



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Council**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Eighth Parliament  
First Session**

**Tuesday 9 May 2023**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



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# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

**Tuesday 9 May 2023**

The House met at 10:00 pursuant to the proclamation of Her Excellency the Governor.

**The Clerk of the Parliaments** read the proclamation.

*Opening of Session*

## OPENING OF SESSION BY COMMISSIONERS

**The CLERK:** I announce that Her Excellency the Governor had been pleased to cause a Commission to be issued under the Public Seal of the State appointing the Hon. Penelope Gail Sharpe, MLC, Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage; the Hon. John Graham, MLC, Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism; and the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, MLC, Treasurer, as Commissioners for the opening and holding of this session of Parliament.

*The Commissioners took their places on the dais.*

The Usher of the Black Rod was directed to request the attendance of the members of the Legislative Assembly to hear the Commission for the opening of Parliament read.

*The members of the Legislative Assembly attended.*

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** Honourable members of the Legislative Council and members of the Legislative Assembly, Her Excellency the Governor has been pleased to cause a Commission to be issued under the Public Seal of the State constituting us Commissioners with full power, in the name of Her Excellency, to open this session of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly and to deliver messages to the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, and to do all such things as may be necessary to enable Parliament or the Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly to proceed to dispatch of business. The Clerk will now read the Commission.

**The Clerk of the Parliaments** read the Commission.

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** Honourable members of the Legislative Council and members of the Legislative Assembly, we have it in command from the Governor to acquaint you that the Governor desires that you take into your earnest consideration such matters as may be submitted to you.

Members of the Legislative Council, it being necessary that a President of the Legislative Council be first chosen, it is the Governor's pleasure that once members of the Legislative Assembly have returned to their Chamber, that you, members of the Legislative Council, after members have taken the pledge of loyalty or oath of allegiance, proceed to the election of one of your number to be your President.

Members of the Legislative Assembly, it being necessary that a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly be first chosen, it is the Governor's pleasure that you, members of the Legislative Assembly, return to your Chamber, and there, after members have taken the pledge of loyalty or oath of allegiance, proceed to the election of one of your number to be your Speaker.

We are further commanded to acquaint you that the Governor desires that measures be taken by you, as may be deemed expedient, to provide for the peace, welfare and good government of the State.

*The members of the Legislative Assembly withdrew.*

*Members*

## PERIODIC LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ELECTION

### Return of Writ

**The CLERK:** I announce that I have received the writ for the periodic Legislative Council election held on 25 March 2023, which was returned to Her Excellency the Governor, endorsed with the names of the following members who were elected at that election:

The Hon. Courtney Houssos

The Hon. Natasha Marianne Maclaren-Jones

Ms Catriona Mary Faehrmann  
The Hon. Mark William Latham  
The Hon. Rose Butler Jackson  
The Hon. Bronwyn Taylor  
The Hon. Cameron Lionel Murphy  
The Hon. Christopher Dennis Rath  
The Hon. Emily Jane Suvaal  
The Hon. Susan Mary Carter  
The Hon. John Edward Graham  
The Hon. Benjamin Cameron Franklin  
The Hon. Bob Nanva  
The Hon. Jacqueline Amy Munro  
The Hon. Stephen Gingell Lawrence  
The Hon. Dr Sarah Jane Kaine  
Dr Amanda Cohn  
The Hon. Jeremy Nova Buckingham  
The Hon. John Raymond Nettleton Ruddick  
The Hon. Robert Borsak  
The Hon. Rachel Victoria Merton

#### **COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER PLEDGE OF LOYALTY OR OATH OF ALLEGIANCE**

**The Clerk of the Parliaments** announced that Her Excellency the Governor had issued a Commission under the Public Seal of the State authorising the Hon. Penelope Gail Sharpe, MLC, the Hon. John Edward Graham, MLC, and the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, MLC, to administer to all or any members of the Legislative Council the pledge of loyalty or oath of allegiance.

**The Clerk of the Parliaments** read the Commission.

#### **PLEDGE OF LOYALTY OR OATH OF ALLEGIANCE**

The following members took the pledge of loyalty or oath of allegiance and signed the Roll of the House:

The Hon. Courtney Houssos  
The Hon. Natasha Marianne Maclaren-Jones  
Ms Catriona Mary Faehrmann  
The Hon. Mark William Latham  
The Hon. Rose Butler Jackson  
The Hon. Bronwyn Taylor  
The Hon. Cameron Lionel Murphy  
The Hon. Christopher Dennis Rath  
The Hon. Emily Jane Suvaal  
The Hon. Susan Mary Carter  
The Hon. John Edward Graham  
The Hon. Benjamin Cameron Franklin  
The Hon. Bob Nanva  
The Hon. Jacqueline Amy Munro  
The Hon. Stephen Gingell Lawrence  
The Hon. Dr Sarah Jane Kaine  
Dr Amanda Cohn  
The Hon. Jeremy Nova Buckingham  
The Hon. John Raymond Nettleton Ruddick

The Hon. Robert Borsak

The Hon. Rachel Victoria Merton

*The Commissioners left the dais.*

### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL VACANCY

**The CLERK:** I report receipt of communication from Her Excellency the Governor following the resignation of the Hon. Mark Latham. I have acknowledged Her Excellency's communication and the resignation of the Hon. Mark Latham has been entered in the Register of Members of the Legislative Council.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL VACANCY

**The CLERK:** I report receipt of communication from Her Excellency the Governor following the resignation of the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones. I have acknowledged Her Excellency's communication and the resignation of the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones has been entered in the Register of Members of the Legislative Council.

### *Presiding Officers*

### PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

#### Election

**The CLERK:** I announce that as this is the first sitting of the House following the periodic Council elections held on 25 March 2023 under section 22G of the Constitution Act 1902 the office of President of the Legislative Council is now vacant and it is necessary to choose a member to be President before the House proceeds to the dispatch of business. I now call for nominations for the office of President.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Ben Franklin do take the chair of this House as President.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Peter Primrose do take the chair of this House as President.

The Hon. Peter Primrose is a long-serving, experienced member of this House and is well qualified to serve once more as its President. He was first elected to this House over 27 years ago on 17 April 1996 to fill the casual vacancy caused by the resignation of the late Paul O'Grady. Prior to that he served in the other place as the member for Camden from 1988 to 1991, so he would bring 30 years of parliamentary experience to the important role of President. The Hon. Peter Primrose has already served the House in that capacity for two years, six months and 10 days from 8 May 2007 to 17 November 2009. His learned rulings as President are referenced 58 times in the fascinating publication *A concise guide to Rulings of the President and the Chair of Committees*.

In addition to his presidential office, the Hon. Peter Primrose served as a Government Whip for eight years, as a Minister of the Crown and shadow Minister in several portfolios, and as a member and chair of various committees. Notably, he served on the Privileges Committee as deputy chair from 2015 to 2019 and as chair from 2019 to 2023. As the Hon. Adam Searle said when nominating the Hon. Peter Primrose as the Labor Party's candidate for President in March 2021, he has the temperament, technical expertise, experience and, more importantly, the integrity and standing to occupy the highest elected office in this place as President. He also has unparalleled knowledge of the traditions and the experience of this place. I anticipate that he will enjoy bipartisan support and, therefore, present the Hon. Peter Primrose to be President.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Greg Donnelly do take the chair of this House as President.

The Hon. Greg Donnelly was first elected to this House on 23 February 2005 to fill the casual vacancy occasioned by the resignation of the Hon. Michael Egan. For 18 years he has served in this House as a dedicated representative of the people of New South Wales, earnestly pursuing the common good and the public welfare of the whole community. He has held office as Government Whip, Opposition Whip and Deputy Opposition Whip. He has also served as the Temporary Chair of Committees and as a member, deputy chair and chair of numerous committees. The Hon. Greg Donnelly has the integrity and the sense of fairness necessary for the important role of President of this House. I have no hesitation in presenting him to the House as President.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Mark Buttigieg do take the chair of this House as President.

The Hon. Mark Buttigieg was elected to this House by the people of New South Wales on 23 March 2019. He served ably as Opposition Whip in the last Parliament. He has also served as a member and as deputy chair of various committees and has previous experience as a local government councillor. The Hon. Mark Buttigieg has a decisive personality and is guaranteed to keep the business of the House moving along without unnecessary delay. I am happy to present the Hon. Mark Buttigieg to the House as President.

**The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Anthony D'Adam do take the chair of this House as President.

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam was elected to this House by the people of New South Wales on 23 March 2019 and served as Deputy Opposition Whip in the last Parliament. Having spent a lot of time in the Chamber, he is well aware of proceedings and how this place should function. The Hon. Anthony D'Adam has also served as a member and as deputy chair of various committees. Prior to entering this House, he had many years of experience in Labor Party committees and union organising. Therefore, I am happy to present the Hon. Anthony D'Adam to be President of this House.

**The Hon. CHRIS RATH:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Bob Nanva do take the chair of this House as President.

Although newly elected to this House, the Hon. Bob Nanva has served as a local councillor on Burwood Council and has already been made the Government Whip by the Labor Party. As General Secretary of the New South Wales branch of the Australian Labor Party, he has no doubt had to deal with disagreements and disputes between rival ALP factions that are more vicious, virulent and vexatious than anything he would encounter as President in this august and well-behaved Chamber. I present the Hon. Bob Nanva as President of this House.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine do take the chair of this House as President.

Members will not be surprised that I nominate a woman as President. Although newly elected to this House, the Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine has presidential and vice-presidential experience, having served as president of the New South Wales division of the National Tertiary Education Union, as vice-president of NSW Labor and as chair of the NSW Labor Women's Forum. With that experience in mind, I present the Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine as President of this House.

**The Hon. NATASHA MACLAREN-JONES:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Cameron Murphy do take the chair of this House as President.

Although the Hon. Cameron Murphy is newly elected to the House, he has extensive experience as a barrister. He also has presidential credentials, having served as president of the NSW Council for Civil Liberties from 1999 to 2013. He is well placed to maintain the liberty of this House and the rights and freedoms of its members by serving as President. I am pleased to present the Hon. Cameron Murphy as the next President of this House.

**The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Stephen Lawrence do take the chair of this House as President.

While only recently elected to this House, the Hon. Stephen Lawrence has a Master of Laws with merit and a combined 21 years of experience as a solicitor and barrister. He is well placed to interpret without fear or favour the rules and practices of this House. He also has practical experience serving in an elected body as a councillor, deputy mayor and mayor of Dubbo Regional Council. I am pleased to present the Hon. Stephen Lawrence to be President of this House.

**The Hon. AILEEN MacDONALD:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Emily Suvaal do take the chair of this House as President.

While newly elected to this House, the Hon. Emily Suvaal has experience as a trade union official, a representative on the NSW Labor Policy Committee for a Healthy Society and a volunteer on the board of directors of the community childcare centre that her two young sons attend. I present to the House the Hon. Emily Suvaal as President.

**The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Courtney Houssos do take the chair of this House as President.

The Hon. Courtney Houssos was first elected to this House on 28 March 2015 and has been returned as the first selected member at the recent election. The Hon. Courtney Houssos has served diligently and ably as a Temporary Chair of Committees and as deputy chair and chair of several parliamentary committees in the previous term. The



Hon. Courtney Houssos has a good understanding of what is required for orderly proceedings, for allowing members to speak freely and for upholding the dignity of this Chamber. She is a fair-minded and prudent choice. I am delighted to present the Hon. Courtney Houssos as President of this House.

**The Hon. BRONNIE TAYLOR:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Tara Moriarty do take the chair of this House as President.

The Hon. Tara Moriarty was elected to this House by the people of New South Wales on 23 March 2019. She served three years, eight months and 26 days as chair of the important Portfolio Committee No. 1 - Premier and Finance. The challenge of maintaining order during rigorous budget estimates hearings is excellent training for the role of President in this Chamber during vigorous debate. I am very happy to present the Hon. Tara Moriarty to the House as President.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Rose Jackson do take the chair of this House as President.

The Hon. Rose Jackson was first elected to this House on 8 May 2019 to fill the vacancy brought about by the resignation of the Hon. Lynda Voltz. She has served as a shadow Minister and as a member of several committees. The Hon. Rose Jackson has an undoubted passion for the welfare of the people of New South Wales and for our democratic system. I am sure that she will bring that passion to the vital role of President. Accordingly, I present the Hon. Rose Jackson as President of this House.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Daniel Mookhey do take the chair of this House as President.

The Hon. Daniel Mookhey was elected to this House on 6 May 2015 to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of the Hon. Steve Whan. He has served as chair, as deputy chair and as a member of several committees—with some effect, I must say. He has frequently provided from the floor of the Chamber astute and erudite analysis of the application of the standing orders—much to my chagrin—and the rules of the House to the question before the Chair. To have him in the chair, weighing up and deciding competing arguments advanced by members on obtuse points of order would be a pleasure that should not willingly be forgone. "A Daniel come to judgment, yea, a Daniel!" Therefore, with great pleasure, I present the Hon. Daniel Mookhey as the next President of this House.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. John Graham do take the chair of this House as President.

The Hon. John Graham was first elected to this House on 12 October 2016 to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of the Hon. Sophie Cotsis. Currently the Deputy Leader of the Government and a Minister with responsibility for no fewer than five portfolios, he has previously served as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, as shadow Minister for eight portfolios and as a member of a range of committees. The Hon. John Graham is affable and unflappable. He has the perfect personality, demeanour, wit and intelligence to serve honourably and fairly as President. I am pleased to present the Hon. John Graham for the role of President.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Penny Sharpe do take the chair of this House as President.

The Hon. Penny Sharpe was first elected to this place on 11 October 2005. She has served as a Temporary Chair of Committees, Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, shadow Minister in numerous portfolios and deputy chair and member of various committees. As the virtual mother of the House, who better to keep us all in order and focused on the business before us? I present the Hon. Penny Sharpe as President of this House.

**The CLERK:** I invite each of the members nominated, in the order in which they were nominated, to address the House if so desired.

**The Hon. BEN FRANKLIN:** I submit myself to the will of the House.

**The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE:** I thank the honourable member for his support but decline the nomination.

**The Hon. GREG DONNELLY:** I thank the honourable member for the nomination, but I respectfully decline it.

**The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG:** I decline the nomination.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** I thank the honourable member for the nomination, but I respectfully decline it.

**The Hon. BOB NANVA:** I thank the honourable member for the generous words, but I also decline the nomination.

**The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE:** I decline the nomination.

**The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY:** I decline the nomination.

**The Hon. STEPHEN LAWRENCE:** I decline the nomination.

**The Hon. EMILY SUVAAL:** I decline the nomination.

**The CLERK:** I note for the record that no point of order has been taken about the appropriateness or otherwise of a Minister being nominated for the position of President.

**The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS:** I thank the honourable member for the nomination, but I decline.

**The Hon. TARA MORIARTY:** I thank the honourable member for the nomination, but I decline.

**The Hon. ROSE JACKSON:** I decline the nomination.

**The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY:** I decline the nomination.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I decline the nomination.

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** I decline the nomination.

**The CLERK:** There being only one nomination remaining before the House, the Hon. Ben Franklin is therefore elected President of the Legislative Council.

*Members of the House calling on the Hon. Ben Franklin to the chair, he was taken out of his place by the Hon. Penny Sharpe and the Hon. Jeremy Buckingham and conducted to the chair.*

**The PRESIDENT (11:00):** As President-Elect, standing on the upper step: I acknowledge the House and its choosing of me as its independent and impartial President. I express my profound thanks and gratitude for the confidence that is reposed in me. I convey to honourable members my deep consciousness of the honour that this House has conferred upon me. I submit myself to the House. I deeply understand the importance of this role. It is a significant role. I know that there has been commentary about it, but there is nothing more important than having an independent and impartial umpire of the Chamber to ensure that its dignity is upheld and that debate can ensue that is fair to all sides. That is the commitment that I make to every member of this Chamber today.

**The President** took the chair.

**The President** read the Prayers.

**The PRESIDENT:** I acknowledge the Gadigal clan of the Eora nation and its Elders and thank them for their custodianship of this land.

*Governor*

#### **ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT**

**The PRESIDENT:** I report receipt of a message regarding the administration of the Government.

*Presiding Officers*

#### **PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

##### **Presentation**

**The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY:** I inform the House that I have ascertained it to be the pleasure of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor to receive the Legislative Council to present their President to His Excellency in the Jubilee Room at 12.10 p.m. today.

#### **DEPUTY PRESIDENT AND CHAIR OF COMMITTEES**

##### **Election**

**The PRESIDENT:** I announce that, following the periodic Council election held on 25 March 2023, according to Standing Order 18 the office of Deputy President and Chair of Committees of the Legislative Council is vacant and it is necessary to choose a member to be Deputy President and Chair of Committees. I call for nominations for the office of Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Rod Roberts be elected as Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

I speak in support of my nomination of the Hon. Rod Roberts as Deputy President. The Hon. Rod Roberts has been Assistant President for the past four years and is clearly experienced in the rules and functions of this House. He has also sat on a number of committees, including the Procedure Committee, and has a breadth of experience that I believe will benefit him in the role of Deputy President. The Hon. Rod Roberts has always acted fairly and reasonably in his role as Assistant President and I am sure he will bring those same qualities to the role of Deputy President. Most importantly, I believe he is capable of being an impartial and independent Deputy President, which is crucial.

It is fair to say that the honourable member and I do not agree or vote the same way on many issues in this place, but, despite that, we have always had a good working relationship. Other members would agree that the Hon. Rod Roberts always conducts himself in a very sensible and respectful manner in this place and is well regarded by both Houses. I have spoken to my colleague in the other place the member for Sydney, Alex Greenwich, about this nomination. He is very supportive of the Hon. Rod Roberts as Deputy President and believes he will do a good job in this role, as do I. I commend the nomination of the Hon. Rod Roberts as Deputy President to the House and all members.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** For reasons that I have previously articulated in relation to the qualities of the Hon. Peter Primrose, I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Peter Primrose be elected as Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** For reasons that I have previously articulated, I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Greg Donnelly be elected as Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** For reasons that I have previously articulated, I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Mark Buttigieg be elected as Deputy President of this House.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That Ms Abigail Boyd be elected as Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

Ms Abigail Boyd has been a member of this House since 23 March 2019. She has ably served as Temporary Chair of Committees for one year, eight months and 20 days, and as chair, deputy chair and member of various committees. I encourage her to accept this nomination and commend her to the House as its next Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That Ms Cate Faehrmann be Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

Ms Cate Faehrmann has been a member of this House since 7 September 2010. She has ably served as Temporary Chair of Committees for two years and 26 days, albeit back in 2011 until 2013, and as chair, deputy chair and member of various committees. I encourage her to accept this nomination and commend her to the House as its next Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That Ms Sue Higginson be Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

Although Ms Sue Higginson has been a member of this House only since 12 May 2022, she has already served as deputy chair of Portfolio Committee No. 5 and chair of Portfolio Committee No. 7. She is ready for higher office. I encourage her to accept this nomination and commend her to the House as its next Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That Dr Amanda Cohn be Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

While Dr Amanda Cohn is new to this House, she comes to us with plenty of experience. She was the youngest woman ever elected to Albury City Council and was its deputy mayor from 2016 to 2021. I encourage her to accept this nomination, and commend her to the House as its next Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

**The PRESIDENT:** There being no further nominations, I shall now ask each of the candidates, in the order in which they were nominated, if they would like to address the House.

**The Hon. ROD ROBERTS:** I submit myself to the will of the House.

**The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE:** I thank the honourable member for his ongoing support, but I decline the nomination.

**The Hon. GREG DONNELLY:** I thank the honourable member for his compelling argument, but I respectfully decline.

**The Hon. MARK BUTTIGIEG:** The offer is declined.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I thank the honourable member for his kind words and his acknowledgement of my extraordinary talents; however, I am afraid that my work is required on the floor, so I decline.

**Ms CATE FAEHRMANN:** I decline the nomination.

**Ms SUE HIGGINSON:** I gleefully decline.

**Dr AMANDA COHN:** I decline the nomination.

**The PRESIDENT:** There being only one nomination, the Hon. Rod Roberts is therefore elected Deputy President and Chair of Committees.

### ASSISTANT PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

#### Election

**The PRESIDENT:** I announce that, as this is the first meeting of the House following the periodic Council election held on 25 March 2023, according to Standing Order 19 the office of Assistant President of the Legislative Council is vacant, and it is necessary to choose a member to be Assistant President. I call for nominations for the office of Assistant President.

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** I propose to the House and move:

That the Hon. Peter Primrose be elected Assistant President.

I nominate the Hon. Peter Primrose for all the reasons given by the Opposition, for the deep respect in which he is held and for the experience that he brings to the Chamber.

**The PRESIDENT:** There being only one nomination, the Hon. Peter Primrose is therefore elected Assistant President.

#### *Announcements*

### ABORIGINAL CULTURE AND HERITAGE

**The PRESIDENT (11:13):** In 2016 the Legislative Council committee inquiry into reparations for members of the Stolen Generations recommended that each new Parliament commence with an acknowledgement of the strength and importance of Aboriginal cultures and heritage. The first acknowledgement was given at the opening of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament in 2019. The past injustices against Aboriginal people in New South Wales cannot be denied or undone. Rather, it is how this Parliament, on behalf of the people of New South Wales, responds to the telling of these truths. We must be willing to listen and acknowledge our shared history, as told through the eyes of Aboriginal people. We will work together with Aboriginal people to heal the pain of historic wrongs and, empowered by this knowledge of our history, create better futures for all people of New South Wales.

It is through working together that the New South Wales Parliament has achieved important milestones along the journey of reconciliation. We enacted the Aboriginal Land Rights Act in 1983 and established the Aboriginal land council system. In 1997 we were the first Parliament in Australia to formally apologise to members of the Stolen Generations. In 2010 we amended the New South Wales Constitution to formally acknowledge and honour New South Wales First Peoples, their cultural connection to lands and waters, and their contribution to the identity of the State. We enacted the Aboriginal Languages Act in 2017, which was another Australian first. Only by acknowledging and respecting the past can we focus our commitment and take action to listen and change the future. As members of this Parliament, we have the power and responsibility to achieve more by working closer with Aboriginal people, by understanding the truth of our history, and by strengthening our understanding of Aboriginal cultures and heritage for the wellbeing of all.

#### *Business of the House*

### CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** By leave and without notice, I move:

That notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders:

- (a) there be no questions this day;
- (b) the questions on the motions for the adjournment of the House this day be put without amendment or debate; and
- (c) for the sitting of the House this day, members may give notices of motions by delivering a signed copy to the Clerks at the table.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Members*

## MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

### Correspondence

**The CLERK:** I table correspondence from the Deputy Secretary and General Counsel, Department of Premier and Cabinet, dated 24 February 2023, concerning changes in ministerial arrangements in relation to the previous Government.

### MINISTRY

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** I inform the House that, on 28 March 2023, Her Excellency the Governor accepted the resignation of the Hon. Dominic Francis Perrottet, MP, as Premier, Minister for Employee Relations, and Minister for Finance, and as a member of the Executive Council, which action involved the resignations of his colleagues from their respective offices and as members of the Executive Council. On the same day, Her Excellency the Governor appointed the following persons to the offices indicated:

The Hon. Christopher John Minns, MP  
Premier

The Hon. Prudence Ann Car, MP  
Deputy Premier, and Minister for Education and Early Learning

The Hon. Penelope Gail Sharpe, MLC  
Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, and Vice-President of the Executive Council

The Hon. John Graham, MLC  
Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Night-time Economy and Music

The Hon. Daniel Mookhey, MLC  
Treasurer, and Minister for the Gig Economy

The Hon. Ryan John Park, MP  
Minister for Health and Regional Health, Minister for Mental Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast

The Hon. Joanna Elizabeth Haylen, MP  
Minister for Transport

The Hon. Michael John Daley, MP  
Attorney General

I further inform the House that, on 6 April 2023, Her Excellency the Governor accepted the resignation of the Hon. Christopher John Minns, MP, as Premier, and as a member of the Executive Council, which action involved the resignations of his colleagues from their respective offices and as members of the Executive Council. On the same day, Her Excellency the Governor appointed the following persons to the offices indicated:

The Hon. Christopher John Minns, MP  
Premier

The Hon. Prudence Ann Car, MP  
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney

The Hon. Penelope Gail Sharpe, MLC  
Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage

The Hon. John Graham, MLC  
Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism

The Hon. Daniel Mookhey, MLC  
Treasurer

The Hon. Ryan John Park, MP  
Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast

The Hon. Joanna Elizabeth Haylen, MP  
Minister for Transport

The Hon. Paul Scully, MP  
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

The Hon. Sophie Cotsis, MP  
Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety

The Hon. Yasmin Maree Catley, MP  
Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism

The Hon. Jihad Dib, MP  
Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice

The Hon. Kate Rebecca Washington, MP  
Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion

The Hon. Michael John Daley, MP  
Attorney General

The Hon. Tara Moriarty, MLC  
Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Western New South Wales

The Hon. Ron Hoenig, MP  
Minister for Local Government, and Vice-President of the Executive Council

The Hon. Courtney Houssos, MLC  
Minister for Finance, and Minister for Natural Resources

The Hon. Stephen Kamper, MP  
Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport

The Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC  
Minister for Water, Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth, and Minister for the North Coast

The Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong, MP  
Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections

The Hon. Timothy Carson Crakanthorp, MP  
Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter

The Hon. David Robert Harris, MP  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast

The Hon. Jodie Elizabeth Harrison, MP  
Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

The Hon. Jennifer Kathleen Aitchison, MP  
Minister for Regional Transport and Roads

### SENIOR MINISTERS

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** I inform the House that, effective from 5 April 2023, the following Ministers were designated as senior Ministers:

The Hon. Daniel Mookhey, MLC

The Hon. Ryan John Park, MP

The Hon. Joanna Elizabeth Haylen, MP

### PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** I inform the House that, on 1 May 2023, the following persons were appointed as Parliamentary Secretaries:

Ms Julia Dorothy Finn, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier, and Parliamentary Secretary for the Arts

Mr (Greg) Gregory Charles Warren, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier, Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Early Learning, and Parliamentary Secretary for Western Sydney

Ms (Trish) Trisha Lee Doyle, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Climate Change, Parliamentary Secretary for Energy, Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment, and Parliamentary Secretary for Heritage

Dr (Hugh) Paul Joseph Hugh McDermott, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General

Mr David Raymond Mehan, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer

Dr Michael Joseph Holland, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Health, and Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Health

Dr Marjorie Spooner O'Neill, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Transport

Mr Stephen Louis Bali, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Planning and Public Spaces

The Hon. Mark Buttigieg, MLC  
Parliamentary Secretary for Industrial Relations, Parliamentary Secretary for Work Health and Safety, and Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism

Mr Edmond Atalla, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Counter-terrorism

The Hon. Liesl Dorothy Tesch, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Families and Communities, and Parliamentary Secretary for Disability Inclusion

Ms Anna Watson, MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for Roads, and Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Transport and Roads

The Hon. Anthony D'Adam, MLC  
Parliamentary Secretary for Customer Service and Digital Government, Parliamentary Secretary for Emergency Services, and Parliamentary Secretary for Youth Justice

### **LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT**

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** I inform the House that, on 28 March 2023, I was appointed Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council and the Hon. John Graham was appointed Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council.

### **GOVERNMENT WHIP AND DEPUTY GOVERNMENT WHIP**

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** I inform the House that, on 3 May 2023, the Hon. Bob Nanva was elected Government Whip in the Legislative Council and the Hon. Cameron Murphy was elected Deputy Government Whip in the Legislative Council.

### **REPRESENTATION OF GOVERNMENT IN THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** I inform the House that in the representation of Government responsibilities in this Chamber, I will act in respect of my own portfolios and will represent the following Ministers in the other House in respect of the following portfolios:

The Hon. Christopher John Minns, MP  
Premier

The Hon. Paul Scully, MP  
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

The Hon. Kate Rebecca Washington, MP  
Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion

I further inform the House that the Hon. John Graham, MLC, Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism, will act in respect of his own portfolios and will represent the following Ministers in the other House in respect of the following portfolios:

The Hon. Joanna Elizabeth Haylen, MP  
Minister for Transport

The Hon. Jihad Dib, MP  
Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice

The Hon. David Robert Harris, MP  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast

The Hon. Jennifer Kathleen Aitchison, MP  
Minister for Regional Transport and Roads

I further inform the House that the Hon. Courtney Houssos, MLC, Minister for Finance, and Minister for Natural Resources, will act in respect of her own portfolios and will represent the following Ministers in the other House in respect of the following portfolios:

The Hon. Prudence Ann Car, MP  
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney

The Hon. Ryan John Park, MP  
Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast

The Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong, MP

Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections

I further inform the House that the Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC, Minister for Water, Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth, and Minister for the North Coast, will act in respect of her own portfolios and will represent the following Ministers in the other House in respect of the following portfolios:

The Hon. Timothy Carson Crakanthorp, MP  
Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter

The Hon. Jodie Elizabeth Harrison, MP  
Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

I further inform the House that the Hon. Daniel Mookhey, MLC, Treasurer, will act in respect of his own portfolio and will represent the following Ministers in the other House in respect of the following portfolios:

The Hon. Sophie Cotsis, MP  
Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety

The Hon. Michael John Daley, MP  
Attorney General

The Hon. Stephen Kamper, MP  
Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport

I further inform the House that the Hon. Tara Moriarty, MLC, Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Western New South Wales, will act in respect of her own portfolios and will represent the following Ministers in the other House in respect of the following portfolios:

The Hon. Ron Hoenig, MP  
Minister for Local Government

The Hon. Yasmin Maree Catley, MP  
Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism

#### **LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION**

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I inform the House that, on 21 April 2023, I was elected Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council. I further inform the House that, on 5 April 2023, the Hon. Sarah Mitchell was elected Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council.

#### **OPPOSITION WHIP AND DEPUTY OPPOSITION WHIP**

**The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE:** I inform the House that, on 21 April 2023, the Hon. Chris Rath was elected Opposition Whip in the Legislative Council and that the Hon. Wes Fang was elected Deputy Opposition Whip in the Legislative Council.

#### **THE GREENS**

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Yet again The Greens have elected not to have any particular leader. As we now have Dr Amanda Cohn joining us, we have an expanded team and our portfolio responsibilities have changed. We will make those available to all members.

#### **PAULINE HANSON'S ONE NATION**

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** I inform the House that I have been re-elected as supreme leader of One Nation and will continue to head our enlightened dictatorship bureau.

#### *Bills*

#### **LAW OF EVIDENCE BILL 2023**

#### **First Reading**

**Bill presented and read a first time on motion by the Hon. Penny Sharpe.**

#### *Announcements*

#### **AUSLAN INTERPRETERS**

**The PRESIDENT (11:19):** I inform the House that, according to resolution of the House of 10 November 2022 regarding Auslan interpretation of certain proceedings, during the Lieutenant-Governor's address to Parliament this day Auslan interpreters will be present on the dais.



*Presiding Officers*

**PRESIDENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**Presentation**

*The members of the Legislative Council proceeded at 11:20 to the Jubilee Room, there to present Mr President to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor.*

The House resumed at 14:31.

*Governor*

**OPENING OF SESSION BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR**

**His Excellency the Hon. Andrew Bell, the Lieutenant-Governor of New South Wales**, was received by the President, who was accompanied by Ministers and officers of the House, and was conducted to the dais.

The Usher of the Black Rod was directed to request the immediate attendance of the members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber.

*The members of the Legislative Assembly attended.*

*Message Stick*

**MESSAGE STICK**

**Mr Ray INGREY:** Naggang-bi ba yilinji-nhur  
ngayagang Ray Ingre, gamay-ngal ba gadhu-ngal-ngay  
biyangga-ngay Gujaga Foundation  
guriwal-dha ngalamangay, guriwal-mang  
ngala-ma-njang gadigal-gulli ngura-nhung nhaya  
ngura-dha dharra-ma-ngay madha ngabu-mara-djan ngabu-mara-nhung nguranhung  
nhaya  
dharawal-wulawala ngali-yila madha ngura-nhung yagun  
nhaway ngala-ma-njang dil-dil NSW Parliament ba  
ngala-ma-ngay njilamung girrawah-yu Gujaga-ngay  
gipparr-ngalin yaga-ngiil girrawah-yu djurwa-yali-njang  
Bundeena-yu njir barawa-yari-nhung  
girrawah-ngay ba gamay-ngal-ngiill  
gama-ma-ri-ngay dharawal-langa  
budjari ba ngad-gayang

Good afternoon, His Excellency the Hon. Andrew Bell, Lieutenant-Governor of New South Wales; the Hon. Chris Minns, Premier of New South Wales; the Hon. Benjamin Franklin, President of the Legislative Council; the Hon. Michael Daley, Attorney-General and member for Maroubra, where my community is situated; Government Ministers; and members of Parliament. My opening remarks in my language, the Dharawal language, translate to, "My name is Ray Ingre, I belong to coastal Sydney and Botany Bay. I am the chairperson of the Gujaga Foundation. I am a resident of La Perouse. We are gathered on the land of the family group belonging to gadi. I stand here as it is my grandmother's grandmother's country. Our old people lived here as it was their country and their cultural obligation to be here. Today we are gathered to mark the opening of the New South Wales Parliament, and I stand here a child of the stingray. Our ontology, our dreaming, tells us we come from the stingray. When the scales of the serpent fell off, the stingray grew. I am the stingray and we are the Gamayngal. I am speaking to you in Dharawal." Thank you, and good luck.

*Governor*

**LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR'S SPEECH**

*Auslan interpreters took their place on the dais.*

**His Excellency the Hon. Andrew Bell, the Lieutenant-Governor of New South Wales, was pleased to deliver the following Speech:**

We are meeting today on the traditional lands of the Gadigal people. I acknowledge them as the custodians and traditional owners of this land. I pay my sincere respects to their elders, past and present. And I extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait people here today.

Honourable members of Parliament: You have been called together to consider proposals for the first session of the Fifty-Eighth Parliament of New South Wales. You will make your deliberations and put forth your arguments in this, the oldest Parliament in Australia. The Legislative Council was established 200 years ago by the New South Wales Act 1823. This was our nation's first step towards representative democracy. Next year we will celebrate the bicentenary of this House as well, I should add (in my other capacity), as the bicentenary of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. Much has changed since 1824. At its first sitting, there were only five government officials, all of them men. Today we are more numerous and more representative of our community. The new Cabinet is emblematic of this. For the first time in our history, women make up half of the New South Wales Cabinet. But many of our core values remain the same.

Over the past 200 years, people from across New South Wales have been drawn to this Parliament to serve. They have worked diligently to win the consent of their fellow citizens and to seek out compromise—to hammer out solutions in the real world. And they have done this to make a real and positive difference in the lives of their fellow citizens. In earning the trust of your constituents, you have been elected or re-elected to office. You are part of a great democratic tradition.

For some, this is your first time in this Chamber. You might be giddy with excitement. Perhaps a little unsure of the protocol. Or even how to get around the building. Don't worry. You are very welcome here. And you will quickly find your feet. Others are seasoned veterans. Whichever you are, I urge you never to forget the footsteps in which you follow, the trust that has been placed in you, nor the honour it brings. We have in this Chamber people of different backgrounds who hold differing views. That is important, it is valuable—it is crucial to ensure the decisions of this Parliament reflect the people it represents.

Today it is my great pleasure to speak to the Government's program for the Fifty-Eighth Parliament. Before I do, I commend all those involved in the transfer of power. This is no less remarkable for being routine. We have seen established and mature democracies from around the world struggle with this. New South Wales, happily, has not. This should give us great pride in our Westminster tradition, our institutions and in the people who serve in them. The civility of the election campaign—much commented upon by the media—will also serve you well going forward.

A change of government inevitably brings a new focus and priorities. I am advised that before the 2023 State general election, the Government set out its plan for New South Wales based on six major priorities. Namely to:

- Reform the New South Wales education system, including preschools and TAFE.
- Repair and rebuild our health system.
- Increase access to affordable and reliable transport, and cap road tolls.
- Ensure good, sustainable housing is attainable for buyers and renters.
- End the privatisation of State-owned assets and critical infrastructure, while creating a State-owned clean energy corporation; and
- Build an economy that is resilient and works for people and small businesses.

This is the agenda the Government put to the people of our State. It is the basis upon which it was elected and the mandate that it carries.

I turn to education. The New South Wales Government has made education reform a first order priority. This concerns not only parents, students and teachers but everyone invested in the future of our State. Education is nation-building.

A recent OECD report noted Australia's "high level of teacher attrition" as a serious concern. It pointed to high levels of disruption in the classroom. And it noted a "steady decline" in our schools across reading, maths and science. As a nation, we face a projected shortfall of 4,100 high school teachers by 2025. Education does not work without passionate and skilled educators. This is why the Government is focused on getting qualified teachers into our schools.

It will begin by reaching a comprehensive agreement with the Department of Education to reduce teacher workloads and make salaries more competitive. It continues by converting 10,000 temporary teaching roles into permanent positions as well as converting 6,000 temporary teacher support staff roles into permanent positions. This will give teachers the job security they have been asking for to make teaching their life's vocation—and teaching is a vocation. The casualisation of teaching has forced thousands of talented teachers to leave the profession in New South Wales. The Government has already taken the first steps towards fulfilling this promise, and it is expected that 1,400 teachers will be made permanent by the start of the next school term, with the full 10,000 temporary teaching positions expected to be converted to permanent positions by the start of the next school year.

Support staff are the unsung heroes of the school system—staffing the front office, looking after students in the sick bay and ensuring the lawns are mown. For too long these staff have been employed on year-to-year or even term-to-term contracts. Temporary positions increase job insecurity, particularly for young staff, making it much more difficult to get finance for a home or a car, to lay down roots and to start a family. The Government is demonstrating respect for these vital roles by providing staff who have been at the same school for three years with a permanent position. The Government is sending a message to all school staff that they are valued and appreciated for the important work they do.

We can all, no doubt, recall the name or names of teachers that inspired us at school and had a major impact on our life's trajectory. We can confidently say education is nation-building because good teachers make an impression on us early, the citizens of the nation.

To help get the right people into classrooms, the Government will establish a \$20 million Innovative Teacher Training Fund. This will support innovative pathways into teaching, such as clinical teaching hubs. These hubs will give "on the job" training by embedding teaching students into schools so they can gain classroom experience and receive mentorship. The Government will also make it easier for people to retrain as teachers midway through their career by expanding weeknight and weekend Master of Teaching courses. All these measures will complement a new \$400 million Education Future Fund. The fund will ensure all public schools receive the funding they need to deliver improved student outcomes and ease chronic teacher shortages. Additionally, the Government's "Growth Area Schools Plan" will bring new and upgraded schools to high growth areas.

To address educational standards, an ongoing, targeted literacy and numeracy tutoring program will be established. And in a novel measure—but not one without precedent in other jurisdictions—the Government will introduce a ban on mobile phones in all public schools. If we truly are where our attention is, many students might be "returning" to the classroom for the first time in years.

But education does not begin at school. Nor does it end there. Research has unequivocally shown the importance of high-quality early childhood learning experiences. To ensure all our children receive this "head start," the Government has committed to:

- delivering 100 public preschools co-located with public primary schools, and
- investing in 50 new and expanded preschools at non-government schools.

For school graduates, the Government will also focus on vocational education. Successive generations have been made job-ready at TAFE. The Government will support the institution by allocating a minimum of 70 per cent of all skills funding to TAFE. This will provide TAFE with the financial stability it needs. The Government will also conduct a comprehensive review of the vocational education system to ensure that it is accessible and up to the task of upskilling the workers of New South Wales.

Another priority concerns health care. The Government has set out an agenda to ensure that every person in New South Wales can access health care quickly and easily. This is a foundational concern for any government. Our earliest civic buildings were hospitals. When we are sick and when we are afraid, we want the best—for ourselves and our loved ones. During the darkest days of the pandemic we saw our healthcare professionals at their very best. But in its wake, NSW Health lost 12.6 per cent of its nursing staff in 2021 and 2022, compared to about 7 per cent each year in the preceding three years. A post-pandemic exodus of staff from professions that they love will leave our State uniquely vulnerable and is a wake-up call that must be heeded.

The Government plans to address this—in part—by removing the cap on the wages of health workers. By removing the wages cap, it is hoped the exodus of healthcare workers can be stemmed while further systemic challenges are addressed. Longer term structural reform also includes introducing minimum Safe Staffing Levels to public hospitals. This will begin in emergency departments and move progressively out into other areas. Just as the Government wants teachers to spend more time in their classrooms, it equally wants nurses to spend more time with their patients.

The Government will hire an additional 1,200 nurses, alongside 500 new paramedics in rural and regional areas. Boosting the number of paramedics in rural and regional New South Wales was the very first major health policy announcement the new Government made, intended to reduce the burden of chronic paramedic shortages and ease strain on the fraught rural and regional health system. Paramedics form a critical part of the backbone of our health system. They endure some of the most difficult and dangerous conditions of all frontline workers and the Government is committed to supporting and protecting them.

As our community grows, it is important that our health infrastructure continues to expand. Since 2015-16 New South Wales has lost 365 public hospital beds while nearly every other State increased their number of beds. Victoria gained 598 and Queensland gained 1,027. To address this, the Government has committed to delivering over 600 hospital beds in Western Sydney, beginning with a 300-bed hospital at Rouse Hill. This will require a \$700 million investment, to more than double the existing plans. A raft of upgrades has been proposed, including to Canterbury, Fairfield, Mount Druitt and Blacktown hospitals.

In our regions, a new Eurobodalla hospital will be opened to service our growing South Coast community. The Government has also committed to building a new public hospital in the aerotropolis, which is expected to be the largest growth area in Sydney over the next two decades. To relieve pressure on our hospitals, the Government will also invest \$100 million over five years to boost funding to Women's Health Centres across the State. This will help more women to access tailored health services.

On the subject of frontline workers, the Government has committed to boosting police numbers, particularly in Western Sydney. The NSW Police Force has endured an exceptionally challenging few years, through bushfire and pandemic. The State's officers deserve our gratitude and continuing support.

The Government believes that New South Wales should have a transport system where everyone has "accessible, affordable, reliable and sustainable" transport options available to them. In an election campaign set against a cost-of-living crisis, the issue of tolls grew in prominence. The Government is committed to putting downward pressure on tolls and undertaking a review. This includes a two-year cap of \$60 a week for Sydney motorists. It also includes ensuring that the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Harbour Tunnel remain in public hands and that money collected on these key public assets will go towards toll relief. The Government has promised never to privatise the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Harbour Tunnel. The Government has also already commissioned Professor Allan Fels, the former chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, to lead an overhaul of the toll network.

The issue of transport also led to the contest of ideas around privatisation. The Government is on record as opposing the privatisation of bus services. It has committed to ending the privatisation of public transport—now and into the future. And it will aim to improve the delivery of bus services, by establishing a bus industry task force. This will bring together industry, trade unions and community stakeholders to find solutions, improve service delivery and ensure an end to the privatisation of our public transport.

In addition, the Government is also looking at expanding the State's manufacturing muscle so that it can build the transport options of the future. Our State has a proud history of domestic manufacturing. Before it was a haven for the arts, Carriageworks in nearby Redfern was a hub of industry. It was a place where trains were built and innovation—such as the first air-conditioned trains—was nurtured. The Government plans to start building our public transport fleet locally, starting by building replacements for the ageing Tangara fleet in New South Wales. This will create 1,000 jobs during the design and build phase, and many more in the ongoing maintenance. Additionally, it will set a target of 50 per cent minimum local content for future rolling stock contracts, by the end of its first term.

I turn to housing. Housing affordability is also a major issue in our State and, as we know, the stakes are high. Somebody said, "It's not a House; it's a home." A home implies security and stability. The kind of solid foundation that gives people the confidence to go out and pursue their dreams and weather the storms of life. But how many people in our State are currently living in "homes"? Many of our fellow citizens currently feel trapped. Buyers face growing mortgage repayments amidst a cost-of-living crunch. Renters (also facing inflationary pressures) are stuck with too few rentals, too high rents, falling vacancies and rent bidding.

The Government was elected to tackle housing affordability and deliver a better and fairer deal for renters. It is a significant challenge, particularly given the significant economic and budgetary challenges of the day, and one without a simple solution. The new Government is focused on increasing supply, especially in the regions, as well as modernising the laws for renters. It will prioritise Build-to-Rent programs, beginning with a \$30 million pilot program on the South Coast.

It will also address supply around social housing, requiring a target of 30 per cent affordable, social, and universal housing on surplus public land. This will signal to the private sector that constructing new and more

diverse neighbourhoods is both achievable and desirable. To help first home buyers access the kind of stability earlier referred to, the Government will abolish stamp duty outright for first home buyers purchasing a house worth up to \$800,000. For first home buyers purchasing a property up to \$1 million, the Government will offer a concessional rate.

As more people are choosing or being forced to rent, the rights of renters understandably became an election issue. The Government aims to make renting fairer with the appointment of a Rental Commissioner, who will be an advocate and voice for renters. The commissioner will be tasked with:

- identifying barriers to boosting housing supply for renters,
- identifying the practices and gaps that undermine the rights of renters, and
- gathering data on renting to inform future policy-making.

The Rental Commissioner will work to create reasonable grounds for ending a lease, ending the practice of no-grounds evictions. The Government will also introduce a ban on secret rent bidding. If renters want to offer more than the listed price, this will have to be disclosed to all applicants, who then have the chance to match or better the offer. For renters, moving homes can also cause additional headaches. The new Government will ensure renters don't have to set aside extra money while they wait for their bond to be refunded with the introduction of a portable bond scheme.

The fifth priority of the Government concerns the vexed issue of climate policy and privatisation. Climate change has been called the defining issue of our time. But this is something of a misnomer. It will define "other" times as well. It will impact the lives of our children and their children. It will challenge future governments in ways that are difficult to predict, let alone prepare for. So, it is important that our policy levers reflect the seriousness of our circumstances. The new Government will introduce a bill to legislate the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. It will also seek to legislate a 50 per cent reduction in carbon emissions (from 2005 levels) by 2030—just seven years away. To drive the large-scale changes needed to reach net zero, the Government will create a new State-owned body, the NSW Energy Security Corporation. It will be seeded with a \$1 billion investment from the existing Restart NSW Fund with the aim of accelerating investment in renewable energy assets.

The corporation will be a linchpin between government and the private sector. With the private sector driving investment in cheaper, cleaner generation—like wind and solar—the Government aims to ensure energy is available when there is no wind or sun. This includes renewable storage solutions like pumped hydro or community batteries for rooftop solar. These areas are critical to managing the transformation of the New South Wales energy system and providing the reliability the State needs.

The Government campaigned on a platform of ending the privatisation of State-owned assets. This includes safeguarding the public ownership of Sydney Water and Hunter Water. Sydney Water has provided safe, reliable water supply to Greater Sydney, the Blue Mountains and the Illawarra for 135 years. Hunter Water has served the community for 130 years. Both have underpinned the growth, health and flourishing of their communities. On a warming planet, maintaining public ownership of the water supply is ever more critical.

Retaining public ownership will ensure that the water supply remains in the hands of the people of New South Wales while remaining subject to strict pricing rules and legislation, budgetary oversight and reporting requirements. Keeping State assets in public hands will not just protect the community and our State's resilience; it will also benefit the economy. At the July 2021 ACCC annual regulatory conference the then chair, Rod Sims, said, "Privatising assets without allowing for competition or regulation creates private monopolies that raise prices, reduce efficiency and harm the economy".

The final priority is around the economy and resilience. COVID was many things. A global pandemic. A public health emergency. A "stress test" on our supply chains and just-in-case inventory methods. It exposed the fragility of our systems. Suddenly, when we needed things that we didn't produce locally, we couldn't always get them. This ranged from the mildly annoying, like stationery, to the genuinely life-threatening, like vaccines. Or when we could get certain items, their cost was prohibitively expensive. The lesson the Government took is that, in an uncertain world, we need to scale up investment in our domestic manufacturing capacity and better support local industries.

New South Wales has a \$33 billion manufacturing industry, spread across more than 26,000 businesses. It employs one-quarter of a million people. At the heart of the plan is a commitment to train and skill up the next generation of high-paid, highly skilled workers who will meet the needs of our people in good times and bad, and literally build a better State for future generations. This means prioritising local content and local manufacturing in all government contracts. I have mentioned that this will begin with the next fleet of trains to be replaced, the

Tangara fleet. The Government will also set a target of 50 per cent minimum content for future transport rolling stock contracts by the end of its first term. It will also increase tender weightings to 30 per cent, capturing local content, job creation, small business, and ethical supply chains. To oversee this investment, and growth of local industries, the Government will establish an independent, expert body: the NSW Jobs First Commission. This will be charged with supporting the growth of local industries and helping local firms in bidding for government tenders.

This "MADE IN NSW" policy will be matched by an emphasis on skill-building. Local manufacturing will struggle to grow without the highly skilled workers to support it. Western Sydney, the Hunter, and Illawarra will benefit from the establishment of TAFE Manufacturing Centres of Excellence. The centres will be able to train, retrain and upskill 1,000 apprentices and workers in every year across the three sites. Their focus will be traditional and advanced manufacturing techniques and technologies. At a cost of more than \$42 million, the centres will be upgraded to offer mechanical engineering and electrical fitting—for free. As New South Wales continues to wrestle with labour and skills shortage, the Government will look to Western Sydney and the regions to help deliver the workers of today and tomorrow.

By way of conclusion, the Government has a clear mandate from the people of New South Wales to:

- invest in those who look after us—teachers, health and frontline workers
- address the rising cost of living through affordable transport options and sustainable housing
- ensure public-owned assets remain in public hands, and
- address the energy crisis.

You—the elected members of the Fifty-Eighth Parliament of New South Wales—have a great responsibility and opportunity before you. You represent a tremendously diverse and industrious people, coming from many nations and all walks of life but working together for the good of all. I began my address by noting the great honour that is bestowed upon you. But do not be cowed by this occasion either, or your new roles. Embrace the opportunity of public office.

Commit yourself wholeheartedly to the task ahead. Work hard to represent and serve the communities that elected you. Political life is not easy. It demands the highest standards of integrity. It calls daily for discernment and courage—and (on occasion) not a small amount of caffeine. I hope that you will all draw upon reserves so that, in four years' time, you are all proud of what you have achieved for the people of New South Wales—and also the way in which you have achieved it.

I now leave you to the important tasks entrusted to you by the people of New South Wales and wish you the best of luck in the critical work ahead of you. Thank you.

*His Excellency having left the dais, the members of the Legislative Assembly withdrew.*

*The Auslan interpreters left the dais.*

*Special Adjournment*

#### **SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT**

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** I move:

That this House at its rising today adjourn until Wednesday 10 May 2023 at 12.00 p.m.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Adjournment Debate*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**The Hon. PENNY SHARPE:** I move:

That this House do now adjourn.

**Motion agreed to.**

**The House adjourned at 15:21 until Wednesday 10 May 2023 at 12:00.**