



New South Wales

Legislative Council

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Wednesday, 10 August 2022

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 10 August 2022

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 Eora nation and its Elders and thanked them for their custodianship of this land.

Documents

SENIOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT COMMISSIONERS

Tabling of Report of Independent Legal Arbiter

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I move:

- (1) That the report of the Independent Legal Arbiter, the Hon. Alan Robertson, SC, dated 26 July 2022, on the disputed claim of privilege lodged by the Hon. Penny Sharpe on documents relating to the appointment of the Senior Trade Commissioner to the Americas, be laid on the table by the Clerk.
- (2) That the report of the Independent Legal Arbiter, the Hon. Alan Robertson, SC, dated 28 July 2022, on the disputed claim of privilege lodged by the Hon. Daniel Mookhey on documents relating to the appointment of the Senior Trade Commissioner to the Americas, be laid on the table by the Clerk.
- (3) That, on tabling, the reports are authorised to be published.

Motion agreed to.

Motions

TRIBUTE TO DAME OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN, AC, DBE

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (10:03): I move:

- (1) That this House notes:
 - (a) the passing of Australian music icon Dame Olivia Newton-John, AC, DBE, on 8 August 2022;
 - (b) that Olivia Newton-John was one of the most successful musical artists of the twentieth century, selling over 100 million records, recording 10 number one United States singles and also making her mark in films that defined a generation;
 - (c) that Olivia Newton-John was inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame in 2002, inspired and entertained generations and showed the way for Australia to export its talent to the globe; and
 - (d) that as a breast cancer survivor Olivia Newton-John was a tireless advocate for cancer research and treatment, including support for the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness and Research Centre in Melbourne.
- (2) That this House offers its deepest sympathy to the families and friends of Dame Olivia Newton-John.

Motion agreed to.

TRIBUTE TO JUDITH DURHAM, AO

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (10:04): I move:

- (1) That this House notes:
 - (a) the passing of Australian music great Judith Durham, AO, on 5 August 2022;
 - (b) that as part of The Seekers, Judith Durham was one of the first Australian musicians to achieve major global success, selling over 50 million records worldwide, was inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame in 1995, and a recipient of the APRA AMCOS Ted Albert Award for outstanding service to Australian music in 2013;
 - (c) that Judith Durham inspired generations of Australians to sing and write music; and
 - (d) that Judith Durham had been the National Patron of the Motor Neurone Association of Australia since 1994 and supporter of many other charities.
- (2) This House offers its deepest sympathy to the families and friends of Judith Durham.

Motion agreed to.

TRIBUTE TO UNCLE ARCHIE ROACH, AM

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (10:04): I move:

- (1) That this House notes:
 - (a) the passing of Australian music legend Uncle Archie Roach, AM, on 30 July 2022;
 - (b) that Archie Roach was one of Australia's most important poets, singer-songwriters, activists and truth tellers;
 - (c) that Archie Roach was a Gunditjmara (Kirrae Whurrong/Djab Wurrung), Bundjalung Senior Elder and member of the Stolen Generations, taken from his family at age three;
 - (d) that Archie Roach gave voice to the pain of this experience in the iconic song *Took the Children Away* from his landmark 1990 album, *Charcoal Road*. This was the first time many white Australians had heard of the Stolen Generations and exemplifies the way music can shake our conscience, provoke us to action and be a powerful part of healing; and
 - (e) that in addition to being inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame in 2020, he was a seven-time ARIA award winner, the first songwriter to be recognised with a Human Rights Achievement Award and was made a Member of the Order of Australia [AM] in 2015.
- (2) That this House offers its deepest sympathy to Archie Roach's sons, Amos and Eban, to his family and to his friends and colleagues for this tragic loss.

Motion agreed to.

Committees

PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE

Reference

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1927 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice by inserting after paragraph (1):

- (2) No member, or substitute member, of the Public Accountability Committee who had access to the in-camera transcript referred to in the special report may participate in the inquiry, and the Leader of the Government and any relevant crossbench member may nominate substitute members for the purposes of the inquiry.

Leave granted.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Accordingly, I move:

- (1) That report No. 14 of the Public Accountability Committee entitled *Special report on the unauthorised disclosure of in camera evidence given on 29 June 2022*, dated August 2022, be referred to the Privileges Committee for inquiry and report by the last sitting day in 2022.
- (2) No member, or substitute member, of the Public Accountability Committee who had access to the in-camera transcript referred to in the special report may participate in the inquiry, and the Leader of the Government and any relevant crossbench member may nominate substitute members for the purposes of the inquiry.

Motion agreed to.

Motions

TRIBUTE TO SHARYN CULLIS

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (10:06): I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1928 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice by omitting "Ms" wherever occurring and inserting instead "Dr" and omitting "Andersen" wherever occurring.

Leave granted.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Accordingly, I move:

- (1) That this House notes with sadness the death of Dr Sharyn Cullis on Friday 10 June 2022.
- (2) That this House further notes that Dr Cullis:
 - (a) was a dedicated environmental activist who campaigned against threats to endangered wildlife, particularly koalas, in the Campbelltown and Wollondilly local government areas;
 - (b) was a founding member and Vice President of Save Sydney's Koalas, the Principal of the Georges River Environmental Centre, founder of the Georges River Environmental Alliance, a volunteer with the Streamwatch and River Health Monitoring programs, an active member of Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society and Friends of Oatley, and only recently helped establish "Friends of Glenlee";
 - (c) was an active member of the Georges River Combined Councils' Committee, also known as Riverkeeper, and she was recognised on their honour board in April 2022;
 - (d) was a board member of the Sydney Metropolitan Water Catchment Authority, a member of the National Parks Advisory Committee and a member of the consultative committees for the South 32 Appin Mine and Moorebank Intermodal; and

- (e) successfully lobbied for the preservation of 6,500 hectares of pristine wilderness between the Georges River and the Illawarra escarpment as the Dharawal National Park.
- (3) That this House acknowledges and honours the contributions of Dr Sharyn Cullis to her community and to the environment and sends its sincere condolences to Dr Cullis' family, friends and colleagues and that this resolution be communicated by the President to the family of Dr Cullis.

Motion agreed to.

SERBIAN FOLKLORIC FESTIVAL

The Hon. LOU AMATO (10:06): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) on Saturday 6 August and Sunday 7 August 2022, the thirty-fourth Serbian Folkloric Festival was held at Bonnyrigg Sports Club;
 - (b) the festival was a celebration of traditional Serbian culture with 46 different performances from Serbian folklore groups from around Australia;
 - (c) thousands of people from all backgrounds visited the two-day festival and enjoyed Serbian music, food and culture; and
 - (d) the great contribution of Michael Andjelkovic, Bonnyrigg Sports Club Community Liaison Officer, in organising the event.
- (2) That this House notes that guests of the event included:
 - (a) His Grace Bishop Siluan, Serbian Orthodox Church of Australia and New Zealand;
 - (b) Rade Stefanovic, Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia;
 - (c) John Pavasovic, Committee Chairman;
 - (d) Nena Borak, Committee Secretary;
 - (e) Cedomir Jesic, Bonnyrigg Sports Club President;
 - (f) Sinisa Kos, Bonnyrigg White Eagles;
 - (g) Anne Nicolou, Principal of St Sava College;
 - (h) Steve Kamper, MP, member for Rockdale, shadow Minister for Multiculturalism;
 - (i) Tania Mihailuk, MP, member for Bankstown, shadow Minister for Natural Resources;
 - (j) Dai Le, MP, Federal member for Fowler;
 - (k) Lou Amato, MLC, representing the Hon. Mark Coure, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors;
 - (l) Michael Andjelkovic, Bonnyrigg Sports Club Community Liaison Officer;
 - (m) Father Rade Radan, St Sava College;
 - (n) Mayor Frank Carbone, Fairfield City Council;
 - (o) Mihailo Mijatovic, Councillor of Fairfield City Council; and
 - (p) Milovan Karajcic, Councillor of Fairfield City Council.
- (3) That this House acknowledges the great contribution of the Serbian community to New South Wales, and acknowledges the contribution of Multicultural NSW in providing a \$5,000 funding grant to assist in hosting the festival.

Motion agreed to.

Committees

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

Establishment

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations)
(10:07): I move:

- (1) That the resolution appointing the seven portfolio committees reflecting Government Ministers' portfolio responsibilities adopted by this House on 8 May 2019, and as amended on 9 June 2021, 12 October 2021, 13 October 2021, 23 February 2022 and 22 June 2022, be further amended to reflect changes to Government Ministers' portfolio responsibilities as follows:
 - (a) in paragraph (1) (a) "Portfolio Committee No. 1 – Premier and Finance" omit "Aboriginal Affairs, Arts and Regional Youth" and "Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Tourism and Sport, Western Sydney" and insert instead "Aboriginal Affairs, Arts, Regional Youth, Tourism" and "Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Sport"; and
 - (b) in paragraph (1) (f) "Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport" after "Veterans" insert "Western Sydney".

Motion agreed to.

Budget

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2022-2023

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2022 TIMETABLE

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations)
(10:07): I move:

- (1) That the resolution of the House of 22 June 2022 relating to Budget Estimates 2022-2023 be amended as follows:
 - (a) after "Day Three: Wednesday 24 August 2022" omit "PC 5 Families and Communities, Disability Services";
 - (b) in "Day Five: Friday 26 August 2022" after "Veterans" insert "Western Sydney";
 - (c) after "Day Seven: Tuesday 30 August 2022" omit "PC 1 Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Tourism and Sport, Western Sydney" and insert instead "PC 5 Families and Communities, Disability Services";
 - (d) after "Day Nine: Thursday 1 September 2022" omit "PC 2 Health" and "PC 1 Premier" and insert instead "PC 1 Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Sport" and "PC 5 Multiculturalism, Seniors";
 - (e) in "Day Eleven: Monday 5 September 2022" after "Aboriginal Affairs, Arts and Regional Youth" insert "Tourism";
 - (f) after "Day Twelve: Tuesday 6 September 2022" insert "PC 1 The Legislature"; and
 - (g) after "Day Thirteen: Wednesday 7 September 2022" omit "PC 5 Multiculturalism and Seniors" and "PC 1 The Legislature" and insert instead "PC 2 Health" and "PC 1 Premier".

Motion agreed to.

Documents

UNPROCLAIMED LEGISLATION

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: According to standing order, I table a list detailing all legislation unproclaimed 90 calendar days after assent as at 10 August 2022.

TABLING OF PAPERS

The Hon. EMMA HURST: By leave: I table a document comprising a printout of the names of 119,608 citizens who have signed an online petition opposing 85 years of shark culling and requesting the removal of nets and drum lines. I move:

That the document be published.

Motion agreed to.

SENIOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT COMMISSIONERS

Report of Independent Legal Arbiter

The CLERK: According to the resolution of the House this day, I table the report of the Independent Legal Arbiter, the Hon. Alan Robertson, SC, dated Tuesday 26 July 2022, on the disputed claim of privilege relating to the appointment of Senior Trade and Investment Commissioners.

Report of Independent Legal Arbiter

The CLERK: According to the resolution of the House this day, I table the report of the Independent Legal Arbiter, the Hon. Alan Robertson, SC, dated Tuesday 28 July 2022, on the disputed claim of privilege on additional papers relating to the appointment of Senior Trade and Investment Commissioners.

Committees

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 6 - TRANSPORT

Reports

The CLERK: According to standing order, I announce receipt of report No. 17 of Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Transport entitled *Acquisition of land in relation to major transport projects*, dated August 2022, together with submissions, transcripts of evidence, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions, and correspondence relating to the inquiry, received out of session this day.

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

That the House take note of the report.

Debate adjourned.

Business of the House

POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS

The CLERK: According to standing order, I advise the House of the following postponements:

- (1) Business of the House notice of motion No. 1, standing in the name of Ms Cate Faehrmann, postponed until the next sitting day.
- (2) Business of the House notice of motion No. 2, standing in the name of Mr Justin Field, postponed until the next sitting day.
- (3) Business of the House notices of motion Nos 3 and 4, standing in the name of Ms Abigail Boyd, postponed until Tuesday 13 September 2022.

Documents

NSW BUILDING COMMISSIONER AND PROPERTY SERVICES COMMISSIONER

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (10:18): I move:

That, under Standing Order 52, there be laid upon the table of the House the following documents, created since 21 December 2021, in the possession, custody or control of the Premier, the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Small Business and Minister for Fair Trading, the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Customer Service and/or the Office of the NSW Building Commissioner, relating to the resignation of the NSW Building Commissioner and the termination of the Property Services Commissioner:

- (a) the resignation letter of the NSW Building Commissioner, David Chandler, and the termination letter of the Property Services Commissioner, John Minns, within 24 hours of the passing of this resolution;
- (b) all documents created since 21 December 2021, relating to the resignation of the NSW Building Commissioner, David Chandler, and the termination of the Property Services Commissioner, John Minns, within seven days of the passing of this resolution;
- (c) all correspondence, including emails, text messages or messages on instant messenger services, created since 21 December 2021, between the former Minister for Fair Trading, Eleni Petinos, or any member of her former ministerial staff, and the NSW Building Commissioner or the Office of the Building Commissioner, within 14 days of the passing of this resolution;
- (d) all documents including ministerial briefings, correspondence and emails, created since 21 December 2021, relating to Coronation Property Co Pty Ltd, within seven days of the passing of this resolution;
- (e) any emails, text messages or messages on instant messenger services, created since 21 December 2021, between former Deputy Premier, John Barilaro, and the former Minister for Fair Trading, Eleni Petinos, within seven days of the passing of this resolution;
- (f) any emails, text messages or instant messenger services, created since 21 December 2021, between former Deputy Premier, John Barilaro, and the NSW Building Commissioner, David Chandler, within seven days of the passing of this resolution; 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.

This very serious matter has been well canvassed in the media. On 25 July 2022—just a couple of weeks ago during our parliamentary recess—the NSW Building Commissioner abruptly and prematurely resigned from his position after only earlier this year signing an extension until September next year. We on this side have been seeking further information and pursuing this for several weeks. We initially sought an explanation from the then Minister. We then asked the Premier to explain this further. On the same day, I called for additional details to be shared with the public. Within a week, the then Minister was sacked by the Premier. As a result, on 5 August we called for this resignation letter to be made public.

The Saturday Telegraph published a series of revelations from the letter. It was pretty clear that it had seen some parts of the letter, which referred to a problematic relationship between the then Minister Petinos and the Building Commissioner. This order for papers under Standing Order 52 calls for a large number of documents. It specifically calls for the release of the resignation letter of the Building Commissioner within 24 hours. Yesterday the Labor Opposition in the lower House asked the Premier to release the letter to try to get to the bottom of this problem. We have been calling for it for days. The Premier unbelievably outlined that he had not actually read the letter. The reason this is so concerning is *The Sunday Telegraph* reported that Coronation Property was subject in April to a stop work order from the Building Commissioner. That group incidentally employed the former Deputy Premier, John Barilaro, earlier this year after he left Parliament late last year. Before he was appointed to that plum trade commissioner to New York post, he was working for this particular property organisation.

There is a series of strands here that need to be untwined. It is incredibly important that we start with the resignation letter. We are asking the Government to press "print" wherever that file is stored and produce that within 24 hours. We do not think that is an unreasonable request. I appeal to the Government not to claim privilege to try to cover up this letter further. It is incredibly important that it is released to the public, so that it can see why, after 40 years in the construction industry—a pretty tough industry—Mr Chandler could only survive seven months with this Minister. We want to get to the bottom of it. We think the public deserves that. We have also called for a large number of other documents as a result of the questions that we asked on Monday about Mr Barilaro's involvement with Coronation and his interactions with the Minister and the Building Commissioner.

It is incredibly important that the public gets a clear answer, first of all, on what the basis for this abrupt and premature resignation was. But, secondly, we want to get to the bottom of the actual relationships and the way that the Building Commissioner was interacting with this particular group, Coronation Property, and with then Minister Petinos. We have asked for a large range of documents. We have spread those out and tried to be reasonable. Some have been asked for within seven days and some within 14 days. We have sought to be reasonable in the time frames that we have provided to the Government.

This comes off the back of a report in *The Daily Telegraph* today that, as seen from the ministerial disclosures, the then Minister Petinos met with Coronation Property on two occasions, 2 June and 21 June. Rather than being a meeting, as disclosed in the ministerial diary, we learned from today's *The Daily Telegraph* that it was actually a party held to celebrate the appointment of John Barilaro to the trade commissioner role in America. We need to get to the bottom of this and it starts with the public release of the Building Commissioner's resignation letter.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations)
(10:24): I move:

That the question be amended as follows:

- (1) In paragraph (a) omit "24 hours" and insert instead "seven days".
- (2) In paragraph (c) omit "all correspondence," and insert instead "All correspondence relating to Coronation Property Co Pty Ltd,".
- (3) In paragraph (e) after "on instant messenger services," insert "relating to Coronation Property Co Pty Ltd".
- (4) In paragraph (f) after "instant messenger services," insert "relating to Coronation Property Co Pty Ltd".

The Government does not so much object to the motion on the basis of the documents sought but on the basis of the time limit, quite frankly, of 24 hours. I know the shadow Minister will say, "We have been looking for this document. It is only one document in the circumstances. It should be easily able to be produced." This document was written by the former Building Commissioner to the Government. Consultation needs to occur with him. Legal advice needs to be obtained in respect of the scope of the order and the contents of that letter.

I understand that my friends on the other side of the Chamber will potentially move a further amendment to this motion to acknowledge, in fact, that the document contains potentially privileged material. In order for privilege to be properly canvassed, it makes sense, in my view, to have a proposal where the time for the delivery of the documents sought allows the Government to obtain proper advice in relation to them. The Government will be opposing the motion on the basis that the times sought are unreasonable. In those circumstances we urge the member to agree to the Government's amendment.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (10:27): I support the motion. I commend the mover for the generosity of time that she has given the Government in respect to the return of documents. Her generous attitude to stagger the release of documents at first instance is not necessarily a move that I favour. No-one should necessarily infer that it is a precedent that I intend to follow at any point. I will move an amendment with two parts. Firstly, I think that it is necessary to put beyond doubt in respect to paragraph (d) the scope and nature of the documents we need. It should include handwritten and file notes. Secondly, I foresee the Government once more trying to slow the release of information by hiding behind frivolous privilege claims that have never been upheld by this House before. In order to short-circuit what will be an absurd proposition and argument from the Government about privilege, I move:

That the question be amended as follows:

- (1) In paragraph (d) insert "handwritten and file notes," after "all documents including", and
- (2) Insert at the end:
 - (2) That in returning the documents required to be produced in response to paragraph (a) of this order, the agencies and officers covered by the order redact the following personal information: mobile phone numbers, email addresses and any other contact information.

This amendment is by no means an acknowledgement that the Government has a privilege claim. It is actually an affirmation that the Government will make an absurd privilege claim. Let us not allow this process to be slowed. One thing is clear as a result of the shadow Minister's relentless focus on this issue. What has come to light is that, once more, what the Premier has been telling the people of New South Wales does not seem to be the complete story. There would seem to be other details, which I am sure the people of New South Wales would like to know, as they relate to the reasons for former Minister Petinos' resignation and the involvement of Mr Barilaro.

We are meant to believe that Mr Barilaro had a party with Minister Petinos on budget day to celebrate his appointment to the Americas position and, lo and behold, his best friends the Coronation Property Co. Pty Ltd happen to be invited along. We are meant to believe that they were cracking open the champagne somewhere along the line to celebrate Mr Barilaro's journey to New York and, of all the people who came to party, Coronation Property Co. happened to be there, just a few weeks prior to the lifting of a stop work order at their property. Seriously, it is too ridiculous to be believed. Nevertheless, let us get to the bottom of it by passing this motion as proposed.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (10:30): In reply: I thank all contributors to the debate. I indicate to the Government that the Opposition will not be supporting an extension of seven days. This is something that the Opposition has been calling for consistently. I have been calling for this letter almost since the NSW Building Commissioner initially resigned. Indeed, I foreshadowed it in the pages of *The Sydney Morning Herald* over a week ago. This is not a surprise to the Government, and it should not be difficult for the Government to produce the document. As to the proposed additional changes, no, the Opposition is not going to reduce the scope of this order; we are not going to agree to more time. I have been incredibly reasonable to allow a week and a further two weeks for additional documents.

Usually the Government and I can come to an agreement. Usually we find a way through in relation to amendments and time frames. But this is an issue where the Government has consistently said one thing to the public and then, after the production of documents to this House, its statements have been shown not to be the case or not to be the full truth. So, yes, the Opposition is going to cast the net wider; we will get to the bottom of it. At the outset of the inquiry into the appointment of John Barilaro as trade commissioner to the Americas, we were told that it was an open and transparent process. The past seven weeks have shown that was absolutely not the case. That is why the Opposition is pursuing this issue.

Coronation Property Co, a developer that employed the former Deputy Premier, was issued a stop work order by the Building Commissioner. The former Deputy Premier then contacted the Building Commissioner and said, "I want to have a meeting, but to be clear it's not about the prohibition order, it's just to get a feel of what's going on." The Opposition wants to get to the bottom of what was going on. The Building Commissioner subsequently resigned, abruptly and prematurely, no prior indications, after all of this occurred. We want to get to the bottom of it and, more than that, the public deserves answers.

This is not some little fishing expedition we are pursuing. This relates to very important building reforms that go to the safety of the community in New South Wales. The Building Commissioner was the man that the Government said was going to spearhead the efforts, and abruptly he resigns. The Opposition wants to get to the bottom of it. Something does not add up here. I acknowledge and note the Opposition's support for the amendment proposed by my friend and colleague the shadow Treasurer, who is far more experienced in frivolous privilege claims made by the Government than I am, so I take his learned advice and I thank him. He has moved a very practical amendment to the motion, which should be agreed to by the House today. I urge the Government to not claim privilege on the Building Commissioner's letter when it is produced in 24 hours' time.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Courtney Houssos has moved a motion, to which the Hon. Damien Tudehope and the Hon. Daniel Mookhey have moved amendments. The question is that the amendment of the Hon. Damien Tudehope be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes15
Noes23
Majority.....8

AYES

Amato
Barrett (teller)
Fang
Farlow (teller)

Franklin
Maclaren-Jones
Mallard
Martin

Poulos
Rath
Taylor
Tudehope

AYES		
Farraway	Mitchell	Ward
NOES		
Borsak	Higginson	Pearson
Boyd	Houssos	Primrose
Buttigieg (teller)	Hurst	Roberts
D'Adam (teller)	Jackson	Searle
Donnelly	Latham	Secord
Faehrmann	Mookhey	Sharpe
Field	Moriarty	Veitch
Graham	Moselmane	

Amendment negatived.

The PRESIDENT: The question now is that the amendment of the Hon. Daniel Mookhey be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

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

Motion as amended agreed to.

NSW AGENT GENERAL TO THE UNITED KINGDOM

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (10:47): 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, excluding any documents previously returned under an order of the House, in the possession, custody or control of the of the Premier, the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the Treasurer, the Treasury, the Deputy Premier, the Department of Regional NSW, the Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade, and Investment NSW relating to Stephen Cartwright, Agent General to the United Kingdom:

- (a) all briefs or briefings, however described, including attachments, sent to, signed by, drafted by received by or approved by the current or former Premier, the current or former Deputy Premier, the current or former Treasurer, the current or any previous Minister for Trade, the current or former Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the current or former Treasury Secretary, the Secretary of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade and the Investment NSW CEO regarding Stephen Cartwright;
- (b) the final selection panel report, however described, which recommended Stephen Cartwright for the position of Agent General in the United Kingdom;
- (c) TLL Communications, including text messages, or correspondence via instant messenger services, between Stephen Cartwright or his office; and:
 - (i) Mr John Barilaro;
 - (ii) The Hon. Dominic Perrottet; or
 - (iii) Mr Stuart Ayres.
- (d) all communications, text messages, or any correspondence messenger services, since 1 February 2022 between Stephen Cartwright or his office, and any person working in:
 - (i) the office of the current or any former Premier of New South Wales;
 - (ii) the office of the current or any former Treasurer of New South Wales; or
 - (iii) the office of the current or any former Minister for Trade.
- (e) all communications between Stephen Cartwright and any person at:
 - (i) the Department of Premier and Cabinet; or
 - (ii) the Treasury.
- (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.

The motion relates to Stephen Cartwright, who is the NSW Agent General to the United Kingdom and who may or may not enjoy the confidence of the Premier of New South Wales as we currently stand. It arises as a result of the inquiry the Public Accountability Committee is undertaking into the appointments of senior trade and investment commissioners, including Mr Barilaro to the New York position. As that inquiry has developed, it has

become clear that there is a need for scrutiny of the process that led to Mr Cartwright emerging as our agent general.

The first line of inquiry that has emerged is how Mr Cartwright got the job. The committee is yet to see produced in any of the documents an independent selection panel report that recommended him for that role. In addition to that, his employer, the Secretary of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade, came before the committee earlier this week and made a rather startling statement, which was that she herself had never seen one and is not aware of whether one exists. To be clear here, some of this took place under the auspices of the Treasury, but it is remarkable that a person who is told to conclude the negotiations has no access to that particular piece of information.

Amongst other things I seek to do by this motion under Standing Order 52 is to put beyond doubt the question of whether the report exists, by asking for it to be produced. Let us see what is returned. That will raise other questions, I am sure. There is also some indication that there was another candidate for that role. That other candidate equally went through a process of independent selection but did not walk away with the role. It looks quite dubious as to how that could have happened again. I am not making any claims, but it is certainly worthy of inquiry.

The second issue that has arisen in respect to Mr Cartwright is a claim that he had a feeling of elevated status and that he was prepared to use this elevated status in order to obtain more remuneration. Let us be fair to Mr Cartwright. He has not had the opportunity to give evidence to the committee or to tell his version of events. But what we have established as fact is that there is no doubt that the Agent General to the United Kingdom is remunerated more than any of the other senior trade and investment commissioners—wildly more, in some respects. For example, had Mr Barilaro jetted off to New York, he would have a cost-of-living allowance to the tune of \$10,000 per year. The agent general has a cost-of-living allowance of \$110,000 per year. That is absolutely startling. The agent general's cost-of-living allowance is higher than the average remuneration of a nurse in New South Wales. It exceeds the starting pay of a police officer by tens of thousands of dollars. That is just the cost-of-living allowance.

It is clear that since Mr Cartwright's engagement as agent general he has made two attempts to renegotiate his contract. In both attempts, he apparently invoked the names of then Deputy Premier Mr Barilaro and then Treasurer, now Premier, Dominic Perrottet. There are questions to be asked about the precise role they had in the determination of his remuneration package. That is worthy of inquiry as well. Equally, in the remarkable statement from the secretary, we heard of some pretty outrageous behaviour from the agent general. We heard that, earlier this year, the agent general sought the direct intervention of Stuart Ayres, as Minister responsible for trade, to resolve a dispute over his remuneration.

Mr Cartwright is alleged to have sent Mr Ayres a WhatsApp message in which he complained about the department's refusal to pay him more. He sought the intervention of Mr Ayres, effectively going above the head of his boss. It was conduct that the secretary herself described as highly inappropriate and almost completely unprecedented in her experience. We should see that WhatsApp message; it is one of the other things I am seeking in this motion. For those reasons, I think the threshold to engage our power has well and truly been triggered. It is important that we see this information and that we see it in seven days. I commend the motion to the House.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (10:52): One Nation supports the Standing Order 52 motion on the basis that this is a shameful repeat of the mistakes of history. The position of agent general was abolished by the Fahey Government because Neil Pickard abused his expense allowance. That is the reason it was abolished in 1995—another hapless member for Hornsby bringing discredit upon the Liberal Party. This is another repeat of history. It is left, right and centre—mainly left. Now, in a repeat of the history with Pickard, we have this guy Cartwright. He got the job because he is a red-hot Liberal Party supporter, and he is racking up expenses that would make Louis XVI blush with embarrassment. It is a direct repeat of the reason the agent general post was abolished in the first place.

A few of us had a few little schemes along the way to change the shape of this place through such a posting. They did not come to pass. One Nation policy now is to abolish all these sinecures—the trade commissioners, the agents general—on the basis that it is a direct duplication of the constitutional power of the Commonwealth. We have Austrade with billions of—

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: They don't look after New South Wales.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: They don't look after New South Wales? If you are running a major company in the United States, how confused would you be when Austrade comes to see you about investing, then some palookas from Queensland, some Mexicans from Victoria and some South Australians come to see you, and then the New South Wales trade commissioner comes to see you? You would be thinking, "What sort of place is

this? How over-governed is this joint called Australia? I will invest where they have just one tier of government: I will invest in New Zealand." It is counterproductive to have all of these party apparatchiki rewarded with huge expense allowances while confusing investors and companies overseas.

As a nation, we should rely on Austrade and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, for which we spend billions of dollars out of Canberra. We do not need the confusion or the duplication or the sinecures. We certainly do not need Stephen Cartwright's expense allowance. We do not need him at all in this position. This motion might add to the Mookhey jihad against these positions and extend the library into its most productive role so far. I mean, the publicity he is getting on this is amazing. If this is part of winding back duplication and trimming back the State budget, we very much support it.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (10:55): I will not go into the merits or otherwise of the agent general or any other of the senior trade and investment commissioners. I think my position on that has been put on record in the past. In the interests of full transparency, the Government does not oppose the motion presented by the Hon. Daniel Mookhey.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (10:55): I am encouraged by the Government's decision not to oppose the motion. However, I will move an amendment that is remarkably similar in nature to the one that the shadow Treasurer, the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, moved to my motion. I move:

That the question be amended by inserting at the end:

- (2) That in returning the documents required to be produced in response to paragraph (a) of this order, the agencies and officers covered by the order redact the following personal information: mobile phone numbers, email addresses and any other contact information.

The Opposition is seeking to avoid a frivolous privilege challenge to this important information. The documentation is going to be crucial to our Public Accountability Committee inquiry going forward, and we seek to ensure that it is available to the public and not just to members of the Legislative Council. I commend my amendment to the House and encourage all members to support it.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY (10:56): In reply: I very much appreciate the contribution of the Hon. Mark Latham to this debate. I can assure him that, should Labor find itself in power, these jobs will go and we will save the money. I know that the cap-doffers in the Coalition all pine for the day that they become the agent general and attend the garden parties in London.

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: They could become the Governor.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I acknowledge that interjection. Their ambition to be the agent general might interfere with their ambition to be vice-regal. But, in twenty-first century commerce, the role of the agent general is highly unnecessary. I look forward to the Government continuing to defend the appropriateness of these roles all the way up to March. I hope that the Government continues to articulate an argument for the agent general in London. I look forward to that debate.

I welcome the amendment moved by the Hon. Courtney Houssos. I felt it was inspired. It certainly adds to the quality of this particular motion. I acknowledge the Hon. Scott Farlow, who once more has proven his ability to navigate difficult political terrain on behalf of the Government and his aptitude in taking on tough arguments for the Government as well. I very much welcome the Government's support. I am glad that after four years I seem to be converting the Government, every now and then, to the cause of transparency.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Adam Searle): The Hon. Daniel Mookhey has moved a motion, to which the Hon. Courtney Houssos has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment of the Hon. Courtney Houssos be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Adam Searle): The question is that the motion as amended be agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

Committees

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BARANGAROO SIGHT LINES

Establishment, Membership, Chair and Deputy Chair

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (10:59): I move:

- (1) That a select committee be established to inquire into and report on Barangaroo sightlines.

- (2) That the select committee inquire into and report on:
 - (a) any actual or perceived biases of the following parties involved in negotiations between the New South Wales Government, Lendlease, and Crown concerning Barangaroo sightlines:
 - (i) the Office of the Premier;
 - (ii) the offices of all responsible Government Ministers;
 - (iii) the Chief Executive and Board of Infrastructure NSW;
 - (iv) the Chief Executive and Board of the Barangaroo Delivery Authority; and
 - (v) any other person engaged in the negotiations on behalf of the New South Wales Government.
 - (b) the probity of negotiations between the New South Wales Government, Lendlease, and Crown concerning the Barangaroo sightlines;
 - (c) the integrity, efficacy and value for money of "unsolicited proposals", including the "unsolicited proposal" initiated by Crown Resorts Limited in relation to the Barangaroo development project;
 - (d) any potential biases resulting in the preferential treatment of the commercial interests of one party over the other;
 - (e) measures necessary to ensure the integrity of the Barangaroo Redevelopment project and similar projects in the future; and
 - (f) any other related matter.
- (3) That the committee report by 20 December 2022.
- (4) That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders, the committee consist of seven members comprising:
 - (a) three Government members;
 - (b) two Opposition members, including Mr D'Adam; and
 - (c) two crossbench members, including Mr Latham.
- (5) That the Chair of the committee be Mr Latham and the Deputy Chair be Mr D'Adam.
- (6) That, unless the committee decides otherwise:
 - (a) submissions to the inquiry are to be published, subject to the committee Clerk checking for confidentiality and adverse mention and, where those issues arise, bringing them to the attention of the committee for consideration;
 - (b) the Chair's proposed witness list is to be circulated to provide members with an opportunity to amend the list, with the witness list agreed to by email, unless a member requests the Chair to convene a meeting to resolve any disagreement;
 - (c) the sequence of questions to be asked at hearings is to alternate between Government, Opposition and crossbench members, in order determined by the committee, with equal time allocated to each;
 - (d) transcripts of evidence taken at public hearings are to be published;
 - (e) supplementary questions are to be lodged with the committee Clerk within two days, excluding Saturday and Sunday, following the receipt of the hearing transcript, with witnesses requested to return answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions within 21 calendar days of the date on which questions are forwarded to the witness; and
 - (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, subject to the committee Clerk checking for confidentiality and adverse mention and, where those issues arise, bringing them to the attention of the committee for consideration.

I note the motion is a joint D'Adam-Latham production—that unholy alliance. If we get this up today, of course, we will be moving on to solve the problems of the Middle East—well, not quite. It is an alliance where wrongdoing has been identified and the need for the committee is clear. The committee that we are talking about, to look at and report on the Barangaroo sightlines, would be seeking to answer a number of important questions. Firstly, why did the Barangaroo Delivery Authority sell the Sydney Harbour sightlines twice, to Lendlease-Crown and to Grocon? What deal did the Government do with Lendlease and Crown in August 2019 after the developers sued and won in the Supreme Court? Why have the details of that deal never been made public?

The third issue that would be examined by the important committee that I recommend to the House is to ask about the memo that former Baird staffer Tim Robertson wrote to Tim Reardon and Simon Draper, head of Infrastructure NSW, in August 2019 saying as follows:

The project team considers that the best opportunity for the Central Barangaroo project to progress in a manner that's consistent with the sender and minimises ongoing risk to Infrastructure NSW is for the transfer of development rights from Grocon to Aqualand.

It is an extraordinary point of view that the Government is seeking to manipulate the corporate arrangements between companies for the benefit of an outfit, Aqualand, one of whose principals is Warwick Smith, a well-known Liberal Party operative and donor. The committee could potentially identify crony capitalism at its worst and that in itself would justify the committee. But then a fourth question needs to be answered: Why did the

Government stall on delivering sightlines to Grocon for three long years, only to deliver them the day after Grocon was forced to sell out of the Central Barangaroo project on 26 September 2019 to a company called Aqualand that was headed by Warwick Smith, the Liberal Party fundraiser?

The Robertson agenda in that memo was fulfilled by stalling year after year on Grocon and forcing it into receivership, with all the consequences for its staff and viability, and handing it on to Aqualand. That in itself is an extraordinary intervention by the Government, which should be neutral when it comes to those corporate arrangements. The best type of governance is neutral in conflicts within the corporate sector. Here, favouritism and cronyism were evident in the way in which Aqualand and Warwick Smith were favoured.

The fifth question would be: Why is Central Barangaroo still a massive hole in the ground, being serviced by a very expensive metro station? That is another example of this Government's waste and mismanagement. The sixth question is the one that my colleague the Hon. Anthony D'Adam has raised about the meeting between Mike Baird and James Packer to examine the Crown part of the deal. It was set up like a Henry Kissinger détente summit with a pre-prepared communiqué. If members look at the documentation there they will see that that in itself was extraordinary.

So many aspects of that dirty deal and such cronyism displayed by the Government warrant a select committee of this House. In a couple of days of hearing, I believe it would get to the bottom of what has gone on and expose the things that the public needs to know about the problems at Central Barangaroo—most obviously, the big hole in the ground serviced by the expensive metro. How did we get to that point when infrastructure funding is so scarce? How was the development so poorly managed, selling the sightlines twice, displaying favouritism and engaging in activities that no government should ever touch? That very concerning mismanagement by the Government needs to be examined by a committee, and I am hoping it can have the support of the Chamber to quickly look at it—a couple of days of hearings and a report—and shed some light on something that has a lot of interest around different media and political circles that have spoken to me and the Hon. Anthony D'Adam. It very much warrants the Chamber's support.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (11:03): I support the establishment of this select committee. I will not go into the details of why the Opposition supports it, because my colleague the Hon. Anthony D'Adam will do that as he has been very actively interested and has been following this issue for a very long time. This is yet another example of an old government doing a whole range of special deals across a whole range of different areas. Lots of questions need to be answered in relation to this, and Opposition members believe that a select committee will be the appropriate setting to do that. I also formally indicate to the House that if the motion is passed there will be two members of the Opposition on the committee, one of them being the Hon. Anthony D'Adam and the other being the Hon. Adam Searle. The Opposition supports the establishment of this committee.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (11:04): It is great to see a motion to get the House involved in a brawl among the big end of town and drag us all into that heated brawl that has been going on for some time. I have some recollection as a Sydney councillor of when the different developers competing in that space were starting to become a problem. To move the motion forward, the Government proposes an amendment that would effectively refer it not to a select committee but to Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Transport, which covers Rob Stokes' general portfolio area. It covers cities, open space and infrastructure, and this is definitely an infrastructure area. The House has standing committees, and the members of those standing committees have expertise from doing various inquiries. Dare I say, I am actually well aware of Portfolio Committee No. 6, although I do not think I am on it at the moment. I move:

That the question be amended as follows:

- (1) Omit paragraphs (1), (4), (5) and (6).
- (2) Omit in paragraph (2) "the select committee" and insert instead "Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport".

Paragraphs (1), (4), (5) and (6) relate to the select committee, the membership and the terms of reference, which are identical to a portfolio committee that is already established except that the membership is established by the House. The Government seeks the support of the House for the amendment to refer the inquiry to a portfolio committee with the expertise and the infrastructure of the committee system around it, rather than to create another select committee of the House.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (11:06): I speak to the amendments. Nice try from the Government, but we have select committees for a reason. The Opposition supports the select committee and will not be supporting the Government amendment.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM (11:06): I do not propose to speak at great length on the motion; I think the case has been well established by the Hon. Mark Latham with regard to the various questions that need to be addressed. The core question that we really need to turn our minds to is the interrelationships of this Government,

which clearly has problems with boundaries and knowing what is appropriate with regard to leaving matters to the public sector and those that require political intervention.

It is quite clear that there are serious questions about the role played by the Government and the Premier's office at the time. The level of intervention in the decision-making needs to be scrutinised. It is true the State should be a neutral player when it comes to conflicts between various fractions of capital. I do not think it is clear that the State has observed an appropriately neutral response in a circumstance like this. It seems that the State has picked one side in a blue, and that is utterly inappropriate. We need to delve into this and find out what happened.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (11:08): In reply: I briefly note that the first I heard of the Government's amendment was when those opposite moved it in the Chamber. One would think they would have some consultation with the crossbench, given the proposal that was put. On the basis of no consultation, I have no support for the amendment.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Adam Searle): The Hon. Mark Latham has moved a motion, to which the Hon. Shayne Mallard has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

Amendment negated.

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

Motion agreed to.

Documents

SYDNEY SUBURBAN STADIUMS

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (11:10): On behalf of the Hon. John Graham: 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 2020, in the possession, custody or control of the Treasury, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Office of Sport, Venues NSW, Infrastructure NSW or the Minister for Sport relating to the commitment to fund and build suburban stadiums in Sydney, including the proposed new stadium in Penrith:

- (a) all documents relating to the business case, tender and/or contract for the development and construction of any of the stadiums;
- (b) all documents relating to the benefit-cost ratio [BCR] of the proposed stadiums;
- (c) all documents relating to any changes made to the commitment to fund and build the stadiums; 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.

Members of this House would know, if they have been following discussions and debate on stadiums in New South Wales over at least the past half-decade—and I suspect for a much longer period of time—that the matter has been very fraught. It is not helped by this Government, which, over a period of time, has had six different stadium policies. There have been a lot of claims—

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: More than Labor.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: And you have only delivered one. Good on you. It is interesting that the Government wants to defend itself on this, given the mess it has gotten itself into. As someone who does not even follow rugby league, I am disturbed that the State could be losing the final to Queensland through breaches of trust by the Government. I am looking forward to Government members defending their stadium policies, their failure to be trustworthy in negotiations over this and, more importantly, the number of times they have duded local communities over promises of stadiums that they have failed to fulfil. This is an order for papers, and we could talk about this for a long time. The point is that Labor is moving the motion because, yet again, it is forced to get to the bottom of this to try to fix the problems created by the Government's mismanagement.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (11:12): No-one will be surprised to learn that the Government will not be supporting this motion. The Government understands that Standing Order 52 orders for papers are a fundamental part of ensuring accountability to this Parliament. However, this is a request for over two years' worth of detailed operational, legal and commercial information involving multiple departments, agencies and external stakeholders. Responding to orders for papers requires resources to be either supplemented or diverted from operations; therefore, the Government opposes the motion moved by the Opposition. In the past two years, the upper House has made several hundred orders for papers under Standing Order 52 and, in 2021, surpassed the numbers of any previous Parliament. This number of orders is now imposing an unprecedented administrative

burden on departments and agencies, taking away resources from serving the communities and citizens of New South Wales.

The time and cost involved in servicing this motion would be substantial for small agencies such as the Office of Sport and Venues NSW. The time frame provided for production of the documents is unreasonable. I am advised that it would require at least 30 full-time person working days to retrieve and categorise the information to be ready for tabling in the House. Furthermore, the resource commitment required to produce the requested detail and documentation would involve not just one agency but several, given the multiple parties involved. This documentation includes over 3,200 individual responses to a "have your say" community consultation campaign. We are not just talking about clerk-grade staff.

Orders of this type require hours across an agency, from clerk grade through to senior executives and chief executives. These head hours would be much better utilised serving the people and communities of New South Wales. In addition, Venues NSW has only just moved offices, relocating back to the Sydney Football Stadium. It is not feasible or reasonable to think that Venues NSW would have the ability to collect and collate the relevant documentation within the time frame.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (11:14): On behalf of the Hon. John Graham: In reply: The Hon. Taylor Martin gets a gold star for trying. The reasons that he was given to read out relating to Standing Order 52 orders for papers do not stack up in any way, shape or form. I address a few of them. Firstly, the scope is always too big according to the Government. Has anyone from any of those agencies actually made an attempt to speak to the shadow Minister about the scope and tried to deal with these matters? I have no advice that has occurred. Frankly, members opposite do not get to come into this place and whinge about scope if they have made zero attempts to speak to the Opposition about this like grown-ups. The Opposition is not interested in getting a bunch of documents that are tangential to the issue that is before us; it is after business cases. It is clear that there are issues that we need to deal with. If someone—and this is a call out to the Minister's offices that probably are not listening to this debate but should be—

The Hon. Taylor Martin: Wow.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: If they are listening, hello up there. The best thing they could have done, if they were worried about scope and the overworking of public servants, would have been to knock on the door of the Hon. John Graham and have a conversation about this. Secondly, public servants do an extraordinary job. It is not their fault that the Government has stripped the public service to the bone and made it hard to do the fundamental work of democracy in New South Wales, which is the role of this House. It is on the Government if it has stripped out its public service so much that staff are overburdened; it is not on us. Thirdly, the Opposition is happy to talk about time frames, but if the Government has not approached us and had a conversation with us we are not going to go there.

Finally, we are eight months away from an election. This House has made a lot of orders for papers since 2019, and none of them has been a surprise. It is not a surprise that a lot of them are going to be passed on a Wednesday. Government members coming in here whinging and saying, "This is outrageous and unprecedented," every time shows that they have failed to get the message, which is that this House takes its oversight role seriously. It has shown that time and time again. It has been willing to push the limits on this.

Instead of whinging about it, the Government should have a strategy to be more effective and less onerous. Again, it is not on the Ministers. They are not the ones who are staying over the weekend to fulfil these orders; it is the public servants. Labor acknowledges that. Government members should stop coming in here and whinging about this. There are a lot of things they could do about this, but they choose not to. The Opposition is not taking responsibility for that somehow being a bad thing. Our job is to oversight these matters. Without the Standing Order 52 work that has happened since 2019, the community in New South Wales would be in the dark about the many nefarious activities that this Government has been a part of.

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

The House divided.

Ayes22
Noes16
Majority.....6

AYES

Boyd
Buttigieg (teller)
D'Adam (teller)

Houssos
Hurst
Jackson

Pearson
Primrose
Roberts

AYES

Donnelly
Faehrmann
Field
Graham
Higginson

Latham
Mookhey
Moriarty
Moselmane

Searle
Secord
Sharpe
Veitch

NOES

Amato
Barrett (teller)
Fang
Farlow (teller)
Farraway
Franklin

Maclaren-Jones
Mallard
Martin
Mitchell
Nile

Poulos
Rath
Taylor
Tudehope
Ward

Motion agreed to.

TEACHER SHORTAGES

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (11:27): 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 Education and Early Learning or the Department of Education relating to the impact of teacher shortages:

- (a) all documents, including reports, briefings, memorandum, emails, email attachments and draft answers to Legislative Council Questions on Notice created since 12 May 2022, relating to merged classes and minimal supervision of students;
- (b) all correspondence between the department and schools relating to information required in response to Legislative Council Questions on Notice created since 12 May 2022 with respect to the numbers of merged classes and instances of minimal supervision in schools in 2022;
- (c) all correspondence between the department and schools created since 12 May 2022 relating to information required in response to Legislative Council Questions on Notice regarding the numbers of temporary teaching positions;
- (d) all documents, including internal reports, briefings, memorandum, emails, email attachments, correspondence and reports or briefings produced by consultants created since 12 May 2022 relating to teacher shortages, vacant permanent and temporary positions in schools and the Government's Teacher Supply Strategy;
- (e) all reports, presentations and correspondence, including the records of any and all attachments to any emails sent to, from and/or between senior executive staff created since 1 January 2022 involving any plans, proposals, policies and/or draft policies regarding the evaluation of reading recovery programs; 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.

This motion makes an extensive but important call for papers. It arises from a question on notice that I lodged on the *Questions and Answers* paper about merged classes and minimal supervision of students. In response to that question on notice, the Minister said that the information was not held centrally by the department. That was directly contradicted by the evidence of the NSW Teachers Federation on the first day of hearings in the inquiry of Portfolio Committee No. 3 – Education into teacher shortages in New South Wales. Federation representatives said they were aware that the information was readily available. So we have no choice but to come to the Parliament and compel the production of documents.

The Government consistently tries to say that the Opposition is politicising or creating the issue of teacher shortages and that it is not a problem. That is simply not the case. I am told constantly by my parliamentary colleagues and by members of the community that every school is confronting teacher shortages. Indeed, I understand that during the parliamentary break the Leader of the Labor Party visited Katoomba High School with the member for Blue Mountains and heard direct evidence from teachers saying, "These are the classes that have been merged today." When the schools infrastructure inquiry visited schools, we heard directly from principals and teachers about merged classes. The idea of a teacher shortage is well known within the community, and only the Government is denying it. This is an incredibly important issue.

The Opposition is seeking these documents because we have received information, through answers to questions on notice, that has directly contradicted evidence to the parliamentary inquiry. We are seeking the documents not only to get to the bottom of that issue but also to inform the teacher shortage inquiry. This is an

incredibly important issue because we know that the quality of the teacher in the classroom is the single biggest factor in a student's success. We have the fastest falling education outcomes in the world. Those are not my words; they are the words of the professors tasked by the Government to review the curriculum.

It is incredibly important that we first get to the problem because we cannot find a solution if we do not identify that there is a problem. I anticipate that the Minister will try to talk about the different trials, packages and announcements that the Government has made. We do not need another advertising campaign. We do not need another trial. We need a comprehensive plan to address the workload and teacher pay issues, not only to encourage teachers to join the workforce but also, more importantly, to retain them in the workforce.

Our survey arising out of the teacher shortage inquiry had almost 11,500 responses. It was a pretty remarkable response. Of those, almost 8,500 responses were from teachers, and we heard overwhelmingly that they were planning to leave the profession in the next five years as a result of the workload issues. Pay is part of it, but workload issues must be addressed. If the Opposition cannot trust the information provided in answer to questions on notice, then we are forced to come to the House and seek further information from the department. With that, I commend the motion to the House and encourage members to support it.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Learning) (11:32): I am very happy to speak to this call for papers and, in doing so, put a few things on the record in response to the comments made by the mover of the motion. First of all, in relation to the relevant questions on notice, there was not just one. I think there were close to 100 different questions on notice relating to a number of schools in western Sydney, asking for specific information about instances of minimal supervision, how many times classes have been merged and how many permanent positions are currently unfilled. My response was very clear that the department does not centrally collect or maintain records of minimal supervision or merged classes across 2,200 schools, and in practice schools do not maintain a central log of minimal supervision and merged classes across a school year. It has never been a requirement of schools.

I am aware of information that was given by the Teachers Federation in relation to this at the recent inquiry into teacher shortages. The truth is that the department went out to the schools that had been named in the questions on notice by the honourable member. I must admit, there was quite a lot of blowback from those schools. We had concerns from the federation and the Secondary Principals' Council about the time it took principals to collect the information. Nevertheless, it was provided. However, my office noticed very obvious discrepancies in terms of the collection of the data. So we asked questions of the department about its confidence in the data and its accuracy, because it was important that what was provided was accurate.

The response from both our deputy secretary and our group deputy secretary was that the manual collection of the information and the variability of the source data across an extended time period in schools means that our confidence is low that we could consistently replicate the results. Senior members of the department could not provide me with assurances that the data was accurate, which is why our answer to the questions on notice is as it is. What we do have that is accurate are the vacant positions at those schools, and they were provided to the honourable member in answer to questions on notice.

The Government will not oppose this call for papers under Standing Order 52, but I think it is important to put the context on the record. As a Minister, I have to stand behind the answers that I give in the Parliament. I take that seriously. So when my advice from the most senior executives and bureaucrats in the department was that they cannot guarantee that data could be replicated accurately and that there is room for human error in the collection systems because there is no central collection system, I made the decision to answer the question as I saw fit. More broadly in relation to teacher supply, there certainly is an inquiry underway. There is, I would say, a very good Government submission that members should avail themselves of to look at our position on these issues.

We also have our Teacher Supply Strategy, which is a plan funded to the tune of \$125 million to address a range of issues when it comes to teacher supply. Education Ministers around the country are meeting on Friday to look at how we tackle those issues. There are some consistent themes coming from other States about what we are doing in New South Wales and how that is heading in the right direction. I look forward to continuously canvassing those issues and talking very strongly about what we are doing as a government to improve teacher supply in this State.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (11:35): In reply: I appreciate the further information that was provided by the Minister in her response. The only thing that I would say is perhaps it would have been more helpful if that information was provided in the response to the questions on notice rather than the standard "We don't centrally collect this data", without giving some insight into why. Given the responses directly contradict what we have been told in an inquiry, it is quite serious, and some additional information would have been helpful. I appreciate the Government is not opposing the motion and I commend it to the House.

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

Motions

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD MARTIN

The Hon. MARK PEARSON (11:36): I move:

- (1) That this House honours the member of British Parliament, Richard Martin, nicknamed by King George IV as "Humanity Dick", because he:
 - (a) campaigned against widespread animal cruelty, including seeking a ban on dogfighting and bullbaiting;
 - (b) was successful in obtaining the passing of the groundbreaking Act to prevent the cruel and improper treatment of cattle by the British Parliament in 1822;
 - (c) led the first prosecution under the 1822 Act with defendant Bill Burns, who was convicted of animal cruelty, having been found guilty of beating his donkey; and
 - (d) was a founding member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which later received royal patronage to become the RSPCA.
- (2) That this House notes that it will be the bicentenary of the passing of the Cruel Treatment of Cattle Act on 22 July 2022 and that the Act:
 - (a) prohibited the "wanton and cruel" beating, abuse or ill-treatment of any ox, donkey, horse, cow, heifer, steer, sheep or other cattle; and
 - (b) was a major achievement in the history of animal welfare, being the first time that:
 - (i) animals were legally recognised as being capable of suffering;
 - (ii) lawmakers were prepared to place animal interests above those of their human "owners"; and
 - (iii) public sentiment in support of animal welfare was harnessed for social change.
- (3) That this House acknowledges that there is significant law reform that remains to be undertaken, including:
 - (a) recognition that speciesism negatively affects the treatment of animals as set out in our regulatory framework; and
 - (b) the need to reform the legal status of animals and their statutory protections to better reflect the changes in community attitudes and scientific knowledge of animal capabilities.

This motion is about Richard Martin and the bicentennial of the Act to prevent the cruel and improper treatment of cattle by the British Parliament. Born in 1754 and politically active until his death in 1834, Richard Martin's groundbreaking achievements for animals loom large in the history of the animal protection movement. Martin was also active in the anti-slavery movement alongside the abolitionist William Wilberforce. Martin's fame as an animal advocate was such that he was on a first-name basis with royalty. He was nicknamed Humanity Dick by King George IV because of his decades-long commitment to challenging social norms regarding animal cruelty. Like all visionaries ahead of their time, he was subject to ridicule, with cartoons of him with donkeys' ears appearing in the newspapers of the day.

Martin was born into a wealthy Northern Irish family with large landholdings. Within his estate there was a small island where Martin would maroon anyone who he found mistreating animals, refusing to return them to the mainland until they repented of their cruelty. Later in his political career he provided financial assistance to people fined under his newly established animal welfare laws if they were poor and truly remorseful. Upon his election to British Parliament, Martin attempted but failed to achieve a ban on dog fighting and bull baiting. Not unlike today's greyhound racing, these now universally condemned activities were once seen as harmless entertainments for the masses, which only the out-of-touch elites wanted to ban. It took several decades but Martin eventually succeeded in his Act to prevent the cruel and improper treatment of cattle being passed into law. This motion honours the bicentennial of that event.

The Act was the beginning of modern animal welfare legislation, criminalising the commonplace cruelty that occurred daily on farms and on the streets, in the marketplace and in the slaughterhouses. The wanton and cruel beating, abuse and ill-treatment of oxen, donkeys, horses, cattle and sheep were now matters of legal sanction. Martin had spent years campaigning to change public sentiment and he drew upon this shift in attitudes to convince his fellow MPs that animal welfare was a legitimate subject for public policy and law reform. Once the bill was passed, Martin lost no time in applying its provisions to animal cruelty perpetrators. Given that donkeys and horses at this time were the main transporters of goods and people, there was significant opportunity for suffering to occur. Many were overworked, overburdened and underfed. Abuse was rife. Cattle were forced to walk many miles to market and then on to slaughterhouses, where death was neither quick nor humane. Here is a small selection of the horrors:

Calves were hanged from the ceiling, alive, until the butcher chose to kill them; animals were skinned before they were dead. Iron hooks were ripped into their faces to better collect the blood. All animals were stored by being thrown into dung and carcass filled cellars, where they broke their jaw or legs as they were thrown in.

During this period of time the ethicist Jeremy Bentham founded the philosophy of utilitarianism, which at its most basic reduction posits that humans should seek to maximise pleasure and minimise pain. Dr Peter Singer is a modern proponent of this school of thought. It informed his pioneering work, *Animal Liberation*, which is credited with starting the animal liberation movement. Bentham applied utilitarianism to the plight of animals. He considered that it was the ability to suffer that should be the benchmark of how we treat other beings and that the capacity for suffering gives the right to equal consideration. He famously stated:

... the question is not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?

Fast forward to 2021 and speciesism, which is the belief that humans are inherently superior to animals and are therefore entitled to exploit them, rationalises all manner of animal suffering. I am certain that Humanity Dick would be horrified by modern-day battery cages, live export, mulesing, 1080 baiting, chemical testing, aerial shooting and the whipping of horses in horseracing. The day will come when these practices are relegated to the scrap heap of history, just like the practices Richard Martin condemned and caused to be unlawful 200 years ago.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (11:42): On behalf of the Government, I thank the Hon. Mark Pearson for again raising an important issue that we all care about, which is animal welfare, and for providing me with the opportunity to highlight the Government's commitment to this matter. I join with the honourable member in acknowledging Mr Richard Martin, an Irish politician. He is honoured as a leading founder of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. I recall that the honourable member spoke quite extensively of Martin in his inaugural speech. I make clear that the Government does not support paragraph (3) (a) of the motion, as set out by the Animal Justice Party, that the "recognition that speciesism negatively affects the treatment of animals". We also do not support paragraph 3 (b), which states:

- (b) the need to reform the legal status of animals and their statutory protections to better reflect the changes in community attitudes and scientific knowledge of animal capabilities.

We propose an amendment to remove paragraph (3) from the motion. The statements provided in paragraph (3) of the motion are in fact, in our view, not in line with current community attitudes and scientific knowledge and our aggressive approach to best practices of animal welfare laws. I move:

That the question be amended by omitting paragraph (3).

Like Mr Richard Martin, the New South Wales Government is pioneering legislation and undertaking several other measures to outlaw cruelty to animals. As the House has heard on numerous occasions, the Government is currently in the process of modernising the animal welfare legislation framework in New South Wales. In January of this year we reached an important milestone in the reform process with the release of the Draft Animal Welfare Bill 2022. The bill was developed based on two rounds of public consultation. The release of the draft bill was a third opportunity for stakeholders in the community to have their say in shaping animal welfare laws in New South Wales.

I advise that the draft bill continues to acknowledge the need for protecting and promoting welfare of animals, with specific provisions relating to animals having the ability to feel pain, distress and physical or psychological suffering. A parliamentary committee has reviewed the Draft Animal Welfare Bill as part of its inquiry into animal welfare policy in New South Wales. It published an interim report earlier this year. The New South Wales Government is considering its response to the committee's interim report. With those few words, I again stress to the House and to the people of New South Wales that the Government remains committed to reforming animal welfare legislation in New South Wales to world's best practice.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH (11:44): I participate in debate on the motion moved by the Hon. Mark Pearson. It would be fair to say that the research undertaken by me and my office in relation to Richard Martin was actually quite illuminating. I note the honourable member spoke about his rather unique way of holding people to account for their treatment of animals. Putting people on an island and leaving them there until they repent is interesting. Some 200 years later, there may be a body of thought about that as well. It is interesting that is the way he went about it. His actions led to the RSPCA being created, which is important.

While we acknowledge the efforts of Richard Martin, the motion highlights, though, that there has been and continues to be a change in community attitudes towards animal welfare. That evolution continues as we speak. Drawing on some of the commentary from the erudite Parliamentary Secretary, it is pretty clear that animal welfare and animal rights issues are exercising the mind of the Government, as they should be. Part of the research for this particular motion was a bit of work on a definition of speciesism. Again, the Hon. Mark Pearson in his contributions spoke about speciesism. Richard Ryder, who originally coined the term, defined it as:

... a prejudice or attitude of bias in favour of the interests of members of one's own species and against those of members of other species ...

But there are other definitions. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, known as PETA, also has a definition on its website, which I think is important to put on record. It says:

Speciesism is a misguided belief that one species is more important than another. This toxic mindset is deeply ingrained in our society, and it results in all kinds of negative consequences.

It talks about treating one species' lives as more valuable than others. This highlights again the evolution in animal welfare and animal rights in our modern society. That evolution continues in our legislative framework. To contemporise our legislative framework is important. There is a body of work that would suggest that currently our rules and laws do not equate with where the community thinks we should be. The motion gives us a chance to reflect upon the efforts of Colonel Richard Martin and the work of the RSPCA. I commend the member for bringing the motion before the House. The Opposition will support the Government's proposed amendment.

The Hon. MARK PEARSON (11:47): In reply: I thank the Hon. Shayne Mallard and the Hon. Mick Veitch for their contributions. The Animal Justice Party, in the spirit of celebrating what has happened over 200 years and the great work of Richard Martin, will not enter into any fraction or division. We welcome the recognition that this is an ongoing movement. The day will come when there will be a bill in the House about sentence and then we will shift in that direction further. But we understand where we are now. We have come a long way. The acknowledgement of and thankyou to Richard Martin are welcome. I very much thank members for their contributions to the House.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): The Hon. Mark Pearson has moved a motion, to which the Hon. Shayne Mallard has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

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

Motion as amended agreed to.

Documents

NARRABRI GAS PROJECT

Production of Documents: Order

Ms SUE HIGGINSON (11:49): 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 between 1 September 2018 and 1 October 2021 in the possession, custody or control of the Department of Regional NSW, Department of Planning and Environment, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Minister for Planning and Minister for Infrastructure, relating to the Narrabri Gas Project:

- (a) all documents relating to meetings with Santos NSW (Eastern) Pty Ltd or its representatives;
- (b) all documents relating to meetings with representatives from Narrabri Shire Council; 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.

The Narrabri coal seam gas project, known as the Narrabri Gas Project, was approved by the Independent Planning Commission [IPC] on 29 September 2020. The approval was given despite strident community opposition and evidence that the project would contribute to the climate crisis as well as threaten water sources, cultural heritage and the local environment. In making its determination, the IPC claims it relied on the New South Wales Government's assessment. This call for documents under Standing Order 52 seeks to inform the community about the influence that may have been exerted by Santos NSW (Eastern) Pty Ltd [Santos] and/or the Narrabri Shire Council on the New South Wales Government in the lead-up to the approval being granted.

The project has continued to attract enormous community opposition, concern and outcry. The project intends to drill some 850 coal seam gas wells on areas of public land in the largest inland intact woodland in north-west New South Wales, the Pilliga State Forest. For members who have not been fortunate enough to visit the Pilliga, I can attest to its beauty. It is a truly special place that captures some of the most unique country in New South Wales. It is a habitat for endangered species and ecological communities, a place rich in cultural heritage, a recharge area for the very important Great Artesian Basin and a community landscape revered by many. There was serious concern from the communities impacted by the project that it would be a Trojan Horse for gas development in north-west New South Wales and that, before we know it, there would be an expansion of gas development further afield, including on the fertile, resource-rich Liverpool Plains.

The potential risk of even one gas project is huge. The area at risk is many times larger than just the visible wellhead that pokes above the surface of the land. The drilling fractures the watertable, and the holding ponds for toxic chemicals are often poorly maintained and can leak into nearby bushland. I have seen the effects of a leak from one of these ponds. There is now a scar of dead trees and poisoned land that cannot be compensated for by mere fines against the operator. The Government and Santos claim to care about these impacts and gave loud assurances to the community that this toxic and dangerous industry was not going to spread. They said that the Narrabri Gas Project was entirely limited to the project as approved by the IPC on 29 September 2020. However, this has proved to be untrue. On Tuesday 12 April 2022 the Government renewed petroleum exploration licences [PELs] 1, 12 and 238.

The community deserves to know the truth about what lobbying, if any, has taken place by coal seam gas companies and advocates with this Government. What false promises were made about the economic benefits of coal seam gas? Were the real risks to health, water security and the environment disclosed to the Government by companies that stand to profit hugely from exporting a finite natural resource? We know these meetings took place because evidence of them was recently discovered by the community under New South Wales freedom of information laws. The documents that this Standing Order 52 motion seeks to uncover will hopefully give us and the community the answers we seek, because the Government's approval of more PELs this year begs the question of how it has been convinced that coal seam gas is an appropriate industry for north-west New South Wales.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (11:53): I speak in relation to Ms Sue Higginson's call for papers. Recently we have been caught in the midst of an energy crisis, which has highlighted that while the move towards renewable energy will continue, we are not yet at the point where wind and solar can provide the baseload power we need during times of peak demand. The previous Federal Government was pushing for an extra 70 petajoules of gas on the east coast, and the Santos project at Narrabri is critical to being able to deliver that. New South Wales cannot just sit back and expect other States to do the heavy lifting for us, especially not when we have a viable and commercial quantity of gas in our own State.

The process around the approval of the Santos project could not have been more robust and transparent. At the time the project went to the Independent Planning Commission [IPC], there were calls to halt its assessment because of COVID. Instead, the IPC moved its public hearings online. Many more people, including members of this place, had their chance to have a say on the project across the seven-day period of public hearings. The IPC ultimately approved the Santos project with a string of very stringent conditions. The process has been robust. The Deputy Premier's Future of Gas Statement has dramatically reduced the areas of New South Wales covered by petroleum exploration licences while providing Santos with the certainty of forging ahead with the Narrabri Gas Project.

Even the newly elected Albanese Government has been mugged by the reality of the energy crisis. Suddenly, its promise to reduce household power bills by more than \$200 has been scrapped, with talk now focused on the quality of thermal coal that comes from New South Wales mines. Gas also has a critical role to play in the energy sector more broadly. There has been much discussion about the prospect of a gas reservation policy being introduced, but New South Wales still does not have a domestic gas market. There is no gas to reserve. Santos has publicly declared that all gas from its Narrabri project will be used domestically. It is an important project for the people of New South Wales for energy security, energy costs and manufacturing. Ms Sue Higginson's motion reads like a giant fishing expedition. She is welcome to all the reading that will follow, because the Government supports the Santos project in Narrabri and will not oppose the motion.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (11:55): I make a short contribution to the debate. I listened to the Minister with interest. It was an interesting policy discussion that had very little to do with the Standing Order 52 request. This is, yet again, an important call for papers that will provide some information as to the decision-making that has gone on in relation to the Narrabri Gas Project. Labor notes, of course, that the project has been approved. We could have a much longer discussion about gas reservation and the failures of the previous Federal Government and this Government, but today is not the day. Labor supports the motion.

The Hon. SCOTT BARRETT (11:56): The Government does not oppose this Standing Order 52 request. However, we feel the need to explain to the House the process by which the Narrabri Gas Project was approved. The Independent Planning Commission approved the Narrabri Gas Project subject to 134 strict conditions. The commission's decision followed a rigorous assessment of the project, undertaken by the Department of Planning and Environment. That assessment was informed by extensive community consultation and advice from Narrabri Shire Council, government agencies and a range of independent experts, including a water expert panel established to provide advice on the project, chaired by Professor Peter Cook of the University of Melbourne. Following an examination of all the evidence, the commission concluded that the project is in the public interest, as it will improve gas security for Australia's east coast domestic market and deliver significant economic benefits to New South Wales and the Narrabri region.

Under the conditions of approval, Santos must have a range of management plans approved before the project can proceed. These plans must describe in detail how aspects of the project will be managed to comply with the conditions of consent and avoid, mitigate and offset the project's impacts. The conditions of consent also require Santos to establish advisory groups comprising independent experts and representatives from the community and relevant government agencies. The advisory groups will provide advice on the management of water, greenhouse gases, biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural heritage through the life of the project. These advisory groups have now been established and are providing input into the management plans currently being prepared for the project. This is important context for this debate. I reiterate that the Government will not be opposing the motion.

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

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PHOTOGRAPHS

The PRESIDENT: I advise members that a staff photographer will be present in the Chamber during question time to take photographs.

Questions Without Notice

NSW BUILDING COMMISSIONER RESIGNATION

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (11:59): My question without notice is directed to the Leader of the Government and Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations. Has the Minister discussed with the Premier the contents of the resignation letter from the Building Commissioner, David Chandler, and the circumstance of his departure?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations) (11:59): It is a pretty easy answer to give: No.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (11:59): I ask a supplementary question. I would like the Minister to elucidate his very brief answer to confirm to the House whether he has indeed read the letter from the Building Commissioner.

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: Point of order: That is a new question.

The Hon. Courtney Houssos: To the point of order: The original question sought information from the Minister about the Building Commissioner's resignation letter. The Leader of the Opposition's subsequent supplementary question sought an elucidation of the information provided to the House in relation to the initial answer and also relates to the initial question.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: To the point of order: The initial question asked me whether I had discussions with the Premier. That is what the question was about. The answer was no. This is a new question, which in fact asks me whether I have read the letter. That is completely different to whether I have had discussions with the Premier. That is a new question.

The Hon. Penny Sharpe: To the point of order: The Minister here has cherry-picked the part of the question he wished to respond to. We have asked about the contents of the resignation letter from the Building Commissioner, David Chandler, and what action was taken in relation to this. Seeking an elucidation as to whether the Minister has read the letter is completely in order, I would argue.

The Hon. Sarah Mitchell: To the point of order: I have just one contribution. Obviously, a supplementary question should seek elucidation of a Minister's answer. I am not sure of how you elucidate the word "no".

The Hon. Wes Fang: To the point of order: Mr President, your previous rulings on this matter have indicated that the question must arise out of the answer of the Minister. There is no way that you could interpret the answer from the Minister to then be forwarded to asking the supplementary question that the Leader of the Opposition did. It is a new question and I would seek that you rule that way.

The PRESIDENT: I thank you all for your submissions. I will refer to my previous ruling because that might help elucidate people's thinking on this. Supplementary questions must be related to the answer given by the Minister and must seek to elucidate the answer—that is, make the answer clearer. At the same time, unless a supplementary question is so far from the original question or answer as to be unreasonable, points of order on this will not generally be upheld. The answer from the Minister was no. It was very direct and very much answering the question, which I applaud with great vigour. In saying that, the question put as a supplementary question from the Leader of the Opposition seeks to elucidate that and is reasonably connected to the original question. So, in that case, I will allow the supplementary question.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations) (12:03): Thank you for your very clear ruling, Mr President. I have not read the resignation letter from David Chandler.

WINTER HOLIDAY BREAK PROGRAM

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (12:03): My question is addressed to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Regional Youth, and Minister for Tourism. Will the Minister update the House on the outcomes of the winter Holiday Break program?

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Regional Youth, and Minister for Tourism) (12:04): I thank the honourable member for the question. We all know that school holidays can impact the hip pockets of parents. Parents, particularly those in the regions, spend a fortune during the holidays on entertainment and recreational activities for young people. Because of this, holidays can be a stressful time for families who are trying to seek out boredom busters on a budget. But, thankfully, the Government understands this and has been working with the Office for Regional Youth to provide regional young people with the opportunity to enjoy a range of free and subsidised activities to reconnect, socialise, learn new skills and have fun during the school holidays.

A few weeks ago, thousands of young people from across regional New South Wales enjoyed the largest ever winter Holiday Break program. With more than 80 free or subsidised activities on offer, from theatre workshops, martial arts classes and ice skating to winter snow days, the New South Wales Government's \$10 million Holiday Break program provided a range of different activities for young people interested in sports and recreation, and arts and culture. The inclusion of arts and cultural activities in the program is incredibly important to me. Regional young people who are uninterested or unable to engage in sports sometimes find it hard to find alternative opportunities. I may have been one of those children myself. But the Holiday Break program is changing this.

For example, Create NSW has collaborated with the Office for Regional Youth to offer the SongMakers program to help young, aspiring songwriters to channel their creativity. I was privileged enough to sit in on one of these sessions in Coffs Harbour, where they bring in professional musicians to engage with young people who are looking at this as a potential career option. Another example is the KYUP!, which is holding a number of personal safety and empowerment workshops for young girls, something that I know everybody in this Chamber believes is important.

The key takeaway from the Holiday Break program is this: It has alleviated and will continue to alleviate significant cost-of-living pressures for regional families in this State. We need to understand and appreciate that for regional families it can be significantly more challenging than for urban families, who can just drop their kids off, potentially, at an organisation or a facility that might be a kilometre or two away. There is a significant tyranny of distance involved, which means that these costs need to be minimised wherever we can possibly do it. I am sure that members across this Chamber would agree that this is an important and meaningful program for our regional young people. I thank everyone who was involved with the winter Holiday Break program. I now encourage all local councils and eligible not-for-profit organisations to reach out to the Office for Regional Youth to start planning for the next Holiday Break in the spring.

REGIONAL TAXI PLATE OWNERS COMPENSATION

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (12:07): My question is directed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Thousands of taxi plate owners have waited seven years to receive adequate compensation. The transport Minister blames the Treasurer. What is the delay and when will regional taxi plate owners get the compensation they are due?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:07): I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for the question. It is important to note that, as the regional transport Minister, I have engaged extensively with regional taxi plate owners and operators, the Taxi Council—

The Hon. Walt Secord: Not true. Misleading.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I would be very careful with what you say there, Mr Secord—regional plate owners and co-ops, taking on board their concerns. This consultation has taken place over the last 12 months and has been an important part of the process. The Opposition can ask the questions of my colleague Minister Elliott directly, but he too has consulted with metropolitan plate owners. He too has consulted with the Taxi Council. Together we have been able to come up with feedback from that consultation. We are working that through government processes. No matter what tricky question those opposite ask me, I am not going to be outlining the decisions of Cabinet around this. The point is that, as someone who uses taxis in the regions,

I understand the importance of the taxi industry in regional New South Wales to help people get from A to B. They assist people with getting to medical appointments. They play a critical role in regional New South Wales. Let's face it: Taxis in places like—

The Hon. Mark Buttigieg: Get your finger out! How long do they have to wait?

The PRESIDENT: Order! I call the Hon. Mark Buttigieg to order for the first time. That is bordering on unparliamentary language.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Very much. You should throw him out, Mr President. The consultation has been done and formed part of the Government processes. That has been made pretty public. Despite whatever questions members opposite want to ask, I will not use the dispatch box to announce Government policy and matters before Cabinet here today.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (12:09): I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate on the extensive consultation and engagement that he has talked about? Has that included the Treasurer? Has he spoken to the Treasurer about this matter, given that this big-spending Treasurer has given everyone a dollar except for the hardworking taxidriver?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:10): My office has been in dialogue with the industry, the Taxi Council, regional plate owners, regional plate drivers, community groups, councils and local government. My office has been in consultation with Minister Elliot's office, with the Treasurer's office and with the Deputy Premier's office. Members on this side of the House want to get the job done right.

The Hon. John Graham: Point of order—

The Hon. Walt Secord: Someone should do an inquiry into this.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I am having trouble understanding whether the Hon. John Graham wishes to make a contribution on the point of order. The Hon. John Graham has the call, not the Hon. Walt Secord.

The Hon. John Graham: I do not object to the context, but my point of order is on direct relevance. The question is quite specific. Has the Minister spoken to the Treasurer?

The PRESIDENT: The Minister has been dealing with that and will come to the nub of the question forthwith.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: To reiterate and confirm, my office deals with multiple stakeholders within the taxi industry, whether it be the Taxi Council, regional plate owners or regional communities. I have made that very clear. As I said, my office has been in regular—

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The Hon. John Graham: Point of order: I would like to insist on direct relevance. It is important that a Minister can say whether he has raised a financial issue like this with the Treasurer. The House is entitled to know that. The Minister should be directly relevant and come to the nub of that question.

The Hon. Damien Tudehope: To the point of order: The member is entitled to ask the question; the Minister is entitled to answer the question in the manner in which he is answering it. I suggest that he is answering the question in a directly relevant manner. It may not suit the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, but the Minister is being directly relevant to the question.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister has been directly answering the question in relation to the Treasurer's office. He has twice repeated those comments and the other elements of consultation that have been undertaken in that regard. If he has nothing more to add, the Minister should resume his seat, unless he will directly deal with the issue of the Treasurer.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Again, my office and I as a Minister have been in consultation with other Ministers of the New South Wales Government regarding the transition within the point to point industry.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD (12:12): I ask a second supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate on whether those Ministers he says he has been in contact with in relation to this issue include the Treasurer?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:13): I thank the member for the second supplementary question. Yes.

COERCIVE CONTROL LEGISLATION

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD (12:13): My question is directed to the Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence. The Joint Select Committee on Coercive Control, which the Minister chaired, recommended that an implementation task force be established to manage the introduction of a criminal offence of coercive control. The task force would be responsible for, among other things, consulting with various stakeholders about the text of any draft coercive control bill. Why has the Government instead released a draft bill with a rushed consultation period, and without the implementation task force that would have ensured that we got this important reform right and minimised any unintended consequences?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD (Minister for Metropolitan Roads, and Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence) (12:14): I thank the honourable member for her question and her interest in this area. I was privileged to work with the member on the joint select committee inquiry into coercive control, which was a nine-month process undertaken from October 2020. I was privileged to chair that inquiry, but members were from both Houses. We came to 23 unanimous recommendations, which included the criminalisation of coercive control. That report was tabled, and the Government has responded and supported 17 of the recommendations in full, in principle or in part, with six for further consideration.

The Government response supports the criminalisation of coercive control in former and current intimate partner relationships and supports in principle the creation of a definition. As part of the inquiry, we undertook successive and extensive consultation, including going to the regions to ensure that we were meeting with stakeholders directly. The Government is committed to developing and consulting on this reform with stakeholders, which is why on 20 July 2022, when it released the exposure draft of the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Coercive Control) Bill 2022, it was for public consultation.

The exposure draft gives effect to the commitments to introduce the reforms, but I note that the Government has provided an opportunity for people to have their say through the Have Your Say website, which is available and closes on 31 August on this matter. Feedback is welcomed from the community and sectors on whether the draft bill will meet its purpose to criminalise coercive control in intimate partner settings and how that might be improved. In addition, the domestic and family violence sector, as the member highlighted, has indicated that it will seek longer consultation and is arguing for a longer period to properly interrogate the reform. We note that there has been extensive consultation already. Recommendation 1 said:

Following drafting and legislation of such an offence, and prior to commencement ...

It is important to note that it was very clear, and Government members were deliberate in our response that, prior to commencement, the implementation should be assisted through a multi-agency task force. The thinking is to have had the inquiry, to introduce the legislation and then to have a substantive period during which there can be that implementation task force working with the sector so that we can see, during that time, what the legislation looks like once it has been through this House and the other place. So we are working together with the sector. We heard clearly that the implementation would be one of the most important parts of the success of this legislation.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD (12:17): I ask a supplementary question. I thank the Minister for her detailed response. I listened carefully to see if she responded to the part of my question relating to the subsequent recommendation, which was to shepherd consultation through the task force. I ask the Minister to elucidate on her answer and to let me know why that particular recommendation has not been followed.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD (Minister for Metropolitan Roads, and Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence) (12:17): It is important to note as a starting point that the Government very much values the input of stakeholders. That is why we undertook a comprehensive inquiry in the first place, prior to the drafting of this exposure bill. We value the sector's insights. We look forward to working with them closely and receiving the contributions of constituent members through the stakeholder round tables and any submissions that they wish to make during August.

It is important that the Have Your Say process be allowed to be fully undertaken throughout August. I can confirm to the House that this is the fourth round of extensive consultation the Government has undertaken on coercive control over the past three years alone. The Government was clear that it wanted to support the recommendation about the implementation task force, and it has done so. In addition, regarding recommendation 15, I note that the Government response was that it would further consider consultation. It did not specify that further consideration would occur prior to the introduction of the legislation.

The Government position has been clear. We have had the inquiry. It is important that we allow for stakeholder consultation, which is occurring now. We are very clear about that. That should be undertaken. But we ultimately want to get on with the job of criminalising coercive control, which is why we will be introducing

that legislation. I look forward to bringing it to the House, and to the contributions of all members, to make sure that we can save some people's lives and recognise that insidious crime.

The Hon. WALT SECORD (12:19): I ask a second supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate her answers with regard to the repeated references she made in both answers to consultations with stakeholders? As part of those consultations, what support is the Government providing for training for police to identify trends to spot coercive control and to assist them so that, when they need to enforce the law, they know how to go about collecting evidence?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD (Minister for Metropolitan Roads, and Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence) (12:19): I thank the honourable member for his interest in this area. We heard extensively throughout the inquiry about the need for education. We were very clear that the success of criminalising coercive control will rely on implementation by the police and education to ensure that those gathering evidence of a repeated pattern of behaviour can do so, rather than the current incident-based response of police.

Government members have recognised that, and it will form part of what we will be undertaking. We are very clear that we need to ensure that we are really resourcing police during the implementation period and are working to understand and educate the sector to gather that information properly and to identify the pattern of behaviour over time that can form coercive control in a number of ways, very often financial or psychological control. We have a range of opportunities to put together a real picture of what is happening to that victim-survivor in the circumstances, and that will be a key component of it.

EDUCATION WEEK

The Hon. WES FANG (12:21): My question is addressed to the Minister for Education and Early Learning. Will the Minister please update the House on how schools celebrated Education Week?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Learning) (12:21): I am very excited to update the House about how exciting last week was. Education Week is an annual celebration of our public education system here in New South Wales and of the achievements of our schools, students and teachers. The public education system in New South Wales is the largest public education provider in the Southern Hemisphere. More than 70,000 teachers deliver high-quality education to more than 800,000 students across more than 2,200 public schools. This year's theme was "Creating futures - education changes lives", focusing on the journey that students and learners take throughout their time at school and the futures that we are creating for them.

I had the opportunity to visit a number of schools last week during Education Week. I give a shout-out to the students and staff at Dubbo North Public School. I was there with Dugald Saunders on Wednesday, and principal Toby Morgan was dressed as Spider-Man. They had their Book Week theme that day, and the kids had all sorts of different costumes. They were very excited to be there. They sort of made me feel, as a mother, that I might be failing at the Book Week costumes in the Mitchell household, because some of those parents had really gone above and beyond, so full credit to the families at Dubbo North. But it was great for them to have parents back on site and really celebrating Education Week with their Book Week parade. I also call out a couple of other students and schools that came to my attention during the week. Lennox from Caringbah North Public School founded the Snacktember movement.

The Hon. Bronnie Taylor: Is she at school, finally?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: She started collecting snacks when she was in preschool, and then at the end of the month she would drop them off to OzHarvest, which would then pass them on to children and families in need. Lennox has collected 500 kilograms of donations—amazing! She was presented with the One to Watch Award as part of the NSW Women of the Year Awards. She is creating her own future and creating brighter futures for others.

I also mention our school communities up in the Northern Rivers. After the floods in March, The Rivers Secondary College schools in Lismore banded together and came up with the idea of Vouch for Lismore. With that fundraising initiative, they went on to raise over \$130,000 through bake stalls, fundraising drives and donation buckets. The proceeds were then converted into over a thousand vouchers that were given to those who were affected by the floods. I was not in Lismore during Education Week, but I was there the week before. What they are doing with Vouch for Lismore, literally coming from the principals and leadership in that school community, has been amazing.

Those are just two small examples, but they show the inspiring power of students and teachers in public education when they band together to help their community. As a government, we absolutely want to continue to

deliver the Education Week theme of "Creating futures - education changes lives" through our record investments in school infrastructure, our new and upgraded schools, our regional schools getting the best internet connectivity they have ever had and our support for students in achieving their educational goals to ensure fantastic lifelong learning in New South Wales.

SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (12:24): My question is directed to the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations. During the Minister's visit to the Anglicare Sydney Social and Affordable Housing Fund site in Dapto last Friday, he stated the planning system should put requirements on developers to provide social and affordable housing in new developments and that targets of 5 per cent to 10 per cent would be appropriate. What is the Minister doing to ensure the Government's planning system imposes social and affordable housing targets on developers?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations) (12:25): It is a good opportunity to talk about what a great development that Anglicare development is in terms of the contribution that it is making. Anglicare has delivered a package of some 550-odd social housing opportunities for the State Government as part of a total package of 3,600 social housing opportunities. Working with the private sector to deliver those outcomes has been an important component of an extraordinarily efficient delivery of high-quality social housing. In fact, among the really impressive parts of that social housing development were its integration with a retirement village and the delivery of other services and wraparound opportunities—community centres, cafes and hairdressers—as part of the social housing complex. While being very happy to be part of something that the Government ought to be exceedingly proud of, and working with the private sector and Anglicare and some of the people—

Ms Cate Faehrmann: Point of order: I have waited 1½ minutes to hear what the Minister will do to ensure that the Government's planning system imposes social and affordable housing targets on developers. I waited for a minute and a half while he talked about the Dapto situation, but I ask that he be directly relevant to the question.

The PRESIDENT: The Minister's comments have been generally relevant and sometimes directly relevant. They are introductory and certainly provide a wholesome context, but I now draw the Minister towards the nub of the question.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I thought those opposite would take great delight in the commitment of this Government to deliver 3,600 social housing opportunities in this State. By all means, they could only ever dream about that in terms of their commitment. They talk a lot; we do a lot. That is the difference: We do it; they talk about it. In fact, we have never heard a policy from them. Do they have a policy on social housing? Let us hear it—no policies. They will talk about it but never deliver a policy. When those opposite want to develop policies, maybe they will have some credibility. But until such time as they want to talk about policy, in those circumstances, they are irrelevant.

The Hon. Mick Veitch: I announced four policies during the winter recess.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Was the Hon. Mick Veitch doing some work on policy? That would be a first.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. I encourage the Minister to be directly relevant. That outburst was nowhere near the question, so he will draw himself back. Ms Cate Faehrmann is being very patient.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: It was a pleasure to be part of that launch, together with the launch of a mobile housing services van. I do not know if the member was aware that I participated in that as well. That was a very significant contribution to homelessness— *[Time expired.]*

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (12:29): I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate his answer? The Minister talked about a social housing package of 3,600 houses. He is aware that there are 50,000 people on the social housing waiting list. Meanwhile, the Government has sold \$3 billion worth of social housing. On what basis did the Minister come to the conclusion that 3,600 houses, or a 5 per cent to 10 per cent target, would help adequately bring this number down and deal with the social housing crisis?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations) (12:29): It is a good question. It leads me to the previous question the member asked, which I did not have enough time to answer because of observations that I made. Firstly, I am not the planning Minister. Some members opposite might wish I was the planning Minister, but I am not the planning Minister. This Government has an excellent planning Minister who works closely with the Minister for Families and Communities to deliver on

social housing opportunities. I made the observation that there is always work to be done on the delivery of social housing. I do not resile from the observations I made that there are opportunities for the Government to participate in and deliver on social housing.

There are also opportunities within the planning system to deliver those outcomes. What I suggested as part of my off-the-cuff remarks, which I possibly regret now, is that the Minister for Families and Communities gave me the great opportunity to be involved in an excellent announcement and delivering great social housing opportunities. I do not move away from the observations I made there. By giving planning opportunities to developers, there is an opportunity for us to identify the targets that we want to achieve. Developers often get the benefit of rezoning and planning opportunities. There is no reason why, as part of those planning opportunities, they cannot work with government for the purpose of delivering social housing outcomes.

SELECTIVE SCHOOLS AND DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (12:31): My question is directed to the Minister for Education and Early Learning. Will the eligibility for the 20 per cent of reserved places in selective schools and gifted classes for disadvantaged students be based on the suburb they live in or on the individual student's circumstances?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Learning) (12:32): I thank the honourable member for her question about some of the changes being put in place for the selective schools test. This is a good opportunity to speak about why the Government is doing that. Obviously, the changes came about in response to a more extensive review that occurred in 2018. It is about making the overall system fairer. The review found that certain groups of high-potential and gifted students were missing out on places because of low socio-economic background, Aboriginal heritage or disability or because they lived in a rural or remote area. These changes are in place to help address the unintended barriers that prevent already gifted students from having fair and equitable access to opportunity classes and selective high schools.

All students from under-represented groups who are offered a placement must have sat the placement test and demonstrated their ability to perform at a high academic level. They will be considered only if their results on the placement test are within 10 per cent of the lowest initial offer or as deemed by the selection committee. I also put on the record that if there are not enough applications to a particular school from students from under-represented groups, or if these students do not meet the minimum performance requirements, the held places will then be offered to general applicants based on their highest performance on the placement test. The member has asked specifically about people from a low socio-economic background or across—

The Hon. Courtney Houssos: The disadvantaged.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: —from a disadvantaged background and how that will be determined. My understanding is that they will be looking at the primary school setting that those students are attending, but I will seek further advice on that. I want to clarify that, and I will provide that to the member by the end of question time.

FAR NORTH COAST HOSPITAL SERVICES

The Hon. SCOTT BARRETT (12:34): My question is addressed to the Minister for Women, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for Mental Health. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales Government is delivering first-class hospital services on the Far North Coast?

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Women, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for Mental Health) (12:34): I thank the honourable member for his question, and I look forward to more in-service tutorials from the Hon. Mick Veitch up there. It was exciting to go to the topping out ceremony of the new hospital in Tweed last week with the member for Tweed, Geoff Provest, who is a dear friend. He is a fantastic member and has been a great advocate for this site. This hospital is one of the biggest ever in regional New South Wales. It is absolutely incredible. I commend all of the people who were positive about getting this hospital up and going. There was no negativity; there was only positivity about this site. It features a dedicated learning, development and research building, enabling the support and growth of the local health workforce. There are also new health services, including radiotherapy, chemotherapy, cardiology, additional inpatient beds and an extra 16 new emergency department treatment spaces.

The emergency department is incredible. It was great to walk around it with everyone. It has been co-designed with clinicians and people on the ground, and it is truly incredible. One of the lovely things about the hospital at Tweed, which we also see at the South East Regional Hospital in Bega, is that it was able to be built with lots of natural light. A person having their dialysis in Bega is able to look out onto the old dairy farm paddock. It is the same with oncology. The views out of the Tweed hospital are magnificent. People can stay on

country, where they are, to receive their treatment. We are envisaging that it will help over 5,000 people who will now be able to get care locally in the Tweed. Previously they had to travel.

Our regional staff do incredible work. They have been amazing. They are all excited about this new hospital build and are really involved. I have had the privilege to go to the site twice since I became the Minister for Regional Health and have witnessed the positivity shown by everyone who is building it, knowing the legacy it will have for the people of Tweed. I have talked to engineers, builders, sparkies and everyone on site, and they are so positive about it. There is a high percentage of female tradeswomen, engineers and project managers working on it. As the Minister for Women, that is exciting for me. It is incredible to have this amazing, brand-new facility that the staff and the community in the Tweed are looking forward to. Everybody is excited about it. I take this opportunity to give a huge shout-out to Rebecca, who heads up Health Infrastructure NSW. She has done an incredible job with all of the new builds.

FLOOD PLAIN HARVESTING

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (12:37): My question is directed to the Hon. Ben Franklin, representing the Minister for Environment and Heritage. Given the Minister's own official description of floodplain harvesting targets put forward by Minister Anderson for inclusion in water sharing plans as "too low" and that they "fail to adequately protect environmental assets", why did the Minister give concurrence to these changes? On what scientific basis did the Minister sign off on these targets instead of insisting on the alternatives proposed by his officials, which were based on environmental watering requirements to deliver healthy river ecosystems?

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Regional Youth, and Minister for Tourism) (12:38): I thank the honourable member for his question. This Government is committed to the regulation of floodplain harvesting. It is critical to limit this form of water take to sustainable levels and return water to the environment. For decades, floodplain harvesting has had zero restrictions. It has gone unmonitored and unmeasured and has grown unconstrained at the expense of our river ecosystems and the plant and animal species that depend on them.

Flood plain harvesting is the last major element of water access that is not fully regulated in New South Wales. Licensing and regulation of flood plain harvesting will return around 100 gigalitres per year, on average, to flood plains, rivers and creeks in the northern Murray-Darling Basin. In the Gwydir Valley alone, for example, the take of water from flood plains will reduce by an average of over 58 gigalitres annually. This will boost the health of those internationally valued wetlands and directly benefit the water birds, native fish and frogs that breed and thrive in these areas.

The new rules are about getting the balance right. We need to balance outcomes for water users while also protecting the environment. The floodplain harvesting targets in the water-sharing plans are an improvement on the original targets discussed. Importantly, they restrict access to flood plain harvesting until certain flows are achieved. They were cross-referenced against the environmental watering requirements in the long-term water plans and revised to improve outcomes for connectivity and fresh-water dependent flora and fauna.

In addition, the flood plain harvesting targets include provisions to ensure that by 2025 they are independently reviewed by an expert and the results are published to ensure transparency. The 2025 deadline for review is within the 10-year lifespan of the water-sharing plans, so the review will happen vastly sooner than waiting for a formal remake. The Government remains committed to amending water-sharing plans to bring flood plain harvesting into the licensing and regulatory framework and to improve the outcomes for the environment.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (12:40): I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate his answer with regard to the balance that he believes these changes have given? On what basis does he believe the targets and rules to which he has given concurrence meet the water management principles of the Water Management Act 2000 which, for the purposes of water sharing, require him to put critical human need and environmental water needs ahead of extractive users rather than balancing the outcomes?

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Regional Youth, and Minister for Tourism) (12:41): My first answer summed up all the issues particularly expertly, and I have nothing further to add.

GRIFFITH SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM (12:41): My question without notice is directed to the Minister for Education and Early Learning. What is the Minister's response to an independent University of New South Wales report, which states that the Government's decision to merge the two year 7 to year 12 comprehensive high schools

in Griffith into the one school-two sites model "created significant inefficiencies and duplication" and that "considerable reputational damage" has been caused to secondary education in Griffith as a result of that decision?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Learning) (12:41): I thank the honourable member for his question in relation to the merger of the high schools in Griffith. Obviously they are schools that I have visited during my time as education Minister. We asked the University of New South Wales to conduct that review to make sure that we know what we need to do to make sure that that school merger is a success. Obviously I am well aware—particularly as the school still operates across the two campuses—that compared with other school mergers that we have done there have certainly been challenges in Griffith. I accept and acknowledge that.

The point of looking at what is happening there is to make sure, as I said, that we are addressing the issues. That is why we got the University of New South Wales involved in that particular review. A number of recommendations were made as part of that review. Certainly they are now under consideration by me as Minister, by the Government and the department to make sure that what we are doing at that school is getting the right outcomes that we need for students. I am happy to continue to keep the member and the House updated as we work through the implementation of the recommendations from that report from the University of New South Wales.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM (12:43): I ask a supplementary question. In her answer, the Minister referred to a range of challenges. Were those challenges identified in the consultation process that preceded the decision to create the two-school model?

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Learning) (12:43): I am happy to respond to that question as best I can. However, that decision was made prior to my time in the Education portfolio. So I am not fully across the specific details of the consultation and what went on in that process. I believe it was under Minister Piccoli at the time. I will take on notice the supplementary question just to get clear and accurate advice about the process because, as I said, it predates my time as Minister. I would also add that the final report, which we received at the beginning of July, had 14 recommendations. In my initial response, I probably did not make clear that the department has accepted all 14 recommendations from the university's report and that we will work to implement what we need to do to make sure that we are getting the right and best outcomes for students at Murrumbidgee Regional High School.

COERCIVE CONTROL LEGISLATION

The Hon. CHRIS RATH (12:44): My question is addressed to the Minister for Metropolitan Roads, and Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence. Will the Minister update the House on the progress of the New South Wales Government's commitment to criminalising coercive control?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD (Minister for Metropolitan Roads, and Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence) (12:45): I thank the honourable member for his question and for his interest in this area. We are one step closer to criminalising coercive control in New South Wales with the release of the Government's draft bill for public consultation to outlaw and criminalise coercive control in intimate partner relationships. As I have spoken about a number of times in this Chamber, the Perrottet Government is committed to improving women's safety in New South Wales. That is why we have a dedicated Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence and why we are progressing these important reforms. I acknowledge and thank the Attorney-General for his leadership in this area.

The public exposure draft bill is a significant aspect of the Perrottet Government's strong response to the parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Coercive Control. Coercive control is a form of domestic abuse that involves patterns of behaviour that have the cumulative effect of denying victim-survivors their autonomy and independence. It is an important matter to distinguish. This abuse can involve physical, sexual, psychological or indeed financial abuse. Criminalising coercive control provides further protections for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence in recognising those patterns. These landmark reforms recognise that domestic abuse is not only about physical violence. It can and often does include physical, sexual, psychological and financial abuse to hurt and ultimately control someone else.

Criminalising coercive control is also crucial to ensuring that we recognise in law a pattern of behaviour that is identified as a precursor to domestic-violence deaths. Submissions on the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Coercive Control) Bill 2022 can be made via the New South Wales Government's "Have Your Say" website. I encourage stakeholders and members of the public to contribute to these important reforms before consultation closes on 31 August 2022. The Perrottet Government is committed to keeping women and children safe in New South Wales. Criminalising coercive control is one important aspect of the Liberal-Nationals Government's

strong record on women's safety and our strong investment in and partnership with the sector. We are backing that in with reforms, including our landmark budget this year.

We have passed nation-leading affirmative consent reform in this State. That law commenced on 1 June. We have introduced five new jury directions to address common misconceptions about consent. That is supported by a positive public awareness campaign targeted at young people called "Make No Doubt", which I launched with the Attorney-General, who is such a strong advocate in this space, on 25 May this year. Finally, we have banned self-represented people accused of domestic violence in criminal and related proceedings from directly cross-examining complainants. But our work is not done. One day I hope there is no need for a Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence. Until then the Perrottet Government remains committed to protecting women and children and our record proves that.

NATIVE ANIMALS HABITAT PRESERVATION

Ms SUE HIGGINSON (12:48): My question is directed to the Hon. Sam Faraway, representing the Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales, concerning the findings, contained in the *Final report, Coastal IFOA operations post 2019/20 wildfires, June 2021*. Will the Government implement the recommended changes to the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval prescriptions to increase the retention of hollow-bearing trees and recruitment trees to ensure that there is sufficient habitat in State forests for native animals, particularly threatened species such as the recently listed unique, beautiful endangered greater glider that relies on hollows for its survival?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:49): I thank the member for her question to the Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales, who resides in the other place and who I represent in this place. The then Minister for Planning and Public Spaces requested the Natural Resources Commission through terms of reference to provide independent, evidence-based advice on forestry operations under the coastal integrated forestry operations approval, as the New South Wales public forest estate recovers from the 2019-20 bushfires. The Natural Resources Commission provided that advice, which is Cabinet in confidence and is currently being considered by the New South Wales Government.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON (12:49): I ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister please elucidate whether the recommendation is going to be implemented? There was no actual answer there. We can see how significant it is. The advice has been given. It was provided in June 2021. Can the Government commit to implementing the recommendations of its own independent, expert body, the Natural Resources Commission?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:50): I thank the member for her supplementary question. I refer to my previous answer.

MAITLAND HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE (12:50): My question is directed to the Minister for Regional Health. What is the Minister's response to community concerns that 20 per cent of patients at Maitland Hospital's emergency department are leaving without treatment—the highest leave rate in the entire State?

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Women, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for Mental Health) (12:50): I thank the honourable member for his question. I note the Hon. Greg Donnelly made a comment about not being negative, and I commend him for that because I think that is a really good thing. It is something that I have been trying to get across to those on the other side for quite some time. We have made an incredible investment in New South Wales in our health system. We have challenges around our workforce. We are still in the middle of a pandemic. A high number of staff have been furloughed due to COVID, as many in this place have. Touch wood, I still have not had COVID.

The Hon. Sarah Mitchell: They will be testing you.

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR: Yes, I will be testing my blood. It has been a really big challenge for us. We also know that there is an enormous challenge in primary care and in our GP sector. So people are coming into our emergency departments, and we want them to seek the care that they need because they are unable to get appointments at their local GP surgeries. That has placed undue stress on our system. But on some days when you enter our system, you will have to wait longer, and on other days you will be seen right away. It depends on what is happening on that day at that particular time. The Bureau of Health Information data shows that for January to March 2022 Maitland Hospital had an increase in emergency department attendees. It was up 6.9 per cent. That equates to 897 more attendances compared with that same quarter in 2021. So that shows there is an increased demand because of all the reasons that I have said, and that we have been open and transparent about, regarding what is happening in our regional health system at the moment.

We also have an enormous number of people in our hospital system that should be in aged-care facilities at the moment. That is taking its toll on our system as well. We are looking at working with the Federal Government to make sure that we can get those people into the most appropriate places. That is honestly what is happening. On some days there will be increased demand and on other days there will not. But the people in our New South Wales rural and regional health system, and indeed in our metro system, are working very hard every day to meet those demands for people. It was great to talk about the signs and symptoms of stroke yesterday and for everyone to be aware of them in Stroke Week. If you require care in one of our rural and regional hospitals you will be treated. Please come and please understand that you will be triaged appropriately.

The Hon. Greg Donnelly: Lucky dip.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Minister has the call.

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR: Gee whiz, I'm finished.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE (12:54): I ask a supplementary question. I thank the Minister for her answer. Rather than seeking a further elucidation of all the negative points she raised and the problems the Government has, I ask her to simply elucidate on the number of elderly patients who are taking up beds in New South Wales public and private hospitals.

The Hon. Wes Fang: Point of order: The question contained argument and I would ask you to rule it out of order.

The Hon. Peter Primrose: To the point of order: The Minister particularly asked us not to respond or ask for elucidations in relation to negative matters. She raised the issue of the number of elderly patients taking up public hospital beds as one of the concerns that she has. I am simply asking her to please elucidate by providing that number.

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

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Women, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for Mental Health) (12:55): I thank the honourable member for his supplementary question. I am really pleased that the Opposition is now starting to talk about its constant negativity in relation to the rural and regional health system. I do not have the exact number of beds that are taken up at this time, but I am happy to take the honourable member's question on notice. This is something that is being discussed with every State Government right across Australia at the moment. It is something that members opposite, I am sure, would be aware of, with their keen interest in rural and regional health and what is happening in our system. But I am happy to get further detail for the honourable member.

NORTHERN RIVERS FLOOD SUPPORT

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (12:56): My question is addressed to the Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Services. Will the Minister please update the House on how the New South Wales Government is supporting those impacted by the Northern Rivers floods?

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES (Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Services) (12:56): I thank the honourable member for his question. It is vital that people have a roof over their heads, particularly while they are recovering from the devastating floods, which is why the New South Wales Government was so quick to implement a range of initiatives to support local residents. Last month I had the opportunity to see firsthand the rebuild effort, particularly for our social housing tenants. To support flood-impacted tenants, we are investing \$168 million to repair and replace social housing. To carry out this work, over a number of weeks and months since the flood local tradespeople—including carpenters, electricians and plumbers—have been working to ensure that the repairs and rebuilds are occurring, whether it is the kitchens and bedrooms, refitting bathrooms or repairing all plasterwork.

While in Lismore I had the opportunity to meet with Roma and a number of residents in her housing complex. I had a chat to them about the repairs that have been done and about the impact that the floods have had on them. Roma had been living in that property with her little dog for over a decade. There was a lot of damage done to her home, where the waters reached above 1.25 metres. It was great to hear directly from Roma not only how pleased she was to be back at home but also how quickly the repairs had occurred. She lost so much during the floods. One of the greatest things, which she was so happy about, was that the kitchen table that her son had built for her survived, despite the fact that her kitchen was destroyed. Her lounge and all other furniture needed to be replaced. That was one thing that remained, which was lovely to hear from her. I was also taken around, along with Minister Steph Cook, to see the various repairs that had been done in her home, as well as to a number of other properties.

But it is not just about doing the repairs to people's homes. It is about providing support as well. I note the significant work that is done by NGOs. The Government is investing \$13.3 million as part of our New South Wales flood support program to provide critical support to organisations on the ground that are helping people with their recovery. The Government is also acknowledging the significant work being done by our volunteers on the ground who are providing assistance and support across the local area. As we know, the support that they provide includes family and youth support, domestic violence support, homelessness services, disability support, support for seniors and also support for local Aboriginal communities. These are just a few things that the New South Wales Government is doing to support the extensive flood recovery effort across the northern areas. I commend the work of not only the Government but also those on the ground.

PARVOVIRUS

The Hon. EMMA HURST (12:59): My question is directed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, representing the Minister for Agriculture. Parvovirus is a highly contagious and often fatal disease that affects unvaccinated puppies and dogs. While a vaccine for parvovirus is readily available, many council pounds do not routinely vaccinate puppies and dogs in their care, leaving them exposed to parvo outbreaks and fatalities. Will the Minister advise what steps the New South Wales Government is taking to reduce the spread of parvovirus and advise whether it has considered making parvovirus vaccines mandatory for all dogs entering council pounds?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY (Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (13:00): I thank the honourable member for her very specific question regarding local pounds and, obviously, councils' involvement with those pounds. I will take that question on notice and get the Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Dugald Saunders, to reply in due course.

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

SELECTIVE SCHOOLS AND DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Learning) (13:00): Earlier in question time the Hon. Courtney Houssos asked me a question relating to changes to the selective schools test and how students will be identified for equity placements. I said I would endeavour to get an answer and I have. I thank my team upstairs and give them a shout-out in the Chamber. To answer the member's questions, students from each of the equity groups will be identified using data from the application form and other data held by the department. Low socio-educational advantage students, students who currently attend schools that serve communities with higher levels of disadvantage will be eligible for the low socio-educational equity placement. In the future the department will continue to refine how we identify students with low socio-educational advantage to ensure that it is as fair as possible.

Students who identify as Aboriginal will be eligible for equity placement. Students whose home address and current school are located in rural or remote areas will be eligible for equity placement. Finally, students who are listed on the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data [NCCD] on school students with disability as receiving a supplementary, substantial or extensive adjustment will be eligible for equity placement. While I am on my feet, I also give a shout-out to my new Parliamentary Liaison Officer, Millie Burnett, just to embarrass her, because she was also great with information today. I thank Millie and welcome her to the Legislative Council. I ask everyone to be nice to her because she is lovely.

Supplementary Questions for Written Answers

NSW BUILDING COMMISSIONER RESIGNATION

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (13:02): My supplementary question for written answer is directed to the Leader of the Government and relates to the Building Commissioner's resignation letter. Will the Leader of the Government elucidate his answer and outline whether he has been formally or informally told or briefed on the contents of the Building Commissioner's resignation letter?

FLOOD PLAIN HARVESTING

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (13:02): My supplementary question for written answer is directed to the Hon. Ben Franklin. Will the Minister elucidate his answer regarding the review clauses in the amended water sharing plans, given the review clause is clear that, on the basis of the outcome of the review, any amendments made cannot alter the long-term average annual amount of water able to be extracted under those water licences? Should the review show that changes are required to the long-term average amount of water to meet critical human needs and environmental needs, would those changes trigger compensation?

*Questions Without Notice: Take Note***TAKE NOTE OF ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I move:

That the House take note of answers to questions.

NSW BUILDING COMMISSIONER RESIGNATION

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS (13:03): The first question the Labor Opposition asked today was whether the Leader of the Government had been briefed, had seen, or had had discussions with the Premier about the resignation letter of the Building Commissioner. The answer was no. It is interesting that that is the same response that the Premier provided the lower House in question time yesterday. Let me be clear: I do not expect the Government to read every resignation letter from every public servant. But on 25 July the Building Commissioner abruptly and prematurely resigned. This was a shock to the industry. This man was charged with leading the Government's response to the issues plaguing the building industry.

Initially the media was backgrounded by the Government, which actually sought to smear the Building Commissioner, saying the resignation was a result of the investigation that had been launched. Days later we found out that the investigation actually cleared the Building Commissioner from any wrongdoing. It is worthwhile noting why he was being investigated. It was because he was compiling a list of dodgy certifiers. I think that is clearly within the remit of the Building Commissioner and what he should be doing. I have concerns about the fact that he thought he needed to shop it around to the banks instead of pursuing them himself. The former Minister, instead of pursuing the issue of the lack of powers the Building Commissioner had, launched an investigation into his conduct.

There have been plenty of rumours about the reason for this sudden and shocking departure. Just days later, after allegations of bullying were raised about the same Minister, the Minister was sacked by the Premier. We are concerned that this sequence of events is not a coincidence. We have called on the Premier consistently to provide more information to the public, including the resignation letter. The public has been left in the dark about the circumstances that have surrounded this abrupt and premature resignation and the real reasons behind it. Then an explosive story appeared in the Saturday Telegraph, which reported that it was a result of a "problematic" relationship with the former Minister.

It mentioned Coronation Property, a group that employed the former Deputy Premier and that had a stop work order issued in April. We learnt late Monday night that the former Minister for Fair Trading, who did not have time to meet with the owners of Mascot Towers for months, made time to meet with this developer twice within the space of weeks. More questions need to be asked. That is why we are pursuing this issue. It goes to why the Leader of the Government in this place and the Premier are not asking those questions. They are out of touch with what the community wants to know.

NATIVE ANIMALS HABITAT PRESERVATION

Ms SUE HIGGINSON (13:06): I take note of the answer given by the Minister for Agriculture regarding the Natural Resources Commission [NRC] report that is widely available in the public sphere despite the Government claiming that it is a privileged Cabinet document. The Government commissioned this report more than two years ago. It has been considering it for more than a year now. The forests of New South Wales cannot afford the time that this Government insists on taking when it comes to implementing the recommendations of this expert report that it commissioned itself.

Yesterday another two species were added to the threatened species list. The glossy black cockatoo and the mountain skink have joined the koala and the greater glider as being at risk of extinction. The glossy black cockatoo and the greater glider in particular are species that require hollow-bearing trees for their continued survival and existence. That the Government continues to sit on the recommendations that we all know are contained in this report while the extinction crisis rages around the globe is utterly disgraceful. The answer from the Minister today exposes the truth that the Government does not care. It does not care that extinction is forever. It does not care that the biodiversity of our State is at risk from ongoing, unsustainable logging of our public native forests. Biodiversity is not just an environmental concern; the science tells us that the stability of our world is reliant on biodiversity.

Perhaps if I frame this in the language of those opposite, I will have more success: If our forests and the animals that rely on them are not allowed to live it will lead to our economic and social ruin. Native forest logging in New South Wales is coming to an end. If members of the Government are not willing to make the changes that the NRC has recommended in this publicly available report they will bring about the collapse of their treasured Forestry Corporation even faster than they will drag our natural world down with them. The Government needs

to deal with the reality that we face through the ongoing destruction of our public native forests. If it does not have the bravery or the intelligence to take this challenge on then it must get out of the way, because the community and our world is relying on this Government to act responsibly, listen to the science and make sure that our society is capable of surviving the challenges of our age. Extinction is forever.

WINTER HOLIDAY BREAK PROGRAM

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (13:09): I take note of the recap by the Minister for Regional Youth of the wonderful winter Holiday Break program. It is a program that I was not all that familiar with before today, but it is certainly something that I will be looking out for in the future for my kids. It seems like a very good program. It is great to see young people in regional New South Wales being encouraged to get active, learn new skills and have fun with their friends through free and heavily subsidised activities. It is also great to see that these activities are catering to a broad range of interests including sports, arts and culture. The Minister reflected on his own circumstances as a young person and the need to cater for diverse interests. I commend the Minister for the story he told about the Newcastle-based Catapult Dance Choreographic Hub director Cadi McCarthy, who said that the Holiday Break program allowed her team to deliver a series of week-long contemporary dance sessions to regional youth. She said:

Young people aged 12 to 24 from across the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie regions will learn from nationally acclaimed choreographers who will teach and create new collaborative dance performances. The program is focused on inclusivity, collaboration and creativity.

Of course, this was just one of the many exciting opportunities made possible by the Holiday Break program. The program is providing important opportunities for young people to find their passion, develop new skills, collaborate and explore exciting forms of self-expression. I thank the Minister for sharing the successes of the Holiday Break program with the House.

FAR NORTH COAST HOSPITAL SERVICES

The Hon. WALT SECORD (13:11): My contribution to the take-note debate relates to the answer given by the Minister for Regional Health involving Tweed hospital. The Minister waxed lyrical about the visit to Tweed hospital. I understand she was there with the member for Tweed, the Deputy Premier, and police Minister Paul Toole. She waxed lyrical about patients enjoying treatment in the sun. She talked about Queensland tradies getting New South Wales jobs working at the hospital. She referred to the seven-storey hospital being built and that she, the Deputy Premier and the local MP had presided over the hospital's topping out ceremony. But at no point did she address my interjection about free parking at the hospital.

I know that members are not supposed to respond to interjections, but the lack of free parking is the number one issue for Tweed hospital. The Minister did not respond to that whatsoever. On the day of the Minister's visit, the local member said there would be a \$50 million multilevel car park with 1,200 car spaces. When pressed by the local media, he insisted that the Government would fulfil its promise to provide free parking. I remind members that on 23 July 2020 our colleague the Hon. Peter Primrose asked question No. 1632 as to whether there would be free car parking at Tweed hospital. The answer was, "Yet to be finalised." When the local member for Tweed, Geoff Provest, was pressed on it by that august journal of record *The Byron Shire Echo*, he said yes, he believed that there would be free parking. When asked why he believed that, he answered, "Because it was promised by John Barilaro." I thank the House for its consideration.

FLOOD PLAIN HARVESTING

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (13:13): I take note of the answer from the Hon. Ben Franklin to my question regarding floodplain harvesting. This issue has been canvassed broadly in this House and by the public for a number of years. It reached a crescendo over the winter break. Three times the Government has ignored the will of this House and disallowed regulations enabling the licensing of this type of controversial water take, where billions of litres of free water are being handed out to a handful of large corporate irrigators. There has always been general recognition in this House that this sort of take should be regulated and licensed. But the rules governing that take—when that water should be protected to get downstream for critical human needs and the environment—need to meet the requirements of the Act and the expectations of the community, and deliver for the environment. That is not just my view; that is how it is prescribed in the Water Management Act in New South Wales.

I was heartened to see the incredible work coming from the environment department, the officials at the Environment and Heritage Group, who were very clear in responding to the targets and rules for this take proposed by water Minister Anderson. They made it clear to Minister Griffin that the targets were too low and failed to meet the requirements of the environment to deliver the needs of the environment. They raised concerns about whether the rules would comply with the requirements of the water management principles of the Act, and concerns were even raised by Water officials that they may be legally challenged because of that fact.

That was the advice put before Minister Griffin before he gave concurrence to changes to water sharing plans which have now enacted the rules to enable these licences to be used to take water. We face the situation where the environment has not had a drink for a long time at levels that will sustain the ecosystem's services. The very things that the Act says need to be delivered before extractive uses for the river were not met. A flood event comes and the first people getting that water are a handful of large corporate irrigators in the Northern Basin. The environment Minister signed off on those rules.

The Government says, "Yes, but we've got a review clause." But as I pointed out to the Minister in writing, the review clause is limited. It cannot change the long-term average annual take. A review may come back which says, "This is wrong; it is failing to meet the requirements of the Act, it is failing to deliver for communities and the environment. You need to change it", and the response is, "I can't change it. We limited the ability of the review clause to change it." So, if we have to change it, now we will pay out hundreds of millions of dollars, maybe more, in compensation to a handful of large corporate irrigators. This should have always been the starting point: The rules need to deliver as required under the Act, for communities and the environment. The Minister has failed.

FAR NORTH COAST HOSPITAL SERVICES

The Hon. LOU AMATO (13:16): I thank the Hon. Bronnie Taylor for her update to the House on all the good work the New South Wales Government is doing in the Tweed Valley. It is fantastic to hear of the topping out of the new Tweed Valley Hospital Redevelopment Project, which is a game changer for the growing region. This is the largest regional health project ever undertaken in New South Wales. Guess what? Labor opposed it—you would have thought that the Government was building a nuclear waste dump. The Opposition set up fake community campaigns, picketed the site and protested. Their allies, The Greens, even threatened to blockade the start of construction using council trucks and to ban any local contractors from council work if they worked on the new hospital.

Labor told the community that the Coalition Government would never deliver a hospital, only the Opposition could. But years later this Government delivered. The member for Tweed, our great colleague Geoff Provest, would not be bullied or kowtowed by the smear. He stood firm, took the promise to the election, and the community backed him in. Look at him now. I encourage those opposite to take a good hard look at the progress the Government has made on this incredible hospital project, so they can see what they opposed. There is a great time lapse video of the construction online which members should see—just Google "Tweed Valley Hospital Development: Timelapse".

MAITLAND HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY (13:18): I take note of the answer about Maitland Hospital given today by the Minister for Regional Health. A theme is starting to emerge from that answer and the response given yesterday to some questions on regional health. There is an attempt to attack the Opposition for asking legitimate questions in this House during question time about access to health and hospital services in rural, regional and remote New South Wales. Those issues have not been manufactured or confected by the Opposition but have been directly raised by constituents in those parts of the State. I need not remind the Deputy President about the inquiry conducted, which put this issue fairly and squarely on the table of both Houses of this Parliament.

The Coalition Government, in power since March 2011, had not spoken much about the matters that form the subject of the report, but then late last year appointed a Minister for Regional Health, which is a good step forward to bring some focus to this. A few months later, we had the appointment of the Coordinator-General for Regional Health, who was the subject of an answer yesterday. Some things are happening and progressing, but they are coming off the back of a report of issues raised from the Queensland border, to the Murray River and out to Broken Hill.

It is not a case of the Opposition whinging and whining and being negative. These matters are staring the Government in the face and they have not been there for a short period. In March next year this Government will have been in office for 12 years. Trying to deflect the concerns being raised by the Opposition is pretty rich. If the Minister is serious about dealing with these issues, I encourage her to provide a response to the 44 recommendations much earlier, instead of waiting until November this year, which is allowed under the six-month provision for responding to recommendations.

**NORTHERN RIVERS FLOOD SUPPORT
FAR NORTH COAST HOSPITAL SERVICES
MAITLAND HOSPITAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT**

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (13:21): I take note of answers given this day and will cover two points. The first is the answer from the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones about work occurring in Lismore, which is very timely, given flood recovery is ongoing and will take a long time. As a member of the flood committee, I can vouch for the level of trauma and uncertainty within that community and the challenges that will continue long after we have stopped talking about this. This is a three- to five-year rebuild and a very big deal.

The Minister touched on funding provided to community organisations, which is extremely welcome. But government systems have failed to engage with three community organisations in a way that, if they did, would much improve the community's response to these very difficult issues. I call out particularly the work of Koori Mail, which is a media company and a newspaper. Over the past six months in Lismore, it has worked miracles every day and cared for people experiencing a great deal of trauma. The company provided food and clothing, and has helped people to support rebuilding. It has not received much funding at all and is about to close that service. The company provides the most trusted service in the Lismore area for First Nations people and for others, and opens its door to everyone, yet we still cannot seem to fund it properly.

Resilient Lismore is another organisation doing extraordinary work every day to connect people to the services they need. It is very responsive. I raise the work of WardellCORE, which is providing an extraordinary mental health service, under the guise of a drop-in centre, where people can get a bit of food and maybe pick up some furniture they might need. The Government is not responding well to that. We can do better, and I urge the Minister to work hard when responding to all of the reviews and to support those community organisations already doing the bulk of the work. They can do it faster, better and more effectively.

The last comment I make is that the Minister for Regional Health in her answers constantly accuses the Opposition of being negative about rural health. We are not negative about rural health. Every single day we praise, support and commend the work of people who work in the health services across rural and regional New South Wales. We want to know whether the Government is giving them the resources they need, whether workforce planning is being done and whether the State Government is coordinating with the Federal Government to deal with issues such as aged care and lack of primary care. That is not being negative; that is asking the right questions.

TAKE NOTE OF ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

The Hon. PETER POULOS (13:25): I close this take-note debate by referring to some of the answers given today by several Ministers. The Minister for Education and Early Learning referred to this week being Education Week, which is an opportunity for everyone across New South Wales to celebrate the achievements of our outstanding public schools, applauding students, teachers and learning communities. In this period, the Government has announced a number of initiatives aimed at helping teachers to do what they do best, which is, of course, teaching our students. Some of those initiatives include introducing hundreds of new roles in administration, leadership and support in our schools to lighten teachers' workloads.

Those new roles will work with our teachers to do those tasks that currently take up too much of their precious time, such as data entry, paperwork, and coordinating events and excursions. Another initiative the Government has introduced is providing New South Wales teachers with a full suite of high-quality sequenced curriculum resources to assist with lesson planning. This will be an important undertaking for our teachers, who have told us that finding or making high-quality resources that align with the curriculum is the number one tax on and challenge to their time.

A response provided today by the Minister for Regional Health showcased the outstanding, first-class hospital service that will be delivered to the communities of the Far North Coast. She was able to attend the topping-out of the Tweed Valley Hospital Development program. The new hospital will provide facilities that cater for radiotherapy and chemotherapy, have an enhanced emergency department and reflect the needs of this important regional community. I commend member for Tweed Geoff Provest, who helped land this, for his outstanding advocacy. Those two situations demonstrate how the Government is attending to the needs of our community across New South Wales.

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

Motion agreed to.

*Members***LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL VACANCY**

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Wes Fang): I report receipt of a message from Her Excellency the Governor convening a joint sitting of the members of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly for the purpose of the election of a person to fill the seat in the Legislative Council vacated by the Hon. Catherine Cusack. I announce that members shall assemble for such purpose on Thursday 11 August 2022 at 10.30 a.m.

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

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Chris Rath): I welcome into the President's gallery this afternoon Miss Alice Harrington, a student from Abbotsleigh, who has just completed work experience in the office of Ms Abigail Boyd. I understand from Ms Abigail Boyd that Alice has written a speech, and this will be delivered today by the member. Alice, I trust you have enjoyed your time at Parliament.

*Private Members' Statements***HERMIDALE FUTURE FARMERS PROJECT****FERAL PIG MANAGEMENT**

The Hon. SCOTT BARRETT (15:03): On the weekend, along with the Deputy Premier, I was lucky enough to once again catch up with Skye Dedman, principal of Hermidale Public School, which is a seven-kid school west of Nyngan. It is great to be able to bring their story back to this House, as well as the small jar of soil I am holding. The story, and the soil, is from the Hermidale Future Farmers Project—an initiative that became a reality when a neighbouring farmer and former student donated 220 acres for the purpose of growing a wheat crop. The three-year project enables students to build their farming knowledge as well as use the proceeds of the crop for annual educational, cultural and social immersion trips.

Students have just returned from two weeks exploring Darwin, visiting Jabiru Area School, Kakadu and Litchfield national parks and experiencing the culture of Australia's Top End. It gets even better, with future trips planned for Melbourne next year, with an eye to either Tasmania or the Great Barrier Reef beyond that. The soil I hold is from the farm and part of its fundraising efforts. There is a collection of photos on Facebook of where this soil has ended up. I am pleased to be able to bring some to Parliament. The people of regional New South Wales are not only wonderful and friendly but also resourceful, and the Hermidale Future Farmers Project is testament to that. I commend all those involved and encourage others to look at the efforts made by this outstanding community.

Recently, in Coonabarabran, I came face to face with our feral pig problem with a mob of pigs as big as any I have seen before. Unfortunately, with a few years of favourable weather conditions, it is a problem that is getting worse. Pigs are causing significant damage to crops, pasture and farm infrastructure, such as fences and dams. Of course, they can also spread diseases, which is a risk we would much rather be without in the current climate. We all need to work together to reduce our feral pig population. Government and land managers, private and public, all have a role to play. The more people who are involved, the more successful the control programs can be.

Knowing that the most effective management is achieved through landscape-wide control, Local Land Services has been coordinating hundreds of group control programs. Last year they covered more than 40 million hectares using a variety of tools, including coordinated baiting and trapping as well as aerial shooting, which this year has accounted for nearly 20,000 pigs. Obviously, in these times, much more can still be done. To that end, I and, I am sure, others in this place would encourage all landholders to implement best-practice biosecurity measures on their properties. In doing so, they can reach out to Local Land Services for support so we can implement some large-scale controls. The best way we can fight the problem is together, and biosecurity is everyone's responsibility.

INDIGENOUS VOICE TO PARLIAMENT

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE (15:06): Giving our First Nations people a voice should not be a point of contention. After all, Australia is their land. They have lived on this land and cared for the land—their land—for the past 65,000 years. Is this not reason enough to amend the Constitution and grant them a say in the way they should run their affairs? How else can we reconcile with our First Nations people, if we do not grant them a voice and right the wrongs of over two centuries of persecution, dehumanisation, marginalisation and

trauma? For reconciliation to occur, our First Nations people must be given that important tool, that important mechanism. They must be given a voice through which they can relay their concerns, their needs and their wants to the highest authority in the land: our national Parliament.

It was a special moment for all of us when the Hon. Linda Burney, the member for Barton, was appointed Minister for Indigenous Australians with carriage of the voice and of matters of priority for our First Nations people. As president of the Federal Electorate Council of Barton, I am especially honoured to be associated with this historic moment. As the co-chair of the NSW Parliamentary Friends of Reconciliation, I look forward to campaigning hard to give a voice to our First Nations people—a voice long denied. In line with the greats of this nation—Gough Whitlam, Bob Hawke and Paul Keating—Prime Minister Albanese, with the Labor Party he leads, has made history by making the Voice to Parliament his Government's key agenda item. Speaking at the Garma Festival, the Prime Minister unveiled the wording of the proposed amendment to our national Constitution. It is this:

- (1) There shall be a body, to be called the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.
- (2) The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice may make representations to Parliament and the Executive government on matters relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
- (3) The Parliament shall, subject to this Constitution, have power to make laws with respect to the composition, functions, powers and procedures of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

To pass, the question requires a double majority of a national majority of voters in the States and Territories and a majority of voters in a majority of the States. That is a significant hurdle, but not impossible if all sides cooperate and support the referendum. The simple and clear question that may be put is something like this:

Do you support an alteration to the Constitution that establishes an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice?

To echo the Prime Minister, that is a straightforward proposition—a simple principle. It is a question from the heart. Those words are a basis for dialogue and discussion, not a line in the sand. Let us make history and give our First Nations people the right to their important voice.

LIVESTOCK GENETIC STORAGE

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK (15:09): A positive case of foot-and-mouth disease in Australia would instantly shut down our livestock industry, sending many of our State's farmers into a freefall similar to the drought only a few years ago. Our farmers cannot suffer such a loss again. It is incumbent on this country's politicians to ensure we back our farmers and take every measure available to us to ensure the future of our livestock genetics through livestock fertility preservation and genetic banking. Genetic improvement occurs over many generations. By design, farmers develop genetics critical to the health and productivity of their business. Generations of farming families have spilled blood, sweat and tears while growing, developing and protecting unique Australian livestock blood lines.

The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party believes in planning for the worst-case scenario so that we can be in the best possible position to regrow the livestock industry when the threat has passed. Artificial insemination and extraction of biological material from livestock are relatively simple and routine, practised widely in modern farming, but government support is required to ensure the safe deposit and storage of breeders' valuable genetics. This Noah's ark protection is nothing unusual to us. We do it for humans, so logic tells us that we can do it for livestock.

It does not have to end there. A successful genetic banking program would also protect endemic and endangered Australian species, something all sides of politics would and should support. Our Aussie farmers are scared. They support safe storage because it ensures the future of their farms and the unique genetic makeup of their livestock, worked on for generations. Our farmers have copped it all, with drought, flooding, rodent infestation and now the threat of foot-and-mouth disease. Genetic banking protects our Aussie farming legacy and provides long-term security of livestock and heritage in our State.

POWERING SYDNEY'S FUTURE PROJECT

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (15:11): I congratulate you, Deputy President Rath, on your elevation to that position. I recently represented the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy, the Hon. Matt Kean, and joined representatives from Transgrid, Taihan and the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to mark the completion of the construction of Transgrid's Powering Sydney's Future project at Beaconsfield in Sydney's south. In partnership with Taihan, Garde, GE and Zinfra, Transgrid delivered that vital piece of Sydney's energy transmission infrastructure on time and on budget at \$220 million. The project involved extensive cabling under light and heavy rail, and under the Cooks River and the Sydney Park wetlands. It crossed through several local government areas and followed a 20-kilometre journey along the roadway. That required significant regulatory approval conditions to ensure minimal environmental and social disruption.

It is important to note that from the Government's perspective, the project involved relatively few issues during construction. Members would know we hardly heard boo about this. It involved digging a channel along a 20-kilometre road route and laying two huge conduits and a massive cable through our city. That is testament to the capability and capacity of Transgrid and its contractors in effectively planning and managing each stage of the project, as well as the high level of engagement with the directly impacted communities along the route at each stage of construction. I congratulate Transgrid and its partners for delivering that necessary infrastructure proactively and consultatively with the communities affected.

On the day, managing director of major projects at Transgrid Gordon Taylor and Taihan CEO Hyung-Kyun Na, who flew in just for the event, noted the important role the project will play as Sydney's energy needs continue to grow. The opening of the \$200 million 20-kilometre high-voltage underground cable is an opportunity to remind stakeholders of the New South Wales Government's energy strategy, including critical transmission infrastructure like this project. With the forward-looking infrastructure projects that the Government is rolling out across Sydney come increased energy needs. The light rail, the motorways, WestConnex, the M9 and the metro rail all require significantly increased energy capacity, and that is where infrastructure like Transgrid's Powering Sydney's Future project become so crucial.

All those things need electricity to operate, and that is why the New South Wales Government has developed the New South Wales Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap. The road map sets out the Government's 20-year plan to deliver the generation, storage, firming and transmission infrastructure we need to power New South Wales into the future. The road map is a plan to deliver cheap, clean and reliable energy for all the residents of New South Wales. An important part of the plan is building the critical transmission infrastructure to distribute electricity, and the Powering Sydney's Future project is a key piece of that puzzle. I commend Transgrid and its partners for their work to ensure we meet the ever-changing energy needs of the Sydney CBD into tomorrow and beyond.

CAMPBELLTOWN KOALA POPULATION

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (15:13): Welcome, Deputy President Rath, to your first time in the chair. How lucky are the people of Sydney to have the koala, one of the most iconic animals, living at the edge of our city? The koala population in Campbelltown in particular is one of the very few across Australia that is disease free. I raise that today because unfortunately we are not doing anywhere near enough to save that koala population. Koalas are vulnerable in New South Wales and are on track to extinction unless we turn things around, which is why that koala population is so important.

So far, this particular colony has escaped the bushfire impact that has seen so many of our other koala populations decimated, but the issue out at Campbelltown is the ongoing and relentless pressure for developments and important road upgrades that are occurring in that area. Government members keep saying that they are following the scientific advice, but they are not. They are not keeping the wildlife corridors that they need. They are allowing developers to start building and ripping down trees before they have put in place the koala crossings that are required to look after that population. At the moment we are losing 10 per cent of the koala population in Campbelltown every year just through car strikes, so this is not an insignificant issue.

Tonight, the excellent volunteers led ably by the Total Environment Centre are holding a forum out in western Sydney for the Save Sydney Koalas group. It is being held at Lakeside Golf Club Camden with the Macarthur Branch of the National Parks Association. They are screening an important film that was recently shown here in Parliament, *Koalas – The hard truths*, by Australian journalist Simon Reeve. They have guest speakers including the Hon. Dr Mike Freeland.

I raise that because Save Sydney Koalas are running an ongoing and relentless campaign to save the koala population. They currently have a petition that is coming to this Parliament that is asking desperately for more protected areas for a koala national park and to look at the rezoning of stage two of the Gilead development, which this House has previously discussed and passed motions in relation to. They want to make sure that we have effective koala crossings on Appin Road. Importantly, they want to ensure that the 450-metre wide koala corridors that are required, as discussed by our Chief Scientist and committed to by former environment Minister Matt Kean, are protected and put in place in perpetuity. That is not the case. We have some very significant choices to make here. I urge the Government yet again: How lucky are we to have those koalas on the edge of our city, and what will we do to make sure that they stay there?

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD (15:17): I recently had a high school student in my office for work experience. Hearing directly from a young person their thoughts, opinions and perspectives is a really empowering thing. As

you have noted, Mr Deputy President, Alice Harrington is in the gallery today. She is 16 years old, and this is what she would like to say to the New South Wales Government:

In 1989 the Convention on the Rights of the Child was universally adopted as the first legally binding international text to protect children's rights. In 2022, as a citizen of Australia and New South Wales, you would think young people would not have to be reminding our government of our basic rights. However, with this government's lack of significant and immediate action on climate change, I as a child, have been forced to remind the NSW government of their legal obligation to protect my rights.

The children's rights that I would like to remind the House of are:

Article 6: Children have the right to live a full life. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily.

Article 12: Children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinions taken into account.

Article 24: Children have the right to ... a clean environment.

Article 1: Everyone under 18 years of age has all the rights of this Convention.

Article 4: Governments should make these rights available to children.

I believe that the NSW Government is not protecting the rights of children with their climate policy making. Achieving net zero emissions well before 2050 is vital to protecting the rights of children in New South Wales, in Australia and across the world. If we continue at the current rate of our greenhouse gas production, increasingly severe disasters such as bushfires, floods and droughts will occur frequently. This will have major economic, political, and social impacts. In the 2019/2020 black summer bushfires 25 people in New South Wales directly lost their lives, and many more were killed due to smoke inhalation. 22 more people were killed in the horrendous floods seen in Northern NSW earlier this year. If we continue at this rate, these figures will only become more extreme. Soon, we will all know someone who has been killed by the climate disaster.

We have unequivocal scientific evidence that human activity has caused climate change. However, we also have unequivocal scientific evidence that humanity has the power to combat climate change. The rights of every child in New South Wales, as well as all the future children of the world, lay in the hands of this government. I implore you to consider the children in your own lives, who at this rate, will experience the dreadful effects of climate change on their futures. Protect their rights. Protect my rights. Protect all children's rights through strong climate policy.

ILLAWARRA NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDAL PRESENTATION

The Hon. PETER POULOS (15:20): On Saturday 30 July 2022, in my role as Parliamentary Secretary for Wollongong and the Illawarra, I had the honour of representing the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery, the Hon. Steph Cooke, at the Illawarra National Emergency Medal presentation ceremony. Amongst the many award recipients and their loved ones, I was joined by Deputy Commissioner Preparedness and Capability Kyle Stewart, APM; Chief Superintendent Greg Wardle; and Greater Sydney Area Commander, Inspector Matthew Reeves, representing the Illawarra and Sutherland district, including respective service officers and members.

The Illawarra and Sutherland brigades had 175 members who received National Emergency Medals for their outstanding contributions during the 2019-20 bushfire season. The National Emergency Medal is awarded to persons who rendered sustained or significant service during nationally significant emergencies across Australia. In this case, it applied to individuals who supported the emergency response for a minimum of five days between September 2019 and February 2020. The RFS members are volunteers who train to respond to any challenge. They heroically dedicated themselves to supporting the operations of the NSW Rural Fire Service during a most horrific period in our State's history.

Whilst I am unable to recognise every award recipient in the time allocated, I will identify the brigades attached to the region. They include Darkes Forest Rural Fire Brigade Group, Helensburgh Rural Fire Brigade Group 1, Otford Rural Fire Brigade Group 1, Stanwell Park Rural Fire Brigade Group 1, Austinmer Group 3, Bulli Group 3, Mt Keira Rural Fire Brigade Group 3, Farmborough Heights Rural Fire Brigade Group 4, Illawarra Communications Brigade Group 4, Dapto Rural Fire Brigade Group 4, Albion Park Group 5, Illawarra Support Brigade Group 5, Oak Flats Rural Fire Brigade Group 5, Calderwood Group 5, Dunmore Rural Fire Brigade Group 5, Gerringong Rural Fire Brigade Group 6 and Jamberoo Rural Fire Brigade Group 6.

We all remember how devastating the 2019-20 fire season was. It was an unprecedented conflagration. Tragically, the fires were deadly and destructive. We remember and mourn the loss of life in the community, including the deaths of NSW Rural Fire Service firefighters and the United States aviation crew members. More than 11,000 bushfires and grassfires burned across the State, with 5.5 million hectares scorched, representing roughly 7 per cent of New South Wales. Indeed, many of the crews from the Illawarra responded to some of the most dreadful fires, including those at Gaspers Mountain and Green Wattle Creek.

NSW Rural Fire Service volunteers rose to the challenge, having to overcome a heavy physical and emotional toll. Many still live with the impacts today. Their dedication and courage saved lives and personal property. The volunteers answered the call for help during the Black Summer bushfire crisis and performed

admirably, protecting communities in the face of terrifying conditions. New South Wales remains forever indebted for their service. I commend those rural firefighters for what they did.

GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (15:23): This year's budget disappeared without a trace. Some \$42 billion in new spending was overshadowed by a single \$500,000 appointment. The decision of the Premier, the Treasurer and Minister Ayres to encourage John Barilaro to apply for the New York trade commissioner role ensured that. This big-spending budget fails all three tests in the Government's own Fiscal Responsibility Act 2012: The expense growth target is 5.6 per cent, but expenses leapt 26½ per cent; the goal of eliminating the State's superannuation liability has been delayed by a decade; and the triple-A rating from Standard & Poor's is gone. Three tests have been failed. Those tests have now been failed for three budgets in a row.

In a big-spending budget, not everyone was a winner. Yesterday in the House Minister Farraway proudly asserted that the budget contained \$19.4 billion for regional roads and transport infrastructure. The National Party used to insist that one-third of expenditure had to be in the bush. Minister Farraway's figure is only one-quarter of the total transport infrastructure spending. It is not one-third; it is one-quarter. This budget owes the bush more than \$6 billion in transport infrastructure spending. Thousands of hard-working taxi plate owners also get nothing. They have waited seven years for fair compensation. Like Minister Elliott, they blame the Treasurer.

This Government's campaign slogan was "you can have it all". Last week we learnt who authored that claim in March 2019, immediately after Premier Berejiklian refused 10 times in 28 minutes to use the word "stadium" in a press conference. Reports claimed that Dom Perrottet and Stuart Ayres "muscle up to campaign HQ", resulting in Premier Berejiklian's claim the very next day that "you can have it all". It is no wonder that Dom Perrottet and Matt Kean authored this budget, delivering on the promise that "you can have it all". The trouble with that is if you have it all, you get it all. You get record expenditure growth; rising fines, fees and tolls; and a record \$183 billion debt resting on future generations.

For Perrottet and Kean, two proud millennials, they have done more than anyone in New South Wales to leave that generation with a long-term debt to pay off. The Treasurer promised to cut energy costs and double the number of koalas, but energy costs are up and the number of koalas is down. The triple-A rating has been cut by one-third. When Dom Perrottet brought down his first budget, he called it the envy of the Western world. His eyes were on the horizon, looking to the financial centres of New York and London. The trouble for the Premier is that others also had their eyes fixed on New York and London, and the Premier gave them his blessing—a blessing that he will come to regret.

CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (15:26): After a decade of inaction by the climate-denying Liberals and Nationals, the Federal Government has just passed an historic climate bill, with the support of The Greens and Independents, after some important changes in the Senate to strengthen the legislation. It is momentous. Across the country, millions of people breathed a huge sigh of relief as our national Parliament took a long-awaited step in the right direction to address the climate emergency. But make no mistake: It is not enough. Any climate plan that does not keep coal and gas in the ground is no plan at all, because a 43 per cent cut in emissions by 2030 is nowhere near enough to keep warming below 1½ degrees. Just two degrees of warming means extinction for some of our most precious wildlife, like the mountain pygmy possum and the koala.

Two degrees of warming means much more violent extreme weather events, far beyond those that we are still recovering from. It means more violent, deadly floods, fires and storms; hotter and more frequent heatwaves; and longer and more severe droughts. Climate disruption is already impacting our food supply, our roads and other infrastructure, people's homes and livelihoods, and our economy; and it is costing lives. We are experiencing all of this with a little over one degree of warming. The United Nations and the International Energy Agency have both said that there can be no new oil, gas or coal development if the world is to reach net zero by 2050. Here in Australia, we will have to keep 95 per cent of coal and gas in the ground to have any hope of limiting warming to 1½ degrees. Yet in New South Wales, since the start of the Paris agreement, the Coalition Government has approved at least 23 coal and gas projects, which will emit six times the greenhouse gases that Australia currently emits in a year. When the Paris agreement was signed, the United Nations climate chief, Christiana Figueres, said:

We must keep fossil fuels in the ground. A safe future has no space for any new fossil fuel extraction.

But New South Wales is digging it up, shipping it out and burning it like there is no tomorrow. Perhaps the obscenely rich coal and gas industry CEOs and their political mates do not care about tomorrow, but we Greens do. We care about the planet and the rights of species like the mountain pygmy possum and the koala to continue existing—to not become extinct. To literally save our planet and many of the incredible species that we share it

with, we must reduce emissions by at least 75 per cent by 2030 and keep coal and gas in the ground. Our political leaders are sabotaging our future by doing anything less than that.

PARKINSON'S DISEASE

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON (15:29): Parkinson's is a degenerative, incurable, relentless, shitty disease. Its symptoms are varied and debilitating. Some are well known: uncontrollable shaking; walking difficulties, leading to slips and falls; and the Parkinson's mask, where sufferers are unable to control their facial muscles. Many mental health issues are associated with Parkinson's disease, including anxiety, depression and forms of dementia. Like many families, my family has been impacted by Parkinson's disease. My mum was diagnosed in 2014. By the time she died in 2018 she was debilitated by panic attacks, unable to hold her grandchildren, and shower and toilet herself. She shared her story in a documentary, but the reality is that many Parkinson's sufferers are not able to talk about or express their experiences. There is stigma, shame and the all-consuming occupational therapy, psychology and psychiatry—a relentless array of health interventions—that make it hard for sufferers to be advocates in the community.

One person who has stepped up to the challenge of being an advocate for Parkinson's disease sufferers is Dean Laws. Dean was an accomplished athlete. He noticed a tremor in his right hand after a run, and in April 2019—mere months after that first tremor—he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Like many sufferers, Dean struggled with mental health as a result of the stigma and shame of his diagnosis. In the real Australian way, his mates rallied around him. In 2019 Dean Laws and his friends established The Dean Team to support his journey of Parkinson's disease. As part of that, he founded The Parkinson's Walking Marathon. At first it was Dean doing a three-kilometre very slow and unstable walk, as he describes it. But with the support of the team and amazing health advocates, The Parkinson's Walking Marathon is now an event.

On Sunday 31 July at the Artarmon Reserve, I walked five kilometres. Dean and his mates walked 40 kilometres. The walking marathon alone raised \$30,000 which, I might add, is more than the New South Wales Government gives Parkinson's NSW for an entire year. The Dean Team now has over 200 members and has raised over \$100,000 since it was established. I said Parkinson's disease was relentless. The Dean Team has a slogan: To beat relentless, you have to be relentless. Dean and his team certainly are. I wish him all the best in his struggle against Parkinson's disease.

Bills

CASINO LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

MUSEUMS OF HISTORY NSW BILL 2022

Received

Bills received from the Legislative Assembly.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Chris Rath): Is leave granted for procedural matters to be dealt with on one motion without formality?

Leave not granted.

MUSEUMS OF HISTORY NSW BILL 2022

First Reading

Bill read a first time and ordered to be printed on motion by the Hon. Sarah Mitchell, on behalf of the Hon. Ben Franklin.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Learning) (15:34): On behalf of the Hon. Ben Franklin: According to standing order, I table a statement of public interest.

Statement of public interest tabled.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: I move:

That standing orders be suspended to allow the passing of the bill through all its remaining stages during the present or any one sitting of the House.

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: I move:

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

Motion agreed to.

CASINO LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022**First Reading**

Bill read a first time and ordered to be printed on motion by the Hon. Sarah Mitchell, on behalf of the Hon. Ben Franklin.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Learning) (15:36): According to standing order, I table a statement of public interest.

Statement of public interest tabled.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: I move:

That standing orders be suspended to allow the passing of the bill through all its remaining stages during the present or any one sitting of the House.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (15:36): I oppose the Government's proposal to have the Casino Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, which has been introduced in a rushed manner, debated and dealt with in both Houses in less than three days. It is quite extraordinary, given the long history of the Barangaroo debacle, the Bergin inquiry and now the Bell inquiry into The Star, that with less than three days to examine the full content of the bill, we are being asked to vote on it. I separate my concern about the timing—the move to bring the bill on urgently and have it resolved in less than one week—from my response to the substance of the bill. I anticipate that most members' contributions to debate on the bill will reflect that the substance of the bill is broadly good and represents a significant step forward. But I think it is important to understand the broader context in which we are debating the bill.

The Bergin inquiry opened a lot of people's eyes to the inadequacy of the regulatory environment for casinos in New South Wales. Largely it looked at Crown's operation of casinos in other States. To some degree it looked at the regulatory environment for casinos in New South Wales and made substantial recommendations. Most of us were aghast at what came out of the Bergin inquiry: in particular, the simple finding that Crown in fact facilitated money laundering through its casinos in other States. It was found that Crown was unsuitable at that time and in that formation to hold a casino licence in New South Wales, and the Barangaroo casino was not allowed to open. It has just opened this week, albeit with a conditional licence. But as disturbing as the findings of the Bergin inquiry were, and as disturbing as what we heard through the Bergin inquiry was, it was quite unbelievable that within a couple of years we found that what was going on at the existing casino in New South Wales, The Star, was as bad, if not worse. And that was happening under the regulatory guise of the current Act, the current regulator, the current department and the current Minister. In one instance we heard of an individual having laundered \$175 million through the poker machines at The Star. That is an extraordinarily level of crime happening right under the nose of the regulator in New South Wales.

The reason that I object to the bill coming to our House with urgency, and being dealt with this week, is that we know that the Bell inquiry, which has been established to look at what is going on at The Star, is going to report its findings imminently, possibly as soon as the end of this month. And we know that that inquiry was broader. It did not just look at the issues of money laundering, the regulatory environment and the business behaviours of The Star. It went deeper and looked at some of the harm and the impact of the failures of harm minimisation in the regulation of gambling and casinos in New South Wales.

It makes sense to wait for that report to be handed down so that we can consider whether or not additional legislative reform is required. That reform might include additional powers for the NSW Independent Casino Commission in this bill, which we will debate, or other changes to the regulatory environment as it affects casinos or the framework for managing the impact of gambling harm in our society. I have to ask the question, why the rush? It has been put to me that giving the casino commission the powers now is important so that any findings or fallout from the Star inquiry can be dealt with in a clear way and there is a clear line between the findings and the body that is designed to implement any recommendations or take action against The Star. But on my reading of the bill, it largely just gives the existing powers to the new commission.

I applaud the work of Philip Crawford and the way he communicates these problems to people. It has been refreshing to have a regulator being very open about the problems and dealing with them in the way he has. I thank him for his time in the last week to talk about these issues. But the transitional arrangements have been more than adequate for him to take the action that he has against Crown casino, so I do not think that we need this bill today to be able to deal with the findings of the Star inquiry. But I am concerned that this Government will not get around to bringing additional legislation back, if it is needed, to deal with the findings that might come from the Star inquiry, which we know will be far broader than the Bergin inquiry and will go into the dealings of an operational casino in New South Wales.

Whilst this is happening, we have seen additional worrying allegations about money laundering on fairly extraordinary levels through poker machines in our clubs and pubs. Exposés by 9News show that this is happening in a coordinated way across venues to the tune of tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars a year. We know that the Crime Commission is currently looking at it. It has put out information about regulatory reform options and is seeking input from the community at this time. We have seen reports leaked of surveillance activities and data crunching as part of this Crime Commission investigation, which shows rampant money laundering in our pubs and clubs.

So why aren't we waiting for that report so we can have a more holistic approach to dealing with the issue of money laundering in gambling facilities in New South Wales? It would have been better to deal with all of these things at one time. It is unfortunate that things have dragged on so long since Bergin. I appreciate that that is in part because of the inquiries in other States. It has made things difficult. The Star inquiry has been longer than expected and so has the Crime Commission's inquiry. I am worried—and I would appreciate advice from the Government in its response in this debate—that the Government will not get a chance to come back before the next election and deal with the critical matters that might come out of the Bell and Crime Commission inquiries. And I do not think that circumstances will arise whereby it cannot take action against The Star without this legislation. We are closing the door on an important discussion, totally unnecessarily.

That is the reason that I wanted to put on the record my opposition to this bill being rushed through. Again, apart from some pre-warning from the Minister last week, which I appreciate, we only saw the final bill on Tuesday. We have been asked to read a substantial bill and put together amendments. The Government is engaging, which, again, I appreciate. But that is not a reasonable approach to deal with such a significant issue, one that has fostered so much public and political debate. Having said that, I recognise that this bill is a ginormous step forward in the regulation of gambling in New South Wales.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (15:45): I too speak against the rushed nature of the passage of the Casino Legislation Amendment Bill. On behalf of The Greens, I register our opposition to the bill coming before the upper House so soon after amendments were passed in the lower House and so soon after we saw the draft legislation. The Government has had 18 months to consider the recommendations of the Bergin inquiry and then has rushed through legislation this week when we know the Bell review of The Star is going to be handed down in a few weeks. It is disappointing that this legislation cannot wait for consultation to continue this week, for the Bell review to hand down its findings and to see what elements of the Bell report can be included in this legislation.

I will speak to the elements of the bill when, no doubt, we are debating it tomorrow, but just in terms of urgency, this bill should be delayed. We will probably have recommendations from the Bell review that are around reducing harm. This legislation is implementing what the Bergin inquiry suggested is needed. There are many improvements that we can make, and we will be seeking to move amendments when we debate the bill. But the Bergin inquiry's terms of reference did not consider the harms caused by gambling. It did not consider measures that could be taken to reduce the harms caused by gambling. That is what the Bell inquiry will do and is reporting on in just three weeks.

It is almost highly suspicious that the bill is being rushed through right now, at the very last moment before the Bell review is handed down. Tomorrow is the last parliamentary sitting day. When we come back, we will probably have a raft of other recommendations that we should have included in this legislation. But, no, the Government and the Opposition as well, as I understand it, support the bill going through this week in its limited form. They are missing a vital opportunity to legislate measures to reduce gambling harms, in line with whatever will be recommended by that very important review into the casino. So we do not support the rushed nature of the bill, and we object to it going ahead.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (15:48): I will make a brief contribution. The Opposition understands the view that has been put by the members, and it is a legitimate concern. Those of us in the Opposition do not share that view, largely because of the views that have been communicated to us by people such as Philip Crawford. That is why we are taking our view. We share Mr Justin Field's view about the way Mr Crawford has intervened and his public communication, which has given the public a lot of confidence. That is why we support the motion. I call on the Government to put on the record its view. It would be extraordinary for the Government not to respond to the views that have just been put forward in the Chamber. The Government should place on the record its view and the reason this legislation is being put through the Parliament, which is the choice of the Government. We will respond to the motion in the way I have suggested. Our shadow Minister has made our views clear elsewhere, but legitimate issues have been raised and I expect the Government to respond.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Learning) (15:49): On behalf of the Hon. Ben Franklin. In reply: I have the joy of being on duty when this bill has come before the House. Obviously it is not my portfolio. I put on the record that from the Government's perspective this is a standard

procedural motion when we receive a bill from the other place. We do not see this as any different. That is why we move the motion to allow the normal procedural process to take place.

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

The House divided.

Ayes33
Noes6
Majority.....27

AYES

Amato	Houssos	Poulos
Barrett (teller)	Jackson	Primrose
Borsak	Latham	Rath
Buttigieg	Maclaren-Jones	Roberts
D'Adam	Mallard	Searle
Donnelly	Martin	Secord
Fang	Mitchell	Sharpe
Farlow (teller)	Mookhey	Taylor
Farraway	Moriarty	Tudehope
Franklin	Moselmane	Veitch
Graham	Nile	Ward

NOES

Boyd	Field (teller)	Hurst
Faehrmann (teller)	Higginson	Pearson

Motion agreed to.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: I move:

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

Motion agreed to.

Documents

NARRABRI GAS PROJECT

Production of Documents: Order

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON (16:00): In reply: I thank all members who contributed to the debate on this motion, and I thank the Government for not opposing the transparency and accountability sought by this call for papers. I will take a moment to respond to the Hon. Sam Farraway. The former Chief Scientist for Australia, Professor Penny Sackett, who works with the Australian National University's Climate Change Institute, has said the Narrabri coal seam gas project should not be approved. Professor Sackett says that if the Narrabri Gas Project is approved and developed, it would mean that Australia will not meet its Paris commitments of keeping warming to between 1.5 and well below two degrees Celsius because it alone will burn through 11 per cent of our Paris targets carbon budget. This gas project, if it goes ahead, will lock in dangerous climate change. The truth is—and the honourable member and his Government should be honest about this—gas is not a transition fuel to a future world that stays below two degrees Celsius of warming.

The experts have told us gas is a fossil fuel that has only marginal benefits over coal when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions and, in the words of the former Chief Scientist for Australia herself, "perhaps very little at all when methane emissions are fully and realistically accounted for." To suggest gas is somehow needed here in New South Wales is an admission of government failure—failure of this State Coalition Government and of the former Federal Coalition Government to ensure our safe and timely transition to 100 per cent renewable energy. The honourable member and his Government should cease and desist from supporting such reckless fossil fuel projects. I warn that if the Government continues to support these life-threatening and harmful climate-fuelling projects, it does so at its own peril, just like the former Morrison-Joyce Coalition Government. Time is up—climate change is not coming, it is here. But March 2023 is coming; heed this warning.

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

Motion agreed to.

Motions

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (16:04): I move:

- (1) That this House notes that:
 - (a) National Volunteer Week 2022 is being held from 16 May to 22 May 2022 with the theme for this year "Better Together"; and
 - (b) National Volunteer Week is a time to celebrate our wonderful volunteers for their tremendous efforts across the State.
- (2) That this House recognises that as our State was faced with bushfires, the pandemic and most recently, the floods, our volunteers were there every step of the way to assist their community.
- (3) That this House thanks each and every one of our volunteers for their energy and investment in volunteering across New South Wales.

I highlight a significant week in our calendar; a week to recognise some of the bravest and most dedicated and selfless people in New South Wales. National Volunteer Week was held from 16 to 22 May this year. It was a time to celebrate and recognise the wonderful contributions made by volunteers and the impact of volunteering on our local communities. The theme for National Volunteer Week this year was "Better Together". Volunteering really does bring people together and serves as a great connector to build social cohesion and reduce isolation. It not only builds relationships but, as a collective, volunteers work to bring communities together.

We have seen over the past few years, and in recent months, just how this year's theme rings true. As volunteers combatted fires, braved the pandemic and, most recently, assisted a community following the floods, they ensured our community spirit remained strong. There are too many volunteer organisations to name, but I want to share some of them today. I acknowledge the volunteers at the Hunter Region Botanical Gardens. Some 200 volunteers work hard to keep the gardens flourishing all year round on its grounds of 130 hectares. Last week Kevin Stokes was acknowledged as Hunter Volunteer of the Year for his 36 continuous years of volunteering at the gardens. As well as maintaining the gardens, volunteers provide walking tours which ensure that the knowledge of the local Aboriginal people is shared with visitors. The garden's volunteers were featured on the ABC television program *Gardening Australia* earlier this year as part of a segment on Volunteer Week.

The surf lifesaving movement, of which I am a member, is Australia's largest volunteer organisation. Last year more than 181,000 members across Australia completed 1.34 million patrol hours, performed 8,064 rescues and 1.6 million preventative actions, and attended to 53,466 first aid cases over the summer. I thank all volunteer lifesavers for their dedication and commitment to the community and to the safety of New South Wales beaches. I also highlight the Cessnock District Rescue Squad, which is a local volunteer organisation with 36 members. The group recently received a grant of \$7,000 from the New South Wales Government to purchase a new television and office furniture to allow for improved in-house training. Last year those 36 members responded to 295 incidents, including everything from snake relocations and animal rescues, motor vehicle accidents and missing person searches.

I have also met the volunteers at the Belmont Wetlands State Park near Lake Macquarie. The volunteers there are dedicated to restoring the environment, improving recreation and community access, and working with the local community to ensure that this State park remains safe, beautiful and open for all. I encourage any members who are looking for a unique camping trip to consider staying at the Belmont Wetlands State Park, where they will see the good work the volunteers do there. Finally, I want to acknowledge Port Stephens SES members Jamie Barnett, David Douglas, Ken Hepplewhite and Alysha Springett who were part of the Hunter team for the 2021 World Rescue Challenge. The team competed in two separate challenges against 20 other teams from around the world, including Europe, Asia, and North and South America. The Hunter team was successful in achieving a gold medal for the XVR Incident Command Challenge and a silver medal for the Human Drones Trauma Challenge—amazing results, given the calibre of the competitors from around the world.

The 2021 *New South Wales State of Volunteering Report* estimated that there are 4.9 million volunteers in the State, spanning community services, sport, the arts, heritage, education, health, the environment, animal welfare and emergency services. Under the *NSW Volunteering Strategy 2020-2030*, the Government is striving to grow participation, build the sector's capacity, invest in research that improves our understanding and enhance the recognition of volunteers and volunteering. I thank each and every one of our volunteers in New South Wales for the remarkable work they do for our State. I thank them for their immense efforts in times of need and for

everything they do on a day-to-day basis. Without them, many important services would not run to the capacity that they do. I commend the motion to the House.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (16:08): I thank the Hon. Taylor Martin for bringing to the House this motion which celebrates the work of volunteers in New South Wales. Of course, the Opposition wholeheartedly supports the motion. Our volunteers are often those who carry the community through a crisis. Volunteers are often the quiet heroes we do not hear about, who provide irreplaceable services and glue our communities together. Put simply, our communities would cease to function without volunteers.

The recent national State of the Environment report recognised the positive impact that community participation has had on land management and emphasised the need to facilitate new partnerships and innovations with our volunteer groups. While there are too many groups to name individually, I will spotlight the work of a few key volunteer groups in New South Wales. Landcare works to bring together grassroots environmental volunteers to foster their advocacy voice and support a variety of environmental projects. A study done three years ago found that every \$1 put into Landcare returns \$6 in economic benefits, which equated to \$500 million per year in New South Wales. It is essential that these groups and the incredible work they do for our natural environment are supported financially by both State and Federal levels of government. The small amount of money that is put in means that more volunteers will come and participate in the work.

Another group I mention are the volunteers who have taken up the fight to save koalas. Due to the work of citizen scientists Mr Kristensen and Mr Anyon-Smith, 80 previously undocumented koalas in Heathcote National Park can now be protected. The discovery of these koalas has raised new hope for other undocumented koala communities. I recognise the tireless work of the community group Save Sydney's Koalas and the Woronora Heights community which volunteers its time to fight for key koala habitat to be protected. However, those who have some of the hardest jobs in our fight to save koalas are the frontline wildlife carers. I recently watched a documentary by Simon Reeves, *Koalas – the hard truths*, which highlights the tireless work of koala carers. To rehabilitate an animal is all-consuming, and the loss of an animal that cannot be saved is devastating. I thank all of the wildlife carers of New South Wales for the sacrifices they make to do this work.

Finally, I acknowledge those who have spoken to me during the recent flood inquiry. The volunteers of those devastated communities worked together, sometimes at huge personal risk, to save members of their communities, their neighbours and often people they had never met before. It will take time before we truly understand the emotional impact of the work that community volunteers undertook during these recent floods. They should never have to feel as unsupported as they did during these floods. Labor will continue to work to ensure that that never happens again. Volunteers hold our communities together. We need to do more to support them. Without them we simply would not be able to function.

The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES (Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Services) (16:11): I support the motion moved by the Hon. Taylor Martin and I commend him for his work. I understand that he is a surf lifesaver. Many of us in this Chamber are involved in a number of voluntary organisations, many were involved before they came into this Chamber and, no doubt, many will be involved once they leave. National Volunteer Week is a great opportunity to talk about the wonderful work that volunteers do not only in New South Wales but also across Australia. I note that National Volunteer Week was held in May. It is particularly important at this time of year to mark the work that is done. Our State dealt with bushfires, a pandemic and, more recently, the floods. Volunteers across our State have been a part of that recovery process and they have worked alongside government, councils and other organisations. The work of our volunteers is immeasurable. They run a number of events and festivals, deliver meals and basically are on the ground to support individuals.

This year during volunteer week it was a great opportunity to announce the Minister's Community Hero certificates—an opportunity for members in the other place to provide certificates to volunteers on the ground, and to help them and their organisations with the work they are doing in the community. It was a great opportunity for me to join Mark Taylor, the member for Seven Hills, and to meet with members of the Karabi Community Centre—the first organisation and volunteers to receive certificates. They are doing a fantastic job. During COVID they did a wonderful job, in particular, engaging through childcare services but also with individuals. They provide meals to people who might be finding it a bit tough and they are also involved in home visits.

The theme for this year is Better Together. In light of what we have seen up north—an issue on which the Leader of the Opposition touched—our volunteers have been the backbone in those communities. It is important to recognise and to identify what more we can do to support volunteers and to bring more people into volunteering. Currently we have 4.9 million volunteers across the State. We need to support them and we must also look at opportunities to raise awareness. It was wonderful to be able to appoint the Hon. Scott Farlow as chair of the ministerial task force to look at what more we can do to support our volunteers and to encourage more people to become involved. I acknowledge and thank all of our volunteers across New South Wales and Australia.

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Regional Youth, and Minister for Tourism) (16:14): I make a contribution to debate on National Volunteer Week 2022 and thank my friend and colleague the Hon. Taylor Martin for bringing this important motion to the House. As a local resident I echo the sentiments of both the Leader of the Opposition and the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones and note the important role that volunteers played in the devastating floods in the Northern Rivers region. Without the hard work and selflessness of volunteers on the North Coast we would have lost many more members of our community during this natural disaster. Volunteers played a critical role in rescuing people stranded by floodwater, in offering shelter and food at evacuation centres, in providing mental health support, and in helping those who lost everything to start the extraordinarily difficult process of rebuilding their lives.

Better Together is an incredibly apt theme for this year's National Volunteer Week. It reminds us that volunteers bring people together, build communities and ultimately create a society that is better for everyone. But, to be honest, this is not really a reminder that the people of the North Coast needed. The idea of Better Together has always been inherent within the Northern Rivers community, and this was obviously showcased recently. As soon as the waters started to rise in Lismore, organisations such as the SES, Lifeline and so many others were immediately operating to save lives and support those in need of assistance. Their efforts were truly inspiring.

I was proud to join a number of my colleagues, including the Deputy Premier and other Nationals Ministers, at the Lismore showgrounds a couple of weeks ago to thank many of the volunteers who risked life and limb to assist others. It was an important and profoundly moving moment. Also inspiring was the response of everyone in the community to the crisis. I saw so many locals reach out through social media to provide shelter, food, clothes, information and donations. They gave up their time at their paid jobs to work shifts at evacuation centres or to help out with the clean-up once the waters had subsided. The fact that so many people in the Northern Rivers were so quick to volunteer shows us that this is a community with a visceral understanding of the power of volunteering—a community that knows they genuinely are better together. I thank the Hon. Taylor Martin for giving the House and me an opportunity to sincerely thank volunteers and residents in the Northern Rivers for their extraordinary and tireless energy and dedication over the past year.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (16:17): I thank the Hon. Taylor Martin for giving the House the opportunity, in our special way, to thank the volunteers across the State for their dedicated service and to mark National Volunteer Week. All volunteers across our State provide an exceptional service, which benefits communities and our economies, as the Hon. Penny Sharpe mentioned, and enhances social inclusion in New South Wales. One of the great pleasures as a member of Parliament—a pleasure that I know is shared universally throughout the House—is to attend community events and recognise the contributions of community leaders within volunteer organisations. Many of those have been named today.

It is timely, as the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones mentioned before, for me to speak to this motion, after the first meeting last week of the NSW Volunteering Taskforce, of which I am chair. I thank the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones as Minister for giving me that opportunity. This task force is set on discussing the future of volunteering and how the New South Wales Government can ensure that our dedicated and heroic volunteers are well supported by identifying and prioritising the needs, challenges and opportunities that volunteers and the volunteering sector face.

The task force will seek to identify potential areas for reform to ensure that the future of volunteering is stronger and to remedy the everyday challenges that volunteer organisations and volunteers themselves face. Our first meeting last week was a productive exchange, which identified practical issues in the sector and canvassed where the New South Wales Government can contribute to fixing these issues. I am sure that the diverse group it brings together, from large and small organisations, from city and from country—including even from Wagga Wagga—has a great understanding of the challenges faced by volunteers across the State. As we discussed, the issues are not always financial. Many are administrative, which are both time and labour intensive but unavoidable.

The task force will deliver a report later this year to Minister Maclaren-Jones to inform the NSW Volunteering Strategy and chart the path forward. The primary aim of the task force is to make the work of volunteer organisations easier so that they can focus on their purpose: to serve and assist the people of our State. Volunteering fosters a sense of belonging amongst volunteers, connecting like-minded people together on causes close to their interests and values. Volunteering helps forge friendships by expanding the social circles of participants. People are given the opportunity to learn and practice new skills and gain valuable experience that can lead to paid employment.

Volunteering enhances an individual's sense of belonging to community and leads to an improvement in self-esteem for participants. This is why you often find so many new Australians involved in volunteering as part of getting established in the community. There is also, of course, the economic value to our State. According to

NSW Volunteering, approximately five million people in New South Wales volunteer per year, leading to a contribution of 1.5 billion hours and an economic value of \$127 billion. All I can say to volunteers across New South Wales is thank you.

The Hon. SCOTT BARRETT (16:21): I take the opportunity to celebrate Volunteer Week and the people who selflessly give their time and resources to improve the lives of others, particularly in regional New South Wales. You could spend days and weeks compiling a list of groups of people who deserve recognition for their efforts, but I will mention just a few as representatives of the many for whom we are all so very grateful. I mention the crossing guards we see every morning when we drop our kids off at school. I know that, at the front of my young bloke's school, Robert Bell does a tremendous job in often horrible weather.

Of course, we see hundreds of volunteers at kids' sport. I had a bit of a crack at coaching the under-7s cricket last season and am aware of the effort involved in that. Thanks must go to Mark Bettinzoli, who looks after the under-8s Panthers soccer team, who are doing quite well this season, I am pleased to report. I recognise Mark as a representative of all the coaches and officials who make kids' sport happen without us even knowing what they do. They set up the grounds, organise the games, run the barbecue and pack up at the end of the day. We simply could not do without them.

I acknowledge the people who work school canteens. I think specifically of Sarah MacGregor, who does a wonderful job running our school's tuckshop, again as a representative of all those who feed our kids every day. I have done some work in drought relief and met some cracking people, who, even though they were often dealing with their own struggles, put so much effort into doing whatever they could to help those around them. Rebel Bell did a power of work through the School of the Air P&C at Broken Hill. Tania Lampe had her fingers in so many pies around Molong. Jocellin Janson coordinated so much drought relief around Narrabri, and Belinda Colless provided a heap of support around Brewarrina. That is a short list of remarkable people, representing the many who did so much.

Of course, through the drought, and through every major disaster event for the past 100 years, there has been the Country Women's Association. Everywhere you go, you see the remarkable ladies of the Country Women's Association putting so much into the communities they love. Recently, I spent time with Margot Muscat at Menindee, who does so much for that community. So does Jan Fennell, who volunteers her time advocating for the local Aboriginal community. These people, and their selfless dedication and service, make regional New South Wales hum. I cannot thank them enough for their contribution to making regional New South Wales the best possible place to live, work and raise a family.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH (16:24): I speak in favour of the motion moved by the Hon. Taylor Martin. "Better Together", the theme for this year's National Volunteer Week, is certainly apt, encapsulating the most important roles that volunteers performing charitable work play in our community. Volunteers give up their time in order to provide assistance to some of society's most vulnerable and communities in times of crisis and to raise money for important causes, of which there are many. As a keen marathon runner, I am reminded of the important role of volunteers and volunteer organisations in my own area in facilitating major events like the City2Surf, which raises a significant amount of money for charities each year and will be held again this Sunday.

The City2Surf began in 1971, 51 years ago, with just over 2,000 participants. Now, as Australia's most famous running event, and often noted as one of the greatest in the world, the Hyde Park to Bondi Beach run attracts over 85,000 participants from around the world each year. The City2Surf raises millions for charities annually and a total of almost \$49 million since 2008. That is made possible thanks to the hundreds of volunteers each year who play a critical role in running the event. Along the course, volunteers are placed from the start to the finish. From manning information desks and water stations to organising bib collection, volunteers play an essential role in ensuring the event can go ahead.

Volunteers also play a role in looking after the environment and keeping our communities clean. Clean Up Australia Day, held on 6 March this year, provides a prime example of this. It exemplifies the potentially far-reaching impact of just one individual's vision and enthusiasm for making our world a little bit better. Clean Up Australia was established over 30 years ago, in 1990, and has become the largest community-based environmental event in Australia. To date, over 20 million Australians have volunteered a total of 38.5 million hours to Clean Up Australia activities to take care of our environment.

At the risk of being a little political, I thank the huge number of volunteers who assist our political parties—of all different shapes and colours. Politics can be a gruelling business. I think we have often seen the huge number of volunteers that each of our parties put on polling booths for each election. They work at pre-poll, do doorknocking and letterboxing, and run the street stalls. It is a tough business, and we should thank for their hard work all of the volunteers who contribute to our political parties of all shapes and colours.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (16:27): The Greens support the motion brought by the Hon. Taylor Martin. Almost 4.9 million people in New South Wales are volunteers. That is more than half of the people who live in this State. Every day, people who have other responsibilities, jobs, dependants and commitments show up to do work for free. They are motivated by compassion, hope, a finely honed sense of justice and a deep commitment to being of service. These are people who turn up for others: for the elderly or children, for the unhoused and for those who need food or mental health first aid, disability support or multicultural services.

They are also the people who turn up for our planet by caring for animals and regenerating plants and our environment. The value provided to our society by all those volunteers is massive. It is the glue that holds us all together. But this Government is increasingly relying on that volunteer glue, leaning on the goodwill and compassion of our community, rather than doing its job to provide services. Where gaps in services have been widened by policies of privatisation, deliberate underfunding, incompetence and Government failure, volunteers are the ones stepping up while this Government sits back.

We do not have to look any further than the recent catastrophic flooding in the Northern Rivers for an example. The flood inquiry found that a lack of Government planning, coordination and response was directly linked to the devastation across the region. But into that chasm stepped the volunteers, with the awesome power of collaborative community support and mutual aid. People picked up shovels and mops, hiked through dangerous hills to reach stranded neighbours, and coordinated food banks. With First Nations people at the centre of those efforts, volunteers provided the community with the services and care it so desperately needed.

That story reminds us that creating system change is also a common good. Not all volunteering is directly giving help to those in need. Sometimes it looks like organising your communities to build their own grassroots power, advocating for an issue, planning a rally or locking on to a bulldozer. For thousands of people it means being part of The Greens, a political movement built not from corporate donations but from people power. The story of all volunteering is the story of people power. I thank all the volunteers across New South Wales for their determination to use their power for the good of the planet and for all of us.

The Hon. WES FANG (16:29): Wow, that was a fascinating contribution by the previous speaker. In that vein, one could say that someone who cuts down somebody who has chained themselves to a bulldozer is also a volunteer. I am delighted to make a contribution to the fantastic motion by the Hon. Taylor Martin to recognise volunteers within our local communities. The past years have seen some quite challenging times, with drought, bushfires and then the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteers played a crucial role in ensuring that the State was able to rise to all of those challenges, particularly in rural and regional communities.

New South Wales has around four million volunteers. In the areas that I represent, which are the duty seats of Wagga Wagga and Murray, those volunteers play a crucial role in the local area and the community. Murray volunteers play a crucial role in the electorate, making up various charities, the State Emergency Service, the NSW Rural Fire Service, sporting clubs, service clubs, carers and the Griffith Carevan. Those charities and organisations would not be able to service the region without the fantastic volunteers that are the driving force behind them. This Government is committed to recognising the vital importance of volunteers, and I was pleased that the Minister for Families and Communities, the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones, announced in June that the nominations had opened across eight categories for the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards.

In rural and regional communities in particular, it is so important that we acknowledge the work of volunteers. They bring so much to our community, delivering sporting events, school fetes, working bees and community groups like the Rural Fire Service. It provides so much comfort and support to the community knowing that they are there in their hour of need. They are very much the fabric of what makes New South Wales great. I join my colleagues in thanking all volunteers across New South Wales, who dedicate so much of their time to assisting those in need during their times of crisis, and I recognise their commitment to their communities.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (16:32): In reply: I thank the many members who volunteered to contribute to the debate on this motion today. I particularly thank the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Penny Sharpe; the Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Services, the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones; the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Regional Youth, and Minister for Tourism, the Hon. Ben Franklin; the Government Whip, the Hon. Scott Farlow; the Deputy Government Whip, the Hon. Scott Barrett; our new Deputy President the Hon. Chris Rath; Ms Cate Fachrmann; and our Deputy President the Hon. Wes Fang, for their contributions today.

The regional ceremonies for the 2022 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards will run from mid-August until the end of October. The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards have grown to become one of the largest celebrations of volunteering in the country. The awards are now in their sixteenth year, and they celebrate the efforts of our State's volunteers across seven different award categories. The finalists will be invited to the gala State ceremony in Sydney to announce the final winners and the NSW Volunteer of the Year. As many people have said today,

the important work of volunteers definitely does not go unnoticed in this place. This is a great opportunity to thank all of our volunteers, and I thank all members for their contributions.

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

Motion agreed to.

Documents

GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (16:35): 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 complete record, current as at the date of the passing of this resolution, in the possession, custody or control of the Department of Premier and Cabinet of appointments made by Ministers to any committee, advisory committee, board or other body, showing the name of the committee or body, the relevant portfolio Minister or Ministers, the names of each appointee, the position to which they are appointed, the date of the appointment, the date at which the member's term expires, the remuneration, and their gender, and 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 call for papers relates to committee appointments. As members know, some appointments have become controversial recently. The Opposition is simply seeking documents held by the Department of Premier and Cabinet [DPC]. One of the core roles of the Department of Premier and Cabinet is to maintain a record of these appointments, and we have named some of them in the resolution. We are looking for appointments to advisory committees, boards or other bodies made by Ministers. The DPC routinely tracks when positions become available, when appointments are made and when they cease. It also tracks remuneration. Given the Government's commitments, I would expect it is now recording the gender of those appointees.

The motion is therefore simply asking for the most recent record of that register, routinely held by the department, to be produced to the House to inform the House about appointments made by Ministers. It is a single register and a single document. Nonetheless, we have allowed 21 days for production. If there are any concerns about that, the invitation is there for the department to raise those concerns through the process and Opposition members are happy to discuss those concerns. I understand the Government will not be opposing this call for papers, and I thank it for that. I commend the resolution to the House.

The Hon. SCOTT BARRETT (16:36): As foreshadowed, the Government will not be opposing the motion.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (16:37): The Greens support this call for papers. It is important at this time that we know what the Ministers in this Government are doing in relation to appointing people to boards. It certainly could be the case that some Ministers are appointing people who are very close to them, people who may not be the best person for the role, too many of their mates or too many men. Maybe the people who are being appointed to those committees have asked for remuneration that is too high—as we have seen in the Public Accountability Committee's inquiry into John Barilaro, which is now looking into the broader circumstances around the appointment of the commissioners and the Agent General in the UK. Quite a few decisions seem to be being made by Ministers to suit themselves, their mates or the top end of town, but that may not be in the public interest. We support the motion.

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

Motion agreed to.

Bills

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS AMENDMENT (ANIMAL SENTIENCE) BILL 2022

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 (16:40): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Animals are sentient beings that consciously and subjectively feel joy, fear, pleasure and suffering. To the vast majority of us, this is not a controversial statement. We have all interacted with animals and seen it for ourselves. Those of us lucky enough to have shared our lives with loved companion animals will be very aware that each

animal has its own unique personality, fears and interests, as well as ways of expressing those individual traits. They are all individually someone, not something.

Thousands of robust and peer-reviewed scientific studies have proven various elements of consciousness and sentience in a variety of animal species. To list a few, we now know that mice and chickens display empathy; that rats will behave altruistically for others; that dolphins experience intense grief; that ants can recognise themselves in a mirror; that ravens demonstrate moral behaviour and will collectively punish others with social ostracism; that Siamese fighting fish can make logical deductions based on prior information; that apes play practical jokes and experience humour; that elephants can act motivated by revenge and exhibit symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder; that some parrots and dogs can ask questions and comprehend the responses; that octopuses experience dreamlike active REM sleep; and that cats can feel annoyed.

We have been studying animal cognition, consciousness and sentience for hundreds of years, and the science on the basic question of whether animals are sentient beings is settled. We have come a long way from the Cartesian thinking of the early seventeenth century that viewed animals as biological machines incapable of reason and devoid of consciousness. But in New South Wales, our laws are stuck firmly in the past. Currently, instead of recognising the inherent value of animals, our laws consider them animate property that can feel only pain or its absence. This is not too far removed from the "automata" categorisation made by Descartes. We can and must do better than this.

While the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979 currently recognises the ability for animals to feel pain, including suffering and distress, and holds in its objects the prevention of cruelty and the promotion of animal welfare, it does not define what welfare for animals actually looks like. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979 is a product of its time. In the 1960s and 1970s, the science of the Five Freedoms of animal welfare—being the freedom from hunger and thirst; freedom from discomfort; freedom from pain, injury or disease; freedom to express normal behaviour; and freedom from fear and distress—resulted in animal welfare laws evolving to actually prevent likely suffering of animals by providing for their physical health and behavioural needs rather than just requiring action after the suffering had already occurred. This is captured in the offences contained in the original 1979 version of the Act as it was made, with the Act not fundamentally changing since. As a result, we have "anti-cruelty" laws that, as the word "anti-cruelty" identifies, apply legal responsibilities that focus only on the animals' negative state of suffering, pain and distress.

Anti-cruelty laws are breached only when an animal's life is so unacceptably bad that it warrants punishment against those responsible, but anti-cruelty laws cannot and do not tell us what an acceptably good life for an animal looks like. It is an outdated concept that suggests "less pain is better welfare". By definition, sentience means the ability to feel and experience. Sentient animals experience pain and pleasure in what the modern science of the Five Domains describes as negative and positive states. Anti-cruelty law prohibits actions that cause an animal to "feel or experience" unnecessary pain and leads to the logical conclusion that anti-cruelty law implicitly recognises animals as sentient. But anti-cruelty law does not extend the duty of care that people have for animals to anything more than avoiding pain. Anti-cruelty law does not acknowledge or apply a responsibility to facilitate a positive life for animals.

The New South Wales Government knows full well that our current laws are not up to scratch. In 2018 the Department of Primary Industries released its Animal Welfare Action Plan, the main goal of which was to modernise the policy and legislative framework. As part of this process, the department invited input on what the public wanted to see in our animal welfare laws. The consultation outcomes report released in December 2021 showed that one of the key issues raised was that the new laws should make specific reference to sentience and/or the intrinsic value of animals. However, despite the clear mandate for a significant overhaul of these laws, including through recognition of sentience, the report has culminated in a piece of draft legislation released two years after the Government's original time line said it would, which provides little improvement to the legislation introduced more than 40 years earlier and does not improve on the implicit recognition of sentience in the 1979 Act.

At the beginning of this year, the then Minister for Agriculture referred this draft bill to a parliamentary inquiry, presumably knowing that the committee could never reach a consensus on the need to update our laws because of the diversity of views—however outdated and misguided some of them may be—of the members that make up the committee. I sat on the inquiry and watched as recreational hunters who brutally kill animals for entertainment, and animal agriculture industry lobby groups that serve to profit from lax welfare laws, were given the same, if not greater, weight as leading animal scientists when presenting evidence to the committee. Meanwhile, the clear mandate demonstrated in the consultation outcomes report was maintained in submissions made to the inquiry, with organisations like RSPCA NSW, the NSW Young Lawyers division of the Law Society of New South Wales and the Australian Veterinary Association, in addition to dozens of individuals and animal welfare organisations, calling for the explicit recognition of animal sentience.

What is playing out now, however, is predictable. The Government is throwing its arms up in the air and declaring that it is just too hard to marry up this great variety of opinions, so it will just tinker around the edges of this fundamentally out-of-date and out-of-touch law. As we heard from experts during the inquiry, the most up-to-date model of scientific assessment of animal welfare and, consequently, the genuinely "modern" authority and scientific model for our animal welfare laws is what is known as the Five Domains. Just as the science of the Five Freedoms was the best-practice scientific model of the day that informed the 1979 legislation half a century ago, the laws of today need to reflect today's best scientific knowledge and concepts of best practice.

The Five Domains model that was developed by Professor David Mellor is the leading scientific animal welfare assessment model. It is accepted in multiple disciplines and by animal welfare scientists, ethicists, lawyers and animal welfare leaders around the world as the best tool for assessing an animal's welfare. The Five Domains model builds upon the Five Freedoms model and provides us with a modern-day concept of animal welfare that stresses the importance of not only minimising negative welfare impacts but also promoting positive welfare outcomes. I quote from the most recent update to the Five Domains model by David Mellor et al, *The 2020 Five Domains Model: Including Human-Animal Interactions in Assessments of Animal Welfare*:

The domains of the ... Model ... are: 1 Nutrition, 2 Physical Environment, 3 Health, 4 Behavioural Interactions and 5 Mental State. The first four domains focus attention on factors that give rise to specific negative or positive subjective experiences (affects), which contribute to the animal's mental state, as evaluated in Domain 5.

In summarising that science, the Five Domains model identifies that the mental state of an animal that subjectively feels and experiences is a combination of its negative and positive nutritional, environmental, health and interactive experiences.

Similarly, the application of the Five Domains model to our animal welfare laws that apply a duty of care for the animals' negative and positive experiences means that animal caregivers will continue to be responsible for ensuring that the animal is free from unnecessary suffering—negative states—and also have a responsibility to provide animals in their care with the opportunity to experience positive states like comfort, interest, pleasure and enjoyment. In practice, providing opportunities for positive states includes simple things like the ability to have a varied diet; access to shade and shelter; and room to play, move and interact and to live what is described in the animal welfare sector as a "good life".

Further examples of providing animals with access to experience positive states, compared with simply an absence of negative states, include the comfort that comes from pleasant and appropriate bedding, compared with the lack of physical discomfort that comes from an unsheltered and overly hot or cold place to sleep; the vitality of fitness and the pleasure of appropriately vigorous exercise, compared with the absence of physical weakness and exhaustion from limited access to movement or over-exercise; and the engaged satisfaction of the animal having choice within its own environment caused by voluntary and self-directed play, socialising and expression of natural behaviours like foraging or hunting, compared with gradual boredom or monotony caused by access to limited or scheduled enrichment.

This is surely what we must aspire to in achieving the true purpose and meaning of animal welfare and wellbeing. Many public and industry leaders are already doing these things. This bill simply means that all people in New South Wales will be required to look after animals in a way that gives due consideration to the suffering and enjoyment of the animal and that all New South Wales animals will have a good life, not just the lucky ones. The creation of a positive animal welfare framework means that a failure to provide adequate and appropriate opportunity for the animal to have positive experiences is a failure to meet welfare obligations. The evolved duty of care that clearly applies to animals' negative and positive states will allow and necessitate a shift in the standards of acceptable animal care to incorporate a legal responsibility for a good quality of life, not just the absence of a bad quality of life.

To quote the Sentient Animal Law Foundation's argument for establishing positive animal welfare as the next logical step in animal law reform, "Less pain is not the same as more pleasure". This reframes the designation of animals as property without abolishing it, creating a meaningful consequence of recognition of sentience in the form of positive animal welfare obligations, hinging on the existing legal paradigm of legal responsibility. That does not provide legal personhood to animals, a concept which is vastly different as a legal concept and in practice. One day it may well be that animals are classified as something other than sentient property and debates about animal rights, personhood and the property status of animals may be further debated and explored. But to be clear, the positive animal welfare laws proposed in this bill—just like our existing anti-cruelty laws—are not about rights for animals but about responsibilities for people. I turn to the specifics of the bill. Schedule 1 [1] provides that the object of the principal Act is to recognise:

- (a) the sentience of animals and their ability to subjectively feel and perceive the world around them,
- (b) that animals have intrinsic value and deserve to be treated with compassion and to have a quality of life that reflects their intrinsic value,

- (c) that people have a duty of care to ensure the physical and mental welfare of an animal in their charge and to provide opportunities for the animal to feel or experience positive states of comfort, interest or pleasure.

The proposed section also sets out how the object is to be achieved. Schedule 1 [2] inserts definitions of "cruelty" and "sentience". Cruelty is not currently defined in the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979, so a definition has been inserted to clarify the Act and its interpretation. "Sentience" is defined as an "animal's capacity to feel or experience negative and positive physical, mental and emotional states". Schedule 1 [2] also amends the definition of "pain" in the principal Act to include "physical, mental or emotional suffering or distress". Currently "pain" is only defined insofar as the Act specifies that it "includes suffering and distress".

Schedule 1 [3] specifies considerations that are relevant to determining whether pain experienced by an animal is unreasonable or unnecessary for the purposes of interpreting the amended definition of "cruelty". Those considerations include whether the pain could reasonably have been avoided or reduced and whether the conduct that caused the pain was in compliance with the law. Schedule 1 [4] requires current animal welfare assessment models and best practice to be taken into account by the court in determining whether a person is guilty of an animal cruelty offence, and by officers and the secretary in exercising certain functions under the Act, where "best practice" means:

... best practice principles and standards for ensuring animal welfare that require the physical, emotional and mental needs of animals to be met in a way that conforms with contemporary scientific knowledge.

Other jurisdictions that have explicitly recognised sentience include the Australian Capital Territory, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, France, Colombia, Slovakia, the European Union, Brussels and Quebec. Victoria has indicated its upcoming animal welfare law overhaul will also recognise sentience. Additionally, the December 2021 free trade agreement between the United Kingdom and Australia recognises that animals are sentient beings.

The purpose of this bill is to explicitly recognise animal sentience and then put into action the legal duty of care to ensure a good life that must follow if the recognition of sentience is to result in meaningful change in practice. Legislative changes in other jurisdictions have largely failed to result in meaningful impacts on animal welfare outcomes because, while they have recognised sentience, they have not defined sentience in a manner that extends the duty of care to clearly and unequivocally add a responsibility for the animal's positive states as part of that recognition. To be clear, this legislative change will not materially alter any of the current specific anti-cruelty welfare standards as they are defined under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act or its regulation. It will not change the statutory definition of "unreasonable" or "unnecessary" cruelty, or the subsequent exemptions granted to commercial animal industries to carry out practices that, if undertaken by a member of the public, would be considered cruel.

Extending anti-cruelty law by recognising and defining sentience in a way that retains responsibility for an animal's suffering and adds responsibility for the animal's enjoyment does not automatically mean that animals cannot be harmed or will never experience a negative state. However, it does place an expectation on our lawmakers to regulate for the welfare of sentient beings who deserve positive experiences. It also acknowledges that where our laws do permit specific acts of harm to sentient beings, we do so because, as a society, we have decided that it is acceptable on balance. It means that as a society, via our law and our lawmakers, we have decided that we need to do more than just protect animals from unnecessary suffering by adding responsibilities for the animals' comfort, interest and pleasure.

It is worth mentioning that if Parliament chooses to extend the duty of care that people have for animals to include a responsibility to facilitate a positive life, it is necessary for the New South Wales Government to provide education and support to animal industries to ensure that this reform is properly implemented. While many farmers, businesses and communities are already invested in improving the lives of their animals, there are just as many for whom this legislative change would present varied logistical challenges, but not challenges so large that they could not be met nor so burdensome that they should prevent the passage of the bill. I acknowledge that recognition of animal sentience is not a panacea for the problems and pitfalls in animal law in New South Wales. However, the consequences of recognising animal sentience and extending the duty of care that we owe to animals will lay the foundation for a better, more balanced and more just regulatory framework that delivers on the expectations of the New South Wales public, who overwhelmingly believe in animals being given a good life.

We can do better than the status quo. Now is the time to align our laws with scientific best practice and overwhelming community expectations. I thank the animal activists, advocates, ethicists, scientists and lawyers who have been advocating for many years for changes to our laws to recognise sentience and incorporate the Five Domains model of animal welfare assessment. I also thank all the organisations and individuals who made submissions at any stage of the New South Wales Government's animal welfare reform over the past four years, including Animal Liberation; the Animal Defenders Office; Animals' Angels; the Australian Veterinary Association; the Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds; GREY2K USA Worldwide; Humane Society

International Australia; Lawyers for Animals; the NSW Young Lawyers division of the Law Society of New South Wales; RSPCA NSW; the Sentient Animal Law Foundation; Sentient, The Veterinary Institute of Animal Ethics; Tree of Compassion; and World Animal Protection, all of which made public submissions to the parliamentary inquiry into animal welfare policy in New South Wales.

I offer particular and massive thanks to Dr Ian Robertson, Dr Daniel Goldsworthy and the Sentient Animal Law Foundation, whose expert guidance has proved invaluable in shaping this bill. Humans have a large and complicated relationship with animals. We still rely on their bodies to feed and clothe us. We work them for necessary labour and for entertainment. We use their bodies and minds for experimentation to benefit humankind. We up-end and even end their lives as we destroy their homes and habitats, and we share our lives with them for mutual companionship. The very least we owe them is to recognise that, like us, they feel joy, fear, pleasure and suffering, and that they, too, deserve a good life. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

ROADS AMENDMENT (TOLLING TRANSPARENCY) BILL 2022

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 22 June 2022.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD (Minister for Metropolitan Roads, and Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence) (17:00): I am pleased to lead the Government's response to the Roads Amendment (Tolling Transparency) Bill 2022 and place on record the Government's opposition to the bill. This will come as no surprise to my friend. I am very underwhelmed by this bill brought forward by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council. The shadow spokesman has now been responsible for this portfolio—and I have been watching closely—for 1,134 days. I commend him for that. This is his signature area. This is something that he has spoken about more than any other issue. Yet the bill is emblematic of the modern New South Wales Labor Party. It is big on bluster, it is big on talk and it is big on press releases but it is devoid of substance. It delivers nothing for the people of New South Wales that we are supposed to be helping today.

Before I turn to the bill, I will set out some context to make clear the history of NSW Labor and its leader, Mr Minns, on toll road infrastructure. This is not to be disparaging of a member in the other place; it is simply to place on record some context in relation to tolling. I can understand why toll roads have been an area of focus for Mr Minns and the New South Wales Labor Party. But it is an ironic reality that the toll road issue they raise is one that Mr Minns and the New South Wales Labor Party created while they were in government. I know that that was some time ago and I know that people have short memories, but they were the creators of this very problem. Time and again the Labor Party hides its history and its calamity of failures to deliver road infrastructure effectively, efficiently or, many times, at all.

Despite running a campaign against distance-based tolling and howling about it publicly and in this place, it was, in fact, Labor that introduced the State's first distance-based toll on the M7, when the Leader of the Opposition was a staffer to then roads Minister Carl Scully. It was their idea. They brought it in. And now they complain about it. NSW Labor brought in five toll roads across Sydney while in government. They were the Cross City Tunnel, the Lane Cove Tunnel, the M7 Motorway, the Eastern Distributor and the Military Road Offramp. Let's step through those. While in government, Labor commissioned and delivered the Cross City Tunnel—ostensibly a good idea and something that was actually delivered. But despite multiple warnings that the predicted traffic modelling was physically impossible, the Carr Labor Government went ahead and awarded the contract. Yet after 18 months of operations the tunnel went into voluntary administration. Surprise, surprise. This is yet another example of how those opposite do not know how to deliver infrastructure—good in theory, good in the press release, not so good on the delivery and terrible for the taxpayer.

Earlier this year the Opposition leader and shadow spokesman released a media release titled "Tolls to Surge by 2.1 Per Cent in Just a Single Quarter". In the top lines, it said, "The Westlink M7 and Hills M2 are the roads which will see the largest increases"—terrifying headlines. What the media release deliberately neglected to mention is that the M7 and the M2 concession arrangements were the most recently entered into by NSW Labor, in 2003 and 2010 respectively. As I said, this is the irony. The New South Wales Labor Party has created and run a massive scare campaign on a problem that it helped to create. And no-one knows this better than Mr Minns, who appears to have had feelings of guilt about his performance as the chief of staff to the former roads Minister. That is why this bill is so underwhelming.

Those opposite claim tolls will be cheaper under Labor. And yet the bill offers nothing to reduce tolls for Sydney motorists. In fact, this bill—and this is the critical point—will only cost taxpayers more money. That is why we are so worried about it. Labor has no policies that will reduce tolls or provide toll relief. In fact, just last

year the shadow spokesman had his first attempt at a bill to reduce tolling by tying increases in tolls and charges to the consumer price index, or CPI. And now we are not hearing anything about it; it is crickets. If that bill had come into effect, motorists would be paying more for toll roads now than ever before, during a cost-of-living challenge in Australia.

I took some time over the winter break to inform myself of the views of the former roads Minister, Carl Scully, on these things—a great Minister and a great contributor. I will quote from his fantastic book *Setting the Record Straight*. Former Minister Scully says:

In the first few months of the Carr ALP Government, we were battered by the media and the public from pillar to post on not delivering on our promise to remove the tolls as promised on the M4 and M5 Motorways ...

When Michael Knight as the new Roads Minister, brought to Cabinet the bad news that the promise could not be delivered because 'the tax implications for the Government are far greater than we had imagined', few were surprised by us backing out of the promise and fewer still, believed the reason he was giving, as the true justification for doing so.

I was a new minister still pretty wet behind the ears—

and he says—

everyone in the room was thinking: 'We never really intended to deliver on that promise'.

And there is the tragedy. And there are the facts. He says:

The reversal of the commitment to abolish the tolls hurt the Government a great deal ... It quickly became a character question well beyond the borders of those communities still having to pay the tolls ... this issue quickly became one of integrity and good character, rather than just a road revenue issue. It was hurting us so much

...

I asked Carr if I could take over the Roads portfolio. It was one I would hold for 8 years, 1 month and 25 days. It was certainly the most rewarding of all the portfolios I would hold, but at times very tough in steering much needed infrastructure to fruition.

I certainly learnt the hard way that having plans for motorways was a whole lot easier than actually trying to have them constructed and open for business.

I say these things because this is a former Labor roads Minister who is putting on the record his concerns about some of these toll issues. I will finish on this point before I get back to the bill. He says:

The period 2005 to 2011 was a sad, wasted six years of non-delivery of any new motorways and no new rail lines or bus-only transitways. The contrast with the huge public infrastructure projects being delivered now in rail, light rail and roads, by the current Liberal state government is, in my view, simply embarrassing.

I think it is important to put on the record that he says:

... if I had not delivered them as private tollways, then none of them except the M5 East would have been built ... The only way they were ever going to be built were as PPPs or not at all.

This goes to the crux of this issue. Because our position on the bill and our reasons for opposing it are more important than ever. The bill proposes amendments to the Roads Act 1993 that would establish a range of additional regulatory requirements on current and future tolling arrangements and agreements. It would limit any Government's capacity to negotiate or amend agreements and it would require the Government and Minister of the day to table a range of information in Parliament, including commercially sensitive information such as the prospective toll revenues to be collected for the duration of tolling agreements.

On the face of it, all of these are ostensibly sensible things to do, except they are not. The proposals in the bill raise several concerns. It is for these reasons that the Government cannot support it. Firstly, the timing of the bill's introduction is questionable, given that the New South Wales Government's Toll Road Pricing and Relief Reform Review by subject matter experts, which we announced earlier in 2022, is still underway. It is being led by Treasury and will be the basis on which the Government will identify policy reform options for Sydney's motorway network. The review is looking to achieve the best balance between consistency of toll road pricing, fair and equitable toll road pricing, improved network efficiency and sustainability of road funding. The review is not due to report to the Government until later this year, so it would be prudent to await the finalisation of this process so that any changes in relation to tolling can be properly considered.

In fact, the first part of the work has already been delivered by this Government through our new toll relief scheme, which began on 1 July. The Government delivered this relief package because it is only too aware of cost-of-living pressures on families. We agree on that point. We are committed to reducing those pressures and we have acted decisively in the budget, with a \$7.2 billion package to boost household budgets and cushion the impacts of inflation. The Government's \$520 million 40 per cent toll rebate scheme for eligible motorists is an important part of our cost-of-living response, offering rebates to eligible non-business and small business customers.

Motorways, both tolled and untolled, are an integral part of the lifeblood of movement in this city and, importantly, have delivered much to the economy of New South Wales. Approximately 70 per cent of non-business toll accounts in New South Wales incur less than \$500 in tolls a year. Approximately 50 per cent pay less than \$200. Of paramount importance in the review is the impact of tolls on consumers, particularly those who are limited in their choice of public transport alternatives and cost-of-living expenses, and who rely on the network to get them to and from their places of work, or on businesses that rely on the movement of goods and services to effectively manage their operating costs and businesses viably. The Opposition's bill purports to concern itself with these things.

The economic success of individuals, families and businesses contributes to the health and vibrancy of this city and New South Wales as a whole. It is important, as we emerge from the devastating impacts of the COVID pandemic on the community, that we put the economy and the New South Wales budget bottom line in a stronger position. Yet this bill does just the opposite. If enacted, its proposals would constrain this Government or any future Government's flexibility to negotiate and agree on concession arrangements for new and existing infrastructure projects, create significant sovereign and litigation risk for private sector entities that have made investments and signed agreements in good faith, and discourage future private sector interest in infrastructure projects. Major infrastructure projects in New South Wales, including toll roads, are already subject to rigorous oversight and include the development of strategic plans, the application of a merit test, detailed business cases and competitive tendering, as well as rigorous public planning and environmental approvals to ensure they deliver value for money.

Under the bill's proposals, any future private sector entities proposing a new or expanded toll road, or tendering for one proposed by a government, would have less certainty about the future of the project. It is like changing the goalposts or the rules halfway through a game. In considering some of the impacts of this bill, we cannot ignore the risks that it provides for private sector investment. By essentially changing the rules after a government has entered into a good faith agreement with private entities, the bill will see the costs fundamentally worn by the New South Wales taxpayer. Because any financial impacts caused by the bill or by potential litigation should the bill become legislation, which is a real risk, will ultimately be borne by the New South Wales taxpayer. And that will be the responsibility of those opposite.

While those opposite see the bill as an opportunity for political pointscoring, the Government values and defends taxpayer dollars. We do not want legislation passed that will cost taxpayers investments in the schools, infrastructure, health and hospitals that they deserve and that this Government has and will continue to deliver. The bill is damaging to the reputation of New South Wales, creating disincentives to private sector participation in public-private partnerships. Public-private partnerships, as we have heard from former Minister Scully, have been successful in delivering major infrastructure projects in recent years. Partnerships that provide for the operation of toll roads by non-government entities reduce the cost burden of roads on taxpayers and offer additional financial benefits through investment in technology, efficient asset management and cost savings through economies of scale.

Again, ironically, NSW Labor also entered into these partnerships while in government. By partnering with the private sector, the Government has been able to bring forward the delivery of an extensive and much-needed motorway network while maintaining its fiscal integrity. As a result, New South Wales motorists experience the benefits of faster and safer journeys. New motorways are built years or even decades sooner than would be possible if the State were to publicly fund them. Let us be clear: private operators are specialists in operating and maintaining toll roads and can apply this knowledge and expertise to provide tollways in the most efficient way possible to benefit the New South Wales taxpayer. As the bill stands, private sector entities proposing a new or expanded toll road, or tendering for one proposed by the New South Wales Government, would have less certainty about the future of the project.

The approach proposed in the bill has the potential to place upward pressure on overall costs to the New South Wales Government because toll road operators will require higher rates of return on their investments to compensate for the higher risk. It could increase the overall cost to the New South Wales Government for a new toll road built and operated by the private sector. The bill also proposes to impose a requirement for toll operators to display signage with information on toll charges at every public tollway entrance and creates an offence for failure to do so punishable by a maximum court fine of \$11,000. Different tolling methods apply across the network, which would create enormous challenges for toll operators to provide toll price guidance in every circumstance for motorists through fixed road signs. It is just not practical or possible.

The Government recognises that bespoke tolling arrangements have led to disparity; however, this bill takes the wrong approach. For example, I am advised that there are 76 entry points across Sydney's motorway network. From an operational perspective, it is extremely short-sighted to mandate required signs across the network when there are so many unique routes on the network. Toll prices for each motorway are currently

available to customers. The information is already there. We do not need the signs; we do not need the infrastructure. There are several sources, including Transport for NSW's website, the toll tag provider and road signage where it is practical and safe to do so.

The last point I make is around the requirement within the bill for the Minister to table a report in the New South Wales Parliament on tolling agreements, tolls collected, toll relief provided and a prospective estimate of tolls to be collected during existing tolling agreements. While Transport for NSW does publish some tolling information in its annual report, other tolling data is not available to the Government as it is subject to contractual confidentiality provisions and would require the consent of each motorway operator to release. The bill would also place upward pressure on overall costs to the New South Wales Government because toll road operators will require a higher rate of return on their investment to compensate for the added requirements that the bill will impose.

In conclusion, I look forward to talking about toll policy over the coming months. I welcome the discussion. The Government welcomes it. That is why a comprehensive review is being undertaken by Treasury and supported by Transport for NSW. We are not afraid to have this difficult discussion. But this short-sighted bill will not achieve what it seeks to do. The Liberal-Nationals Government in New South Wales has a strong record of delivering important infrastructure by encouraging private investment through tolling agreements. The former Labor Government did exactly the same. There is a record of it. There are eight motorways in delivery or delivered. We have not just promised or announced them; we have delivered them. We have not just had numerous plans and announcements; we got on with the job. We are continuing to build and deliver NorthConnex, WestConnex and \$76 billion worth of comprehensive infrastructure in New South Wales as part of our \$110 billion pipeline—

The Hon. John Graham: One hundred and twelve.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: One hundred and twelve—thank you, I stand corrected by the diligent shadow Minister. I am pleased that this is a Government that, while rolling out the infrastructure, is mindful of cost-of-living pressures on families. We want the family budget to go further and for individuals to choose how they spend their money, which is why the Government has already implemented a toll relief package across all toll roads in New South Wales, no matter where or how far motorists drive, where they are from or where they are going. The Government wants motorists to get to where they need to go, get home to their families and get off our roads faster.

That is why the Government has put together a comprehensive package that provides motorists with 40 per cent relief across all toll roads in New South Wales once they spend \$375 on tolls and up to \$750 cash back quarterly into their pockets. They decide how they will spend that money. That is already on the table. That is done. I thank the Premier and the Treasurer for backing that package. Providing more signage does not put more money in the pockets of motorists. Providing documents in Parliament does not provide relief to families with stretched budgets. This Government has delivered unprecedented toll relief through its registration relief scheme and the 40 per cent toll rebate program.

In contrast, the New South Wales Labor Party, which has had a spokesman in place for over 1,100 days, announced a policy as part of a budget reply speech that was lower in monetary value than the policy the Government had announced two days before and had absolutely no detail behind it. The Opposition has now come to this House with a bill that does not deliver a single dollar for New South Wales motorists and, scarily, terrifyingly, will cost New South Wales taxpayers more money in the long run. It is 11 years since NSW Labor lost government and they still do not seem to get it—even with Mr Scully giving them guidance in his book.

I look forward to the Government further shining a light on NSW Labor's bare policy cupboard during the coming months. I would love to see what they come up with. I urge Labor to come up with something for the taxpayers of New South Wales. The Government does not support the bill. We are getting on with the job of delivering world-class infrastructure and cost-of-living support for New South Wales residents and securing a brighter future for the people of this State. For these reasons, the Government opposes the bill.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Chris Rath): Before I call Ms Abigail Boyd, I note that the Business Committee agreed that an hour would be allocated to debate on this bill today.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD (17:22): I contribute to the debate on the Roads Amendment (Tolling Transparency) Bill 2022. I assure the House I will not speak for an hour. Wow, the contribution I just heard from the Minister pretty much sums up why the people of this State are so fed up with politics. Here we have a bill from the Opposition trying to get a little bit more transparency in relation to tolling, to which—surprise, surprise—the Government is opposed because, as we know, it opposes transparency. It is just one week after the upper House committee tabled its *Road Tolling Regimes* report. That report shone a light on the individuals across this

State who are suffering from the burden of tolls, who are spending \$10,000 more per family to travel on toll roads for the pleasure of being able to get to work on time, because the State's public transport is so bad.

The committee heard of the tragic circumstances that people found themselves in. Day after day of hearings we heard from people about the out-of-control tolling in this State. We came to understand very clearly from that inquiry how opaque the Government's arrangements are with tolling giants like Transurban, how secretive the Government has become when it comes to these tolling contracts, rather than letting the public decide on the basis of real and accurate information whether or not the toll pricing is fair. This Government prefers to tell the people of New South Wales what is good for them and to shield them from the glaring failures of its tolling policy by not letting them in on what the tolling contracts actually say.

We have had to fight and struggle to be able to see those tolling contracts. We now know that there are restrictions in those contracts that stop this Government from building competing public transport projects. We now know from those tolling contracts that Transurban could be negotiating with the Government to reduce the outrageous administration fees—up to \$20 per toll. The Government could have reduced that at any time in the past 11 years so that Transurban was not taking massive amounts of administration fees. These are all things that this Government could have done, but no-one knew that it had the power to do it because it would not let us see the contracts.

Here we have this incredibly sensible bill. To my mind, it does not go nearly far enough to unpick the mess that this Government has got itself into by selling off almost every single toll road in the city. There is an absolute mess of contractual arrangements that have tied this Government in knots and have meant that now when it provides any sort of relief to drivers, it is actually lining the pockets of Transurban. Transurban is doing incredibly well; its profits are soaring. The little revolving door Transurban has got going with the Liberal Party is also working incredibly well. Everybody in Transurban and the Liberal Party is very happy with themselves when it comes to the toll roads that have been built and the toll contracts that have been put in place. They are patting themselves on the back. But what the committee heard from individual drivers, the motorists across the State—

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: The Greens members.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: —from every side of politics, Mr Mallard—was that people were suffering from the burden of having to pay massive amounts in tolls just to pick their kids up from school on time, to get to a medical appointment, to see an elderly relative or to get to work in a time frame that does not result in them missing out on massive amounts of time with their family. In response, the Minister just gave a speech that shows how out of touch not only she is but also her Government is with what the average person in our State is feeling at the moment. To point to something Labor did 11 years ago, as though that is an excuse for the continuation and amplification of such behaviour by this Government over the past 11 years, is shocking.

The Minister talks about Labor's lack of policy. Yet what is the Government's policy, other than to continually take money out of the pockets of individuals who are least able to afford it and to put it into the pockets of Transurban? That is the effect of the Government's toll contracts over the past 11 years. Yes, absolutely, the committee says in its report that Labor did do some toll road stuff. That is true. But the vast majority of the current tolls are either new tolls introduced by this Government or toll extensions put on old toll roads. The vast majority of the tolls that are currently being levied in the network are as a result of decisions of this Government.

To be honest, I do not care which government—Labor, Liberal or The Nationals—is apportioned the blame. We now have a complicated system of contractual arrangements that are nearly impossible for this Government to wriggle out of. The Minister is absolutely right when she says, "There is now a risk that when we try to unpick those contracts, we may have to pay to get ourselves out of the mistakes that we have made." That is absolutely correct. But when we look at who should be paying for the mistakes of this Government, it is not the people across western Sydney, who cannot afford it. The people who are least able to afford these tolls should not have to continue to pay for this Government's mistakes year after year. It is for the Government to own up to its mistakes. Yes, spread that cost and admit that it is now going to create some sort of budgetary stress. That is its mistake and it needs to be responsible for it. That is the way it will have to be.

We completely support the tolling transparency bill. It is an attempt by the Opposition to unpick some of those complex and restrictive contractual arrangements that the Government has got itself into. If the Opposition wins government, I wish it the best of luck because it will have to try very hard to unpick a lot of this stuff. The Minister alluded to a toll review. It is notable that the toll review is being undertaken with the Treasurer and subject matter experts. That review is worth nothing unless they speak to individual people, like we did in our inquiry, to understand the actual impact of what the Government has done by tying itself in knots with Transurban.

We propose to move one amendment to the bill. It comes directly out of our road-tolling regimes inquiry and seeks to enact one of the recommendations, which is that we take urgent action to remove the administration

fees that Transurban has been logging people with. We have suggested an amendment that would, if passed by both Houses of Parliament, immediately reduce the administration fees so that the most anyone could be charged is \$2.20 for one toll, as opposed to \$20. We hope that we have support for that eminently sensible amendment, which carries into practice something that we all agreed on during the inquiry. I wish that the Government would do better on this. I am heartened that the Opposition is trying to unpick this mess, and I wish Opposition members luck in trying to create a much fairer pricing structure for our toll roads.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (17:31): It is always nice being lectured by The Greens in the Chamber. I stand with my colleagues and the Minister to oppose the Labor Party's Roads Amendment (Tolling Transparency) Bill 2022. I strongly echo the Minister's sentiment. This is an appalling contribution from the New South Wales Labor Party, which has had 12 years to come up with a sensible policy contribution to the tolling system in Sydney. The bill is nothing more than a political stunt designed to cost the New South Wales taxpayers more money. Let me remind members of the crucial role that toll roads play in the New South Wales economy. The Government's infrastructure program is one of the largest in the world. It includes \$76.7 billion of investment into transport and infrastructure projects to make journeys on our transport network faster, safer, more convenient and more efficient. The New South Wales Government's user-pays toll road program is a critical part of that infrastructure program. As we have heard, it is not unique to this Government. Motorists experience the benefits of faster and safer journeys years or even decades sooner than if the State were to publicly fund new motorways, as The Greens propose.

The reality is that funding motorways through tolls, in partnership with the private sector, releases capital in the budget for Treasury to invest in other essential services the Government provides. We have seen that in the history of this Government in the past 11 years. It includes new hospitals, schools and public transport, which is subsidised by the taxpayer. It includes sport and cultural facilities; all of those things are ahead of their time. We all pay tolls and feel the pain, but they are not unique to any one person. One of the most essential things to remember about tollways is that they release capital to be invested in rural and regional roads and bridges, where tolls are not viable. We heard yesterday about level crossings from the Hon. Sam Faraway. Rural and regional infrastructure that those other funding mechanisms do not support saving lives in rural and regional New South Wales.

The bypass of Coffs Harbour is underway right now. It cannot be tolled but potentially it will save hundreds of lives over the next few decades. The tolling model is part of an overall mix of how the Government can deliver infrastructure across our State decades ahead of time. Clearly there are benefits for the New South Wales economy in getting people and goods where they need to be, fast, efficiently and safely. Sydney's motorway construction program we have undertaken will result in thousands of cars and trucks being removed daily from local roads, returning them to local communities for local use and improving safety and livability for those communities. Motorways save billions of dollars wasted through traffic jams, which are estimated to have cost around \$10 billion in 2020 and to have increased beyond \$10 billion in 2021. That is not to mention the environmental and health benefits of motorways.

WestConnex is one of the largest infrastructure projects in New South Wales, at \$16.8 billion, providing more than 30 kilometres of continuous motorway and creating an estimated 16,000 jobs during construction. I travel on WestConnex a lot. There are number of tradesmen in fluoro jackets and trucks, and the amount of work that has been created by WestConnex is staggering. It has been a great boost to many households of western and south-western Sydney because of extra income from businesses. When completed, it will enable significant improvements in travel times, productivity, reliability and accessibility for the community and businesses crossing our city. The new motorway will provide crucial support for Sydney's longer term economic and population growth and is projected to include more than \$20 billion in economic benefits to New South Wales. The benefits of WestConnex are already being felt. Since the M4 tunnels opened in July 2019, drivers have been experiencing travel time savings across the length of the new M4, averaging 15 minutes in the morning peak and 35 minutes in the evening peak.

I will address the myth that is often perpetrated by the Hon. John Graham and the Labor Party, which is that the M4 toll is applied to people from western Sydney. The M4 toll applies east of Parramatta. While I am from western Sydney and I pay that toll, it is not specifically a western Sydney toll. The biggest western Sydney toll is on the M7, which was put in by the ALP, not our Government. The M7 is an important piece of infrastructure that needs to be expanded as well. On the M8, which comes out near Alexandria, motorists are saving up to 30 minutes between Liverpool and South Sydney, with average travel times halved and peak-hour speeds doubled. The M5's traffic volume is reduced because the M8 is taking some of that extra volume.

The freight industry is a key beneficiary of the toll road investment being made in New South Wales. Toll roads help the industry to save time and money by reducing congestion, increasing delivery reliability and reducing overall vehicle operating costs. This boosts productivity, leading to higher rates of economic growth,

which benefits the people of New South Wales across the board. Labor's bill pre-empted the outcomes of the New South Wales Government's comprehensive review into toll road pricing and relief reform, which was announced earlier this year. Interestingly, we heard from the chair of the committee about the report, which sank without a trace when it was released last week.

The Opposition seems intent on charging forward with this stunt without allowing time for the Government to review the outcomes of the upper House inquiry on road tolling regimes, which the Deputy President, the Hon. Chris Rath and I were on. We authored a dissenting statement, though we supported many of the recommendations. Members can go through the minutes to see which ones we supported, including the one relating to administration fees. There is an issue there for reform. But we certainly dissented from a largely political document designed for a State election. The inquiry ran for eight long months, received more than 300 submissions and delivered a 240-page report only last week. It included a stunt by the Opposition Leader gatecrashing our inquiry at Bexley. To the Hon. Wes Fang's credit, his forensic examination discovered that ALP and Greens members were witnesses to the inquiry.

The Opposition's bill is an inadequate package of measures proposed at the wrong time. The Government is only too aware of the cost-of-living pressures on families—that is the number one issue the Government is concerned about. The new broad-based 40 per cent toll rebate scheme is an important part of the Government's cost-of-living response, offering rebates to eligible non-business and small business customers. Motorways, both tolled and untolled, are an integral part of the lifeblood of movement in this city and have delivered much to the economy of New South Wales, as I touched on before.

Over time, tolling arrangements for each of the tolled motorways in Sydney has been determined on a case-by-case basis. That is the scrambled egg or the omelette argument. Indeed, in our inquiry I referred to trying to pull together the different tolling contracts—started by Labor, continued by this Government, each one individual—as like walking down a street and trying to amalgamate everyone's mortgages into one mortgage. Some people have equity; some do not. Some have different lenders and different reasons to have their loan structured their way. It is not as easy as The Greens would have it, like some sort of wave of a wand. Indeed, it is not as easy as the Hon. John Graham seems to think it is.

I remind members opposite that both Liberal-Nationals and Labor governments have commissioned tolled motorways. They suffer from tollway amnesia. Opposition members talk about toll mania, but they have tollway amnesia. In 1987 the Unsworth Labor Government commissioned the Sydney Harbour Tunnel. The Carr Labor Government commissioned the Eastern Distributor in 1997 and the Cross City Tunnel in 2002. That is where we discovered the new concept of funnelling. The Labor Party closed off roads in Woolloomooloo and closed off William Street to force cars into the tunnel to make it pay the contract. It went broke twice, by the way. Labor commissioned the Westlink M7—a good motorway, but inadequately built. It is only two lanes and it is always congested. That is the first time the Australian Labor Party introduced length of trip tolling, so you pay each time you go in and out of the gates on that tollway. Then there is the Lane Cove Tunnel which, of course, has some faults that we are trying to get rectified, thanks to the contract that Labor entered into at the time.

On the Liberal-Nationals side, the great Greiner Government commissioned the M5 South-West Motorway and the Fahey Government commissioned the M2 Motorway. Over the past 11 years, the Liberal-Nationals Government has delivered both NorthConnex, which has really changed the lives of people on Pennant Hills Road and Carlingford Road, and the majority of WestConnex. I cannot wait until that is finished. We continue to roll out the Government's ambitious infrastructure agenda, including the remaining stages of WestConnex, the M4-M5 Link and the Rozelle Interchange, due to open in 2023; the M6 stage one due to open in 2025; and the western harbour tunnel project. All three of these projects were strongly opposed by those opposite.

Charges vary across the tolling network by point versus distance, time of day versus fixed charges and one way versus each way. It is ripe for reform, and we are looking at that. Also tolls paid by motorists increase by different rates depending on the motorway. Some increase by the consumer price index and some by a fixed percentage amount. This is not new; the Labor contracts have that in them too. These inconsistencies are the real challenge, not simply whether or not a toll operator has a signpost in place at the front of its motorway. The Government recognises that bespoke tolling arrangements have led to customer confusion, cost-of-living impacts and less than optimum outcomes for reducing congestion. In response, the Toll Road Pricing and Relief Reform Review will identify wideranging reform opportunities. The review is guided by the need to balance a range of objectives. They include the following:

- Consistency of toll road pricing
- Fair and equitable toll road pricing
- Improve road network efficiency, addressing issues of traffic congestion
- Meeting emissions reduction targets—

that is very important, and—

- sustainability of road funding

The steering committee's work, led by NSW Treasury, is being guided by the advice of independent transport experts. Let me be clear. Of paramount importance in the review is the impact of tolls on consumers, particularly on those who are limited in their choice of public transport alternatives. I am the Parliamentary Secretary for Western Sydney and I grew up in western Sydney; I know exactly that issue. Also of paramount importance in the review is cost-of-living expenses for people who rely on the network to get them to and from their place of work or businesses that rely on the movement of goods and services to effectively manage their operating costs and business viability.

The Opposition's bill purports to concern itself with these things, but we know that the outcomes of the Government's review will deliver more sustained and widespread benefits than anything ever proposed by the Opposition. Economic success for individuals, families and businesses contributes to the health and vibrancy of this city and this State as a whole, and the next generation of people in New South Wales. As we emerge from the devastating impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the community, the economy and the Government's budget bottom line are important. The Government's review is therefore also concerned with the fiscal impact of potential changes to the budget.

Tolls enable motorway corridors to be built faster and with lower up-front public sector contributions, enabling earlier government investment on wider infrastructure needs. This means more money can be spent on delivering quality schools and hospitals to meet community needs, not only in greater Sydney but also regional New South Wales. As an advocate of public transport, it also means investing in public transport. Good policy design that can solve the complexities of the current tolling regimes across New South Wales cannot be rushed. The toll review recommendations will be delivered to the Government for its consideration later this year. The Government's investment decisions are taken very seriously. Rigorous oversight is undertaken by several government agencies. This bill creates impediments for government and industry that will ultimately have negative flow-on effects for the economy and the taxpayer. It will cost more money to build motorways, but that is a situation I am not sure the Opposition understands or really cares about.

The State needs private sector involvement in its tolling network. The bill creates disincentives to private sector participation. Private sector firms proposing or tendering for a toll road would have less certainty about the viability of the project. The bill would also create uncertainty about future New South Wales Government contribution requirements. This would have far-reaching impacts across the infrastructure program and ultimately the State's economy. More red tape is the last thing people need. The Government wants to keep the tolling network and the people of New South Wales moving forward. The bill is one step backwards to a congested city under Labor, where no major infrastructure was delivered in those long-lost, sad 16 years of government. It does not return a single dollar to motorists and will likely cost taxpayers further money and time on our roads as they sit in standstill traffic with no new motorways under consideration.

The New South Wales Government is leading the way with a strong approach to toll relief, whilst members opposite come to the table with an empty policy. The Government will continue to focus on delivering a brighter future for the people of New South Wales. For these reasons, the bill cannot be supported. I draw the attention of members to the dissenting statement that three members of the committee put forward in the report. I point that out, since the chair of the committee decided to make some points of her own. It reads:

The NSW Government is proud of its history of infrastructure delivery across the State, this report fails to recognise how the Government's fiscal management and policies have been able to deliver road, rail, education and health infrastructure across metropolitan and regional New South Wales decades ahead of time and in stark contrast to other Labor states.

The report fails to acknowledge the benefits of private investment in City shaping infrastructure that benefits New South Wales citizens, as such, the Opposition must now clearly define how they intend to deliver infrastructure in a fiscally responsible way without raising taxes, when Cost of Living relief remains a significant focus of the NSW Government.

The report fails to properly account for the ongoing NSW Tolling Review, led by Treasury and supported by Transport for NSW that has already delivered meaningful cost of living relief that will benefit thousands of families across Greater Sydney. Whilst the Opposition will use this document to prosecute a media strategy, they are still yet to offer up a tolling policy for the people of New South Wales. While the NSW Government has a \$110bn Infrastructure program that will benefit New South Wales Taxpayers, the ALP has not committed to nor supported a single road infrastructure project. The report is a political document aimed at attacking the Government without offering any real solutions or concrete policy reform for toll reform in Greater Sydney.

I echo those words for this piece of proposed legislation, which the Government opposes.

Reverend the Hon. FRED NILE (17:49): I thank the House for the opportunity to contribute to debate on the Roads Amendment (Tolling Transparency) Bill 2022. I was attracted to the bill, which I thought had some merit. But after hearing the Minister, the Hon. Natalie Ward, and then the Hon. Shayne Mallard explaining the weaknesses of the bill, I no longer will be giving it any support. I will oppose it.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH (17:50): When looking at the merits of the Roads Amendment (Tolling Transparency) Bill 2022, it is important to understand that more signage on toll roads, releasing commercially sensitive information and retrospectively renegotiating contracts will not lead to greater toll relief for commuters, individuals and families. We know what will lead to toll relief for commuters, because it is in the budget. In many ways the budget took the wind out of the Opposition's sails, because those opposite were making such a big issue of tolls. When Chris Minns was asked in an interview about what issues the election will be fought over, he said, "Tolls, tolls, tolls." But it has sort of fallen by the wayside a bit because of the amazing announcements in the budget, in particular, the \$750 benefit to commuters in toll relief.

I feel like the bill and the Labor Party's strategy on this is a little bit of a political sunk cost. Members opposite invested all of this time and energy into putting together policies on tolls, thinking that the election would be about tolls, and then the budget took the wind out of their sails. The Government is bringing in \$750 in toll relief, and those opposite no longer have a plan. The plan now seems to be signage, which will not actually mean toll relief; commercially sensitive information being released, which is not toll relief; and retrospectively renegotiating contracts, which is just sovereign risk.

It is with great disappointment that I once again speak on tolls in this place. That is not said out of shame for the Government's record; this Government has consistently delivered toll relief through the registration relief scheme, the M5 cashback and the large towed recreational vehicle toll rebate scheme. Indeed, this Government has eight motorways delivered and/or in delivery by harnessing the power of the private sector in partnership with a \$71.5 billion roads and transport infrastructure investment pipeline. Instead, my disappointment arises out of the fact that once again NSW Labor is seeking to score political points by raising an issue that it has no plan to materially address.

The most obvious flaw in the bill is its disregard for existing inquiries and for the consideration of expert opinion from the Government. It pre-empts the Government's more wide-ranging review of tolling regimes and tolling relief, the recommendations of which are due to be received later this year. No person or party in this place has yet received the best advice as to where improvements could be made to existing tolling arrangements, but Labor has a solution looking for a problem to solve. Likewise, government departments are yet to respond to the road tolling regime inquiry, which occurred in a committee of this place. I was one of its members, along with the Hon. Wes Fang and the previous speaker, the Hon. Shayne Mallard. A response to its report is not due until 1 November. If Labor members truly sought the best outcomes for New South Wales drivers, why would they not value the input of transport experts in government who are yet to have their say?

Labor's bill is also economically reckless, creating additional sovereign risk. The bill hinders the Government's ability to negotiate and finalise new joint infrastructure projects by disrupting the contract-formation process. It would require all private toll applicants and operators to provide commercially sensitive information to the Auditor-General. That would subject operators to increased risk, potentially exposing private corporate proposals and information. This economically reckless bill therefore hinders our ability to be an attractive investment destination in the future. Why would private sector investment flow into New South Wales if we treat private companies with such disregard, opening them up to greater sovereign risk? The likely result will be that New South Wales taxpayers bear greater toll costs as toll road operators require a higher return on their investment to compensate for the increased risks.

The very fact that an operator is choosing to invest in our State will carry with it the burdens of the bill. Labor might be able to prevent that increase in cost, but it will do so by cancelling other vital projects across our State. When Labor members irresponsibly advocate for political-point-scoring toll relief, they will not tell us which schools, hospitals, roads, transport and community facilities end up on the chopping block to make it happen. We need not look beyond the final six years of the former Labor Government in this State to see that underinvestment is a reality of Labor government.

The Minister previously quoted Carl Scully, and I will also quote Carl Scully in my speech. I do not think there are enough opportunities to quote Carl Scully in this place, so I will quote him again. He said, "The period of 2005 to 2011 was a sad, wasted six years of non-delivery of any new motorways, and no new rail lines or bus-only transit ways." Should the bill pass, the New South Wales Government simply cannot employ private sector capital with the same efficiency that has enabled eight new motorways in this State since 2011. Those opposite seek to sabotage the capacity of our Government to deliver world-class infrastructure.

Further to the bill's financial impact, it actively proposes burdensome regulation and red tape. Not only will the Auditor-General be required to extensively review sensitive commercial information; an additional regulatory oversight role is also proposed for the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal [IPART], duplicating existing processes. There is an undoubted risk that those burdensome reviews would expose the Government to possible litigation from operators concerning the disclosure and potential leakage of their commercially sensitive information.

The only other tool that the bill offers is the installation of signage at every public tollway entrance. Whilst we on this side of the House are delivering real toll relief, those opposite are promising extra toll signage. At the very least, this is Labor's first material proposal with detail, and what does it win the commuters of New South Wales? It just offers signage. I find it a little bit funny, because maybe those opposite have never used Google Maps before, but one can already view the difference between a toll road and a non-toll road simply by putting the final destination into Google Maps. I do not really know what problem the Opposition is trying to solve by bringing in the bill.

The bill is economically reckless, harmful to future infrastructure projects in this State, burdensome and designed to duplicate red tape. It results in increased risk for all parties concerned, yet I am convinced that Labor does not really care. The Roads Amendment (Tolling Transparency) Bill is nothing more than political grandstanding. I am frustrated by the incessant, shrill whines that have come time and again from those opposite, whose real objective is not to support the everyday commuter in western Sydney but to garner political favour ahead of an election.

Perhaps worse than this is Labor's hypocrisy. The track record of Chris Minns speaks for itself. He was one of the architects of Sydney's toll network. In his time as deputy chief of staff to former Labor roads and transport Minister Carl Scully, he oversaw the original "toll mania". Labor broke a 1995 election promise to remove tolls on the M5 and M4, and Minns and Scully rolled out 4 per cent increases in tolls for the Lane Cove Tunnel. Funnily enough, Chris Minns now believes that such an increase is unacceptable. Labor also entered into the longest concession toll contracts—49 years for the Eastern Distributor and 51 years for the M2—yet it repeatedly claims that the current Government has let down Sydney commuters. With what? Is \$750 in toll relief letting down Sydney's commuters?

As I have asked innumerable times before, where is NSW Labor's detailed plan for genuine toll relief? The New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has one. In fact, it is already being practised. A renewed and improved registration relief scheme is now in place where, as of 1 July this year, drivers can save up to \$750 each year. Every quarter, eligible non-business and small-business customers will receive a 40 per cent rebate for every dollar spent on tolls once they have reached a minimum spend of \$375. That is the Liberal-Nationals Government plan in action for material toll relief, and it flows back to the pockets of commuters. This Government, unlike Labor, is conscious of real cost-of-living pressures and the costs of tolling on household budgets, which is why almost \$70 million was paid last financial year alone to around 200,000 drivers under the Toll Relief Scheme.

If Labor was bold and courageous, members opposite would come into this Chamber proposing to rip up the contracts with Transurban and the private toll companies, but they will not do that because they know how economically reckless it would be. They are having a bet each way. They are saying they support our plan in part, because it is real money to real commuters in real time, but they are also saying that they will renegotiate the contracts and provide commercially sensitive information that could be leaked out into the community. I would almost have more respect for the Opposition if it went fully socialist and said that the contracts with private toll companies should be ripped up.

Ms Abigail Boyd: Yay!

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: As much as Ms Abigail Boyd might like that as the end result, I would disagree with it—for the extreme ideology that it is—but respect it. This bill is still economically reckless in what it is trying to achieve, and the Labor Party should take another look at it. In the lead-up to the State election, it is probably best for Labor not to open a front where it can be deemed economically reckless. I vehemently reject the pointscore intent of this bill. I urge the House to recognise its many flaws and to wait for the Government's response to the tolling inquiry so that the experts can have their say, rather than rushing into this bill that potentially has a huge number of unintended consequences not just for Transurban and the private sector but also for commuters. For these reasons, I oppose the bill.

Debate adjourned.

Documents

FORESTRY CORPORATION OF NSW

Production of Documents: Order

Mr JUSTIN FIELD (18:04): I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1939 outside the order of precedence as follows:

- (1) Omitting "21 days" and inserting instead "28 days".
- (2) Omitting "1 July 2019" and inserting instead "1 January 2020".

- (3) Omitting paragraph (b).
- (4) In paragraph (c) inserting "harvesting" before "contractors".
- (5) Omitting paragraph (d) and inserting instead:
 - (d) all documents relating to the payment of fines or compliance with regulatory actions in response to breaches of the CIFOA by Forestry Corporation of NSW harvesting contractors.
- (6) Omitting paragraph (g).

Leave granted.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: 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 2020 in the possession, custody or control of Forestry Corporation of NSW, the Department of Regional NSW, Treasury, the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, the Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW, the Treasurer and Minister for Energy, and the Minister for Finance and Employee Relations relating to Forestry Corporation of NSW:

- (a) all documents relating to investigations of potential or actual breaches by Forestry Corporation of NSW or its contractors of the Forestry Act 2012 or Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016;
- (b) all documents relating to potential or actual noncompliance by Forestry Corporation of NSW harvesting contractors of the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval [CIFOA], legislation, internal policies and procedures;
- (c) all documents relating to the payment of fines or compliance with regulatory actions in response to breaches of the CIFOA by Forestry Corporation of NSW harvesting contractors;
- (d) all documents, including but not limited to briefing notes and meeting minutes, prepared for the Forestry Corporation of NSW board, executive team and shareholder Ministers in relation to the *Statement of Corporate Intent 2021-22*;
- (e) all documents, including but not limited to financial reports, spreadsheets and data, which show the contribution of the Hardwood Division to the financial performance targets referred to on page six of the Forestry Corporation of NSW *Statement of Corporate Intent 2021-22*; 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.

Members of this House would be aware that, since the catastrophic 2019-20 bushfires, there has been an active public and political debate about the administration of forestry activities in New South Wales and how the rules for forestry activities have been applied in those catastrophic post-fire conditions and as we have transitioned out of restricted harvesting into business as usual. There has been a range of different reviews of the impacts of the fires on harvesting activities across the State. In that time, we have seen a genuine explosion in compliance issues with harvesting in our public native forests. The Forestry Corporation of NSW, in the most recent statement of corporate intent it issued, went from having an almost perfect record regarding breaches of both the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and the Forestry Act 2012 over the past five years—I think one breach was identified—to having seven breaches in the past financial year.

The cost to taxpayers has been enormous. There has been over half a million dollars' worth of fines issued to the Forestry Corporation of NSW this year alone, and a number of investigations and prosecutions are still underway. Taxpayers are paying for the impact that illegal harvesting activity is having on our forests. We are also paying these fines to ourselves for the breaches of forestry contractors. I have asked numerous questions, both on notice and through budget estimates, about what is going on, what action is being taken against harvesting contractors that are repeatedly doing the wrong thing and why responsible Ministers have not taken more steps to address what is now a systemic problem with the Forestry Corporation of NSW.

The Forestry Corporation of NSW is a bad-faith actor when it comes to complying with the law, as demonstrated by its own reports. This order for papers seeks to have a look at what is going on between Forestry Corporation, the responsible Minister's office—the Department of Regional NSW, which has a clear interest in this and is engaged in these discussions and debates—and the shareholder Ministers, both the Treasurer and the finance Minister, who are signing off on the reports and corporate strategies that are leading to ongoing systemic breaches of the law in New South Wales by Forestry Corporation. That is the intent of this order for papers. I thank the Minister's office for the engagement over the past few hours to bring this down to a responsible degree of detail so that we can have a look at what is going on, in the interest of the people of New South Wales.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (18:09): The Government thanks Mr Justin Field for his engagement in amending the motion to get something reasonable. As such, the Government will not oppose it.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH (18:09): Clearly quite a bit of work has been undertaken today to refine this motion for the production of papers under Standing Order 52. I highlight to a number of other Ministers that this can be done. Some Ministers have conversations with proponents of motions under Standing Order 52 and the motions are refined. It does work. As someone said, it can be "a well-oiled machine". To those Ministers who do

not take that approach—predominantly members of the Legislative Assembly—this motion is a lesson. The Opposition will support the motion. I say well done to those who were involved in the discussions today.

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

Motion agreed to.

FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING

Production of Documents: Further Order

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (18:10): I seek leave to amend private members' business item No. 1931 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice as follows:

- (1) Omitting paragraph (a) and inserting instead:
 - (a) all correspondence created since Thursday 1 July 2021 between the Minister for Environment and Heritage and the Minister's office, Minister for Lands and Water and the Minister's office, and the Department of Planning and Environment relating to floodplain harvesting;
- (2) In paragraph (b) insert "and the Minister's office" after "Minister for Environment and Heritage".

Leave granted.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: 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, excluding any documents previously returned under an order of the House, in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Lands and Water, the Minister for Environment and Heritage and the Department of Planning and Environment relating to floodplain harvesting and not already produced by an order of this House:

- (a) all correspondence created since Thursday 1 July 2021 between the Minister for Environment and Heritage and the Minister's office, Minister for Lands and Water and the Minister's office, and the Department of Planning and Environment relating to floodplain harvesting;
- (b) all correspondence created since Thursday 1 July 2021 between the Minister for Environment and Heritage and the Minister's office and the Department of Planning and Environment relating to the floodplain harvesting;
- (c) all documents created since Wednesday 8 June 2022 that reference targets, triggers, access rules, priority of use, water management principles, demands tables, long term environmental watering plans or environmental water requirements;
- (d) all correspondence created since Sunday 1 August 2021 that references the Murray-Darling Basin Cap or changes to the Baseline Diversion Limit or the Sustainable Diversion Limit; 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.

On 1 July the water Minister, Kevin Anderson, introduced the floodplain harvesting regulations for a fourth time to allow for floodplain harvesting licences and entitlements to be handed out in the northern basin. That will allow the Minister to hand out \$1 billion or more in water property rights to his big northern irrigator mates for free. On 29 July this year the Minister for Environment and Heritage signed off on water-sharing plans for the Border Rivers and Gwydir valleys, which contained around 150 gigalitres of floodplain harvesting volumes. The New South Wales Government plans to update water-sharing plans across the northern basin to implement around 340 gigalitres of floodplain harvesting volumes, which is well and truly above the existing legal limit of 64 gigalitres since sustainable diversion limits were introduced under the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

Documents produced under an order for papers initiated by Mr Justin Field have revealed that staff of the Department of Planning and Environment warned the environment Minister that proposed floodplain harvesting rules will not adequately protect the environment or the needs of downstream communities in the Murray-Darling Basin. A briefing produced in June for the Minister states that "the department considers the proposed in-catchment targets to be too low to protect key environmental assets outside extreme dry periods." It also states that the targets failed to consider the long-term health of the environment and did not "support the water management principles of the Water Management Act."

To address that, the Environment and Heritage group said it had prepared alternative targets that were based on environmental water requirements. Another email between officials on 11 February shows them discussing the potential for downstream targets that would prevent extraction when there was critical human and environmental needs. The officials wrote that such targets would "strengthen the case that the Minister is taking all reasonable steps" to comply with the Water Management Act, noting that a legal challenge on these grounds was considered likely. The Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists has said the proposed targets are so low they "will never meaningfully restrict floodplain harvesting and will fail to ensure that water for river health and community needs are prioritised above irrigation."

The downstream flow target for the Menindee Lakes is a pathetic 195 gigalitres—less water than was in the lakes when the devastating fish kills occurred during the last drought. Volumes stored at Menindee have only fallen to that level six times in the past 43 years, and only ever during extreme drought. Despite that, the environment Minister signed off on the water-sharing plans anyway. This order for the production of papers will reveal what discussions took place between the environment Minister and the water Minister leading up to the environment Minister's approval of the water-sharing plans.

It will also reveal further discussion about the inadequacy of the floodplain harvesting rules and the New South Wales Government's attempts to change the floodplain harvesting limits in the Murray-Darling Basin. We need much more transparency around the issue of floodplain harvesting regarding the discussions that are taking place, the Minister's knowledge about environmental targets and who was telling him what. This order for papers will produce the latest information in that regard. I commend the motion to the House.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (18:15): In the spirit of kumbaya, which is taking over this place and the negotiations that were undertaken by the Minister and Ms Cate Faehrmann—the Hon. Wes Fang has been muzzled for this debate—the Government does not oppose the motion. I thank the member for those negotiations.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON (18:16): I merely wish to say that it is fantastic to see the spirit of cooperation and to echo the comments of my colleague the Hon. Mick Veitch that this is what we can achieve when we talk and work together.

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

Motion agreed to.

Motions

PENRITH SHOWGROUND

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (18:16): I move:

- (1) That this House condemns the actions of the Perrottet Government to evict the Penrith Showground occupants from their historic site, including the Penrith Agricultural Society, Harness Racing Club and market stallholders, without any relocation or rebuilding plans for their facilities, as urged by the local member of Parliament, the Hon. Stuart Ayres, MP.
- (2) That this House calls on the Government to give proper consideration and respect to these Penrith Showground stakeholders and the more than 100 jobs at risk.
- (3) That this House recognises the conventional way of constructing a new football stadium, such as the large new investment at Penrith, to build it on site, without evicting other valuable community organisations, including the Penrith Panthers, who will play two seasons of their home games at the excellent Parramatta Bankwest Stadium along the M4 Motorway from Penrith.

This motion goes to the ongoing mismanagement by the Government of football stadium issues in Sydney. Having reneged on the agreement for funding for Shark Park and Leichhardt and Brookvale ovals, the Government is going all out with overspending in Penrith. It is paying twice to build a football stadium in Penrith.

The Hon. Mark Buttigieg: Why is that?

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: This was an initiative of Stuart Ayres. It is an example of Ayres' arrogance, which has landed him on the backbench, and deservedly so. The example I am raising, from when Ayres was Minister, does him no credit either. There is a chance now for the new Minister, Alister Henskens, to reverse the folly of paying twice. The Hon. Mark Buttigieg asked how the Government is paying twice. The normal practice, for instance, Allianz Stadium and Bankwest Stadium—the old Cumberland Oval—was to knock the old facility down and take a couple of years to build a new one. In that time, teams play at alternative locations. For example, the Roosters play at the Sydney Cricket Ground, next door to Allianz, and instead of Bankwest, players are using the Olympic stadium, not far away at Homebush.

However, the proposal for Penrith is to keep the existing stadium in place and for the Panthers to play there while the Government buys the showground site next door. It is paying twice. It has to pay over \$300 million—it might end up being half a billion dollars—to build that stadium at Penrith on the showground site, which has to be purchased. Further, the Government will evict in a harsh and callous way the existing users of the showground site, which include the RSL, the Harness Racing Club, the Penrith Agricultural Society, market stallholders and many others in the community. I know that in the Penrith district the political power and pull of the Panthers is right at the top of the list. But that does not mean that these other very important community organisations that do not have the political clout of the Panthers can just be thrown on the scrapheap and disregarded.

There was a very useful precedent for how to do it. I pay tribute to the former transport Minister Andrew Constance who, when he needed the Clyde speedway site at Parramatta for the marshalling yards for his new metro, at least had the decency of saying, "I'm not just going to throw them out and take over the site. I'll build

them a new facility at Eastern Creek." And it was a win-win for the speedway users and the devotees of that motoring sport. So why can we not have a win-win, at least at Penrith, where we look after the showground users with some plan to relocate them and fund new facilities? The Government is not even doing that. Arrogant Ayres said, "We'll kick you out. There will be some commercial negotiations to purchase the showground site. Then you're on your own."

That is just plain wrong, because they are paying twice for the one project. They are paying for the showground land and the rebuild of the Penrith Stadium solely as a sop to the Panthers to say, "You will never lose a home game. You'll play your home games on the existing facilities. In two years' time you'll have one at the showground and you don't have to go through what the Panthers say is the terrible consequence of driving 30 minutes down the road on the M4 to the magnificent Bank West Stadium." Poor old clubs like the battling Wests Tigers, Manly in their humble facilities, or Shark Park where one would think a former Liberal Prime Minister might have had a bit more clout, or "Speak-man" could get the job done. They would love the idea of playing at Bank West while a new half-billion-dollar facility is built on their old site.

The logical plan would be to knock down the Penrith Oval and rebuild it there. Leave the showground where it is; it does not need to be disturbed. Over 100 jobs are related to that showground site. They are being lost; they are at risk. The community there is pulling its hair out with worry. Why would a government, other than for the base electoral reason of trying to buy off the increasingly marginal seat of Penrith, pay twice for a football stadium? Why buy the showground site and then rebuild with all that extra money? Under the current plan, the Panthers are effectively being hit up the backside by a rainbow, undeservedly. The smaller players at the showground—the harness racing, the ag society, the market holders, the RSL and everyone else in Penrith—have rights and they should be respected by this Government.

The sensible thing to do is to save the money from buying the showground site. There might be a commitment to Shark Park or Leichhardt, where it has been pointed out by the local mayor that the Premier is supposedly a Tigers fan. He is not much of a fan if he is not living up to his promise. I do not know if anyone from the National Rugby League had a look at that railing that fell over, but Leichhardt needs a few repairs. They may not run into the hundreds of millions, but it needs a bit of an upgrade, along with Brookvale Oval. It is not often that I would advocate for that side of Sydney, but even the poor, struggling Manly fans, ripped apart by that ridiculous rainbow jersey, need a little bit of government consideration as well. I commend the motion to the House.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH (18:22): I speak on behalf of the Government and will hopefully be followed by the Hon. Shayne Mallard, a boy from Penrith, who no doubt will give us more local knowledge about this important issue. Penrith is a thriving city centre, supporting and servicing Sydney's growth areas and strategic investment such as the western Sydney aerotropolis and Penrith Lakes. Penrith is a suitable location for the development of the outer Western Sydney Stadium, as identified in the Government's Stadia Strategy, due to its location as part of the Western Parkland City, growing population and status as a developing city centre.

The New South Wales Government is considering the best location for the new stadium. Following a six-week community consultation program, feedback from over 3,000 people provided a clear picture of what the new stadium needs to deliver. No decision has been made about the location of Penrith Stadium, and this motion from the Hon. Mark Latham is premature. New South Wales needs to ensure that we have the best stadiums for the people of our State to enjoy world-class sporting events. The Government is committed to delivering a state-of-the-art stadium with an improved game day experience for fans and modern amenities.

The Government's commitment to Western Sydney Stadium is consistent with the first Stadia Strategy, announced by the Liberals and Nationals in 2012. It envisaged three stadiums—one in the Eastern Suburbs with the Sydney Football Stadium, another in the Central City of Parramatta with Bank West Stadium and the Western Parkland City to have the state-of-the-art stadium people deserve. This commitment to Western Sydney Stadium is also consistent with the Government's vision for Sydney's three-city strategy, with the Harbour City in the Sydney CBD and surrounds, the Central City of Parramatta CBD and the Western Sydney Parkland City with the new aerotropolis and surrounding areas. The New South Wales Government has a vision for our great city, ensuring that Sydney can be the best city to live. This is because the New South Wales Government is committed to investing in communities right across our city and ensuring that no matter where one lives one can watch sport in a state-of-the-art stadium that suits Sydney's position as a world-class city.

The New South Wales Government is consulting on a range of options as part of the Penrith Stadium redevelopment and no decision has been made as to its location. Following a six-week community consultation program undertaken by Infrastructure NSW, feedback from over 3,000 people provided a clear picture of what the stadium needs to deliver. It is vital that the Government consults with the community and takes all the concerns on board as to the location of the Penrith Stadium.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM (18:25): The position that the Government has just put will be of no comfort to the people impacted by this decision. They are totally in the dark about what is going on here. This came as a shock—the suggestion that they might be impacted and moved.

The Hon. Mark Latham: They will be.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Exactly. There was no consultation. There are 100 jobs there. These people have been told they have to move, without any relocation or rebuilding plans, as the motion says. That is the issue here—no consultation and 100 jobs, or people, impacted in this way. There is the agricultural society, the harness racing club, market stall holders and the Hog's Breath Cafe, which operates year-round. This site is not used casually some of the time; it is in use most of the time. It is private land, owned by the historical society for a long time. These are some of the concerns. The harness racing at this site is not just important in western Sydney; it is a feeder site for some of the important clubs further out. Parkes, Bathurst and Dubbo all feed into it. This has a big impact on harness racing as one reaches out over the range into regional New South Wales.

The Hon. Wes Fang: John Graham—champion of harness racing.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I grew up going to the trots in Albury.

The Hon. Wes Fang: Did you?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. Mark Latham: Why do the Nats hate racing?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I have been distracted. That is the concern here. People living their lives, happily going about their business, and community clubs will be impacted, with no consultation and no plans to address what now happens to them. They were making plans for this site. Plans for how the site could be developed were being talked about. Those have now been thrown into disarray by what appears to be a half-baked plan. I will leave my contribution there, having been wound up by the contribution of the Government. I encourage the Government to deal directly with these people and give them some comfort about what this means for their future and the future of the community clubs. We will be supporting the motion. We are glad the issue has been brought here. The Leader of the Opposition has been clear about where we stand on the issue of stadiums more generally. There is no reason for disrespect to this important local community.

The ASSISTANT PRESIDENT (The Hon. Rod Roberts): I will now leave the chair. The House will resume at 8.00 p.m.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (20:01): I strongly oppose the motion of the Hon. Mark Latham. As mentioned in previous contributions, I again make it very clear that no decision has been made by the New South Wales Government on the location of the proposed new Penrith stadium. The motion here is fuelling conspiracy theory and speculation, which those opposite enjoy being part of. The New South Wales Government plans to redevelop Penrith Stadium as part of its commitment to improve sport and visitor economy infrastructure across our city and our State. As the Hon. Chris Rath outlined in his speech, it is a key part of the three cities strategy and the parkland city approach. The new stadium will be a major event venue run by Events NSW to support the growing population in the Greater Western Sydney area. As the Parliamentary Secretary for Western Sydney, I welcome that. It will cater for sports, which we expect, but also entertainment and tourism—the whole package. It will be a 24-hour facility, seven days a week.

The stadium builds on a strong track record of delivery by the Liberal Government and the local member, Stuart Ayres, including the \$1 billion redevelopment of Nepean Hospital; the Yandhai pedestrian crossing over the Nepean River, which I attended the opening of; the widening of Northern Road; and the widening of Mulgoa Road, which has already seen the section between Museum Drive and Union Road completed with a new rail bridge installed. Numerous schools have been upgraded in the Penrith electorate, and I note the recent announcements by the local member regarding the opening of new facilities at Cranbrook and Nepean high schools and the \$1 billion Nepean Hospital upgrade. A whole package is going into western Sydney. The Government and the local member, Stuart Ayres, are delivering for Penrith.

The New South Wales Government is consulting on a range of options as part of the Penrith Stadium redevelopment, and no decision has been made as to its location. I used to go to the old Penrith Football Stadium. I remember the days of the Panthers' Royce Simmons and Brandy Alexander, before I became a Rabbitohs supporter. I have a great affinity with that stadium, but it is not fit for purpose and needs to be replaced. Those opposite appear not to be keen to support a new stadium for Penrith, and I call out the Hon. John Graham and his contribution. Why will he not say if the Labor Party supports a new stadium? He would not answer that question.

Instead, it is conspiracy theories about alleged property deals and whatever is going on out there, and not looking at the substance that the people of Penrith deserve a new stadium. Following a six-week consultation program undertaken by Infrastructure NSW, feedback from over 3,000 people has provided a clear picture of what the new stadium needs to deliver for the people. The outcomes of the engagement with key stakeholders will further inform the development of Penrith Stadium, which was announced by the Premier—no conspiracy here—on 9 December 2021.

I ask for a one-minute extension of time.

Leave granted.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: As other speeches have outlined, further consultation and engagement sessions have been undertaken by Infrastructure NSW, including discussions with the Penrith Paceway. My great-uncle used to run his pace horses and racehorses around there when I was a kid. The House should agree that western Sydney deserves a world-class stadium that benefits the region and will deliver world-class events for the residents of western Sydney. Labor appears to be opposed to that stadium. The Government will not support the motion because it is factually incorrect and premature.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM (20:05): In reply: Let us make this clear, nobody opposes the construction of the new Penrith stadium. That has never been put on the table. At one stage in his contribution I thought the Hon. Shayne Mallard was auditioning to be the new candidate for Penrith, given that Stuart Ayres certainly will not be running again. He was auditioning to be the new Liberal candidate for Penrith, until he admitted that he dumped the Panthers and adopted the Rabbitohs as his team, but somehow he thinks he is an expert on the Penrith Stadium. He has not been there since the days of MG, Brandy and Freddy Fittler and now he is a rabbit, so he completely has destroyed his credentials in that regard.

In terms of a conspiracy theory, I think the honourable member is supposed to be the Parliamentary Secretary for Western Sydney. He needs to check the correspondence, because the showground received correspondence from the Government requiring the compulsory acquisition of the site. There is no conspiracy theory in that. Who starts a conversation by sending a letter out saying, "We're going to compulsorily acquire your land, and you're out"? That is not a conversation; that is an eviction. That is the problem. Those stakeholders, the harness racing—and we all remember that famous horse driven by your great-uncle, Mallard the Duck; it was a ripper—the RSL, the showground, the agricultural society, the stallholders and the like have been treated like dirt. There was no conversation, there was no preamble and there was no attempt to have negotiations. It was just a letter of compulsory acquisition—an eviction notice, effectively.

The Ayres plan, this crazy worship of the Panthers—we all love the Panthers; what a great team. But the Government cannot be spending huge amounts of public money and evicting people from the showground simply for the reason that the Penrith Panthers cannot miss a home game for the next two seasons, when the alternative for those two seasons is to play 30 minutes down the road at Bankwest—another multibillion-dollar New South Wales Government investment. No-one is being harsh on the Panthers; everyone is being generous.

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: Not \$1 billion—\$200 million, I think.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Well, it used to be Cumberland Oval until we burnt it down and then rebuilt it again, so it is multibillion. If members know the site—and I do—and the Parramatta Leagues Club and all the fun we had there, it is many billions of dollars of investment and good times. So good on us; everyone is being very generous to the Panthers. But the point is to also be generous to the stakeholders at the showground, and certainly not to treat them like dirt and with such disrespect. Use the Constance model of taking over the speedway land at Clyde and rebuilding them a new facility at Eastern Creek. That was a fair and decent thing to do. That Stuart Ayres cannot be fair and decent beggars belief. No wonder he is not running again. Arrogant Ayres will leave that area in disgrace.

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

The House divided.

Ayes21
Noes14
Majority.....7

AYES

Borsak
Boyd
Buttigieg (teller)

Graham
Higginson
Houssos

Moselmane
Nile
Pearson

AYES

D'Adam (teller)	Jackson	Primrose
Donnelly	Latham	Roberts
Faehrmann	Mookhey	Sharpe
Field	Moriarty	Veitch

NOES

Amato	Franklin	Poulos
Barrett (teller)	Maclaren-Jones	Rath
Fang	Mallard	Taylor
Farlow (teller)	Martin	Tudehope
Farraway	Mitchell	

PAIRS

Secord

Ward

Motion agreed to.*Documents***TAFE NSW CAMPUSES****Production of Documents: Order****The Hon. MICK VEITCH (20:20):** 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, excluding any documents previously returned under an order of the House, created since 24 March 2021, in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Skills and Training, TAFE NSW, Property NSW, Department of Education or Department of Premier and Cabinet relating to the sale of TAFE NSW campuses:

- (a) all documents regarding the possible sale of any TAFE NSW campus, including all analysis, briefing notes, business cases, feasibility studies, correspondence and ministerial briefing notes;
- (b) all correspondence to or from a member of Parliament regarding the possible sale of a TAFE NSW campus;
- (c) any document which contains the utilisation rates for TAFE NSW campuses;
- (d) any document which contains the utilisation rates for TAFE NSW Connected Learning Centres;
- (e) all reports, briefings, memorandum, emails and correspondence relating to the utilisation rates of all TAFE NSW campuses;
- (f) all reports, briefings, memorandum, emails and correspondence relating to the utilisation rates of all TAFE NSW Connected Learning Centres; 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.

This motion under Standing Order 52 seeks the production of documents predominantly relating to the sale of TAFE NSW campuses, including all analysis, briefing notes, business cases and feasibility studies related to those sales. It also seeks correspondence to or from members of Parliament regarding the possible sale of TAFE NSW campuses, documents containing utilisation rates for TAFE NSW campuses and TAFE NSW's Connected Learning Centres, and briefing memoranda or emails related to those utilisation rates.

For quite some time the shadow Minister for Skills and TAFE, and member for Newcastle, Tim Crakanthorp, has been pursuing the issue of the sale of TAFE NSW campuses. He is interested in which TAFE campuses are being closed or put up for sale, and in the process, business cases and returns on such sales. TAFE campuses in regional New South Wales are critically important. During a recent timber function in the Preston Stanley Room, members of Parliament from all sides of politics met with delegates of the Timber Workers Union. Some of the country towns they spoke about have TAFE campuses. The one in my hometown of Tumut is a forestry TAFE campus that runs forestry courses. It is critically important to that community that the campus not be closed and the land not be sold. That concern is reflected in other regional communities in New South Wales. The Opposition looks forward to seeing the documents produced under this call for papers. As always, we will peruse them very closely.

The Hon. LOU AMATO (20:22): Here we go again, debating yet another baseless motion seeking to extract information on secret TAFE divestments that simply do not exist. Only in March the Minister for Skills and Training in the other place confirmed to Portfolio Committee 3 – Education in answers to supplementary

questions that no current whole or partial divestments have been approved for any TAFE site. In those answers, the Minister also confirmed that there are no future TAFE divestment targets that TAFE NSW is required to achieve. I am advised and pleased to hear that the position remains unchanged. That can also be seen in the budget papers, in which no gain or loss on disposals is projected in the 2023 financial year.

The budget papers make clear that this Government is committed to building new TAFE facilities right across the State. A record \$318.9 million of capital funding will be spent in the 2023 financial year on new and improved TAFE facilities across the State. That includes \$32.7 million for the TAFE NSW Kingscliff campus to expand course offerings in health care and electrotechnology; \$29.6 million to expand the Coffs Harbour Education Campus; funding to continue to build the \$80.4 million NSW Institute of Applied Technology for Construction, which will drive the delivery of our State's infrastructure strategy by enabling up to 700 new apprentices per year to train at that industry-leading facility. All members know that Labor has always been for TAFE and apprenticeships. The Hon. Mick Veitch knows that we were both tradies in our former lives. We all know the importance of it. TAFE is the university of the working class.

The budget also includes funding to deliver state-of-the-art TAFE NSW Connected Learning Centres at Jindabyne and Byron Bay, which will give TAFE NSW a permanent dedicated facility in those communities for the first time. We want to see TAFE NSW continue to expand and grow, not contract and wither. Members opposite are obsessed with selling TAFE. The Government will not support the motion.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (20:25): As the honourable member outlined earlier, this Government boasts record investment in TAFE. The notion that this Government has any ideas to sell off TAFE is simply wrong. Despite the Government's record investment and commitment, this motion seeks to waste the time of TAFE NSW by going on yet another fishing expedition, which the mover of this motion does not come to with clean hands. After all, it was the previous New South Wales Labor Government that closed the TAFE NSW Seaforth campus and sold off TAFE NSW assets in communities such as Tenterfield, Mona Vale, Maitland, Dover Heights, Cooma, Newcastle, Mudgee, Woy Woy, Kingscliff, Cessnock, Forbes, Lithgow, Tamworth, Cootamundra and Charlestown.

I would have thought that this House would want to support TAFE and not divert resources away from TAFE to this motion. Members opposite, including the mover of this motion, want to remove resources from TAFE at a critical time and put them towards this fishing expedition under Standing Order 52. They should be focused on delivering the very best training to the people of New South Wales who are looking to get the skills they need for the jobs they want. That is what our Government is committed to doing. We are committed to delivering a strong and versatile TAFE that delivers world-class training to people right across New South Wales. This Government is committed to delivering a New South Wales TAFE footprint in communities for the very first time, unlike members opposite who closed TAFE campuses over and over again during their time in government. The Government will not support the motion.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH (20:27): In reply: That was sensational. We heard "Ying" and "Yang", Ministers in waiting or MIWs—they are next in line for the job—delivering their speeches with gusto. I do not know why they are not on the front bench. I point out a couple of things. They made wonderful contributions. Everything those Government members said supports this motion under Standing Order 52. Everything they said in the speeches they were given to deliver supports our obtaining the documents. I do not understand why the members would vote against the motion when their speeches argued for it. If they read the speeches they were given before standing up to deliver them, they would have realised that they have been duded.

If running the courses that are required by the workforce in regional New South Wales is going so well, why is it that people are talking to me about the lack of shearing schools? Where are the shearing schools? I am not talking about schools that teach people to shear "a" sheep, which is what the Government is doing. It is running schools that it calls "shearing schools" through the TAFE system to teach people to shear "a" sheep. A person cannot make a living shearing "a" sheep. They need to be taught how to make a living as a shearer, but the Government scuttled those courses. It takes more than five days to become a shearer.

The Hon. Lou Amato made a very good point: Trade skills are more than some of the things that the Government is running on these TAFE campuses. Those opposite should be very careful about reading out the speeches given to them—very careful. They clearly came from an LA Minister's office. Very clearly, they do not understand that they have just set up the members opposite. Everything that the members opposite have said supports the reason this call for papers under Standing Order 52 should get up, so they should back it. I support the motion and commend it to the House.

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

The House divided.

Ayes21
 Noes14
 Majority.....7

AYES

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

NOES

Amato	Maclaren-Jones	Poulos
Barrett (teller)	Mallard	Rath
Farlow (teller)	Martin	Taylor
Farraway	Mitchell	Tudehope
Franklin	Nile	

PAIRS

Mookhey	Mason-Cox
Secord	Ward

Motion agreed to.

TAFE NSW EQUINE COURSES

Production of Documents: Order

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (20:39): 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 electronic format if possible, in the possession, custody or control of the Minister for Skills and Training, TAFE NSW, TAFE Commission or Department of Education relating to equine courses at TAFE NSW Richmond:

- (a) all documents, created since 1 January 2015, relating to the closure or cancellation of equine courses at TAFE NSW Richmond;
- (b) all documents, created since 1 January 2015, relating to student enrolment rates and data, completion rates, customer relationship management data, fixed costs, staffing costs, revenue, expenditure and the financial viability of equine courses at TAFE NSW Richmond;
- (c) all documents, created since 1 January 2021, relating to voluntary redundancies, forced redundancies, staff changes and relocations for equine staff at TAFE NSW Richmond;
- (d) all documents, created since 1 November 2021, relating to expressions of interests or applications in courses for equine courses at TAFE NSW Richmond;
- (e) all documents, created since 1 January 2015, relating to marketing and advertising of equine courses at TAFE NSW Richmond;
- (f) all documents, created since 1 July 2019, relating to Thoroughbred Industry Careers and equine courses at TAFE NSW Richmond;
- (g) all documents, created since 1 March 2020, relating to course delays, course cancellations, changes in delivery modes, changes to training packages for equine courses at TAFE NSW Richmond;
- (h) all documents, created since 1 January 2021, sent to or received from Ms Robyn Anne Preston, member for Hawkesbury, relating to equine courses at TAFE NSW Richmond; 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.

This order for papers is extremely important as the Government's attack on TAFE and its obsession with privatisation has continued. It has had a devastating impact on students and staff of the Richmond TAFE equine courses, the Hawkesbury community and businesses, and the entire equine industry at large. It is absolutely appalling that essential equine courses will no longer be available to New South Wales residents at Richmond TAFE. Highly skilled and essential staff stopped being employed for these courses from 24 June. Jobs were

slashed and courses were cut without adequate explanation or accurate assessment. It will have a devastating impact on the industry. Minister Henskens has wrongly said that there has been a 90 per cent decrease in enrolments. That is completely inaccurate, false and out of touch, which is why we need these papers.

The TAFE NSW and Racing NSW partnership ended in 2019. Under the partnership the courses were statewide and not just based in metropolitan Sydney. Richmond TAFE discontinued delivering certain courses after the partnership ended. Therefore, any enrolment assessments that have been made are on the basis of previous courses that have not been in existence for some time. Additionally, equine courses have been drastically affected over the past few years due to COVID-19 lockdowns, fires and floods impacting the region. Equine courses are in-person courses. Students had been wanting to enrol in classes where they could gain critical practical skills in person during that time period, but they were not able to. Appallingly, the Government has used this as an opportunity to slash jobs, to offload training to private providers and to undermine TAFE—as usual.

The Government says that there is no demand for TAFE's equine courses, that private operators will fill the space and that people will want to attend those courses. This is inaccurate and the industry has informed the Government of it. People from around our country and international students would travel to Richmond to undertake its courses. Without equine courses in Richmond, there will not be face-to-face teaching for beginners and people without adequate skills in the equine industry in New South Wales. Racing NSW offers traineeships; however, they are for individuals who already have many of those skills. We need to see accurate information on the courses, as removing them will be tremendously damaging for the industry and will have safety implications. Disgracefully, Minister Henskens has ignored the pleas for assistance from community and experts. Hawkesbury City Council highlighted the economic value of Richmond TAFE courses and is extremely concerned about their removal. It stated:

The potential impacts of the loss of the above courses on the equine industry locally, a key economic driver in the Hawkesbury, worth nearly \$160 million annually and employing approximately 700 people

Charlie Duckworth stressed the importance of the courses for Chris Waller Racing, pleading for them to continue. He stated:

It is crucial for a high-risk industry such as the racing industry to have training such as the Richmond facility. Racing in Australia is thriving and there is so much money in the game that I can't understand why this course is being shut unless you want the industry to peak and then decline through a lack of staff and dangerous work conditions.

Melbourne Cup winning jockey Darren Beadman has said that the courses are desperately needed. Brett Parbery from Parbery Performance Horses is an Australian champion and representative. He stated:

Shutting a facility and these courses is a tragedy for the future of safe education in an already highly unregulated industry such as the Performance horse industry.

It is clear from the community, industry experts and employers that it is nonsensical to cut these equine courses. The Teachers Federation; my colleague and Labor's shadow Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, Tim Crakanthorp; and Federal member for Macquarie, Susan Templeman, have been fighting for the courses to continue and for the workers who have been ignored by the Liberals and The Nationals. We need answers to hold the Government to account for cutting staff and courses and for trying to downgrade TAFE. That is why we need this call for papers.

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD (20:44): It does seem a night for horses. The Government opposes this call for papers under Standing Order 52. We are focused on growing TAFE and making it as good, nimble and flexible as it can be for the people of New South Wales. The motion asks for five years' worth of detailed information relating to operational management of TAFE NSW. It seems to me that the Opposition is running out of issues about which to call for papers when it is going after horse courses going back five years. We know that TAFE is critical to supporting the State's economy, but instead of focusing on how we can support it, including training students, the motion again proposes—like all of the motions today—that we divert public resources to respond to a fishing expedition for a decision going back five years that TAFE would make in the ordinary course of its operations. It is an operational decision by TAFE, not by the Government.

It is standard practice for TAFE NSW to constantly review its course profiles and adapt its training profiles to meet the evolving needs of industry and the community it serves. It has done so during its over 130 years of existence. Labor would probably have us still doing steam train courses. Over the past few years enrolments in equine studies have declined by more than 90 per cent at the Richmond campus, despite TAFE NSW undertaking a range of activities to grow and diversify delivery and to promote courses locally. It tried to adapt the courses to help them survive. As a result and following consultation with staff, the unions and the local community, TAFE NSW decided to cease delivery of four low-enrolment equine courses at TAFE NSW Richmond when delivery for all existing students is completed. This includes—the Opposition will listen to this—the Certificate II

in Racing (Stablehand) course; the Certificate III in Racing (Trackwork Rider) course; the Certificate III in Racing (Stablehand) course; and the Certificate III in Performance Horse course.

But, importantly—and I have a family background in horses—the farriery courses will continue to be offered at Richmond campus. For members who do not know what farriers do, they look after the area of horseshoes. That very important area will continue at Richmond campus, supporting the local equine community. This change will enable TAFE NSW to redirect its resources into supporting additional training places for students in western Sydney in critical skills areas such as peri-urban agriculture, animal sciences, child care, aged care, disability support and traditional trades, including at the TAFE NSW Richmond campus. Those are the changes that occurred. The Government is committed to the provision of equine training in New South Wales. Members should not doubt that. The Government does not support the motion. TAFE made an operational decision in an evolving education sector. The motion is unnecessary parliamentary overreach.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations) (20:47): I always feel compelled to make a contribution when a motion is moved by Mark Buttigieg.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Adam Searle): You mean the Hon. Mark Buttigieg.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: He is certainly the Hon. Mark Buttigieg. The previous motion was a call for papers under Standing Order 52 [SO52] in relation to TAFE NSW campus sales. That motion was carried. But now, to put additional pressure on those people who work in the TAFE system, the member has directed another SO52 call for papers at TAFE. The motion will again use up the resources of TAFE, which the member is supposedly the great saviour of and protagonist for. One can only make one conclusion about anything that the Hon. Mark Buttigieg ever does in this place: that someone from the union movement has rung him up and said, "Mark, we need a favour. This is the union boss on the phone. Can you get some information for us on equine courses?" Because the Hon. Mark Buttigieg has never made a contribution to this place other than as dictated by his union masters.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Adam Searle): I am loath to interrupt, Minister, but you are coming close to casting aspersions on a member of this House. It is contrary to the standing orders.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I accept that. I cast no aspersion. I am sure the Hon. Mark Buttigieg has had original thoughts in his life.

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam: Point of order: It is out of order to reflect on the motives of a member, which this contribution appears to be extensively directed to. The Minister needs to focus on the substance of the motion and not on what motivates the Hon. Mark Buttigieg to bring the motion to the House.

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: To the point of order: Reflecting upon the motives of a member is not out of order. "Why are you bringing this to the House?" is a standard debate in this place.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Adam Searle): Making attacks on a member otherwise than by a substantive motion is contrary to the standing orders. I will not uphold the point of order on this occasion, but the Minister is warned.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Thank you, Mr Deputy President. What I will say about this motion is in line with a lot of the observations I have made about similar motions in this place. Recently, a lot of them have had some significant substance, one might say. But this one is effectively asking the Government and the people who work in TAFE to use their resources for a purpose for which they should not be doing so, rather than educating the students. [*Time expired.*]

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE (20:50): Briefly, I understand there is one reason for this matter being brought before the House and that is that when TAFE started to decline significantly under the former member for Hawkesbury, before he chose to move—and I note that the former member for Epping would be well aware of that event, but I will not reflect on it—people out there, including the Liberal councils and Liberal councillors, sought to raise the concerns of the local residents, to say, "Why are you doing this? This is an important industry in our community. Will you tell us the reasons? Give us the information. Make it clear to us."

We have a Liberal-Nationals Government in New South Wales doing this. The people approached the local Liberal member to ask, "Why are you doing this?" The Liberal council in Hawkesbury asked the Government, "Why are you doing this?" The Government cannot say. It will not give any information. What happens? Labor comes to this House and says, "The residents, the council, those people affected, the TAFE employees, are urgently seeking to know why." That is the motivation behind this motion. The matter should never have to come to this House because if the local member, the Minister and the Government as a whole are going to take this action and absolutely decimate a local industry in one of their own seats, then they should tell the people who are affected why.

The Hon. Shayne Mallard: That's a long bow.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: A long bow? It is not a long bow when a Liberal council and community representatives cannot get information out of their local member. It is outrageous that the time of this House has to be taken up by a Standing Order 52 call for papers on this matter simply to get information for local residents because their representatives will not provide it. I urge members to support this motion.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN (20:53): The Hon. Peter Primrose's contribution about this House's time being taken up by a Standing Order 52 call for papers is interesting because, again, I will talk about the time being taken up within TAFE NSW for another fishing expedition. The time and cost involved in servicing this motion will be substantial and it will take away from the day-to-day functions of TAFE NSW. TAFE make decisions every day regarding the sustainability of courses. It reviews whether these courses will continue to be offered in the way that they have been, with dramatically dropping course enrolments in this case. Training Services NSW has been working with other registered training organisations that are interested in providing equine training in the Sydney metropolitan region.

Additionally, over the next 12 months the New South Wales Government will invest \$1.5 million in TAFE NSW Richmond for a new veterinary clinic, agricultural livestock facilities and equipment, and a Connected Learning Point. However, those opposite will not accept an operational decision of TAFE NSW that responds to changes in market demand. This motion is a drain on resources and a waste of time for TAFE NSW—resources that would otherwise be able to focus on TAFE NSW's main objective, which is training the students of this State. They are resources that could be focused on continuing to improve training opportunities for the people of Greater Sydney.

In contrast, this Government will continue to focus on what matters, and that is ensuring that TAFE NSW has resources and funds directed to where it matters—and what matters most is our students and frontline teachers. This Government is delivering a record \$1.974 billion of expenditure for TAFE NSW in the 2021-22 budget. We have committed \$251.7 million in this year's financial budget for capital works alone, including the brand-new Institute of Applied Technology facilities at Meadowbank and Kingswood. This Government has built and improved facilities right across New South Wales, including, of course, in western Sydney. Hundreds of thousands of people are engaging in fee-free training as part of the Government's response to the challenges faced by the State over the past three years. We want to focus on the future of New South Wales, on building on these achievements, not on re-prosecuting operational decisions made by TAFE NSW. The Government does not support the motion.

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (20:55): In reply: I thank my colleagues for their contributions, the Hon. Shayne Mallard, the Hon. Damien Tudehope, the Hon. Peter Primrose and the Hon. Taylor Martin. A lot of what was said in opposition to the Standing Order 52 call for papers turned on this big resource drain of having to get five years' worth of papers. What about the poor TAFE teachers who have lost their jobs? Has anyone opposite reflected on why we might want to analyse the business case as to why the Government has slashed those jobs? Is there any thought for those people? This is serious business; people have lost their livelihoods. The Government was told by industry, employers, the TAFE teachers and the local council that its decision was insanity. The Government's response in this place is, "Five years' worth of papers is too much of a drain." Are those opposite serious?

The Government said in this place that its decision was based on some sort of rigorous analysis of enrolments dropping. In my speech introducing the motion, I stated that the Opposition has reason to suspect that due to the disbanding of the racing partnership, COVID and the floods, the basis for that analysis is false. If the Government is so confident that it is such a rigorous analysis, that there was a genuine drop in market demand and enrolments, and that all the subject matter experts—from employers through to TAFE teachers, through to the industry—are telling fibs, then presumably when the documents turn up, they will tell us that story. We will have egg on our faces and those opposite will have won the debate. But the Government does not want us to have a look at the papers to make the analysis. What does that say about the Government's confidence in the analysis that was done to justify the decision to slash these courses and jobs and gut these areas? We are talking about people's livelihoods. The least the Government can do is say in this place, "Yes, we're confident. We stand on our record. Here are the papers." I commend this motion to the House. We will not let up on this issue until we have a good look at it.

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

The House divided.

Ayes21

Noes 14

Majority.....7

AYES

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

NOES

Amato	Maclaren-Jones	Poulos
Barrett (teller)	Mallard	Rath
Farlow (teller)	Martin	Taylor
Farraway	Mitchell	Tudehope
Franklin	Nile	

PAIRS

Mookhey	Ward
Secord	Mason-Cox

Motion agreed to.*Motions***DAFFODIL DAY****The Hon. WES FANG (21:07):** I move:

- (1) That this House notes that on Thursday 25 August 2022 the community will celebrate Daffodil Day, the iconic fundraising campaign run by the Cancer Council.
- (2) That this House further notes that Daffodil Day is an opportunity to come together and give, to help fund research to create change in the lives of people impacted by cancer.
- (3) That this House commends and celebrates the excellent work carried out by the Cancer Council and the community on Daffodil Day and throughout the month of August for this important cause.

I am pleased to move this motion, which is really important for a number of reasons. For some people, including me, Daffodil Day means so much. I will take those present on a bit of a journey. Next year will be a decade since my father passed away. He passed away from cancer. I remember that, when he died, it was quite a number of years before I could buy the daffodils. To me they were a symbol of cancer. Daffodil Day is in August most years, and my father's birthday is 31 August, so it was particularly difficult.

I remember, about three years after he passed away, I bought some daffodils and took them home. It was a bit of a cathartic moment. For so many people, in so many different places, daffodils will mean something different. For most people it is just a yellow flower that they will buy once a year in August, and it will be to support those who have cancer and those who have suffered because of cancer—as I think many of us in this place have. For many others, it will represent something else. For everybody who looks at the daffodil as a symbol, it has a very powerful message about cancer and about the acceptance, the research and the emotions that it brings out in people. It is a sign and a way of acknowledging that, while cancer exists in our community—while it may take our loved ones from time to time—we are stronger and we will beat it eventually.

On 25 August this year, I will buy some more daffodils. They will be for my dad. Even though it has been nine years since he passed away, I will look at them and I will remember that, even though it was cancer that took his life, it will never take the memories. While the daffodil might be a symbol that means something different to everybody in this place, and indeed everyone across New South Wales, I hope that it actually does mean something to them, because to me it really does. In 2016, after I bought the first bunch and put them in a vase and had them on the dining table, I think it was a way of healing.

The Cancer Council in New South Wales does an amazing job. We know that it supports those who have suffered with cancer and those who, like me, have suffered because of a loss. I think that Daffodil Day is also a way of acknowledging the hard work of the staff and volunteers. And so, while I know there have been some

jokes about this motion tonight and whatnot, I think it is actually really important. Cancer may not have touched everyone yet—and I hope it does not. But I expect that somewhere along the line everyone will know somebody or perhaps may even lose somebody to cancer. In that regard, it is so important that we continue to talk about it and acknowledge it. We must support the research, support those who have lost somebody, support those with cancer and support people and organisations like the Cancer Council for what they do for people in this State and in this country.

The Hon. TARA MORIARTY (21:13): On behalf of the Opposition, and as shadow Minister for Medical Research, I speak in support of the motion. I thank the Hon. Wes Fang for moving the motion and thank him for sharing the story about his dad. I am very sorry for his loss. I thank him for talking about it today, and I will acknowledge the anniversary in a couple of weeks. It is very tough. I thank the Cancer Council for the amazing and important work it does. It is an essential service in our community. Daffodil Day is important for supporting the Cancer Council to provide its services. Supporting people who are suffering from cancer, supporting family members who are trying to get through and supporting people who are suffering is all really important. But, more than that, the money that the Cancer Council raises and contributes to research is, in fact, the most important work that it does.

Medical research is essential for beating cancer over the long term. One in two Australians are diagnosed with cancer. It is either going to directly affect one in two people in our community, or will impact pretty much all of us by being touched by a family member or friend who will be or has been diagnosed or, worse, passed as a result of it. We must do whatever we can do to assist with research, and I call on the Government to do whatever it can to fund more research and to manage cancer out of our lives.

We have done some work over the past couple of decades. In the 1980s, of course, only 49 per cent of people survived a cancer diagnosis. We are now above 69 per cent, and that is terrific. But it is still obviously not good enough, and we need to do whatever we can to get those numbers even higher. I again thank the Cancer Council. It really is an essential service in our community. The staff deserve every bit of support and acknowledgement for the work that they do—particularly, as I said, for the really important money they raise and work they do in research to beat all kinds of cancer.

The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR (Minister for Women, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for Mental Health) (21:15): I thank the Hon. Wes Fang for moving the motion. I know how much he loved his dad and, more than that, I know how proud his dad would be of him here. It is wonderful. I am sure his dad is looking down tonight and is proud. I also thank the Hon. Tara Moriarty for her words. I want to pick up on that. One thing the Cancer Council does well is allocate money to research. That is what is really important. When I think back to over 20 years ago when I started my career, I had an amazing patient called Mrs Jenkins. She lived in Crows Nest. She had been diagnosed with bowel cancer with liver metastases, so we knew that she probably only had a few months to live. She was an amazing woman. She gave me the most beautiful vase, which I still have. I am always terrified that I will break it, because it means so much to me.

I always think, "Wow, if Mrs Jenkins was diagnosed 10 years later, she probably would have gone another 20 years, because we have gotten so good at it." Now we can treat liver secondaries; we can actually resect it. We can do all of these amazing things, and that is solely down to research. That is incredible. Our results in breast cancer are phenomenal. It is brutal treatment. It is really tough with the chemotherapy regime and everything, but the drugs that we are able to give people now, like Tamoxifen, have meant such longevity. I think that is incredible. It is because of research and because everybody gets behind things like Daffodil Day, which raises money for research. That is really important.

Another thing that the Cancer Council does is so important. Since before the days of heaps of technology when we all can read things, it has provided a booklet on every single type of cancer. Whenever you walk into a cancer unit or go to see a community nurse, you can get information that is specific to your cancer and your treatment, whether you have pancreatic cancer or bowel cancer or a sarcoma. The booklet contains all of the life skills that help you at that time in terms of your diet and what is important, and rest versus exercise and all of those things. That is a really practical thing that the Cancer Council does, which this fundraising is used for. I think that is really important to think about.

In closing, I will talk about sarcomas and how osteosarcomas affect people who are very young. There is a wonderful girl called Molly, from Dubbo, who has osteosarcoma. She does so much for fundraising. If anyone can get behind any of the things that she runs in Dubbo, that would be absolutely amazing. Both osteosarcoma and Ewing's sarcoma are areas where we need to do more research. We know what research can do. I encourage all members to get out there and support their local Daffodil Day. I thank the Hon. Wes Fang for moving the motion.

The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL (Minister for Education and Early Learning) (21:18): I make a brief contribution, and thank the Hon. Wes Fang for moving this motion. On 25 August I am sure that all members of this House and, indeed, thousands of people right across the State, will recognise the importance of the Cancer Council by buying daffodils, wearing daffodil badges and making sure that they support an amazing organisation. I also mention the literally thousands of people who volunteer to support the Cancer Council right across the country. It is an important cause, and it is an important reason for people to spend their time to support people who are dealing with cancer. As the Hon. Wes Fang said, we all have people in our lives who have been impacted. It is something that we take very seriously.

A lot of us should pay tribute to the Cancer Council and the work that it has done to make sure that awareness is there in the community. I touch on the very famous "Slip, slop, slap" campaign about having a T-shirt, hat and sunscreen, which was the brainchild of the Cancer Council. I think we all remember that, and I instil it into my kids now. It is what you have to do when you go out, because it is important. It is a very active way that people can prevent skin cancer and melanoma—being aware and making sure to check one's skin.

My medical support in this House, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor, would be well aware of this, but I recently went to the skin doctor to have a check-up. I have a small basal cell carcinoma; it is called a superficial BCC—very common, easily treatable. I go every year and check and, after telling my family about it and just mentioning it, my husband that day went in and got his skin checked. My mum said, "I'm going to go in too." When people know what to do in terms of having the appointments and getting checked, all of that is important in relation to raising awareness. Particularly with skin cancer, the work of the "Slip, slop, slap" campaign is something that we all know and is definitely the brainchild of the Cancer Council. I add my support to the motion and to Daffodil Day. It is a really important thing that we should all get behind. I congratulate and acknowledge the Hon. Wes Fang for bringing such an important motion to the House on private members' day.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH (21:21): I commend the Hon. Wes Fang for bringing the motion to the House. In 2020 it was estimated that there were just under 150,000 new cases of cancer diagnosed and just under 50,000 deaths. Too many of our friends and family and too many of us personally have been affected by cancer or its consequences. Whilst a cancer diagnosis is a profoundly distressing and emotional experience, the Cancer Council's Daffodil Day exists to bring hope to a subject that is all too often accompanied by hopelessness.

Every August thousands of Australians from across the country raise funds for the Daffodil Day Appeal. The life-saving appeal funds cancer research that is focused on one goal—a cancer-free future. Investment in research by organisations like the Cancer Council has helped increase cancer survival rates to 69 per cent today. As the largest non-government funder of cancer research in Australia, the Cancer Council has enabled significant advancements in cancer prevention, screening and treatment. Funds raised on Daffodil Day go toward researching fields such as cervical cancer elimination, immunotherapy and the study of childhood cancers.

The impact of cancer is often more painful than what is initially assumed. It grieves the loving family; it devastates the close friend; it shocks the whole community. One personal experience for me was my grandfather in 2016. He was in his mid-80s when he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. The doctor said to him that there was no point undergoing treatment because for people in their mid-80s, the treatment for such an advanced form of pancreatic cancer is just as harsh as living with the cancer. He decided not to undergo the treatment, and he passed away soon thereafter.

But a more positive story was a friend of mine, Elliott Donnison, who was diagnosed with stage 4 lymphoma in 2015. He was told he had only a 10 per cent chance of living, and he underwent a more experimental treatment and survived. The cancer is in complete remission, and it is because of the important research that is done each and every day that he was given the opportunity to live. He was only in his early 20s, and he probably would have passed away without that research and that advanced medicine. I very much commend the motion and Daffodil Day, and all of the advancements in cancer research that are being made in Australia.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN (21:24): I too speak in support of the motion and thank the honourable member for bringing it forward. I firstly express my gratitude on behalf of The Greens for the work of the Cancer Council. I particularly remember during the regional, rural and remote health services inquiry by Portfolio Committee No. 2 that the Cancer Council told us of its incredible work, particularly in regional New South Wales but all over New South Wales—things such as providing thousands of individual transport journeys and assistance to get to treatment for cancer patients who otherwise could not have afforded to get there.

I will not use my contribution tonight to have a bash at the Government. But it is stark that we have so many organisations and charities like the Cancer Council that exist to fill gaps because there is not the level of support and services that there should be in our public health system to support the number of people who have cancer. Charities will always exist, and that is a good thing. No matter how much investment governments of any

persuasion pour into our health services, charities will always exist to provide care, compassion and additional resources for people in their hour of need.

But some of the work that they do should really fall to government, and the Cancer Council, as I said, really does pick up a lot of that slack. If we had better publicly funded health services, maybe the Cancer Council would not have to raise as much money as it does. I too have lost both parents to cancer, both in regional areas, so cancer has touched me quite significantly. I thank the Cancer Council, and I thank the Hon. Wes Fang for bringing this forward. But I wish we did not have to rely on the Cancer Council so much and that we had a better publicly funded health system.

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Regional Youth, and Minister for Tourism) (21:27): I also contribute to this discussion about Daffodil Day. I acknowledge and thank my friend the Hon. Wes Fang for bringing the motion to the Parliament and for relaying his personal situation and that of so many others, including the previous speaker, Ms Cate Faehrmann. I appreciate that. I too have been touched by cancer, as we all have in this Chamber. It is important to acknowledge this date and to come together as a people and as a Parliament to support life-saving cancer research.

Over the years the Cancer Council has raised millions of dollars through the Daffodil Day Appeal, including \$1.5 million last year, and this year it is incredibly important that Australians continue to support the cause. Every five minutes one Australian is diagnosed with cancer. It is responsible for 18 per cent of the burden of ill health suffered by Australians and 9 per cent of the health system expenditure attributable to specific diseases. But despite those sobering statistics, research by the Cancer Council makes and will continue to make a really significant difference to the lives of Australians.

Despite some of the harrowing stories that we either hear or have experienced personally, cancer survival has improved dramatically. Thirty years ago Australians diagnosed with cancer had a fifty-fifty chance of surviving for at least five years, but today that survival rate has increased to 70 per cent thanks to a better understanding of risk factors, screening programs and the development of more effective treatments. Cancer incidence and mortality rates have also fallen, but it is important to note that these improvements are not evenly spread across the population. Indigenous Australians are 14 per cent more likely to be diagnosed with cancer and 20 per cent less likely to survive than non-Indigenous Australians. Cancer incidence rates are also slightly higher in regional areas. The New South Wales Government is aware of these issues and is working to improve them.

I conclude with an old legend about the daffodil flower. So the story goes, when daffodils are presented to someone as a bunch, they are meant to provide happiness. However, if they are given as a single flower, daffodils bring misfortune. I thank the Hon. Wes Fang for giving us the opportunity to discuss Daffodil Day as a bunch of politicians, because we know that one person alone cannot change the lives of all the people impacted by cancer. We need to get more people talking about this. The more people we can get talking about it, the better.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (21:30): After hearing the contribution of the Hon. Ben Franklin, I am now a little concerned about the solitary daffodil that is in front of us here, but we have many daffodils around the Chamber. I thank the Hon. Wes Fang for moving this motion, and I commend him for the heartfelt story that he shared. It is an important motion to him and many others around the Chamber. As has been discussed, cancer has probably impacted all of us in this Chamber, and we all have a personal story. It is an insidious illness that one in two people will be diagnosed with by the age of 85. When you do the math on that, it would be a small minority who do not have an immediate loved one who has been touched by cancer—that dreaded C word. It is not just the person who is diagnosed with cancer who is impacted but also the family and friends who live through the ups and downs of treatment and stand alongside the person who is diagnosed.

This year Daffodil Day is on Thursday 25 August. It is highly recognisable, with the bright yellow colouring of the Cancer Council, which is a wise branding decision due to the high level of awareness that exists in our community. It is an iconic campaign that is run each year to fundraise for cancer research and raise community awareness about cancer. I beg to differ with Ms Cate Faehrmann's contribution; I believe there is adequate funding across our health system. But it is also good to see private philanthropy and the work of the community coming together to support cancer research. The Parliament knows how sudden a cancer diagnosis can be, especially after the recent news in the other place from the member for Londonderry. I am sure all members in this Chamber will stand with Prue Car during her fight. United together, members of this House extend our best wishes to her for her battle ahead. I am sure that she will be back in the Parliament soon.

The strength of cancer patients across our State who withstand the tremendous shock to their health is truly inspirational. The work of foundations such as the Cancer Council and the McGrath Foundation to support those with a cancer diagnosis is tremendous. Of course, we have our own McGrath Foundation nurse in this House in the Hon. Bronnie Taylor. I encourage all members and the public to make sure they stay up to date with their cancer screenings. They are underutilised and can save lives. Early detection of cancer is crucial and is one of the

most effective ways to catch cancer at an early and more treatable stage. The Government remains committed to addressing the challenges associated with cancer. This year it published the NSW Cancer Plan, which is a clear, achievable vision for how government and non-government organisations and stakeholders can work together to reduce the prevalence of cancer and ensure the best possible compassionate care for all. I commend the motion to the House and thank the Hon. Wes Fang for moving it.

The Hon. PETER POULOS (21:33): I too wholeheartedly support the motion of my colleague the Hon. Wes Fang and thank him for helping raise awareness about Daffodil Day. As has been mentioned, Daffodil Day is on Thursday 25 August. It is an iconic annual campaign run by the Cancer Council that fundraises for cancer research and raises awareness in the community. It gives hope to those affected by all types of cancer. As has been reinforced, one in two people will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85. No doubt, we have all come across tragic circumstances of individuals who have passed away because of this wretched disease. My own awareness was amplified when I first met my wife. It became apparent to me that there are many volunteers every year who dedicate themselves to support the Cancer Council through Daffodil Day and Australia's Biggest Morning Tea. They have been impacted dramatically by their loved ones passing away from cancer.

My wife has always been one of the first within her workplace to volunteer to host fundraising events and has always dedicated herself to assisting on Daffodil Day. It is very raw for her because her father died when he was in his early 40s, leaving behind three young children. She has never forgotten it. To this day, the family has an annual memorial, and we all gather at the cemetery to reflect and honour his memory. That is an example of a fully grown woman with her own children who can never let go of the experience she had as a result of seeing her dad suffer and pass away from cancer. These annual philanthropic events enable individuals across the State and beyond to contribute and raise money to help combat and overcome this disease. I acknowledge their efforts in doing so.

The Hon. WES FANG (21:37): In reply: I thank the members who have made contributions to the debate on this motion. I thank the Hon. Tara Moriarty for her contribution on behalf of the Opposition. I thank my ministerial friends and Nationals colleagues, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor, the Hon. Sarah Mitchell and the Hon. Ben Franklin, who all spoke about their own stories. Each of them had a personal story about how cancer has affected them. I also thank my good friends in the Liberal Party, the Hon. Chris Rath, the Hon. Scott Farlow and the Hon. Peter Poulos, who told their stories as well. It is powerful to know that cancer is something that affects all of us in different ways. There were also stories of positivity. I thank Ms Cate Faehrmann for her support for the motion and for putting on record The Greens' support for the Cancer Council. That is important, so I thank her for doing that.

I am pleased that this motion has come before the House today. It is important that this house of review, which can sometimes be combative and hostile in its nature, also has the opportunity to acknowledge and recognise things that are important in our community. The daffodil is a symbol that means different things to so many different people. I have spoken about how, for many years, I could not buy them. But now it means something different to me. It can also be a sign of hope.

Like the Hon. Scott Farlow, I wish the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the other place all the best in her battle. I hope that Prue Car is doing well in her fight. All members in this House and the other place will stand with her to see her through and welcome her back as soon as she is able. There are also positive stories like that of my good friend and member of the Labor Party in Wagga Wagga, Stephen Cooke. I am sure some members opposite would know Stephen. He has been on every Labor booth that I have ever been on. We have our battles. He is a cancer survivor and somebody who represents what support for the Cancer Council can do. I commend the motion to the House.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Ms Abigail Boyd): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Documents

TABLING OF PAPERS

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE (Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations) (21:40): Earlier this week I gave an undertaking to the House to produce a summary business case for Dungowan Dam. In accordance with that undertaking, I table the following paper:

- (1) A report of the Department of Planning and Environment entitled *Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) - Dungowan Dam Summary Business Case*, dated 28 January 2022.

The document is not produced with an admission that the order for the production of documents under Standing Order 52 is validly brought. It is produced voluntarily by the Government.

EXHIBITED ANIMALS**Production of Documents: Further Order**

The Hon. EMMA HURST (21:41): I seek leave to amend private members' business No. 1914 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice by inserting "Get Wild" before "Amazement Farm" wherever occurring.

Leave granted.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: 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, excluding any documents previously returned under an order of the House, created since 23 June 2021 in the possession, custody or control of the Department of Regional NSW or the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales relating to exhibited animals:

- (a) all licences, permits and approvals issued to Daniel Brighton, Darren Brighton or Jenny Brighton under the Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986 and its accompanying regulations;
- (b) all documents recording any revocation, suspension or other disciplinary action taken by the Department of Primary Industries in respect of any licence, permit or approval issued to Daniel Brighton, Darren Brighton or Jenny Brighton;
- (c) all licences, permits and approvals issued to Get Wild Amazement Farm and Fun Park, Kindifarm, Farm Friends Mobile Petting Zoo or Central Coast Zoo under the Exhibited Animals Protection Act 1986 and its accompanying regulations;
- (d) all documents recording any revocation, suspension or other disciplinary action taken by the Department of Primary Industries in respect of any licence, permit or approval issued to Get Wild Amazement Farm and Fun Park, Kindifarm, Farm Friends Mobile Petting Zoo or Central Coast Zoo;
- (e) all documents recording the results of any audits and inspections of Get Wild Amazement Farm and Fun Park, Kindifarm, Farm Friends Mobile Petting Zoo or Central Coast Zoo by the Department of Primary Industries, including records of any corrective action requests;
- (f) all correspondence between the Department of Primary Industries and Get Wild Amazement Farm and Fun Park, Kindifarm, Farm Friends Mobile Petting Zoo or Central Coast Zoo;
- (g) all internal correspondence prepared by the Department of Primary Industries regarding Get Wild Amazement Farm and Fun Park, Kindifarm, Farm Friends Mobile Petting Zoo or Central Coast Zoo;
- (h) all complaints received by the Department of Primary Industries regarding Get Wild Amazement Farm and Fun Park, Kindifarm, Farm Friends Mobile Petting Zoo or Central Coast Zoo, including all documents recording any action taken by the Department of Primary Industries in response to those complaints;
- (i) all records of any investigations undertaken by the Department of Primary Industries in respect of Get Wild Amazement Farm and Fun Park, Kindifarm, Farm Friends Mobile Petting Zoo or Central Coast Zoo;
- (j) all documents relating to lions being sought or obtained by Daniel Brighton, Darren Brighton, Jenny Brighton, Get Wild Amazement Farm and Fun Park, Kindifarm, Farm Friends Mobile Petting Zoo or Central Coast Zoo; and
- (k) 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, which calls for the production of documents under Standing Order 52, seeks documents relating to a number of petting zoos licensed by the NSW Department of Primary Industries [DPI]: Get Wild Amazement Farm and Fun Park, Kindifarm, Farm Friends Mobile Petting Zoo and Central Coast Zoo. Those facilities all have one person in common—Daniel Brighton. I have spoken about Daniel Brighton many times in this place. This is a man who, while running a petting zoo, stabbed a dog with a pitchfork six times and left her hanging from a tree for several hours before finally bashing her to death with a mallet. He was charged with serious animal cruelty and has been convicted twice, first in 2019 and then again in 2022 after a protracted period of appeals and a rehearing. Daniel Brighton is once again appealing his conviction, and that appeal is ongoing.

I make clear that this call for papers does not seek any documents associated with Mr Brighton's ongoing court proceedings. It seeks documents that have been exchanged between Mr Brighton and the DPI in relation to exhibited animal facilities associated with him and his family, including licences, permits, animal approvals and correspondence, while those court proceedings for serious animal cruelty have been ongoing. In June 2021 this House made a very similar order under Standing Order 52. I am moving this motion following tip-offs from whistleblowers who told me that, despite what was being said publicly, Mr Brighton had continued to be heavily involved in many of the exhibited animal businesses and was continuing to acquire more animals through those businesses. The documents I obtained under the earlier order confirmed exactly that: that Mr Brighton continued to be the primary contact with DPI for many of those exhibited animal facilities and that he continues to be heavily involved.

The documents also confirmed that one of the facilities linked to Daniel Brighton—Central Coast Zoo—was seeking a permit to obtain lions and build a lion enclosure on a "priority" basis. Tragically, it was later

confirmed in the media that those lions had been retired from Stardust Circus after a lifetime of use and abuse in the industry. This motion seeks documents created since the last order for papers, which is a period of just over one year. I do not anticipate that a huge volume of documents will be subject to this order. However, if a huge volume of licences and permits have been issued to Mr Daniel Brighton, his family and associated entities over the past year, while he has been on trial for serious animal cruelty, then that in and of itself is serious cause for concern and investigation, and even greater justification for making the order sought by the motion. I do not think any member or anyone in the community would feel comfortable with someone who is facing such serious charges of animal cruelty being involved with or acquiring more animals. I urge every member to support this motion.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (21:45): Again in the interests of the spirit of kumbaya that is prevailing over this House tonight—

The Hon. Adam Searle: Yay!

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Yay, yay, kumbaya! Again, it is a model of what can happen in this House when members and Ministers engage together to come to a resolution. The Hon. Mick Veitch was discussing that earlier and highlighting it as a good indicator to Ministers and members of how the rules of the House can be upheld and respected in a peaceful and harmonious way to enable members to seek the information they want. As such, the Government will not be opposing the motion.

The Hon. MICK VEITCH (21:46): This is a well-oiled machine. The Opposition is supporting the motion.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Ms Abigail Boyd): Kumbaya all round; that is fabulous. The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Motions

MOUNT CANOBOLAS CONSERVATION

Ms SUE HIGGINSON (21:46): I seek leave to amend private members' business No. 1936 outside the order of precedence for today of which I have given notice by:

- (1) In paragraph 2 (a) omitting "will cause" and inserting instead "may cause".
- (2) In paragraph 2 (d) omitting "have not been adequately consulted or listened to" and inserting instead "must be adequately consulted and listened to".

Leave granted.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Accordingly, I move:

- (1) That this House recognises the cultural heritage and ecological significance of Gaanha-bula/Mount Canobolas to Wiradjuri people and the communities of Orange and the Central West and that Gaanha-bula is a sacred site.
- (2) That this House notes that:
 - (a) this sacred site is presently under threat by plans for a 100-kilometre mountain bike trail network that may cause irreversible destruction and desecration of significant Aboriginal cultural heritage, sacred Aboriginal sites and fragile ecosystems;
 - (b) Gaanha-bula is a State Conservation Area due to the ecological values and cultural significance of the landscape;
 - (c) mountain biking is a high-impact sport that degrades landscape and requires significant clearing of vegetation and earthworks in the preparation and maintenance of the trails; and
 - (d) Wiradjuri Elders and local community groups such as the Canobolas Conservation Alliance must be adequately consulted and listened to in the development of this proposal.
- (3) That this House calls on the Government to:
 - (a) ensure that a broad range of community stakeholders are consulted with and listened to, including Wiradjuri Elders and Canobolas Conservation Alliance, when considering the proposal of a mountain bike trail on Gaanha-bula/Mount Canobolas; and
 - (b) protect the cultural heritage and the ecological values of Gaanha-bula/Mount Canobolas.

Gaanha-bula/Mt Canobolas is a mountain that sits on the border of Cabonne and Orange City Council local government areas. For Wiradjuri people, there is a story of three brothers. The oldest is Gaanha-bula, the middle is Wahluu and the youngest is Galbuman Ngiillinya. Devastating fires in 2018 on Gaanha-bula revealed important cultural heritage. Objects were recovered that provided substantial tangible evidence of the long history of use of the whole of Gaanha-bula by First Nations people. However, the Wiradjuri ties to Gaanha-bula have always been known.

The Wiradjuri story, as told to me by Uncle Neil Ingram, goes like this. Gaanha-bula and his brother Wahluu both fell in love with a beautiful young woman. But because she showed more interest in Wahluu, Gaanha-bula became jealous and challenged him to a spear-throwing competition. Wahluu won by a narrow margin. But before he could do anything Gaanha-bula hit him on the back of the head with a bundi and killed him. The spirit ancestors grew angry, so they made the ground erupt and lava spilled out over Wahluu's body where he lay. Gaanha-bula fled, but the spirit ancestors were still angry. They struck him down and again erupted the ground, and lava flowed over his body too. The youngest brother, full of grief and fear, fled too. These three brothers now make up what we know often as Mount Canobolas, Mount Panorama and Mount Macquarie.

Gaanha-bula is a traditional men's initiation site and a place used for burning—initiation and ceremony. Wiradjuri people occupied this land and camped on the mountain during these major ceremonies. The objects recovered in 2018 include scatters of stone tools and engravings, and the exposed soil revealed stones that did not occur there naturally, like rose quartz. It was then confirmed by Aboriginal Elders and two archaeologists, who subsequently visited the site, that these were indeed Aboriginal objects. Orange City Council has plans to build an intensive 100-kilometre mountain bike track network on this site. Mountain biking is a high-impact sport that erodes landscape and requires significant clearing and excavating to prepare the trails. The proposal also includes allowing commercial events to be held on the mountain to offset the costs of managing the bike network. Such events would mean high numbers of mountain bike riders on the mountain, which would exacerbate the damage and desecration of these sites.

Gaanha-bula is also an enclave of unique, rare and endangered ecology. There are at least 10 species of plants and animals there that are found nowhere else on the planet. Of those, two are listed as threatened and four types of lichen are part of an endangered lichen community. A nomination for this area to be recognised as an Area of Outstanding Biodiversity Value under the Biodiversity and Conservation Act 2016 has been made. Four years on from that nomination being submitted, it still sits with the department, awaiting a response. I acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of Orange City Council to grow tourism in the region and to work cooperatively with other councils across the Central West to visitors to enjoy what our beautiful Central West has to offer. Tourism Australia lists First Nations tourism as one of Australia's key tourism interests and trends. However, authentic experience is the key to this finding, not built environments at the expense of sacred Aboriginal sites. It is in fact the sacred site of Gaanha-bula that makes the region unique, and it needs to be protected. The site is too precious to destroy, and I urge the House to support this motion.

The Hon. ROBERT BORSACK (21:52): The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party does not support The Greens motion on saving Mount Canobolas. My colleague in the other place, the member for Orange, Phil Donato, has actively supported the Mount Canobolas bike trail project from its inception. Uniquely backed by Orange City Council and Cabonne Council, the joint support for the project stems from the future economic and social benefits the trail will offer those areas. Both local government areas have suffered traumatically in recent years. The economic impact of drought and bushfire smoke that tainted fruit and vineyard harvests, coupled with COVID-19, has been substantial. The areas need to start recovering, and the economic assessments prove that the bike trail project stacks up, with a cost-benefit ratio of 2.226.

Although not everyone may agree with this project, they may change their minds when made aware of the substantial benefits it will bring to the community. The project will facilitate opportunities for Indigenous-specific cultural tourism, with education on Wiradjuri history and culture, both on the mountain and throughout the broader district. The construction and development stages of the project will stimulate the local building and construction sector. The related spending will boost the local economy, not just in Orange and Cabonne but in the broader regions.

The revenue generated through tourism and patronage will be directed straight back into managing flora and fauna on Mount Canobolas. To date, the stewardship and management of the mountain has left it overrun with invasive weeds like blackberries and has allowed pest animals to proliferate. Weeds will need to be removed to establish the trails, which means continuous maintenance. The National Parks and Wildlife Service will be provided with the personnel to manage the noxious weed and pest control that is required. The project will attract investment, diversify the local economy and create jobs. It will grow the visitor economy by offering a world-class mountain bike track with the potential to attract high-level international events. The Mount Canobolas project will only bring benefits to this region. It must go ahead.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE (21:54): I listened carefully to the Hon. Robert Borsak's contribution to this debate, and I agree with a lot of what he said. The Opposition, however, has a different view on the motion. I indicate that I am seeking to move an amendment, so I will speak to the amendment upfront. I move:

That the motion be amended as follows:

- (1) Omit paragraph (2) (c) and insert instead:

(2) (c) mountain biking is a sport that may degrade landscapes, and

To explain this, I think Ms Sue Higginson has done the right thing in that she wanted to bring to the attention of the House the significant Aboriginal and cultural heritage that is contained within the Mount Canobolas area, and she wants to ensure that there is appropriate and ongoing consultation with First Nations people in relation to those sites. That is a good thing. Labor particularly thinks that is something that must happen. However, Labor is supportive of the work that has been done on the mountain bike project. With these amendments, which we have agreed to, we are able to do everything that we want to do with this motion. One thing is to basically recognise that Mount Canobolas is an important Aboriginal site that must be dealt with extremely carefully. Similarly, it is a State conservation area and there is the need for the biodiversity to be protected. But there is also the ability to work through the issues associated with the mountain bike project. I think they are worth doing and if we are going to do them, we should do them very carefully.

The action point in relation to this motion is that it calls on better community stakeholder consultation to ensure that the Wiradjuri Elders, particularly, are listened to—that is extremely important—and also to protect the cultural heritage and ecological values of Mount Canobolas Gaanha-bula. I do not think anyone in this place would disagree with that; it is a perfectly reasonable thing for us to ask for. We are asking for a level of care to occur, and we recognise the work that has gone into what is happening with mountain biking. On this side of the House, we are supportive of mountain biking. We think it is an extremely important tourism opportunity and we would like to be able to say that when these things are being put in place, they are the best they can be, the most sensitive they can be and the most exciting they can be. We should aspire to do all of those things. It is not an either/or situation, which is why Labor is very happy to support the motion if amended.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Ms Abigail Boyd): Ms Sharpe, can I clarify that you are omitting paragraph (2) (c) and replacing it, but not the first bit?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes, sorry. I had part one on the printout, but I am not moving that. I withdraw that.

The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN (Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Regional Youth, and Minister for Tourism) (21:57): I start by paying my respects to the Wiradjuri people of central New South Wales and acknowledging their ongoing connection to Gaanha-bula, also known as Mount Canobolas, which continues to hold significant spiritual importance for the Wiradjuri people and surrounding Aboriginal people and nations. The importance of protection, management and preservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage cannot be understated. Cultural heritage holds deep significance for Aboriginal people in the entire State of New South Wales. It is inextricably linked to our history, country, identity and practice of culture. We must be proud that we are home to the oldest surviving culture in the world—an unbroken connection of 65,000-plus years for Aboriginal cultural songlines, stories and ceremony.

Gaanha-bula has a strong cultural and spiritual connection to the Wiradjuri people and the wider Aboriginal community. It was used for sacred men and women's sites, initiation sites for men and birthing places for women and continues to contain artefacts, traditional bush medicine and bush tucker, also known as flora and fauna. But I understand that there are concerns raised by the Aboriginal community members of central western New South Wales relating to the ecology of Gaanha-bula as well as Aboriginal cultural heritage of this location. I can assure them that this Government has been in contact with the local council to stress the importance of ongoing consultation with key Aboriginal stakeholder groups and with the Aboriginal community to ensure the Aboriginal cultural heritage values of Gaanha-bula are protected.

That being said, the Hon. Robert Borsak, my friend, is right too. This is an excellent project, and the Government supports the development of recreational opportunities, particularly for young people in regional New South Wales, and promoting tourism, my new portfolio. But this must be balanced with the protection and preservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage, which includes our culturally significant sites and, most importantly, country. I appreciate the concerns raised and I understand that the proposed development is being designed to leave wide buffers around areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage and known sensitive ecological areas.

The importance of working closely and genuinely consulting with Aboriginal communities is a central consideration in the reform process in New South Wales. I believe that the amendments moved firstly by Ms Sue Higginson and then by the Hon. Penny Sharpe now achieve that. We can have our cake and eat it too. As the area is an important Wiradjuri place, Wiradjuri Elders are integral to the consultation and planning process to ensure that irreplaceable Aboriginal cultural heritage is protected and continues to be celebrated. The ongoing engagement of Wiradjuri Elders and the Aboriginal people of Orange will assist in facilitating the management of future plans without destroying cultural heritage. We are committed to providing improved protection for Aboriginal cultural heritage but we are also committed to providing these sorts of excellent and important resources for regional young people.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Ms Abigail Boyd): According to sessional order, it being 10.00 p.m. proceedings are interrupted.

Adjournment Debate

ADJOURNMENT

According to standing order, members made the following statements.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK (22:01): The "Put local back into council" protest of the Demerge NSW Alliance and Residents for Deamalgamation occurred on Macquarie Street this week. Community members from Cootamundra-Gundagai, Inner West, Guyra, Hilltops, Pittwater, Bombala, Tumbarumba, Canterbury Bankstown and the Central Coast councils were in attendance. The timing is deliberate as the Cootamundra-Gundagai Local Government Boundaries Commission report is now before the Minister for Local Government. The report recommended a demerge and the Minister has 28 days to respond. The Boundaries Commission previously recommended a demerge for Tumbarumba, but the Minister overturned that recommendation. Tumbarumba is still fighting, and I plan on helping them and all the other communities fight for their local government areas.

I live in the inner west of Sydney. A poll conducted in December last year found that 62.5 per cent of the community wanted the Inner West Council to revert to its three original constituent parts. A draft business case has suggested it stay merged, which has enraged locals, who care very little about the cost of a demerge but instead about the benefits that local representation will bring back to their community. In the draft business case conducted by Morrison Low, the community believed that the key benefits of a demerge included significantly improved local representation, a right to self-determination, the removal of unpopular forced amalgamations, perceived service level improvements and better alignment of the community's interest. It tells us that communities value their councils and that local representation is more important to them than the costs of a demerge.

The Canterbury Bankstown council has resolved that it too will prepare a business case for de-amalgamation. It has been six years since the forced council mergers and many communities have waged fierce battles since those announcements. It is time local government was listened to. The Cootamundra-Gundagai report highlighted emerging mental health issues due to the loss of identity and the council's lack of responsiveness to residents. The Government should take notice of the consequences of these mergers on communities, particularly in the bush. The New South Wales Government should look to Queensland, which in 2014 allowed councils to de-amalgamate simply because it was what residents wanted.

The Morrison Low draft on the Inner West Council found that in the Queensland cases the total amount of the demergers was borne entirely by the de-amalgamated councils. Those councils were able to determine revenues, services and service levels for their communities that brought them back to a financially sustainable operating position. That is a good result and should influence the New South Wales Government's decision to listen to the communities of amalgamated councils that wish to demerge. It is not in this Government's or any future government's interest to have pockets of angry citizens planning protests because they feel ignored. Ratepayers' associations are now forming in the Federation and Snowy Monaro councils in a bid to stem massive rate increases in the areas. It is suspected that calls for demergers will be next. Those communities should rest assured; the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers will back any of their calls wanting their councils demerged.

ICE USE IN NEW SOUTH WALES

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON (22:04): On 12 November 2018, flanked by the Minister for Health and the Commissioner of Police, the then Premier, Gladys Berejiklian, said this in relation to the impact of ice addiction on our communities:

It is a huge issue and growing concern in our regions, in particular ...

Minister Hazzard added this:

The NSW government is determined to lead Australia by getting the best health and justice minds to come together, draw on information available ... and then map out a forward strategy

They were announcing the launch of the Special Commission of Inquiry into the Drug 'Ice' headed by the eminent Dr Dan Howard. Dr Howard conducted an incredibly rigorous and thorough process, hearing from experts, users, families and young people. He conducted hearings across regional New South Wales. People told their stories, pleading for the Government to do more to fix our broken and harmful drug laws. The final report contained heartbreaking testimonies and over 100 recommendations. It has been 925 days since the release of the Special Commission of Inquiry into the Drug 'Ice' report. It has been almost four years since the Government first called out this issue and said that New South Wales was determined to lead.

The New South Wales Government is so lacking in urgency on this issue it took 855 days to respond at all and, when it did, it was an interim response that only addressed one of the recommendations. I remind the House that there were 109 recommendations. The Government's response so far is a measly 2½ pages after almost four years. That amounts to nothing more than a glorified press release. It has not been through Cabinet. There is no legislation. With only a few sitting weeks left of Parliament, I think it is fair to assume that there will not be any. This is completely unacceptable. Over the past few years, we have faced health crises head on. During COVID we listened to the health advice of public health officials and experts. These same health experts have something to tell us about our drug policies as well. What are they telling us about the ice and drug epidemic and drug-related deaths? It is that our drug laws are fundamentally broken and that we need change

People's lives are on the line. Ignoring this issue does not make drugs or drug-taking go away. In fact, it makes it much more dangerous and lines the pockets of old mate drug dealer down the road. Again, only organised crime and drug dealers are benefiting from the Government's inaction. The Government's response does nothing to address serious issues of ice in regional communities and the tragic deaths at music festivals or make our communities safer. All it does is prop up organised crime gangs in New South Wales that rely on the illicit drug trade and leave addicted people who could get better if we gave them support without that support. They are not getting better. They are sick, criminalised and marginalised. Yes, our drug laws are broken but that does not mean that they cannot be fixed. We need to start treating addiction and drug use as a health issue, not a criminal one. We need to treat people with dignity and respect. That means doing the things that we know are going to be effective

We must urgently begin a trial of pill testing at music festivals. We must look at options to expand supervised medical injecting centres and drug courts and, critically, implement diversionary programs. We need to review the use of strip searches, drug decriminalisation and legalisation. These are not radical ideas. They are the direct recommendations from the report commissioned by the Government and led by an eminent health expert based on evidence from across the globe and in our communities in New South Wales. Labor has proposed a comprehensive drug summit to do all these things. The New South Wales Government has had years and has done nothing. I will not let the stories of the ice inquiry be forgotten. I will not let its recommendations be forgotten. Politics moves fast. We lurch from one scandal to another under this Government, but I will not let the issue of people who are the casualties of our failed war on drugs be forgotten by this Parliament.

KOREAN WAR

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW (22:09): On Wednesday 27 July 2022, the Guardians of the NSW Korean War Memorial held the sixty-ninth commemoration of the Korean War Armistice at the Korean War Memorial in Moore Park, Sydney. It was an honour to attend on behalf of the Minister for Veterans, the Hon. David Elliott, and the people of New South Wales to pay respect to the sacrifices made in the fight to protect South Korea during the Korean War. As noted in my motion on the same topic, which I put on the record this week, the response by Australia was part of an effort by 21 nations in the aid of South Korea, with Australian servicemen in the conflict deployed to a country they did not know and had barely heard of. Boys, at the incredibly young age of 18, were sent to fight in a battle that can bond us all—a fight for freedom. I must say, from my visit to Kapyong many years ago, it was a stark contrast seeing the dedication in the Australian War Memorial to "Fighting for freedom" compared to that of our New Zealand brethren which was listed as "Fighting as part of the United Nations operation."

Eighteen thousand Australians served in the Korean War. This Parliament honours the service of our military personnel, the sacrifices of the 339 Australians who lost their lives and the 1,216 Australians who were wounded in the war. National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, which marks the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement in 1953, is held on 27 July annually and is also known as Korean Veterans Day. The Korean people are truly grateful for our service, and it is service that we must strive to recognise. Every year, the Korean Government is very keen to ensure that it conveys thanks to all who served in the Korean War, particularly the Australian service personnel and, of course, the Korean expats as well. This year's event was particularly special, with it being the first time in two years it could be held and that the Australian and Korean communities could come together to honour the sacrifices of both Australian and Korean soldiers during the war. It was a particularly poignant scene on a glorious Sydney day to see both the Australian and South Korean flags flying side by side together after a two-year absence.

The Korean War Memorial in Moore Park is an impressive space and a recognition of the bond between our two nations. To my mind, it is one of the most significant war memorials in New South Wales and, sadly, is one of the least recognised and rarely visited. The Korean War Memorial is based on four key pillars. On the outside of the memorial is a circular stone wall around the site, which is symbolic of the "strength" of both South Korea and Australia. The memorial is shaped in a circle, with the path through the centre comprising the shape of the Taegeuk—the symbol at the centre of the flag of South Korea. This represents the "commemoration" of the

casualties of the war and honours their service. There is a field of metal sculptures in the centre of the memorial which are based on South Korea's national flower, the Rose of Sharon, which represents "regeneration". Symbolising "remembrance" are polished concrete blades, representing the mountains throughout Korea—mountains which, sadly, would have been the last sight seen by many of our service personnel.

The memorial has been a fitting representation of cooperation, since its establishment in 2009, between the New South Wales Government and the Korean Government, who jointly funded the construction along with veterans' groups and the Korean community in Sydney. I thank the Korean Consulate and particularly the Consulate-General of the Republic of Korea, my friend, Mr Sangwoo Hong, for their dedication to the Australia-Korea relationship and to deepening the ties that exist between our two nations—as was marked recently by the Premier's visit to South Korea. The Korean Consulate marks our veterans' sacrifice at every event and hosts many functions each year to thank our servicemen. The Korean Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs has supported the grandchildren of veterans through scholarships to return to the land their grandparents fought for before the Miracle on the Han River—and what a different land it is today.

The sacrifice of our forebears has forged our relationship of today. Within the Korean community in both Australia and, of course, in Korea there is significant thanks and gratitude that their land of opportunity could be forged out of the sacrifice of our personnel. The Korean War Memorial at Moore Park is a representation of a friendship established through shared values in defence of freedom—sadly, through war—and the bright future our cultures and communities share. This memorial and important event will bring the Korean and Australian communities together for many years to come to honour the service and memories of our brave servicemen who stood up for freedom. I look forward to joining them again next year for the seventieth commemoration service.

AVIATION INDUSTRY

The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG (22:14): Our aviation industry is in chaos. Our State's residents and workers have been paying the price for the actions of Qantas management and other air services companies. There has been a race to the bottom in the airline industry, led by Qantas management, where working conditions are becoming increasingly worse, which is also impacting our residents who cannot access reliable services. The decision of Qantas management to illegally outsource jobs during the middle of the pandemic has resulted in poorer working conditions across the industry. After Qantas illegally terminated its loyal workers, Dnata obtained low-cost contracts for certain ground work. Dnata ground crew, who are within the supply chain of Qantas, are being chronically overworked and rosters are acutely understaffed. Dnata has been attempting to cut the pay of experienced workers, which would drive them to below legal award conditions. Dnata has failed to invest in full-time permanent jobs, refused to lift standards, and has also rejected the efforts by workers to increase part-time hours, which only places further pressure on the understaffed workforce.

Disgracefully, Dnata unsuccessfully sought to fill rosters by attempting to bring in overseas workers from Manila. I support the Transport Workers Union [TWU] in calling out the disgraceful actions of Dnata and Qantas. The wages and conditions of aviation workers should not be going backwards. Dnata workers did not receive JobKeeper and acted extremely reasonably in deferring bargaining during the pandemic. Dnata workers are now being forced to consider industrial action as a last resort, as they are wanting fair pay and job security. An application by the TWU to the Fair Work Commission was approved last week to hold a protected action ballot. The chaos that so many of our residents have experienced—the cancellations, the lost luggage and the safety incidents at airports—is only going to worsen with the recent actions of Dnata and Qantas. It is absolutely disgraceful that Dnata issued a recent staff memo that informed workers not to use the term "under the pump" when things go wrong. The memo was in regard to safety issues with aircraft and equipment damage.

Qantas bares a great deal of responsibility for Dnata's cost-cutting measures and contracting pressures as it exerts financial control over the third-party labour hire companies who are trying to keep Qantas contracts. Qantas management is actively driving down standards, wages and conditions in the industry. Since Qantas outsourced its ground work, there has been an increase in safety incidents such as locking pins left in landing gear, belt loaders crashing into planes and incorrect weight information being provided to pilots prior to take-off. Just this week, Qantas management has made even more outrageous decisions. Management sent out a request to head office staff asking for managers and executives to undertake a short-term arrangement where they would swap their typical office work for baggage handling and customer service work.

Working on very busy tarmacs and undertaking baggage handling duties requires a high level of skill. We know that serious safety incidents and injuries can occur when inexperienced individuals without the right training undertake this type of work. It is extremely concerning for safety, and we know that having inexperienced workers will only worsen the airport chaos. Dropping executives into these jobs once again demonstrates that Alan Joyce should not be managing Qantas. The decision-making at Qantas is absolutely appalling. Qantas is now reported to be Australia's worst-performing airline. New South Wales residents and workers should not have to endure the

chaos that has been caused by the actions of Qantas management. The corporate greed needs to come to an end in the aviation industry; workers deserve good conditions and secure jobs.

LIBERAL PARTY LEADERSHIP

The Hon. CHRIS RATH (22:19): John Howard would often claim that the Liberal Party is a broad church, comprising both classical liberals and conservatives. Yesterday our party room's decision to elect my good friend Matt Kean as Deputy Leader of the New South Wales Liberal Party is a testament to John Howard's claim. Matt Kean is a quintessential classical liberal, or moderate, and Premier Dominic Perrottet is very much the archetypal conservative. They respect each other, and the party and the people of New South Wales benefit from this fusion of philosophies, as classical liberal policies are tempered by the sceptical restraining influence of conservatism and, in turn, conservative policies are moderated by the classical liberal principles of freedom, the individual and the market.

Premier Dominic Perrottet and Treasurer Matt Kean are like yin and yang, not because their political views are polar opposites but because they prove, unlike the Federal Liberal Party, that such a fusion can lead to harmonious, complementary coexistence. They are so different, but it works. Just as a shadow cannot exist without light, so too Perrottet conservatism cannot exist without Kean liberalism. Since the fall of Howard in 2007, the Federal Liberal Party has agonised over whether it should be a conservative party or a moderate party. The climate wars and the Abbott-Turnbull animosity in part created this identity crisis.

At a State level, however, we have not been plagued by the same issues. We understand that the party is not only a broad church but more of bird that can fly only with two wings: a conservative wing in the tradition of Edmund Burke and a classical liberal wing in the tradition of John Stuart Mill. At the Federal election just over two months ago, we jettisoned this happy coexistence. We became a big government, reactionary, populist party, and the results spoke for themselves. There were three core demographics that turned on us. Firstly, the closer you lived to the city or the CBD or the GPO, the more likely you were to swing against the Liberal Party.

Secondly, the higher your level of education, having postgraduate and undergraduate levels of education, the more likely you were to swing against the Liberal Party. Thirdly, those people from more culturally diverse backgrounds, in particular the Chinese community, were more likely to swing against us at the last election. The first two—education and proximity to the CBD—no doubt explain the loss of Wentworth, North Sydney and Mackellar, as well as going even further behind in Warringah. The third demographic—the culturally diverse communities—no doubt explains, in part, the awful losses of Reid and Bennelong.

In seats like Wentworth, North Sydney, Mackellar and Warringah, the single biggest issue that caused the loss of so many of our once safe seats was climate change. But at a State level we have largely mitigated this problem. In Wentworth, where I live, Allegra Spender brought to the election a policy of not only net zero by 2050 but also 50 per cent reductions by 2030. To be more precise, she brought our policy to the election, because they are the targets we committed to long before she committed to those targets. Matt Kean has unfairly copped a lot of flak in pursuing action on climate change. But, unlike our Federal counterparts, he has managed to turn what was once a weakness for the Liberal Party into a core strength.

Nobody even knows or cares what NSW Labor's climate plan is; all they know is that ours is better. There certainly will not be a teal wave at the next State election, because we have Matt Kean and he is the antidote. My plea to conservatives in the Liberal Party is that you may not love Matt Kean but, without his good work, we are all going to hate the Opposition and the teals a heck of a lot more. We are stuck with each other. So let's win the next election by continuing with the killer combination we have already proven to work: a fusion of Kean classical liberalism and Perrottet conservatism.

OUTBACK XPLOERER TRAIN ROUTE

The Hon. SCOTT BARRETT (22:24): Just last week I ventured out to Broken Hill and Menindee. This in itself is not that big a deal. I am often out in western New South Wales. It is a wonderful part of the State and more people should visit. I am here to recommend a way to do it: on the XPT Outback Xplorer. For those unfamiliar with the Xplorer, it is a weekly passenger train service between Broken Hill and Sydney, with many wonderful stops in between. I jumped on at Orange and headed for Menindee. No sooner had I sat down with some lovely scones from the buffet cart, the incredible show began as the New South Wales countryside began sweeping past.

The rolling hills of the Central Tablelands opened up to the flat cropping country through the Lachlan valley. The country got sparser the further west we went, but wet areas, in some parts totally under water, were clear signs of recent heavy rains—a stark difference to my visits there three or four years ago. Crops gave way to cattle, then to sheep. Then the horn on the train got quite busy as it warned small mobs of goats of our approach

before they scattered into the scrub. Kangaroos and emus looked on with cautious interest as waterbirds scarcely deviated from their task, stalking around the edges of temporary bodies of water.

Bright colours caught the eye—the green grasslands in close, the golden canola crops, the blue sky and the sun glare on the tinted windows—the canvas of the countryside offering the red of the sand hills, dark clay pans, countless shades of green, the blue bush and the purple wildflowers, all closed out with a climax of colours—pink, orange, red, yellow, purple—as the sun set over the Far West just as we pulled into Menindee. I only joined this trip from Orange, so if members think that it could not sound any better, imagine watching the early morning light expose the magnificent Blue Mountains as you snaked your way through the blue-gum forests and majestic cliffs, leaving Sydney far behind you. This is a trip I would recommend to everyone. Do yourself a favour and jump on the XPT Xplorer.

All along the journey from Sydney to Broken Hill there are remarkable places to stop and wonderful things to see, places and things you cannot help falling in love with, like the Elvis Festival at Parkes. Jumpsuit up and head out there in January next year to see this world-famous event, supported to the tune of about \$150,000 by the NSW Nationals in government. In Condobolin there are the utes in the paddock—20-odd utes mounted along the side of the road, all given life by various artists and turned into everything from bird-drawn carriages to outback dunnies and rusty celebrations of our beloved Holden. These will soon be even more accessible thanks to support from the State Government, with the building of a new tourist information centre on the site. I was out there recently to announce money to connect these sites with the town of Condobolin with a river walkway along the mighty Lachlan River.

The Darling provides a drawcard out at Menindee, just a little further down the line. For me it has been far too long since I have caught a decent cod, but there are opportunities aplenty out this way. And those opportunities are growing, literally, one million of them. Well, more than that, in fact: Some 1.27 million Murray cod fingerlings have been released into New South Wales rivers like the Darling this year, as part of the New South Wales Government's \$10 million native fish drought response—a wonderful opportunity out there at Menindee to bag the big one. Then there is the end of the line, Broken Hill, where we have just committed \$110,000 for the Broken Heel Festival, on next month. And of course there is the Mundi Mundi Bash next weekend, headlined by a few you might have heard of: Daryl Braithwaite, Kasey Chambers, Missy Higgins, a young bloke called Jimmy Barnes and, thanks to support from the New South Wales Government, Midnight Oil.

Regional New South Wales is packed full of things to see and do. The Outback Xplorer is one of these things on its own. The places to visit and things to see along the way make up the fabric that sees regional New South Wales as the best place to live, work and raise a family. But if you are not lucky enough to do that, as I know many in this place are not, get out there and visit, and do so on the XPT Xplorer. I am proud to be a child of regional New South Wales, and I am proud to be a part of a Nationals team who, in government, is continuing to deliver for our regions so that our regions continue to deliver for New South Wales.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (The Hon. Wes Fang): The House now stands adjourned.

The House adjourned at 22:29 until Thursday 11 August 2022 at 10:00.