civil war in 2009, when government forces escalated their tactics to include deliberate acts of genocide against Tamil civilians in the north-east of the country. The United Nations estimates that 100,000 civilians were killed between 1983 and 2009, including at least 40,000 in the final weeks. Hundreds of thousands of people were internally displaced, with many fleeing the country as refugees. The Sri Lankan Government is yet to acknowledge its participation in those acts. While some progress towards truth and reconciliation was made in the years following the civil war, in February 2020 the Sri Lankan Government withdrew its support for UN Human Rights Council Resolution 30/1. The resolution, which Sri Lanka co-sponsored in 2015, had called for a judicial mechanism and special counsel to investigate human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. It affirmed:

... that a credible justice process should include independent judicial and prosecutorial institutions led by individuals known for their integrity and impartiality. The incoming nationalist president and former civil war general Gotabaya Rajapaksa withdrew support for the resolution following his election. Rather than seeking to achieve reconciliation, the Government has intensified its oppression of ethnic and religious minorities. Human rights advocates have expressed grave concerns that the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated a slide towards authoritarianism in Sri Lanka. A recent report from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, has linked the rising tide of authoritarianism with escalating ethnic tensions. The Bachelat report observes:

... developments over the past year have fundamentally changed the environment for advancing reconciliation, accountability and human rights in Sri Lanka, eroded democratic checks and balances and civic space, and reprised a dangerous exclusionary and

majoritarian discourse. These trends threaten to reverse the limited but important gains made in recent years and risk the recurrence of the policies and practices that gave rise to the grave violations of the past.

Amnesty International's report *Old Ghosts in New Gharb: Sri Lanka's Return to Fear* corroborates Bachelat's concerns. The report details a pattern of targeting those who have played an active role in investigating, documenting, litigating, or reporting on human rights violations and abuses, and advocating on behalf of the victims, including at least six incidents where lawyers were targeted. For instance, in April 2020 prominent human rights lawyer Hejaaz Hizbullah was jailed for months on "terrorism" charges under the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act. The vilification of human rights activists in the judicial system is particularly concerning in the context of ongoing efforts to identify perpetrators and victims of war crimes. Bachelat's report explains that:

Independent observers and organizations working with families of the disappeared continued to criticize the lack of transparency and public information, the conduct of proceedings, and intimidation and harassment of family members by military and intelligence officials.

The State has adopted similar authoritarian measures to undermine the freedom and integrity of Sri Lanka's press. The International Federation of Journalists has drawn attention to grave media rights violations over the 2000 to 2015 period, including killings, disappearances, abductions, assaults against journalists and attacks against media stations. The political situation in Sri Lanka has led to renewed calls for multilateral action against perpetrators of human rights abuses.

In March of this year the forty-sixth session of the United Nations Human Rights Council passed a resolution that expressed concerns about an emerging trend in relation to a deteriorating situation of human rights in Sri Lanka. These included the accelerating militarisation of civilian government functions, the erosion of the independence of the judiciary and key institutions responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights, and ongoing impunity and political obstruction of accountability for crimes and human rights violations. We should all be concerned by the deterioration of the situation in Sri Lanka, its slide into authoritarianism and its refusal to bring to justice those responsible for grave human rights abuses.

The Australian Government should be giving serious consideration to the suggestion from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights that member states apply targeted sanctions such as asset freezes and travel bans against state officials and other actors credibly alleged to have committed or be responsible for grave human rights violations or abuses. The United States has already sanctioned Sri Lankan Army chief, General Shavendra Silva, and his immediate family for his involvement in war crimes during the Sri Lankan civil war under its Magnitsky Act. Australia should adopt similar legislation and follow suit. I encourage all members of this place to join the Tamil community in demanding justice for the victims of the Sri Lankan civil war.

SHARK NETS

The Hon. EMMA HURST (22:32): Every year across New South Wales hundreds of marine animals including dolphins, turtles, sharks and rays are dying in shark nets. Submerged around beaches from Newcastle to Wollongong, these killer nets are providing a false sense of security. In reality, research shows that nets are ineffective at protecting beachgoers whilst indiscriminately killing countless marine animals. With renewed calls for an end to the use of these killer nets, it is time the New South Wales Government listened to our communities and to science, and banned shark nets in New South Wales. Put simply, it is impossible for lethal shark control measures like shark nets to guarantee public safety.

Floating four or more metres below the surface, these nets do not connect with the shoreline. This allows for sharks and other animals to swim over, under and around the nets, something we know they often do. There is also no statistical evidence proving shark nets prevent shark bites, with recent research from both Deakin and Wollongong universities confirming just how ineffective these nets really are. In fact, CSIRO shark expert Barry Bruce has stated they should not be classed as a barrier but as a fishing device. In 2017 a Federal Senate committee recommended that shark nets be removed from all New South Wales beaches.

The damage these lethal nets are doing to marine animals is clear. Shark nets are not species specific. Their holes are not big enough to let through sea turtles, nor are they visible enough to deter dolphins and whales. Because of this, in New South Wales alone shark nets have killed thousands of animals over the past nine years, including 503 hammerhead sharks, 293 rays, 72 turtles and 49 dolphins and whales. Many of these animals would have suffered for hours and slowly drowned. Over 19,000 animals are known to have met this brutal death in New South Wales shark nets. Even animals released alive are not guaranteed survival; the stress and injury of entanglement can cause death soon after.

From climate change to pollution and fishing, marine animals are facing threats from all sides and sharks are at serious risk. In fact, it is estimated that over the past 50 years, shark populations have dropped by 71 per cent, devastating marine ecosystems where they play a critical role as apex predators. We cannot continue adding to shark carnage with these cruel nets. And we do not need to because, where shark nets are failing, other new

technologies are succeeding. Drone and helicopter surveillance, shark listening stations, eco shark barriers and even personal shark deterrents are all methods that keep swimmers safe without the heavy toll on marine animals.

What is almost always overlooked is the most important shark mitigation strategy of all: beach patrols. Investing in lifeguard patrols and emergency responses has been highlighted by researchers as the most impactful way to keep people safe in the water. All but one of New South Wales' netted beaches are patrolled already, and it would be easy to invest the money and resources being used in shark netting programs in supporting our beach communities to expand the critical surf lifesaving programs already in place. The research makes it clear: Shark nets are not protecting us but they are indiscriminately killing tens of thousands of animals. With community support for shark net removal and so many effective and humane options to protect swimmers, there is no reason to keep netting our beaches. I urge councils across New South Wales and the New South Wales Government to listen to science and our communities. It is time to protect animals and remove these deadly nets from our waters.

VETERANS SUPPORT SERVICES

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES (22:36): I bring to the House's attention the importance of support services for veterans and their families. New South Wales is home to a diverse veteran community of more than 200,000 former Australian Defence Force [ADF] personnel who have served our nation. Of those, 56,000 are current clients of the Department of Veterans' Affairs, with 60 per cent living in regional areas. There have been challenges ensuring that sufficient ongoing support is reaching our veterans, enabling them to seamlessly transition from military service to civilian life. I note that the recent decision by the Federal Government to establish a Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide has been welcomed by the community.

There are a number of organisations that work to support veterans and their families in various ways, from finding employment to accessing mental health support. Over the years I have spoken about many of them. I acknowledge the work of Soldier On. It is a not-for-profit organisation that offers a variety of services that can easily be tailored to meet the needs of individuals and their families. Soldier On's services have been developed in consultation with defence personnel, veterans and their families. Soldier On's program not only aims to develop and strengthen one's ties with their family and community but also strives to provide an effective range of health and wellbeing services, employment opportunities, learning and education programs, and participation in community, social, and sporting activities. Soldier On works to ensure the wellbeing of veterans and their family members are the focus of all services it provides.

Soldier On has a number of offices around New South Wales, including Sydney, Albury, Newcastle and Port Macquarie, where serving or former ADF personnel, including reservists and their immediate family members, can access support. It offers a range of social activities at their centres that encourage service personnel and their family members to reconnect with themselves and each other as well as to build links with the wider community. It also offers mental health support services for those who have been impacted by their service to Australia.

As with any organisation, the COVID-19 pandemic has meant there has been a need to adapt. Soldier On has moved many of its services and programs online, with both group sessions and one-on-one services available. With the development of online services, more people can be reached through the program, especially veterans in regional areas. Veterans often find it difficult to start another career following their service. Offering education and employment pathways and support services is essential to support our service men and women in transitioning to civilian life.

The New South Wales Government has developed a holistic range of support measures for veterans and their families with the release of the flagship NSW Veterans Strategy, which brings together the initiatives available to veterans in New South Wales. These programs create pathways into education, employment and community networks and services. They respond to specific needs for secure housing, health and veterans' wellbeing. We have a number of concessions available for ex-service personnel, while our Veterans Employment Program has supported hundreds of veterans into jobs in the New South Wales public service.

The needs of veterans are changing over time, in part reflecting the increasing participation of women in the Australian Defence Force [ADF] and the changing nature of military service and military conflict. Our strategy needs to reflect the changing needs of the veteran community. The 2021 census will give us our first opportunity to improve our understanding of the veteran population; it will now include questions relating to whether someone has served in the ADF. With this new information we will be able to see, with greater detail, where there is more work to be done, and where we are succeeding in connecting with and getting support to our veterans and their families, as well as tailoring our support service to their needs.

Every New South Wales Government department participated in the development of this strategy, allowing us to recognise what services are already available and where services could be extended. Each year roughly 1,200 ADF personnel leave service and settle into civilian life in New South Wales. This is the critical transition period where we must ensure that our veterans are set up for life as they change careers or get more involved in the community. The skills they carry from their service can be invaluable to many businesses. However, translating these skills to the civilian market and retraining them is one of the challenges. One of the other key issues veterans face when leaving the services is also the loss of community, which can result in mental health issues in the future. Offering support pathways to join and be involved in a new community is of utmost importance for not only our veterans but their families too. With this whole-of-government strategy and the upcoming royal commission, we will be able to increase targeted tailored support for our veterans to ensure that our veterans and their families get the support they deserve.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that this House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 22:42 until Thursday 13 May 2021 at 10:00.